

## Sustainable kindergarden/daycare partnerships between South Africa and Germany

An international kindergarden/daycare partnership offers many opportunities to explore new perspectives and different everyday realities. The primary focus should be on learning and discovering together.

With the common goal of sustainable development, we aim to provide educators and children in South Africa and Germany with the opportunity to gain insights into the life of their partner kindergarden. Through digital meetings, exchanging profiles, drawings, videos, photos and stories, children from both countries can meet and learn about their daily lives. Looking beyond one's own experiences and engaging with different life realities is intended to promote intercultural exchange and mutual solidarity. The idea of the partnership is based on regular (virtual) exchange and the common goal of a more sustainable future and does not include any commitment to travel or any form of financial support or funding.

Is your kindergarden/daycare interested in partnering with a German kindergarden/daycare? If so, please feel free to express your interest by emailing us at [t.holzer@faire-metropole.ruhr](mailto:t.holzer@faire-metropole.ruhr). We will then facilitate contact with a German kindergarden/daycare for you to exchange profiles initially. You can also fill out the profile in advance and send it to us along with your expression of interest.

### Thematic starting points for exchange

The topics of climate change, nutrition and fair trade offer a good opportunity to exchange ideas across borders. Our globalized food and trade system connects us to one another. It is not uncommon to find products from southern Africa, such as rooibos tea, grapes, raisins, salt, spices or nuts in supermarket shelves in Germany. The effects of climate change are no longer only noticeable in the Global South, but also in Germany. But compared to South Africa, Germany contributes significantly more to climate change, whereas it is primarily the people in African countries who suffer more from its consequences. Using pictures, photos and videos, children can exchange ideas about their different realities of life, for example on the following aspects:

- Which fruits and vegetables grow in each other's regions? What are similarities and differences? How is this related to climatic conditions?
- What are typical dishes prepared with regional ingredients?
- Are there (Fairtrade) products that are grown or produced in South Africa and imported by European countries, e.g. Germany?
- What does Fairtrade mean for the producing families?
- What impact does our globalized trade system have on climate change?
- How does climate change affect life here and in the partner daycare region, especially in relation to water accessibility, agriculture and nutrition?

## Why South Africa and Germany?

The partnership between the governments of the South African province of Mpumalanga in South Africa and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany was founded in April 1995 - in solidarity with the now independent country and in support of the young democracy. This step was a logical consequence of the commitment of many different actors in North Rhine-Westphalia and throughout Germany during the time of racial separation in South Africa - from church communities to political alliances, people and organizations supported the resistance against the inhumane rule of the authoritarian apartheid regime.

The province of Mpumalanga and North Rhine-Westphalia also have a common history of mining: many people in North Rhine-Westphalia, especially in the Ruhr area, see an obligation to stand up for the miners in South Africa after the mines on the Ruhr have been closed. Germany continues to import hard coal from countries in the Global South, including South Africa, where the mining sector is being criticised for violations of labor and human rights in areas such as Mpumalanga. The sky above the Ruhr is blue again, but this should not increase the suffering of the people of South Africa, who instead satisfy the need for energy in western countries.

At the beginning of the partnership, the focus was on vocational training, the promotion of small and medium-sized businesses and housing construction. In the further course, topics such as good governance, education, youth, sports, health and HIV/AIDS were added as areas of cooperation. In the 15 years of collaboration, connections have also been established beyond Mpumalanga's borders - such as with the provinces of the Free State, Limpopo, Gauteng and the Western Cape. In order to bring international cooperation across 10,000 kilometers to life, we need actors here and there who continually provide inspiration for new project ideas and new collaborations.

## The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Agenda 2030, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, is a global plan aimed at promoting sustainable peace and prosperity and protecting our planet. Since 2016, all countries have been working towards implementing this shared vision to combat poverty and reduce inequalities. It is particularly important to address the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable population groups and countries because only when no one is left behind the 17 goals can be achieved by 2030. Goal 17, "Partnerships for the Goals," explicitly highlights global partnerships, as global and local partnerships that work together and support each other drive sustainable development. Goal 17 is supported by cooperation, mutual respect, and shared values.

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS

17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS

