



*The SANCRC's strategic plan and funding
requirements for period March 2021 – end Feb
2023*

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Introduction to the SANCRC

The South African National Child Rights Coalition (SANCRC) is a network of 125 civil society organisations and activists in the child rights sector. The coalition members are united in the pursuit of a shared goal: Strengthening national child-rights governance to secure a coherent and effective child care and protection system capable of realising the rights of every child in South Africa to survive, be protected, to develop to their full potential and participate in decisions that affect them.

Rationale for the SANCRC

The Government of the Republic of South Africa (GRSA) is duty-bound to make children's rights a national, rights-based development priority. It is duty-bound to ensure government-wide action and accountability for realising the rights of every child through the adoption of a national, unifying child-rights governance system.

Given the high levels of inequality in South Africa, it is duty-bound to ensure government-wide prioritization of measures to equalise the rights of chronically marginalised children to, not just survive, but develop to their full potential.

This duty is created by multiple child and human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC); global and regional development plans, including the United Nation's SDG agenda (2030) and the Africa Union's Agenda 2063; and national laws and policies, including the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the National Plan of Action for Children (2020), the National Child Care and Protection Policy (2019), the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (2015) and the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005.

Through its ratification and adoption of these instruments, the GRSA has committed to secure implementation of children's rights through the adoption of a national child rights governance system. A national system of governance that explicitly prioritises children's rights as a national development priority and mainstreams the pursuit, monitoring and accountability for realising these rights within government's institutional architecture that drives government-wide pursuit of the country's national development priorities.

The national child rights governance system must yield a national, integrated child care and protection system that secures the provision of all services and support required by families, caregivers, and children necessary to ensure that every child develops to their full potential.

There is now an abundance of evidence as to what children require to develop to their full potential, and what disadvantaged children require to compensate for historical deficits to equalise their developmental opportunities. Similarly, the evidence and governing legal instruments are clear on government's associated responsibilities now captured in multiple global and regional policy / system's strengthening road maps such as the Nurturing Care and INPSIRE Frameworks, Africa's 2040 Agenda for Children, and the General Comments numbers 5 published by both the African and United Nation's Committees on children's rights.

The evidence is clear. Securing the survival, protection, and development of all children to their full potential requires the realisation of the rights of every child to:

- Health (not just for survival, but also for optimal development)
- Nutrition and food security (not just to prevent malnutrition) but to promote healthy growth and development (no stunting)
- Receipt of daily responsive and positive caregiving from all caregivers
- Quality learning from birth until the end of formal schooling
- Protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Security and safety in the way of birth registration and access to safe and healthy environments in which they live, play, and learn.

These rights are inter-related and inter-dependent. They must be realised through the provision of nurturing care that provides children with an age-appropriate combination of parenting, support, and services they need across this whole continuum to secure their survival, protection, development to their full potential and participation. If only some children receive only some of these services, they may well survive, but they will be at high risk of poor development.

There is overwhelming, compelling evidence that children's development requires realisation of their collective rights. Malnourished children, children living in poverty, children who battle disease, children who experience unresponsive caregiving, children who experience violence and children who receive little or poor quality education may survive, but they are at a very high risk of failing to develop. As such, rather than becoming the next generation of economically active citizens, nurturing parents, and strong leaders, they are at risk of being trapped in an intergenerational cycle of poverty. They are at risk of becoming the heads of the next generation of poor households that will face the same battles that their parents face now.

Sadly, this is the reality for most children in South Africa. Tackling only one or some of these challenges, such as increasing education or access to food, will have little lasting impact on overcoming accumulative deficits. Continued pursuit of a siloed, fragmented approach rather than a coherent, long-term child-centred governance agenda will further erode our human capital foundations.

The primary responsibility to provide nurturing care falls on parents and families, as supported by early childhood care and education practitioners, health care providers, teachers, social workers, and other service providers.

However, the GRSA bears a prior legally enforceable duty to take all measures necessary to enable the provision of nurturing care across the caregiving continuum. Where parents and caregivers are unable to provide nurturing care because of factors such as poverty, lack of knowledge, trauma, mental illness, and toxic stress, the state is obliged to provide an appropriate package of support to overcome the risks and enable nurturing care. To fulfil this duty, it must, and has committed in terms of the National Child Care and Protection Policy to develop a national, integrated child care and protection system that provides a continuum of promotive, preventative, and therapeutic care and support that responds to risks to guarantee the provision of nurturing care.

The GRSA has committed, in terms of the National Child Care and Protection Policy, to adopt a developmentally oriented system of child care and protection that offers three levels of support:

1. A universal suite of services necessary to enable all caregivers to provide nurturing care (for example, a national parenting support programme, early care and education and schooling system and health system)
2. A system that guarantees the identification of all families and caregivers whose capacity to provide nurturing care is potentially compromised and provide additional compensatory measures to mitigate the underlying risks to secure nurturing care, prevent poor outcomes, and in so doing equalise the opportunities of children at risk of poor development.
3. Where families and children fall through the preventative net, the GRSA has committed to establish an effective child protection system that will identify children who experience deprivations, abuse, neglect, and poor development outcomes, and provide the required, quality therapeutic and restorative services to ensure the resulting harm is mitigated and the child's nurturing care and developmental trajectory restored.

Fulfilling this commitment requires a national, integrated, multi-sectoral system of governance that ensures that children's rights are visible and mainstreamed across the national governance continuum. It requires that children's rights (notably their developmentally critical rights) are considered and advanced across government's planning continuum by all organs of state.

Fulfilling the state's promises to children is not the responsibility of one or two departments or levels of government: it is a government-wide responsibility that requires high level national leadership and coordination to secure the required levels of unity of purpose, action, and accountability.

For this reason, the GRSA is obligated to, and has committed to establish a national child rights governance system that is adequately politically positioned, mandated, resourced, and supported to ensure government-wide prioritisation, actioning of and accountability for realising children's developmentally critical rights.

The GRSA has failed to engage in the required child-centred governance, and as a result, has a weak national child care and protection system that is ill-equipped to realise the rights of every child, notably the most vulnerable, to survive, be protected, develop to their full potential, and participate in decisions that affect them. Most vulnerable families and children do not access the support needed to ensure the provision and receipt of nurturing care. This is evidenced by the low rates of access to essential services across the nurturing care domains, the low rates of access to the full package of services required to respond to accumulative risks, and the high levels of avoidable and preventable deaths, illness, malnutrition, development delays and disabilities, poor educational outcomes, violence against children and their low levels of participation in decisions that affect them among South Africa's historically marginalised groups.

The problem is structural in nature, and requires an equally structural, transformational response. Addressing this challenge and changing the developmental trajectory of children and the country requires effective advocacy to strengthen the national child care and protection system. Strengthening the country's track record in only one or some of the domains and for only some children will not bring about the sustainable change that will enable this generation of children to escape the intergenerational poverty trap.

Advocacy must transform the national system of governance to secure a developmentally oriented, transformational child care and protection system. This in turn requires a child-centred national

governance system under the leadership of a capable developmental state. A national planning system that recognises, provides leadership, and demands government-wide accountability for mainstreaming children's rights as a national development priority.

South Africa has an active child rights sector made up of many civil society organisations and activists. However, the sector tends to work in siloes, focusing on improving the realisation of specific rights, such as education, nutrition, protection, or health. To bring about lasting change the sector must work collaboratively to strengthen the national integrated system to ensure routine access by all children and their families to the full suite of services required to secure their equal and optimal development to their full potential.

No one organisation can achieve this outcome acting alone. Therefore, the child rights sector has come together under the banner of the South African National Child Rights Coalition (SANCRIC). The coalition has been established to provide a unifying platform for collective and coherent advocacy for government-wide, child-centred governance to secure and sustain a national, integrated, developmentally oriented child care and protection system as the bedrock of the developmental state upon which our National Development Plan depends.

Status of children's rights and the supporting system

Survival, development, protection, and participation outcomes are poor for most historically marginalised children in South Africa.

Many parents and families responsible for the most vulnerable children face multiple, often intersecting risks that weaken their capacity for nurturing care. Despite the legal duty on the State to provide support to families to fulfil their responsibilities to children, many parents and families are unable to access appropriate services to address these challenges because the national child care and protection system is weak.

As a result, Black African children, children living in poverty, those in under-served rural and informal urban areas, children in the former homeland provinces, children with disabilities and foreign migrant children are at a significant risk of their developmentally critical rights not being realised. This results in very high, and ever-increasing numbers of children who need high intensity care and protection services to mitigate the ensuing harm and poor development outcomes that are, in most cases, completely avoidable. The current protection system is ill-equipped to deal with the increasing numbers. This fuels a negative cycle where the country's dwindling public resources are, as a matter of necessity directed to strengthening the statutory protection system, leaving little for strengthening the promotive and preventative system – a necessary investment to fulfil children's rights and stem the excessively high levels of violence, abuse, poor development outcomes, and bring an end to the current patterns of entrenched poverty and inequality in South Africa.

Before COVID-19 South Africa was already faltering.

Poverty and inequality

- South Africa's 2019 SDG report confirms that poverty levels increased, and our inequality levels remain the highest in the world.¹
- South Africa's inability to escape the poverty/inequality trap is fundamentally linked to its inability to address inter-generational child poverty. Despite 30 years of pro-poor policies, 6 out of 10 children are multidimensionally poor. They are income poor and are deprived of health, nutrition, quality education and basic services – all of which are essential to their development and movement out of poverty.²
- South Africa ranked 127th on the composite global “flourishing index” that measures progress towards sustainable development based on a country's track record in securing children's developmentally critical rights. It scored significantly lower than countries with much fewer resources. The implication being that children in South Africa face many more health, development, and sustainability challenges than children in poorer countries.³

Health and nutrition

- Despite improvements in child mortality, many children continue to die from preventable causes linked to social and economic determinants of health, as well as poor access to essential health services. The Rapid Mortality Surveillance Report estimates an under-five mortality rate of 32 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2017. The authors of the 2019 Child Gauge note that this amounts to 15,965 young children dying before their fifth birthday (or about 44 children a day), primarily from preventable causes.⁴
- Malnutrition remains a critical challenge. It is a leading cause of preventable deaths. Given that stunting reflects both lack of access to adequate nutrition as well as predictive of poor cognitive development in children, it is cause for grave concern that stunting rates have increased since 2008, peaking at 27% of children under the age of 5 years were stunted in 2016.⁵

Basic services

- The authors of the 2019 Child Gauge observe that there “has been little improvement in children's access to water over the past 15 years. In 2018, close to six million children live in households that do

¹ Statistics South Africa. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Country Report 2019 – South Africa. Pretoria

² UNICEF South Africa. 2020. Child Poverty in South Africa: A multiple overlapping deprivation analysis. <https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/media/4241/file/ZAF-multidimensional-child-poverty-analysis-policy-brief-07July-2020.pdf>

³ <https://theconversation.com/drastic-action-is-needed-to-ensure-a-better-future-for-south-africas-children-132291>

⁴ www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/South_African_Child_Gauge_2019/CG2019%20-%20%281%29%20Prioritising%20child%20and%20adolescent%20health.pdf

⁵ Statistics South Africa, National Department of Health, South African Medical Research Council, The DHS Program (Maryland, USA). 2017. South African demographic and health survey (SADHS)2016: Key indicators. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa

not have access to clean drinking water on site.” There are significant racial and provincial differences. Whereas more than 90% of children in Gauteng and the Western Cape have an adequate water connection, only 59% of children in KwaZulu-Natal, 51% in Limpopo, and 39% in the Eastern Cape (39%) benefit from this essential service.⁶

- Access to adequate sanitation remains a significant challenge, the burden of which is disproportionately carried by vulnerable and marginalised children. In 2018, “4.2 million children still use unventilated pit latrines, buckets, or other inadequate forms of sanitation, despite the state’s reiterated goals to provide adequate sanitation to all and to eradicate the bucket system. Over 340,000 children have no sanitation facilities at all (open defecation).”⁷

Education

- Despite the many measures in place, South Africa has not made significant progress in addressing educational inequalities and exclusions across historical fault lines. Based on an analysis of multiple data sets, Spaull concludes that “educational opportunity in South Africa is primarily a function of the colour of a child’s skin, the province of their birth, and the wealth of their parents.”⁸ He notes that South Africa effectively has 2 education systems: one for children in wealthy households, and those living in poor households. Access, retention, and school performance are determined by children’s socio-economic circumstances.
- Whilst school enrolment rates are high among the general population, it is still the case that most poor, Black African children, children in rural areas in the former homelands and children with disabilities are at high risk of exclusion, dropping out and poor educational outcomes.
- In 2019, Human Rights Watch reported that an estimated 600 000 children with disabilities were not attending any type of school in South Africa.⁹
- In addition, drop out rates are high among vulnerable groups, with poverty being one of the key drivers. More than half of the child population that starts Grade 1 drop out before the end of high school. In 2017, an estimated 60% of children who started Grade 1 dropped out before the end of Grade 12, and only 52% of the age-appropriate population remain enrolled.¹⁰ Teen pregnancies remain a key barrier to education. Findings presented during a recent meeting of the Portfolio

⁶www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/South_African_Child_Gauge_2019/CC/CC2019%20-%20Children%E2%80%99s%20access%20to%20services.pdf

⁷www.ci.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/367/Child_Gauge/South_African_Child_Gauge_2019/CC/CC2019%20-%20Children%E2%80%99s%20access%20to%20services.pdf

⁸ Nic Spaull. Equity: A price too high to pay. 2019 <https://nicspaull.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/nic-spaull-springer-framing-chapter.pdf>

⁹Human Rights Watch, 2019. South Africa: Children with disabilities shortchanged. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/05/24/south-africa-children-disabilities-shortchanged>.

¹⁰ E Weybright, L Caldwell, H Xie, L Wegner, and E Smith. 2017. Predicting secondary school drop out among South African adolescents: A survival analysis approach. In South African Journal of Education. 2017. May 37(2) 1353. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6168088/>

Committee on Basic Education, cite teenage pregnancy as one of the contributing factors for school drop-out.¹¹ There are ongoing reports of pregnant learners being excluded from school due to inconsistent school policies.

- Most vulnerable children continue to access unsafe and poorly resourced schools, poor quality teaching and learning, and show markedly poor learning outcomes. The National Education Infrastructure Management System (“**NEIMS**”) report confirms that infrastructure backlogs remain a problem in under-resourced communities and there are still several schools with pit latrines and with an unreliable water supply.¹² According to the latest report, there are still 3164 schools across South Africa with pit latrines as their only form of sanitation.
- Spauld notes that South Africa effectively has 2 education systems: a quality system for children in wealthy households, and weak system for those living in poor households. Poor children are nine times more likely to repeat a grade.¹³ And “while only 48% of Black Grade 3 learners pass mathematics, 85% of White learners do likewise. In Independent schools, 84% of Grade 5 learners can do basic mathematics in accordance with international norms (TIMSS), compared to 67% in fee-charging public schools and only 25% in no-fee public schools (Isdale et al, 2017).”¹⁴
- Inadequate access to early childhood development and education is a major driver of the perpetuation of educational inequalities. Many children in South Africa do not have access to quality early childhood development (ECD) services. Currently, 3.2 million children are not accessing any ECD programmes and only 626 574 or 25% of the children who need it are obtaining subsidised learning.¹⁵ Of the children who are able to access some form of ECD programme, 2.9 million children are in unregistered programmes,¹⁶ which fall outside the regulatory net. In addition, the quality of early learning programmes, including Grade R is of poor quality, so much so, than rather improve the school readiness of vulnerable children, it has deepened educational inequalities.

Protection against child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

- South Africa has and continues to battle very high levels of violence, abuse, and neglect of children. This is a significant challenge as it impacts, not just on the right to protection, but children’s survival, development, and their participation. Violence takes many forms, including physical violence, homicide, corporal punishment, sexual abuse, rape, emotional abuse, neglect, intimate partner

¹¹ Portfolio Committee on Basic Education. Meeting summary: Zero-dropout Campaign. Available at: <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/31112/>

¹² Department of Basic Education. National Education Information Management System Standard Report. August 2020.

¹³ SAHRC and UNICEF. 2016. Global goals for all children.

¹⁴ Nic Spauld. Equity: A price too high to pay. 2019 <https://nicspauld.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/nic-spauld-springer-framing-chapter.pdf>

¹⁵ Ilifa Labantwana’s analysis of the Stats SA General Household Survey 2018. Available at: www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182018.pdf.

¹⁶ Ibid.

violence, bullying, gang violence, and xenophobic violence.¹⁷ Vulnerable children, including children living in poverty, children in rural areas, and the predominantly rural, poor provinces of the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KZN, children with disabilities and the very youngest children under the age of 5 years are at a significantly higher risk of violence, especially in their homes, places of care, schools and communities at the hands of those responsible for caring for them.¹⁸

- The child homicide rate in South Africa is 5.5 per 100,000 – this is more than double the global average.¹⁹ 35 per cent of children in the country have been sexually abused and the same proportion have experienced physical violence; 26 per cent have suffered emotional abuse; and 15 per cent, neglect. Overall, 42 per cent have experienced some form of violence.²⁰
- Home and school environments present significant risks. It is in these environments, where they are meant to be protected and nurtured, that children regularly experience corporal punishment, cruel and humiliating forms of punishment, emotional and verbal abuse and neglect, and bullying. More than half of parents in South Africa regularly use corporal punishment or smacking their children, and 33 per cent report, using a belt or other object when administering punishment. It is not just corporal punishment that is pervasive in homes: 84 per cent of child rapes are perpetrated by relatives, friends, acquaintances, and neighbours.²¹

Equality and children's development

The cumulative impact of these multiple, intersecting deprivations has a significant, lasting, and unequal negative impact on the development prospects of South Africa's most marginalised children. Using proxy indicators of poverty and stunting, it is estimated that 38% of children under the age of five years are at risk of poor (and completely avoidable) development outcomes.²²

The impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has deepened an already existing human development crisis. It is “leading to the deepest global recession since the Second World War”²³ and will “usher in the first reversal in the fight against extreme

¹⁷ Department of Social Development and UNICEF. 2016. Towards a more comprehensive understanding of the direct and indirect determinants of violence against women and children in South Africa with a view to enhancing violence prevention. Cape Town, Safety and Violence Initiative, University of Cape Town.

¹⁸ Jamieson L, Berry L, Lake L (Eds), South African Child Gauge 2017. Cape Town: Children's Institute, UCT

¹⁹ Department of Social Development and UNICEF. 2016. Towards a more comprehensive understanding of the direct and indirect determinants of violence against women and children in South Africa with a view to enhancing violence prevention. Cape Town, Safety and Violence Initiative, University of Cape Town.

²⁰ Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention and the University of Cape Town. 2015. The Optimus Study on Child Abuse, Violence and Neglect in South Africa. Cape Town: UBS Optimus Foundation

²¹ Department of Social Development and UNICEF. 2016. Towards a more comprehensive understanding of the direct and indirect determinants of violence against women and children in South Africa with a view to enhancing violence prevention. Cape Town, Safety and Violence Initiative, University of Cape Town.

²² https://nurturing-care.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/South_Africa.pdf

²³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/06/08/covid-19-to-plunge-global-economy-into-worst-recession-since-world-war-ii>

poverty in a generation.”²⁴ It has weakened the capacity of already vulnerable families to provide children with the care they need.

Data from the NIDS-CRAM Wave 2 studies ²⁵ provide clear evidence of impact of COVID 19 on the ability of caregivers to provide nurturing care for development.

- Between February and April 2020, 3 million jobs were lost. There has since been some bounce-back, but this has been low in households that care for the majority of South Africa’s children. The largest job losses were experienced by poor, rural, female, and unskilled people who have not benefited from the limited bounce back seen in WAVE 2.
- Childcare is affecting women’s labour market outcomes more than men. In June 2020, 3.4 million women said that looking after children precluded them from economic activity.
- The closure of schools deepened educational inequality. It is estimated that children lost 40% of the teaching year in 2020 with poor children in no-fee schools most deeply affected for various reasons, including lack of access to remote teaching opportunities - laying the foundations for deepening the educational gap between rich and poor.
- A whole cohort of young children have lost crucial early childhood education. In 2018 almost 50% of children under the age of 5 years attended an ECD programme. In 2020 only 13% attended ECD programmes – the lowest figure in 18 years. Most children out of ECD are in the care of their families who lack the resources to secure their care, protection, and education.
- Hunger and food insecurity increased to compound already alarming malnutrition statistics. Pre-COVID, close to 30% of children under 5 were stunted. In 2020, 32% of households reported running out of money for food. Access to food through schools dropped from 80 to 25% of children.
- There is little data, but much anecdotal evidence that the mental health and caregiving capacity for nurturing parenting and protection has been deeply compromised. As a result, children in lockdown are at a high risk of violence, abuse and poor care and education in homes where adult caregivers are under stress. Between 2017 and June 2020, depressive symptoms doubled from 12 – 24%.
- Similarly, the health system’s diversion of resources to COVID 19 impacted hugely on children’s access to essential preventative and health promoting services, including immunisations, well-baby visits and developmental screening and support.²⁶

The underlying cause: a weak developmental child care and protection system

Breaking the intergenerational poverty trap is key to South Africa getting back on track, and for fulfilling its commitment to realise children’s rights as protected by the CRC.

Many rights transgressions and inevitable poor development outcomes are completely avoidable and must be avoided to build the country’s human capital foundations. This, combined with the recent erosion of caregiver capacities obligates Government, now more than ever, to mount an effective, national

²⁴ https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/2020-year-review-impact-covid-19-12-charts?cid=ECR_E_NewsletterWeekly_EN_EXT&deliveryName=DM88574

²⁵ <https://cramsurvey.org/reports/>

²⁶ <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-risks-forcing-south-africa-to-make-health-trade-offs-it-can-ill-afford-136301>

response to overcome the challenges preventing families from providing and children receiving the nurturing care needed to secure their optimal and equal development.

Notably, it is duty-bound to adopt a developmental child care and protection system that empowers families and caregivers to provide nurturing care and secure their children's development and protection, and in so doing prevent the need for extensive, specialised, expensive and often, poor quality therapeutic services.

The GRSA has failed to fulfil this duty.

1. Families in South Africa face multiple adversities and require a combination of support and services to overcome these. They require legal protection and direction with regards to their rights and responsibilities and the rights of their children, they require material support in the way of social assistance and access to basic services, they require access to developmentally promotive and protective services such as health care, early development, and education, and they require access to education and information on responsive caregiving, positive parenting, and the dangers of the use of harsh discipline. In addition, parents with children with additional needs, such as children with disabilities, children in conflict with the law and children with substance abuse problems require specialised support to fulfil their children's unique nurturing care and protection needs.

Whilst the GRSA provides several supportive services, these are often not provided in the appropriate combinations to meet the needs of families and children in different contexts. This is largely because of the lack of an adequate system for identification of families and children at risk and mechanisms for assessing their needs and ensuring the appropriate package is provided. This challenge is aggravated by the persistent siloed approach within government to the planning and provision of family support for nurturing care.

2. Whilst some of the services are available, many of the services are not accessible to the most vulnerable children, or where they are accessible, the quality of public services provided is much poorer for vulnerable children. Families and children living in poverty, in rural areas, in under-served informal areas, foreign migrant and unaccompanied children, and children with disabilities face daily challenges in accessing birth certificates, grants, early childhood care and education services, health care, rehabilitative services and assistive devices, and quality education.
3. Critical services and support to secure the provision of nurturing care and protection are not available at scale and are not available to meet the needs of especially vulnerable groups. Notable in this regard is the lack of a national, sustained programme of family and parental/caregiver support to provide responsive caregiving, and the lack of specialised family support programmes tailored to meet the needs of families caring for children with disabilities, children with substance abuse problems, children with behavioural problems, and children of teen parents.

The underlying cause is the same for all rights transgressions and deprivations. The GRSA has failed to engage in the required process of child-centred governance to adopt a developmental child care and

protection system grounded in the prevention of risks and empowerment of caregivers to provide children in their care with the nurturing care and protection required to develop to their full potential.

Critically, government has failed to adopt the legally mandated child rights governance system built on the following foundational building blocks:

1. Effective national leadership and coordination of children's rights as a government-wide responsibility to be fulfilled by all organs of state through mainstreaming of support for nurturing care across the planning continuum.

The Medium-Term Strategic Framework is a critical instrument in this regard. It “translates the ruling party’s electoral mandate into government’s priorities over a five-year period.” It provides this administration’s national road map of priorities that must be mainstreamed across the state’s governance continuum. The MTSF explicitly states that it “serves as a five-year building block towards achieving Vision 2030.” It identifies the national priorities and obligates all “national sector plans, provincial growth and development strategies, municipal integrated development plans, departmental strategic plans and annual performance plans” to align with, advance and account to realisation of the goals and outcomes in the plan, as measured against the stated indicators. It also prescribes the “sequencing and resourcing of priorities” and provides the “transformative framework within which national, provincial and local government can plan for and drive service delivery.”

The MTSF identifies women, youth, and people with disabilities as national development priorities and explicitly requires all levels of government and all organs of state to mainstream their rights and interests across the planning and governance continuum. It obligates gender and disability-sensitive governance in terms of planning, resourcing, delivery of services, monitoring and reporting and holds all organs of state accountable for fulfilling this duty as measured against governance mainstreaming outcomes and indicators.

The MTSF does not make the same provision for children or child rights governance. Children are not, as in the case of women, youth, and people with disabilities, explicitly identified in the MTSF as one of the national development priorities with associated mainstreaming responsibilities.

Likewise, women, youth and persons with disabilities are coordinated by a dedicated department located within the Presidency. Children do not receive the same priority.

2. Whilst South Africa has a generally progressive child rights legal framework, a critical systemic gap is the lack of adequate legislation mandating and guiding the implementation of critical policy commitments into appropriate promotive and preventative, developmentally supportive programmes.

For example, the recently adopted the progressive, developmentally oriented National Child Care and Protection and National Integrated ECD policies have not been adequately legislated, thus frustrating systematisation.

3. Inadequate, universalised, quality programmes to provide comprehensive and integrated support for nurturing are across all domains, including health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, education, protection and security and basic services.

Our current policies map out a comprehensive suite of programmes required to enable families at risk to provide nurturing care and prevent poor outcomes for children, including health and nutritional support, not just for survival, but children's health development; parenting and/or family support for responsive caregiving; early learning services from birth across the life cycle of the child; prevention and protection services to keep children safe and mitigate harm; and access to social protection services, including material support, birth registration services, and access to water and sanitation.

Key programmes are not available, either at all, or in inadequate combinations, and if they are available, often it is only for a very limited number of children, and often of inadequate quality to compensate for relevant risks.

Critical gaps include:

- Inadequate programmes for healthy development. Health services focus on survival and neglect development and the prevention of disabilities and developmental delays.
- Material support is provided through grants, but not supported by support for enabling care and protection.
- Parenting support for responsive caregiving is not offered at scale through public programmes.
- Prevention and early intervention services are very limited resulting in high numbers of children needing care and protection. Statutory protection services are limited in terms of availability and quality.

4. Inadequate human and financial resources, as well as infrastructure to ensure child-rights planning and governance, as well as effective implementation to secure coverage and lasting improvements in the well-being and development of the country's whole child population.

A fundamentally important building block of a child-rights system of governance is child rights budgeting which the State has committed to engage in per its treaty obligations. A long-standing concern by treaty bodies has been the failure to honour this commitment.

A standing concern raised in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's concluding observations are the weak child rights budgeting processes adopted by the State. Specifically, the failure to develop, organize, and track the national budget from a child-rights perspective to ensure that adequate allocations to achieve child-rights targets, and the lack of transparency and accountability with regards to the budget, improvements in equity in allocations and expenditure across provinces and districts and for measures to combat corruption.

To date the State has not addressed these concerns. Indeed, recent developments have further deepened the concerns. The combination of corruption, an existing economic recession, the impact of COVID 19 on the current budget and its projected impact on economic growth in the next fiscal cycle has reduced South Africa's national budget enormously.

This means that the current planning cycle is going to be seriously underfunded, and government is introducing a system of zero-based budgeting to significantly curtail expenditure. Given the lack of a child-centred budgeting process and the failure to recognise children as a national development priority, the

coalition is concerned about the impact of these measures on the adequacy of resources for essential children's programmes.

5. Inadequate information management systems to enable population-based planning, delivery and monitoring of coverage, quality, and impact of services on children's development and to inform evidence-based quality improvement planning cycles.

Notably, the system is marked by ineffective systems for identification of all families and children at risk and mechanisms for guaranteed access to a package of responsive services.

In addition, systems for collecting, analysing, coordinating data across sectors, and using it to plan appropriately are weak. South Africa has different platforms for collecting data embedded within particular departments. Many are not dedicated to collecting data on children only. For example, the South African Police Services (SAPS) collects administrative data on crime generally. It does not have a separate system for collecting data on children who are victims of crime, including data on children who offend or perpetrate violence. Thus, data on children around this key dimension is not disaggregated per age or gender thus making it difficult to inform strategy and programming for children.

Not all the data management platforms in the country are adequately coordinated, resulting in great difficulty in tracking the progressive attainment of children's rights.

6. Weak partnerships between government and its development partners, including CSOs

The NDP, the MTSF and the NPAC recognise and indeed depend on civil society as a critical partner in realising the country's rights-based sustainable development agenda. However, CSOs are unable to fulfil their role as development partners – in terms advocacy, participation in development and delivery of programmes, monitoring and reporting because of the fragility of the institutional arrangements, and required capacity and resources.

Critical impediments include the following:

1. Inadequate access to information that may be accessed by CSO's in all, including remote areas.
2. Inadequate coordination between government and civil society
3. Inadequate coordination within civil society
4. Inadequate funding of CSOs.

Children are critical CSO role players and have a right to be active participants in the child rights governance system. Children's participation is well-recognised in South Africa's legal framework, but inadequately systematised and routinised across the governance continuum.

Solution: system's strengthening advocacy by a united civil society sector working across the system

The members of the coalition have united in their shared recognition that securing lasting change for children in the country requires significant strengthening of the national child care and protection system, and this in turn requires the strengthening of the national child rights system of governance.

Whilst important, it is not enough to strengthen only one or more of the elements of nurturing care required for development: the supporting national system must be strengthened. This requires the adoption of a government-wide child rights governance system, and within that framework, the respective components must be strengthened to ensure the provision of quality services and support in appropriate combinations.

This requires a collective and unified national advocacy response.

The South African National Child Rights Coalition (SANCRC) has been established to provide a platform for effective, collective advocacy for strengthening the system of child rights governance, the emerging national child care and protection system, and the quality and adequacy of the services provided within this framework.

Coalition structure, management, and development

The SANCRC is a voluntary association of members and activists that was established in mid 2020 through the process described below. It is governed by a constitution and overseen by the management structure described in the following paragraphs.

Several initial organisations came together in June 2020 to establish the Coalition. Coalition membership has grown to more than 140 organisations by February 2021. The objective is to steadily grow the membership to constitute as an inclusive, broad based, democratic structure that is representative of the full diversity of civil society and children. In addition, a key objective is to establish the necessary institutional arrangement to effectively manage the collective to achieve maximum gains for children in South Africa. It is for this reason that the SANCRC's strategic plan includes the 5th thematic working area – coalition development.

The coalition is currently led by an interim steering made up of 10 member organisations. The role of the interim committee is to provide leadership to establish the coalition's initial platforms, institutional arrangements, Constitution, and mobilise civil society organisations to join.

The committee will be formalised and made permanent through an inclusive, democratic, and transparent nomination and election processes which will involve all members. This process is planned for the 1st quarter of 2021.

The interim committee is supported by a small executive management team and secretariat providing the day-to-day management, communications, and logistical support to the coalition.

The executive management team is made up of the thematic leads of the thematic focus areas (described below) and the secretariat organisation.

Save the Children South Africa currently acts as the secretariat, providing logistical, communication and financial management support.

Funding raised in support of the coalition's strategic plan will be used to further the coalition goals and objectives implemented through activities organised under the five thematic areas.

All funding agreements and the management of the resources and partner relationships and reporting requirements will be managed through select member organisations that are willing to fulfil this role and

that have robust and effective financial management processes and institutional arrangements in place to guarantee ethical, efficient, and effective use of resources. Currently two member organisations provide the financial management. They Save the Children South Africa and Give a Child a Family, both of which are long-standing registered organisations with robust and transparent financial management systems in place.

Functions of the coalition

1. To facilitate coordination of civil society for effective realisation of children's rights.
2. To facilitate collaboration to amplify civil society's voice, resources and impact on children's survival, protection, development, and participation.
3. Provide a unifying, communications, advocacy, and planning platform for bringing together a broad-based coalition of organisations that would like to collaborate in advancing a shared vision of a strong national, child rights governance system that realises the rights of every child in South Africa.
4. Draw on our collective networks, knowledge, expertise, and materials to build a stronger civil society movement.
5. Establish a web-based resource hub for the children's sector where all relevant information will be housed and can be freely accessed.
6. Facilitate the sharing of information amongst members, but also between members and government, the media, development partners and business.
7. Provide regular updates on changes, developments and processes that impact on children to the coalition members using social and other media platforms.
8. Facilitate the monitoring of responses, identification of critical challenges, and supporting and holding responsible role players (government and non-government) to account for appropriate redress.
9. Enable and facilitate the identification of critical gaps and challenges in current responses through interactive engagement with coalition members.
10. Establish platforms for collective and inclusive deliberation and advocacy to resolve challenges.
11. Facilitate civil society participation in international, regional, and national decision-making and accountability processes.
12. To provide a platform for enabling children's agency through their informed participation in coalition advocacy and communications initiatives.
13. Generate evidence and facilitate its use to strengthen the national child rights governance system.

The SANCRC strategic plan

The SANCRC has developed a three-year strategic plan of action that seeks to address the underlying structural and systemic weaknesses in the system of governance and the resulting weaknesses in the child care and protection system. In so doing it aims to increase the universal and routine availability of appropriate services to secure the nurturing care children require to develop to their full potential.

Vision

The rights of every child in South Africa, especially the most vulnerable, to survive, be protected, develop to their full potential, and participate in decisions that affect them are realised.

Mission

To facilitate coordinated civil society communication and advocacy for a stronger national child rights governance **system** that ensures that children's rights to survive, be protected, develop to their full potential, and participate are recognised and advanced as a national rights-based, development priority by all role players.

Goals

South Africa has a child-centred rights-based national governance system that sustains a developmental national child care and protection system that:

1. Ensures compliance with child and human rights treaty obligations
2. Ensures that children's rights are recognised as a national, rights-based development imperative
3. Ensures government-wide action and accountability for realising the rights of every child, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, to survive, develop to their full potential, be protected, and participate in all decisions that affect them.

Objectives

To strengthen the following foundational building blocks of a child rights governance system that sustains a developmentally oriented child care and protection system:

1. An integrated programme that provides every family caring for children and the children in their care with the complete suite of services and support they need to provide and receive nurturing care across five core domains / rights:
 - a. Health care for survival, prevention of illness and disability and promotion of healthy development
 - b. Nutrition to prevent malnutrition and ensure healthy growth and development
 - c. Responsive caregiving that ensures children receive age-appropriate love, care and protection through positive parenting that responds to children's needs
 - d. Education from birth until a child completes their schooling/ enters post-schooling education
 - e. Security and safety through access to basic services to ensure a healthy environment, birth certificates and identity documents, social protection, and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation

2. Effective mechanisms for identifying all families and children at risk and their needs, and mechanisms to ensure their access to appropriate quality services to enable nurturing care
3. Effective mechanisms to ensure government-wide and coordinated planning and provisioning of the required combinations of services to children and their families
4. Adequate human, financial and infrastructural resources to plan, provide, deliver, monitor, and report on delivery and impact of the required quality programmes
5. Mechanisms to secure government-wide monitoring, measurement, reporting on and accountability for access to the required quality services that make an impact on children's rights
6. Mechanisms to ensure ongoing improvement in provisioning to secure universal realisation of children's rights.

The problem statement and strategic focus areas of the SANCRC

Achieving a developmental child care and protection programme of action requires a national system of child rights governance that is built on several systemic building blocks. These are prescribed by child rights treaties and development instruments. The building blocks are described in the following table, with a summary indication of key strengths, gaps, and weaknesses in the current system. The SANCRC will focus on addressing a select number of these gaps and weaknesses through collective advocacy under each of its thematic focus areas.

	Legal / policy mandate	Programmes / delivery mechanisms at all levels of government	Adequate human resources	Adequate infrastructure	Adequate financial resources	Systems for monitoring, accountability, and continuing improvement
<p>High-level political leadership of government-wide child-centred planning for nurturing care in the Presidency, Premiers and Mayoral offices</p> <p>And</p> <p>Mechanisms for continuing improvement in government-wide planning</p>	<p>Children are not a priority in the MTSF, SONA, Provincial and Local plans of action</p> <p>Weak mechanism for ensuring child rights weaknesses is addressed in annual high-level government-wide planning at presidency, national line departments, premiers, line departments, mayoral offices</p>	Mechanisms are not in place to ensure government-wide child-centred planning and accountability	Lack of child-rights governance capacity within the Presidency	Currently no high-level resourced institutional structures equipped to provide leadership functions	No budget for child-rights governance in Presidency	Some, but very limited indicators in the MTSF for children – but inadequate measured against the child rights governance framework
<p>Effective coordination of government-wide planning and provisioning of integrated support for child-centred planning for nurturing care</p>	Have the National Plan of Action for Children. But it is not legislated and is a guiding framework	Coordination of the NPAC is located in the DSD with inadequate authority and capacity to fulfil the mandate	Inadequate technical capacity across all levels of government to operationalise the NPAC	Supporting infrastructure is weak	Budget is limited (in the absence of a costed plan for effective coordination at all levels of government)	NPAC has indicators, but systems are not in place to monitor, measures and ensure ongoing government-wide improved planning
<p>Effective advocacy, oversight, and accountability of</p>	Oversight structures are not mandated / weak mandate to advocate for and oversee / hold government accountable	Limited / no programmes dedicated to advocacy and oversight of child rights governance responsibilities	Weak HR	Weak infrastructure	Inadequate budgets	Weak/ absent or inappropriate systems and indicators for monitoring progress

government-wide provisioning	for child right governance / children rights / treaty responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliament • DPME • SAHRC • Civil society • Children 					
An integrated package of support and services across five domains of nurturing care and mechanisms to identify and refer families at risk	1. Child Care and Protection Policy 2. ECD Policy Commit to providing a package of support for nurturing care But not a legislated mandate and inadequate supporting systems (recognised in the MTSP as key gaps)	Some services available to some children. But: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Key services absent – especially responsive caregiving and health and nutrition for development 2. No mechanism for identification and referral of all families at risk 	Some human resources, but not enough and not adequately trained for developmental planning, provision, monitoring and quality improvement	Infrastructure inadequacies	Budget does not support the developmental approach mandated by the policies	National M & E systems do not measure the full package, availability and impact on children's rights as required by the policies
Quality health care for survival and development	Health services for survival and prevention of illness, but no clear legislated mandated for developmentally supportive services	Weak systems				
Nutrition	Policies support developmentally supportive nutrition, but not legislated and weak systems	System requires strengthening across the spectrum				

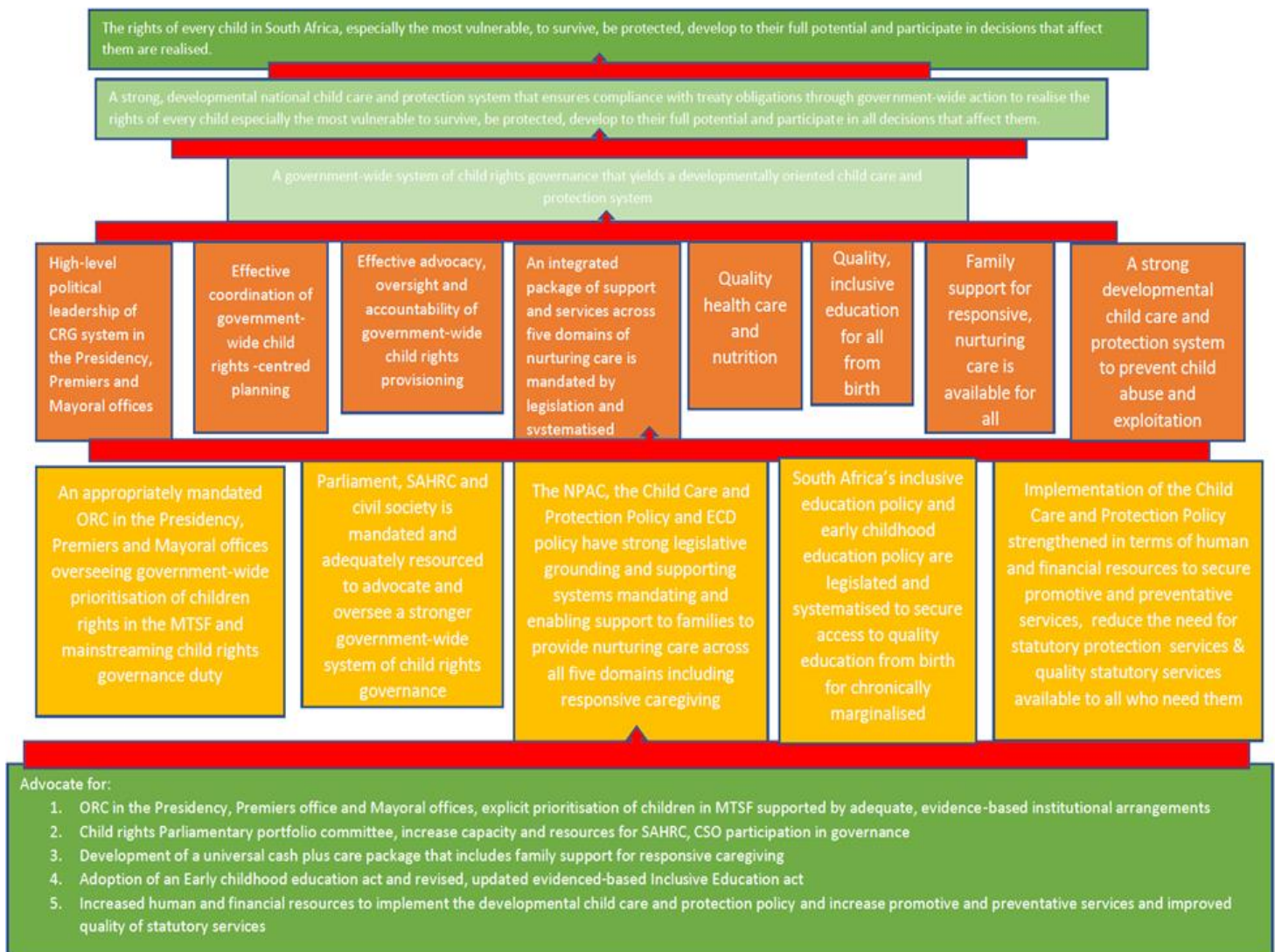
Quality, inclusive education from birth	<p>Have policies, such as ECD Policy and White Paper 6 on inclusive education committing to providing inclusive, quality education from birth.</p> <p>But these are not adequately legislated / no laws supporting / mandating action</p> <p>White Paper 6 is outdated and does not secure inclusive education from birth</p>	<p>Policies have not translated into effective inclusive education programmes from birth and for vulnerable children.</p> <p>South Africa has two education systems / 2 different education programmes: one for wealthy and one for children in poverty. The former is strong, and the latter remains weak.</p>	<p>Weak systems for inclusive, quality education from birth for vulnerable children</p>
Responsive caregiving and protection	<p>ECD Policy and Child Care and Protection Policy commit to providing support for responsive caregiving.</p> <p>However, the policies have not been adequately legislated or systematised</p>	<p>No universal or targeted support for responsive caregiving programmes</p> <p>Weak / absent systems</p>	
Safety and security	<p>Good policies and laws: Child care and protection policy Children's Act Social Assistance Act</p>	<p>Programmes are available. But access and quality are limited with many vulnerable children excluded and remain trapped in intergenerational cycle of poverty</p>	<p>Systems for identification and guaranteed referral and provision of services to prevent / mitigate harm are weak</p>

SANCRC theory of change

The SANCRC will advocate collectively to address critical systemic weaknesses in child rights governance to secure a developmental child care and protection system that complies with treaty obligations and realises the rights of every child to survive, be protected, develop to their full potential, and participate in all decisions that affect them.

The SANCRC has developed this three-year strategic plan of action to address the underlying structural and systemic weaknesses in the system of governance and the resulting weaknesses in the child care and protection system. In so doing it aims to increase the universal and routine availability of appropriate services to secure the nurturing care children required to realise the rights of every child in South Africa to survive, develop to their full potential, be protected, and participate in all decisions that affect them.

The system's strengthening theory of change is depicted in the following diagram.



Thematic focus areas and working groups

The strategic plan is organised across five thematic areas aligned to the specific areas requiring strengthening and which the members agree could be strengthened through their collective efforts.

The coalition currently has five active thematic priorities through which it is pursuing its strategic objectives:

1. Coalition growth development
2. Child rights governance
3. Child protection
4. Family support
5. Inclusive, basic education (including early education)

Each thematic focus area is managed by a thematic working group made up of member organisations working in the respective areas. Each thematic working group has identified thematic lead organisations that have taken on responsibility for coordination of the development and implementation of the thematic strategic plan to contribute to the wider coalition objectives, goals, and vision.

The thematic areas were identified by the coalition members as priority issues given their centrality to children's nurturing care and development. The issues of health and nutrition are not included as a specific thematic area as another coalition, SACSOWACH, was established specifically to address these issues. The SANCRC works collaboratively with SACSOWACH to ensure mutually supportive interventions to address this equally developmentally critical area.

Goals and objectives of the thematic focus areas

1. Coalition growth and development

Goal

To grow the coalition to become an inclusive, representative, and effective strategic advocacy body through its growth as a broad-based civic society coalition with the resources, capacity, and institutional arrangements to support the fulfilment of its functions.

Objectives

1. To facilitate the regulation and democratic and transparent governance and organisation of the coalition through the following key activities:
 - a. Formalizing, finalising, and updating the coalitions institutional, organisational, and resourcing arrangements and supporting documents, including:
 - i. Finalising the Constitution, Codes of Conduct, Terms of Reference, etc.
 - ii. Finalise and adjust the strategic plan
 - iii. Developing and adjusting funding proposals and mobilising and managing resources and funding partner relationships to implement the strategic plan
 - iv. Coordination of the nomination and election process for a standing steering committee
 - v. Developing and distributing annual financial and narrative reports
 - b. Facilitating regular meetings of the organisational structures, including:

- i. Two meetings of the full membership for an annual strategic planning session and an annual general meeting (In the current context, the meetings will be held using remote technology)
 - ii. Quarterly meetings of the steering committee
 - iii. Monthly executive management meetings, supplemented by ad hoc meetings as required
- 2. Recruitment of organisations across sectors, regions and child-led organisations and management of the membership data base. Activities will include:
 - a. Presentations
 - b. Participation in meetings, conferences, and seminars
 - c. Updating and management of the database of members
- 3. Development and maintenance of a coalition communications strategy and platform to ensure a well-informed, engaged civil society coalition. Activities will include
 - a. Finalisation and maintenance of the coalition website
 - b. Information management of critical sources and developments and distribution through communications and publications
 - c. Development of a monthly coalition newsletter and ad hoc updates
 - d. Development and publication of coalition articles in the media
- 4. Membership capacity building for monitoring, reporting, advocacy at all levels including:
 - a. Development of advocacy capacity of members on child rights governance
 - b. Development of capacity for budget advocacy
 - c. Development of capacity for monitoring and participation in treaty and development reporting, processes, and follow-up advocacy across the national governance continuum.

2. Child rights governance

Goals

To strengthen and secure a national child rights governance system:

- 1. That is led at the highest political level by the President, Premiers and Mayors
- 2. That explicitly recognises children's rights as a national development priority and documents this priority in all leading national development plans with associated government-wide mainstreaming responsibilities
- 3. That is coordinated and supported through an effective office or department of the rights of the child institutionalized within the country's national, provincial, and local governance machinery responsible for national priorities housed within the Presidency, Premiers and Mayoral Offices
- 4. That is supported by appropriate systems and institutional arrangements that obligate planning, provisioning, and accountability by all organs of state for realising children's developmentally critical rights
- 5. That is inclusive and participatory to secure the meaningful engagement of the children's sector represented by civil society organisations, activists, and children in all proceedings across the governance continuum.

Objectives

1. To facilitate, coordinate and support global, regional, and national advocacy by coalition members for strengthening the child rights governance system and their active participation across the governance continuum through the following key activities:
 - a. Development of a rights-based developmental child rights governance monitoring framework of indicators, targets, and outcomes
 - b. Child rights monitoring, documentation of programmes reports based on the framework
 - c. Assessment of the planning documents, frameworks, and institutional arrangements for compliance with child rights governance requirements and indicators and advocacy for review and revision of, for example:
 - i. The Medium Terms Strategic Framework
 - ii. Parliaments annual oversight / strategic plan
 - iii. The high-level institutional structures and arrangements supporting government-wide leadership, coordination and accountability for child rights governance and attainment of targets
 - d. Facilitating coordinated knowledge of, and participation in treaty and development body processes, including:
 - i. Securing treaty body observer status
 - ii. Treaty and shadow reporting
 - iii. Participation in committee state party reporting, ad hoc treaty body and related working group proceedings
 - iv. Follow-up communications and advocacy on concluding observations
 - e. Facilitating and coordinating national, provincial, and local advocacy for child rights governance and system's strengthening
 - i. Through support for member participation in processes across the governance continuum
 - ii. Development, review and monitoring of national planning, resourcing, monitoring and accountability processes, documents, and outcomes to ensure children's rights profiled

3. Family support for nurturing care

Goal

To strengthen the system of integrated and comprehensive support provided to parents, families, and caregivers to enable their provision of nurturing care across all five domains required to secure the development of the children in their care to their full potential.

Objectives

1. To strengthen government-wide systematisation of the National Child Care and Protection Policy and the National Integrated ECD Policy to establish and operationalise the developmental child care and protection system the policies commit to institutionalizing, specifically to strengthen the promotive and preventative components of the system through the following activities:
 - a. Critical review of progress and gaps in systematising the two policies
 - b. Research as to the support vulnerable families require in South Africa's current socio-economic context to overcome their risks and challenges to provide nurturing care
 - c. A national nurturing care conference to share results and develop a system's strengthening agenda for nurturing care

- d. Development and distribution of policy and advocacy briefs highlighting systemic weaknesses and system's strengthening measures required
 - e. Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of system's strengthening measures.
- 2. The adoption of effective laws mandating government-wide actioning of the policy commitments through prioritisation, planning, provisioning, monitoring and accountability for the full suite of integrated services required to build resilience and capacity of parents, families, and caregivers to promote children's development and prevent abuse and poor development outcomes through the following activities:
 - a. Legislative review to identify key legal impediments and gaps preventing or inhibiting implementation of the policy commitments
 - b. National conference of members and stakeholders to review results and develop legal amendments to strengthen then enabling environment
 - c. Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for strengthening the enabling legal framework for nurturing care.
- 3. The development and delivery of critical developmentally promotive and preventative programmes and services as part of the integrated package of family support currently not provided, including:
 - i. Health and nutrition for development and prevention of disability and stunting;
 - ii. Parenting support for responsive caregiving.

This objective will be pursued through the following activities:

- a. The development of evidence-based, costed programmes to be delivered through integration into existing delivery platforms such as the primary health care platform and community-based outreach programmes
 - b. Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the programmes.
- 4. Improved human resources for developmental planning for the provision of nurturing care and for delivery of developmentally supportive services to families and children at risk through the following activities:
 - a. Review of current planning and delivery capacity of government and civil society role players against the requirements for effective developmental planning and implementation to identify strengths, weaknesses and develop recommendations for strengthening the workforce for nurturing care
 - b. Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the recommendations.
- 5. Increased allocation of public resources to support implementation of a package of promotive and preventative support services for nurturing care through the following activities:
 - a. Budget review – national, provincial, and local of allocations for promotive and preventative services for nurturing care
 - b. Costing of the programme of nurturing care defined under item 3 above
 - c. Advocacy for increased and equitable allocations in the national, provincial, and local budgets to implement the programme of family support for nurturing care.
- 6. Strengthen information management and monitoring systems to ensure:
 - i. The identification of families and children at risk and their referral for support

- ii. The monitoring and reporting of family / caregiver access to the package of support required to enable nurturing care (not just access to some services) and children's access to all nurturing care domains
- iii. The dissemination and use of data by all role players to improve planning and provisioning for support for nurturing care

This objective will be pursued through the following activities:

- a. A review of current information management systems and development of recommendations for strengthening an integrated system
- b. Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the recommendations.

4. Child protection

Goal

Every child in SA, documented or undocumented including one with disabilities has a right to be protected from all forms of violence.

This requires that South Africa adopts and implements an effective, developmental child care and protection system that supports environments that protect children from the risk of violence and abuse; that prevents them from becoming victims. It requires an effective national child-care and protection system that addressed the structural challenges of inequality and poverty that impact on families and their ability to care for and protect children, as well as a strong system to ensure the protection and reintegration of children who fall victim to violence.

An effort has been made by South Africa to move away from a discriminatory, residual welfare model towards a more inclusive, rights based and developmental system. The child protection model comes with increased demands, which place the system under pressure. There has been ongoing conflict between therapeutic and administrative casework, expert and user led programmes, inter-sectoral collaboration, prevention, and early intervention.

There has been progress at a policy level, with the introduction of new policies like the National Child Care and Protection Policy, the National Plan of Action for children, and the Constitutional ruling against reasonable chastisement. These mark important steps towards building and strengthening the system. However, implementation remains weak because the supporting system is weak, and as a result, violence against children remains very high.

To strengthen implementation, the national child care and protection system as provided for in the National Child Care and Protection Policy must be strengthened, especially with regards to political and financial and human resources to implement the promotive and preventative programme of action to drastically reduce the number of children that become victims of violence and strengthen statutory protection services for victims of abuse.

Therefore, the goal of this thematic focus area is to strengthen the systematisation and in doing the implementation of the developmental child care and protection system provided for in the National Child Care and Protection Policy to prevent violence against children.

Identifies all families and children at risk and provides a comprehensive developmental package of protection services

A strengthened system of statutory services supported by adequate financial, human and infrastructure resources

Harnesses the capacity of CSO and support their collaborative efforts in addressing child protection and working in partnership with Government

Objectives

1. Strengthen the systemic implementation of the Child Care and Protection Policy to ensure universal provision of family strengthening services to enable provision of nurturing care to prevent violence, abuse, and neglect of children
2. Strengthen the system of statutory services supported by adequate financial, human and infrastructure resources to ensure quality services for all victims of violence
2. Secure increased human and financial resources to secure promotive and preventative services, reduce the need for statutory protection services & quality statutory services available to all who need them.

Activities

1. Amplify the voice of civil society organizations working in the child care and protection sector in South Africa
2. Build and contribute to the body of evidence-based community child protection initiatives
3. To advocate for effective national child protection system with adequate financial and skilled human resources to prevent and respond to violence against children
4. Mobilize resources towards realization of children's right to be protected
5. Develop adequate costing/resourcing and investment case documents to support advocacy.

5. Inclusive, basic education

Goal

Inclusive basic education, from birth until the completion of formal basic education through schooling or vocational institutions is a non-negotiable for ensuring the rights of children to survive, develop to their full potential, be protected, and participate. As such it is a foundational building block of a rights-based developmental child-care and protection system – and a foundational building block of the coalition's vision and goal. The failure to realise the rights of all children to inclusive basic education is at the heart of the dual education system in South Africa that sustains the patterns of inter-generational poverty and inequality that impede inclusive and equitable child and national development.

Children living in poverty, in under-serviced rural and peri-urban areas, the youngest children aged 0-2, children with developmental delays and disabilities, ill children, children involved in child labour, teen parents and other vulnerable experience chronic educational exclusion and others.

The systemic underlying causes of this challenge include the following:

- ECD in the pre-school years remains largely privately provided and resourced
- The inclusive basic education system is ill-defined to exclude ECD and focusses primarily on disability rather than all forms of exclusion

- The foundational requirement for an effective, robust inclusive basic education system requires a strong, unambiguous, and well-defined enabling policy and legislative foundation that defines the scope of inclusive basic education and the associated roles and responsibilities
- The current enabling framework is weak. It is fragmented across ECD (DSD), Special Needs Education and Social Cohesion directorates in Education. They do not share a common framework. Their mandate and responsibilities are ambiguous, outdated, and no longer based on pertinent evidence.
- White Paper 6, which currently governs elements of inclusive education, is old (ends this year) and is not a law. It is also based on outdated evidence and does not include ECD.
- There is no early learning legislation to ensure inclusion and clarify roles and responsibilities – made more complex in the light of the pending function shift

The fundamental challenges are weak legislative environment. It is a fatal impediment to effective systematisation and implementation of inclusive basic education because resources, programmes, monitoring, and quality improvement follow clear policy mandates

The goal of this thematic areas is therefore to eliminate educational exclusions and inequalities that drive intergenerational poverty and inequality by strengthening the enabling policy and legislative framework.

Objectives

1. To strengthen the enabling policy and legislative framework for a coherent, coordinated well-resourced single inclusive basic education system.
2. To advocate for the development and adoption of a national inclusive basic education policy and supporting laws – to replace White Paper 6 and consolidate the multiple policies in places.
3. To advocate **for** the development and adoption of a robust inclusive early education policy and law.

Activities

- Policy, legislative and systems review of governing arrangements
- Development of evidence-based recommendations for legislative, policy and systemic revisions and developments
- Advocating for adoption of proposed policy, legislative and systemic amendments / innovations.

Budget linked to thematic areas and activities / interventions (3-year budget)

For period March 2021 – end February 2023

Coalition growth and development				
Objective	Activities	Budget (Years 1, 2 and 3)		
To facilitate the regulation and democratic and transparent governance and organisation of the coalition	Formalizing, finalising, and updating the coalitions institutional, organisational, and resourcing arrangements and supporting documents	R 125 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00
	Facilitating regular meetings of the organisational structures	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00
Recruitment of organisations across sectors, regions and child-led organisations and management of the membership data base	Presentations and participation in meetings, conferences, and seminars	R 25 000.00	R 25 000.00	R 25 000.00
	Updating and management of the database of members	R 15 000.00	R 15 000.00	R 15 000.00
Development and maintenance of a coalition communications strategy and platform to ensure a well-informed, engaged civil society coalition	Finalisation and maintenance of the coalition website	R 35 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00
	Information management of critical sources and developments and distribution through communications and publications	R 45 000.00	R 45 000.00	R 45 000.00
	Development of a monthly coalition newsletter and ad hoc updates	R 250 000.00	R 250 000.00	R 250 000.00
	Development and publication of coalition articles in the media	R 50 000.00	R 50 000.00	R 50 000.00
Membership capacity building for monitoring, reporting, advocacy at all levels including:	Development of advocacy capacity of members on child rights governance	R 150 000.00		R 150 000.00

	Development of capacity for budget advocacy	R 125 000.00	R 125 000.00	
	Development of capacity for monitoring and participation in treaty and development reporting, processes, and follow-up advocacy across the national governance continuum.		R 100 000.00	R 100 000.00
Child rights governance				
Objective	Activities	Budget		
To facilitate, coordinate and support global, regional, and national advocacy by coalition members for strengthening the child rights governance system and their active participation across the governance continuum	Development of a rights-based developmental child rights governance monitoring framework of indicators, targets, and outcomes	R 250 000.00		
	Child rights monitoring, documentation of programmes reports based on the framework	R 125 000.00	R 125 000.00	R 125 000.00
	Assessment of the planning documents, frameworks, and institutional arrangements for compliance with child rights governance requirements and indicators and advocacy for review and revision	R 250 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00
	Facilitating coordinated knowledge of, and participation in treaty and development body processes	R 150 000.00	R 150 000.00	R 150 000.00
	Facilitating and coordinating national, provincial, and local advocacy for child rights governance and system's strengthening	R 250 000.00	R 250 000.00	R 250 000.00
Family support for nurturing care				

Objectives	Activities	Budget		
Strengthen government-wide systematisation of the National Child Care and Protection Policy and the National Integrated ECD Policy to establish and operationalise the developmental child care and protection system the policies commit to institutionalizing, specifically to strengthen the promotive and preventative components of the system	Critical review of progress and gaps in systematising the two policies	R 200 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00
	Research as to the support vulnerable families require in South Africa's current socio-economic context to overcome their risks and challenges to provide nurturing care	R 500 000.00		
	A national nurturing care conference to share results and develop a system's strengthening agenda for nurturing care	R 125 000.00		
	Development and distribution of policy and advocacy briefs highlighting systemic weaknesses and system's strengthening measures required		R 175 000.00	
	Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of system's strengthening measures		R 200 000.00	R 200 000.00
The adoption of effective laws mandating government-wide actioning of the policy commitments through prioritisation, planning, provisioning, monitoring and accountability for the full suite of integrated services required to build resilience and capacity of parents, families, and caregivers to promote	Legislative review to identify key legal impediments and gaps preventing or inhibiting implementation of the policy commitments	R 80 000.00		
	National conference of members and stakeholders to review results and develop legal amendments to strengthen then enabling environment	R 65 000.00		
	Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for strengthening the	R 55 000.00	R 65 000.00	R 65 000.00

children's development and prevent abuse and poor development outcomes	enabling legal framework for nurturing care.			
The development and delivery of critical developmentally promotive and preventative programmes and services as part of an integrated package of family support currently not provided, including: i. Health and nutrition for development and prevention of disability and stunting. ii. Parenting support for responsive caregiving.	The development of evidence-based, costed programmes to be delivered through integration into existing delivery platforms such as the primary health care platform and community-based outreach programmes	R 250 000.00	R 100 000.00	
	Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the programmes.		R 175 00.00	R 175 000.00
Improved human resources for developmental planning for the provision of nurturing care and for delivery of developmentally supportive services to families and children at risk	Review of current planning and delivery capacity of government and civil society role players against the requirements for effective developmental planning and implementation to identify strengths, weaknesses and develop recommendations for strengthening the workforce for nurturing care	R 175 000.00		
	Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the recommendations		R 150 000.00	R 150 000.00
Increased allocation of public resources to support implementation of a package of promotive and preventative	Budget review – national, provincial, and local of allocations for promotive and preventative services for nurturing care	R 125 000.00	R 75 000.00	R 75 000.00

support services for nurturing care	Costing of the programme of nurturing care defined under item 3 above		R 125 000.00	
	Advocacy for increased and equitable allocations in the national, provincial, and local budgets to implement the programme of family support for nurturing care.	R 75 000.00	R 100 000.00	R 75 000.00
Strengthen information management and monitoring systems to ensure: i. The identification of families and children at risk and their referral for support ii. The monitoring and reporting of family / caregiver access to the package of support required to enable nurturing care (not just access to some services) and children’s access to all nurturing care domains iii. The dissemination and use of data by all role players to improve planning and provisioning for support for nurturing care	A review of current information management systems and development of recommendations for strengthening an integrated system		R 175 000.00	
	Advocacy at global, regional, national, provincial, and local levels for implementation of the recommendations.		R 125 000.00	R 85 000.00
Protection				
Objectives	Activities	Budget		
T/b/d				
Inclusive, basic education				

Objectives	Activities	Budget
T/b/d		