



ISSUE 2: OCTOBER 2021

The SANCRC is a civil society coalition of like-minded child rights organisations, activists and children in South Africa advocating for realising children's rights.

The SANCRC advocates to strengthen the national child care and protection system to ensure every child receives the nurturing care they need, not just to survive, but to develop to their full potential.



WELCOME

Welcome to the 2nd issue of the SANCRC's monthly newsletter.

As we approach the end of 2021 and look to a new financial and administrative year, this edition of our newsletter places the spotlight on the lack of progress we have made in improving equality and outcomes for children over the past two decades, the underlying causes, and the urgent need for a transformational shift towards child-centred developmental governance. It cannot be business as usual for government, civil society and all other development partners who have committed to build the human capital needed to achieve our shared national development goals of eliminating poverty and inequality.

This issue is a clarion call to collective action by the President, Parliament, the Ministry of Finance, local government and civil society to work smarter so that we secure maximum short and long-term returns on our investments in children.

In this issue:

- 1. We highlight the World Bank's latest Human Capital Index report that provides the clearest evidence that it is time to change how we invest to reverse declining human capital returns on our investments. The numbers are no longer adding up. Despite investing more of our GDP in education and health than other countries, we have the lowest returns: Children born today will experience a 43% deficit in development potential because we have not invested wisely in their holistic development.
- 2. We share our <u>submission to the Minister of Finance and the Presidency ahead of the mid-term budget policy statement</u> to provide leadership and adopt a transformational, childrights budget that ensures that our ever-diminishing resources are invested to achieve our non-negotiable goal: reduce the proportion of children at risk of poor development.





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WELCOME (continued)

- 3. We identify critical advocacy opportunities for driving a child-centred transformational agenda under the leadership of an effective developmental state using innovations such as the <u>District Development Model</u>. We emphasise the need to use these innovations, but to do so effectively, they must be implemented and support implementation of a shared national plan and government-wide commitment to equalise and optimise children's development as a national priority.
- **4.** We stress the importance of <u>effective child rights monitoring</u>, <u>reporting and follow-up advocacy</u> to improve our systems using the SANCRC's monitoring framework to develop annual and periodic state party reports to UN and AU.

In addition to these highlights, this newsletter provides a rich tapestry of information on progress we have made as a coalition in advancing our priorities, new legal developments, research and pending advocacy opportunities, as well as news from our member organisations and partners about resources they have developed and upcoming strategic events and child rights status reports.

A complete and comprehensive <u>table of contents</u> allows you to navigate the newsletter with ease. By clicking on any of the items, you will go straight to the section in question. In addition, each key section has a more detailed breakdown of sub-sections in a list of quicklinks listed on the left hand-side of the page. Once again, you can click on any of these to take you directly to the relevant article, or simply click on the return icon in the bottom left-hand corner of each page to go back to the table of contents.

This newsletter provides a platform for the voice of civil society and children as well as a portal to access the rich pool of information that impacts our work. We therefore urge all members, children, and partners, including government, research institutes and others to share any news from your organisations, developments, and opportunities that you may be aware of. We will include this in the next issue. Please send any contributions to us at the contact details provided in the newsletter.





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WELCOME (continued)

This newsletter will be shared with members and our partners in government, chapter nine institutions, development institutions, donors, and others. We hope it will become a valuable resource to support us in our collective work. We invite any interested civil society organisation or activist to join the coalition.

- The SANCRC Communications Working Group



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About the SANCRC v

Inclusive, sustainable development requires that every child develop to their full potential. This requires realisation of their rights to health, nutrition, responsive parenting, protection, education (from birth), and social protection. Realising only some of these rights for only some children is not enough...



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OUR VISION

Our vison is a South Africa where our collective resources are managed by an effective developmental state to realise the rights of every child to, not only survive, but to develop to their full potential so that they may become active citizens of a sustainably resilient, prosperous, safe, democratic and well-run

More specifically, that South Africa has a child-centred rights-based national governance system that:

- 1. Ensures that children's rights are recognised as a national, rights-based development imperative.
- 2. Ensures children's rights are realised through state-wide action by every organ of state and non-government partners through the development of strong systems.
- 3. Ensures universal realisation of the right of every child to survive, develop, be protected and participate, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to facilitate coordinated civil society communication and advocacy for a stronger national child rights governance system that ensures that children's rights to survive, protection, to develop to their full potential and participate are recognised and advanced as a national priority by all duty bearers.

GOAL

South Africa has a child-centred rights-based national governance 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 coordinated, state-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.





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OBJECTIVES

To strengthen the following foundational building blocks of the national child rights governance system:

- An integrated programme that provides every family and the children in their care with appropriate combinations of services and support they need to provide and receive the nurturing care required to equalise and ensure their optimal development.
- **2.** Effective mechanisms for identifying all families and children at risk and ensuring they access appropriate quality services to enable nurturing care.
- **3.** Effective mechanisms to ensure government-wide, 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 the provision and impact of programmes supporting nurturing care.
- **5.** Mechanisms to secure government-wide monitoring, measurement, reporting on and accountability for provision of quality services that impact on children's rights.
- **6.** Mechanisms to ensure ongoing improvement in provisioning to secure universal realisation of children's rights.

COALITION FUNCTIONS

- 1. Provide a unifying, communications, advocacy and planning platform for bringing together a broad-based coalition of organisations 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.
- **2.** Draw on our collective networks, knowledge, expertise and materials to build a strong civil society movement.
- **3.** Establish a web-based resource hub for the children's sector where all relevant information will be housed and can be freely accessed and shared.
- **4.** Provide regular updates on changes, developments and processes that impact on children to the coalition members using social and other media platforms.
- **5.** Facilitate the monitoring of responses, identification of critical challenges, and supporting and holding responsible role players to account for taking action to realise children's rights.
- **6.** Establish platforms for collective and inclusive deliberation and advocacy to resolve challenges.
- **7.** Facilitate civil society participation in international, regional and national decision-making and accountability processes.





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OUR MEMBERS

Our members are united in their shared vision of a South Africa where the rights of all children are realised and where no child bears the burden of poverty and inequality. Our members:

- Include a broad base of organisations and individual advocates, activists, researchers and development practitioners.
- Are located across the country in all nine provinces, in rural, urban and periurban areas.
- Include NGOs, faith-based organisations, community based organisations, development institutes, policy think tanks, research institutes, as well as individuals who have committed to advancing the rights of children.
- Include children and child-led organisations.

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The coalition is currently led by an interim steering committee made up of select member organisations that have volunteered to support the initial coalition-building process. The role of the interim committee is to provide leadership, oversight and coordination of:

- Organisational development and management
- Strategic planning
- Resource mobilisation and partner management
- Coalition communications
- Mobilising and growing coalition membership.

The committee will be formalised and made permanent through an inclusive, democratic, and transparent nomination and election process that will take place in 2021.

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

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





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JOIN THE COALITION

Any interested non-government organisation, child rights advocate or activist that shares the coalition vision is encouraged to join by simply completing and submitting the membership application form.

The membership form that can be accessed by clicking on the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y673MDG

We would prefer all members complete the form electronically through the link provided. If you click on the link, you will access the form on the Survey Monkey platform that will enable us to develop our membership data base more efficiently and effectively.

Should you prefer, you can download the <u>Membership Application Form</u>, complete it and send it to the coalition secretariat at the following e-mail address: <u>infor.SANCRC@savethechildren.org.za</u>

CONTACT US

Please feel free to contact us via the secretariat:

Save the Children South Africa:

3rd Floor

Festival Office Park 353 Festival Road

Hatfield

Pretoria

0028

South Africa

Telephone: Phone: 012 430 7772/5

E-mail: infor.SANCRC@savethechildren.org.za

Our website will be up and running soon and we will share the URL shortly.



OUR PRIORITY:

QUICK LINKS

Progress Monitor

New research & developments

 The World Bank confirms that children's development prospects remain unrealised

New laws & policies affecting our priority

 Local government election manifestos fail to see children's development as key to national development

Advocacy opportunities

Harnessing the District
 Development Model to drive
 children's development

News from our members

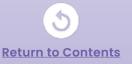
• <u>Invitation to the annual Child</u> <u>Health Priorities Conference</u>

REDUCING THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AT RISK OF POOR DEVELOPMENT

South Africa has committed to ensure that all children, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, not only survive, but develop to their full potential. Fulfilling this promise is key to meeting the country's treaty and constitutional obligations, as well as a pre-requisite to achieve our national development goals of eliminating poverty and inequality.

Building South Africa's human capital for sustainable development depends on the realisation of children's inter-dependent rights, especially the rights of the most marginalised and vulnerable, that will ensure their equal and optimal development.

This in turn depends on the provision of appropriate combinations of services across the life cycle of every child. Critical services include health care, nutrition, responsive caregiving, quality education (starting from birth until the completion of schooling), protection from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, social protection, and their civil and political rights, including birth registration, access to information, the right to voice their opinions, and participate in decisions affecting them.



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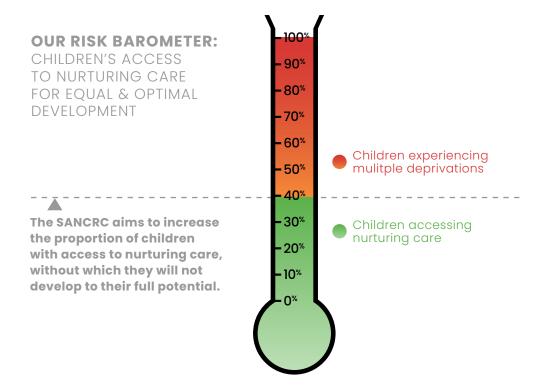
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OUR PRIORITY: REDUCING THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AT RISK OF POOR DEVELOPMENT

PROGRESS MONITOR

No progress in reducing the proportion of children failing to develop to their full potential.



Child Poverty in South Africa: A multiple overlapping deprivation analysis - found that 60% of South Africa's children failed to access developmentally critical services - notably adequate income support, health care, nutrition, protection and education.

As a result of multiple deprivations, UNICEF's "Country Profiles for Early Childhood Development" estimates that 38% of children in South Africa under the age of five years are at risk of poor development outcomes.



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OUR PRIORITY: REDUCING THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AT RISK OF POOR DEVELOPMENT NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS

THE WORLD BANK CONFIRMS THAT CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS REMAIN UNREALISED

According to the <u>World Bank's updated Human Capital Index for South Africa</u> (2020), because of the failure to secure children's developmentally critical rights South Africa is set to lose half of its human capital.

The HCI "measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18. It conveys the productivity of the next generation of workers compared to a benchmark of complete education and full health. Worldwide a child born in 2020 can expect, on average, to be 56 percent as productive as she could be when she grows up."

According to the World Bank:

A child born in South Africa today will be 43 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.

This is higher than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa region but lower than the average for Upper middle income countries. **Between 2010 and 2020, the HCI value for South Africa remained approximately the same at 0.43.**

South Africa has increased its spend on several critical children's services, but outcomes remain very poor. Despite recording some of the highest increases in spending on health and education, there has been no discernable shift in equalising the development prospects of children over the past 10 years. This confirms that we are not, as a country, investing efficiently or effectively to secure the development of our children to build the human capital we need for achieving sustainable, inclusive development.

- Despite spending 4 percent (2017) of its GDP on health, which is higher than both the regional average (2.4%) and the average for its income group (4%), our life expectancy has stagnated, and stunting has worsened.
- South Africa spends 6.2 percent (2018) of its GDP on education which is higher than both the regional average (4.0%) and the average for its income group (4.7%). Yet, 80 percent (2016) of 10-year-olds cannot read and understand a simple text by the end of primary school. This is similar to the average for its region (80%) but higher than the average for its income group (38%).
- South Africa spends 3.4 percent (2016) of its GDP on social assistance which is higher than both the regional average (1.5%) and the average for its income group (1.5%)

Despite the significant spending on services, development outcomes for children remain poor:

• In South Africa, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 10.2 years of school by her 18th birthday.



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NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS (continued)

- Learning outcomes are poor. Students in South Africa score 343 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.
- Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 5.6 years.
- 69 percent of 15-year old's will survive until age 60. This statistic is a proxy for the range of health risks that a child born today would experience as an adult under current conditions.
- 27 out of 100 children are stunted, and so are at risk of cognitive and physical limitations that can last a lifetime.



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NEW LAWS AND POLICIES AFFECTING OUR PRIORITY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION MANIFESTOS FAIL TO SEE CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AS KEY TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Whilst not law or policy, election manifestos provide a birds-eye view of how political parties in South Africa view the issue of development. We reviewed the manifestos of 3 of the largest parties. They all miss the boat in that children's development is not seen as a fundamental priority for social, economic and political transformation, and is not placed at the centre of the proposed national recovery plans.

The <u>ANC's election manifesto</u> recognises that the country is at a cross-roads and identifies the key to recovery as job creation. This is of course important, but impossible without equally prioritising realisation of children's development. Job creation and employment requires sustainable human capital – a fundamental link that is missed in the ANC's plan of action.

Its promise is:

To create jobs and reduce poverty as a matter of urgency. Creating jobs and sustainable economic opportunities for the youth is especially urgent. Over the last year, we have undertaken the implementation of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to speed up social and economic change, including the eradication of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid!

The <u>DA's election manifesto</u> proposes, in a similar vein, to drive recovery through investments in trade and industry without recognising that failure to build the human capital to drive this process will result in unsustainable gains.

It proposes that:

The only thing that can lift millions of South Africans out of crippling poverty is the kind of economic activity that brings millions of jobs. And this kind of activity doesn't just happen. It follows good governance. Investors and entrepreneurs make rational decisions. They take their business where they see opportunities and where they know their investment will be safe.

The <u>EFF's election manifesto</u> identifies 7 pillars for rescuing South Africa from its current nose-dive:

- 1. Land expropriation
- 2. Nationalisation of key sectors
- 3. Ending tenders
- 4. Free quality education, healthcare, houses and sanitation
- 5. Massive industrial development
- 6. Developing the African economy
- 7. Corrupt-free government.



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HARNESSING THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL TO DRIVE CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Government has developed a <u>District Development Model</u> as a vehicle for strengthening local government planning, provisioning, and accountability through meaningful government-wide coordination to secure service delivery for supporting development.

The DDM identifies a lack of meaningful, coordinated government-wide and intergovernmental planning, provisioning, and monitoring as a key impediment to advancing our national development goals. It further identifies the failure, on the part of government, to pursue a meaningful, peoplecentred development and recovery plan.

It proposes supporting local governments to engage in rights-based developmental planning – to become a foundational building block of South Africa's capable developmental state. Through this process, the DDM envisages a shift in local governance to:

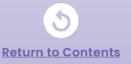
- 1. Stimulate new thinking, new socio-economic paradigms, new and bold solutions, and alternatives; and
- 2. Fundamentally change conditions
 - a. People
 - **b.** Economy
 - c. Space.

The intended outcome of the proposed governance framework is: Sustainable development resulting in poverty reduction, increased employment and improved equality, inclusive and gender-mainstreamed budgets based on people/community needs.

In essence, the DDM depends on a reprioritization and mainstreaming of rights-based development imperatives across the local governance continuum and supporting, effective institutional arrangements to enable coordinated planning to build human capital at the level of people and communities.

This offers fertile advocacy ground that must be harnessed to profile and advance children's equal and optimal development.

Whilst the DDM offers great advocacy potential, the children's sector will have to engage actively and robustly with COGTA, SALGA and local governments to realise this potential. The DDM does not, as it is currently framed, recognise or make mention of children and the pressing importance of ensuring local government's advancement of their development through childcentred or mainstreamed governance – as it does with regards to gender mainstreaming.



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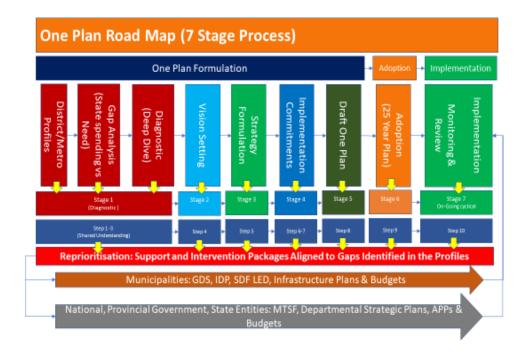
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ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES (continued)

The DDM offers a very important advocacy vehicle, but the children's sector will have to engage robustly with its implementers to ensure that children's development is profiled and advanced as a priority.



At the same time, as can be seen from the diagrammatic representation of the DDM, effective local government planning for building human capital will take its lead from a shared, national plan identifying and mandating government-wide planning for realising national development priorities.

For this reason, it is critical that children's equal and optimal development be explicitly identified as a national, rights-based development priority to be advanced through government-wide mainstreaming, supported by effective leadership and coordination arrangements. This calls for the identification of children's development as priority in the medium-term planning framework and the upcoming medium term budget policy statement – to provide the national context and mandate for the DDM to advance children's development. It also requires the establishment of an effective leadership and coordination structure at the levels of the Presidency, and then at provincial and local government levels to ensure fulfiment of the government-wide child-centred governance mandate.



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INVITATION TO THE ANNUAL CHILD HEALTH PRIORITIES CONFERENCE

Our affiliate, SACSOWACH – the South Africa Civil Society Coalition for Women and Children's Health – has shared an invite for the annual Child Health Priorities Conference. It will be held virtually on 24 and 25 November. We will share the registration details and link as soon as they are available. In the meantime, save the date.





THEMATIC PRIORITIES & PROGRAMMES

QUICK LINKS

- Coalition growth
 & development
- Child Rights
 Governance
- Family Support for nurturing care
- Child Protection
- <u>Inclusive, basic</u> education

In 2020, 60% of children in South Africa were deprived of the nurturing care they need to enjoy an equal opportunity to develop to their full potential. The 2020 Child Poverty in South Africa: A multiple overlapping deprivation analysis found that more than half of the children in South Africa failed to access the income support, health care, nutrition and education rights that are not only constitutionally protected, but essential for their development, protection and participation.

The proportion of children at risk of poor development will have increased thanks to COVID-19 and the estimated 38% of children under the age of five years are at risk of poor (and avoidable) development outcomes will have increased comparably.¹

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 respect of only some services and rights, for only some children some of the time will not empower this and future generations of children to escape the intergenerational poverty trap that has sustained their chronic social, economic, civil and political exclusion.

No one organisation can achieve this outcome acting alone. Therefore, the SANCRC has been established and has developed a three-year strategic plan of action built upon the following five thematic priorities. These have been prioritised because they are necessary to strengthen the national system of child-rights governance and equalise and realise the right of every child to develop to their full potential:

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



Progress Monitor

- <u>The election of our steering</u> committee is underway
- <u>We continue to mobilise</u> resources

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COALITION GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

To become an inclusive, broad-based civil society coalition that is an effective advocacy body with the resources, capacity, and institutional arrangements to support the fulfilment of its functions.

OBJECTIVES

- **1.** To facilitate the democratic and transparent governance and efficient management of the coalition.
- **2.** Grow the coalition as a broad-based, representative child rights organisation.
- **3.** Ensure a well-informed, engaged civil society coalition.
- 4. Development of our member's advocacy capacity.

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COALITION GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS MONITOR

THE ELECTION OF OUR STEERING COMMITTEE IS UNDERWAY

We have received over 20 nominations for election to the SANRC steering committee. You can view the names and qualifications and skills of all of them here. The ballots have opened for electronic voting and will close on 10 November 2021. We will announce our new steering committee by mid-November.

WE CONTINUE TO MOBILISE RESOURCES

One of our major priorities is to ensure that we become a sustainable, standing civil society coalition. A permanent civil society coalition is indeed a fundamental building block and pre-requisite for an effective national child rights governance system. We aim to be here for the long-run.

To achieve this objective, it is essential that we secure long-term funding partners who recognise the intrinsic value of the coalition as a fundamental child rights governance building block, as well as a necessary vehicle for effective child rights advocacy.

We have made good progress, but there is still much work to be done.

We call on all our members and partners to share information and leads, and welcome offers of support from our donor partners.



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CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE

GOALS

To strengthen the national child rights governance system to ensure state-wide prioritisation, action and accountability for ensuring that all children, especially the most vulnerable, receive the nurturing care required to survive, develop to their full potential, be protected and participate in all decisions that affect them.

Specifically, to ensure that the public system of governance through which decisions are made as to the allocation and accountability for use of resources recognises and advances children's rights as a national, rights-based development priority.

OBJECTIVES

To facilitate, coordinate and support evidence-based advocacy by coalition members at global, regional, and national levels for strengthening the national child rights governance system through:

- **a.** Regular monitoring, documentation, and reporting on the status of the child rights governance system and progress in advancing the rights of children to equality and to develop to their full potential.
- **b.** Assessment and advocacy for improved compliance of national planning documents, frameworks and institutional arrangements with child rights governance requirements and indicators.
- **c.** Facilitating coordinated knowledge of, and participation in child rights treaty and development body processes.



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THE SANCRC CALLS FOR PRIORITISATION OF CHILDREN IN THE MID-TERM BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT

The SANCRC has written a submission to the Minister of Finance and the Presidency following up on the matters raised in our previous submission to National Treasury which we share in our last newsletter. We have also written an open letter which we will seek to place in various medial publications, calling on the Minister of Finance and the Presidency to provide much-needed leadership to ensure effective and strategic government-wide child-rights budgeting to ensure our public resources are used better to secure children's equal and optimal development. Specifically, we are calling for the explicit prioritisation, in the upcoming mid-term budget policy statement to be made on 11 November 2021, of institutional arrangements to support, and the provisioning of the required combinations of services necessary to equalise and optimise children's development.

THE SANCRC CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE FOR THE EFFECTIVE LOCATION OF THE ORC IN THE PRESIDENCY

We reported in our last issue that we have made a submission to the Presidency and other key duty bearers calling for the establishment of an effective Office on the Rights of the Child to provide government-wide leadership, coordination, technical support, and oversight of the mainstreaming of the right of children to develop to their full potential.

We received an acknowledgement of receipt from the Social Development Portfolio Committee, but no further indication of how Parliament will be addressing this issue. We have not heard back from the Presidency at all.

We have however had a positive reply from the Child Rights Intersectoral Coordinating Committee overseen by the DSD and have been invited to make a presentation to the task team on institutional arrangements established under the NPAC on the 11th of November 2021.

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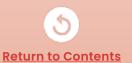
THE SANCRC'S CHILD RIGHTS MONITORING FRAMEWORK USED FOR ANNUAL AND SHADOW REPORTING

We have further developed our child rights monitoring, reporting and follow-up framework for use by coalition members to monitor, report and inform our advocacy for strengthening the child rights governance system to make quantifiable progress in increasing the proportion of children who develop to their full potential.

We will be using the framework, as a coalition, to monitor and produce an annual report on the status of the child rights governance system and progress in realising overarching goal of reducing the proportion of children at risk of poor development.

The data will be collected from existing surveys and reports, as well as from the experience of our members, children, and communities in seeking to access support and services to ensure every child receives the nurturing care they need to develop to their full potential. We will be building the capacity of our members who feel they will benefit from this, for data collection, analysis, reporting and shaping of evidence-based advocacy interventions using the framework and accompanying dashboard of indicators.

We will collaborate to analyse the data to generate an annual state of the children report, as well as to write shadow reports in the next few months on progress in implementing the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Universal Periodic Review report – both of which are due shortly.



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CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS

THE SANCRC ENDORSES CHILD RIGHTS CONNECT'S CALL FOR THE UN TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR CHILD RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING

The SANCRC has endorsed a <u>position paper published by Child Rights</u>

<u>Connect</u> critiquing the UN for failing to mainstream children's rights across its own governance continuum.

The position paper notes that the UN's Secretary General's critique of responses to the Call to Action for Human Rights contained in the Common Agenda fails to recognise and call for prioritisation of child rights mainstreaming as core to leaving no one behind. The position paper notes that: Together with the SG Call to Action for Human Rights, the Common Agenda is a steppingstone for the strengthening of the UN system and a unique opportunity to advance child rights mainstreaming.

It notes however, that opportunity has been missed.

The position paper notes that:

In his report, the SG recognises that "there is a growing disconnect between people and the institutions that serve them, with many feeling left behind and no longer confident that the system is working for them, an increase in social movements and protests and an ever deeper crisis of trust fomented by a loss of shared truth and understanding". He proposes that the only way forward is a "renewed social contract anchored in a comprehensive approach to human rights" and built on "(a) trust; (b) inclusion, protection and participation; and (c) measuring and valuing what matters to people and the planet". Importantly, he acknowledges that "no meaningful social contract is possible without the active and equal participation of women and girls". The SG also states that more needs to be done by the UN and States to support "the political participation of a diverse range of young people", which may mean "challenging social norms and stereotypes, especially in relation to gender, as well as in relation to other forms of marginalization". The report builds on the SG's Call to Action for Human Rights, 2 which includes strong and clear language on human rights mainstreaming: "Within the United Nations, human rights must be fully considered in all decision-making, operations and institutional commitments". This is a welcome and strong signal from the UN at the highest level to bring human rights at the center of UN responses and priorities.

However, the position paper expresses a significant concern that:

In the context of mainstreaming child rights, however, both the Common Agenda report and the Call to Action expressly refer to children only in relation to certain rights and situations, instead of integrating a holistic child rights perspective. Children are only mentioned in relation to future generations (omitting their status as present rights holders), the digital



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NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS (continued)

environment and their rights to health and education. Despite the of lack child rights mainstreaming within the SG initiatives, they are relevant and crucial for all children.

The Position Paper calls on the UN to rectify this omission by making child rights mainstreaming an explicit non-negotiable in the rights-based planning framework called for by the Call to Action. It further calls on the UN to lead the way by effectively mainstreaming children rights across its own organs, agencies and activities.

The position paper calls on the UN to develop a strategy on child rights mainstreaming that applies to all entities and the three pillars of the UN.



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CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS

THE OHCRHR PUBLISHES A GUIDE TO MAXIMISE THE UPR PROCESS TO STRENGTHEN RIGHTS-BASED GOVERNANCE

The United Nation's Office of the High Commission on Human Rights has published a guide to support use of the Universal Periodic Review process to strengthen advocacy and action for strengthening governance for fulfiment of the country's implementation responsibilities.

The report - Maximizing the use of the Universal Periodic Review at country level - provides practical guidance on how the UPR review process can be used to strengthen country fulfilment of their human rights, sustainable development and prevention of violence responsibilities.

The starting point of the guide is that:

The ultimate objective of the UPR is to improve the protection of human rights in every country. The UPR recommendations accepted by a State – publicly in front of all its peers and other stakeholders – present an important entry point for positive engagement and advocacy on many issues within the mandate of UNCTs and peace operations.

The report specifically urges UN entities in South Africa and all other countries to maximise the use of the process to ensure government actions the recommendations made in the last review report through the following measures, which are equally applicable to civil society structures and other development partners:

- Assess the realities of people's lives, identifying root causes of inequalities, conflict and violence and groups (at risk of) being left behind
- Advocate strategically
- Engage in dialogue on sensitive issues
- Facilitate a platform for engagement between government and civil society
- Create and mobilise in-country civil society networks on critical rights-based, sustainable development issues
- Raise awareness of inequalities
- Showcase the link between human rights and sustainable development to ensure rights-based prioritisation and planning.



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MID-TERM BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT

The Minister of Finance will make his mid-term budget policy statement on 11 November 2021. The tabling of the budget is always followed by multiple advocacy opportunities, including a call for public submissions. The SANCRC will be making maximum use of this opportunity to interrogate the adequacy of the budget to drive transformation to reverse declining child development outcomes and increasing inequalities. We will share our observations along with a call to transformational action with the media and Parliament as well as the Presidency and all supporting role players.

THE UPR REVIEW REPORT DUE AND IMMINENT

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a holistic peer review process where the human rights record of the country is reviewed by all UN member states, measured against fulfiment of its implementation responsibilities arising from all human rights treaties. The process culminates in recommendations for strengthening the State Party's responses that must be actioned and reported on in the following report – due every 4 years. The review and recommendations are based on key documents, including reports by civil society. As such, the UPR process offers a critical opportunity for the SANCRC to take stock and make recommendations for strengthening the country's child rights governance system. The current 3rd UPR cycle started in 2017 and runs until October 2022, when the 4th cycle starts.

The SANCRC will be developing and submitting a progress report on steps taken pursuant to the UN working group's report and recommendations made at the end of the last cycle which can be viewed here:

https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/216/43/PDF/G1721643.pdf?OpenElement

STATE PARTY'S PERIODIC REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACRWC DUE AND IMMINENT

The SANCRC previously reported that the Sate's periodic report on progress in implementing the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is now due. We have written to the Department of Social Development requesting a copy of the State Party report, as well as information on plans to consult civil society and Parliament on the draft. We will share the draft and information as soon as it is provided to us.



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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 to secure the development of children in their care to their full potential.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. To strengthen government-wide operationalisation of the National Child Care and Protection Policy and the National Integrated ECD Policy.
- 2. Strengthen the enabling legal framework to provide nurturing care to promote children's development and prevent abuse and poor development outcomes.
- **3.** Strengthen the sustained availability of and equitable access to essential programmes to enable the provision of nurturing care, including:
 - **a.** Health and nutrition for development and prevention of disability and stunting; and
 - b. Parenting support for responsive caregiving.
- **4.** Strengthen human resources capacity for child-centered developmental planning, provisioning, resourcing, monitoring, and system's strengthening.
- **5.** Increased allocation of public resources to support implementation of a package of promotive and preventative support services for enabling nurturing care.
- **6.** Strengthen information management and monitoring systems to ensure:
 - **a.** The identification of families and children at risk and their referral for support
 - **b.** The monitoring and reporting of family / caregiver access to the package of support required to enable nurturing care and children's access to all nurturing care domains
 - **c.** The dissemination and use of data by all role players to improve planning and provisioning for support for nurturing care.

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FAMILY SUPPORT FOR NURTURING CARE PROGRESS MONITOR

FAMILY SUPPORT FOR NURTURING CARE WORKING GROUP TIGHTENS UP ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

The Family Support working group has met and deliberated on its advocacy priorities in the coming months. It has agreed that it will focus on two critical entry points to strengthen the national system of family support for enabling nurturing care as mandated by the National Child Care and Protection Policy. It will:

- 1. Advocate for operationalising the commitments made in the Policy through the development of a national family support for nurturing care system that:
 - **a.** Provides a clear legislative mandate to all responsible role players to provide the support committed to, in appropriate combinations, by the Policy
 - **b.** Clearly articulates the programme of family support and delivery modalities to be provided at scale, to address the most pressing and common risks to nurturing are among the most vulnerable and marginalised families
 - **c.** Is adequately resourced in terms of human, financial and infrastructure resources to enable planning, provisioning, monitoring and ongoing quality improvement of the national programme of family support
 - **d.** Is monitored, in terms of the availability of, access to and the impact of the required family support services to enable nurturing care to equalise and optimise development of all children, especially the most vulnerable in South Africa.
- 2. The second point of entry will be to identify and draw on the extensive best practices in South Africa and comparable jurisdictions to inform the development of an evidence-based programme of family support to be rolled out at scale.

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CHILD PROTECTION

GOAL

Every child in SA, documented or undocumented including children with disabilities, is protected from all forms of violence.

This requires that South Africa adopts and implements an effective developmental child care and protection system that addresses the challenges that impact on the ability of families to care for and protect children, as well as ensure the protection and reintegration of children who fall victim to violence.

Therefore, the goal of is to strengthen the systematisation, and in so doing, the implementation of the developmental child care and protection system provided for in the National Child Care and Protection Policy.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Strengthen the systemic implementation of the Child Care and Protection Policy to ensure availability and access to quality services to protect all children from violence.
- 2. Secure increased human and financial resources to secure promotive and preventative services, reduce the need for statutory protection services and ensure quality statutory services are available to all who need them.



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THE SANCRC MAKES A SUBMISSION ON THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL [B12-2021]

The SANCRC has made the following submission on the Criminal Procedure Bill which has been opened up for public comment. <u>Further information on the call for comments</u> is provided later in this section.

Introduction

This Bill is in response to a Constitutional Court Judgement that requires the protection afforded to child witnesses, child victims and children in conflict with the law should extend beyond the age of 18 years. It therefore extends the Criminal Procedure Act to clearly proscribe the media exposure of children's identities to beyond the age of 18 years once they had reach adulthood.

The Criminal Procedure Act clearly prohibits the exposure of the identity of child witnesses, victims and children in conflict with the law when they are children but was unclear as to whether this extended beyond their attaining adulthood. This lack of clarity and the fear of later exposure in the media could contribute to the reluctance of victims and witnesses to come forward to report offences and testify in court as also impede the acknowledgement of crime by child offenders and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law, who otherwise would have the potential to make good use of diversion programmes or rehabilitation sentences and through participation in such programmes and sentences, have developed into responsible and functional adults.

The Provisions in the Bill

The Bill prohibits the publication of identifying details of child witnesses, child victims and children in conflict with the law, who were under the age of 18 years when the crime was committed, in any media, including social and electronic except under specific circumstances. The prohibition applies before, during and after the conclusion of the criminal proceedings. Exceptions are as follows.

- Substantial injustice must result if the details are not published
- No other means of tracing the child/adult who was a child are available
- Witnesses: It is necessary to locate the witness to obtain a statement concerning a case or to testify in the court proceedings. If publication is essential to achieve this, the age of the person may not be published or the fact that the person is required as a witness
- Victims: only if the publication of their identity is necessary to protect them, and to obtain information about an alleged offence.
- Children in conflict with the law: the child has absconded from custody



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or a place of detention and is, on reasonable grounds, suspected as having committed a serious crime (Schedule 3 crime such as murder or rape), cannot be traced, and is considered necessary to locate the accused. In this instance the published information does not reveal the child's age or that the child is involved in the commission of an offence.

In the above instances permission must be obtained from the National Commissioner of Police, or a person delegated by the Minister. The level of delegation is not provided for in the Bill and this may result in decisions being made by inexperienced and untrained officers.

Magistrates may authorise the publication of whatever information considered appropriate if this is just, equitable and in a person's best interests.

A child, on reaching the age of 18 years may apply to the court in which the criminal proceedings were conducted for the authorisation of the publication of information that reveals the identity of the applicant, provided that the applicant understands the nature and effect of the court order.

In considering and granting the application, the court must take into account:

- The nature of the charges
- The age of the victim, witness and/or child in conflict with the law
- The period between the criminal proceedings and the application.
- The interests of the public or any person
- The interests of society with regard to the reporting of offences and participation in court proceedings of witnesses and victims
- Whether the revealing of the applicant's identity will identify any other person involved in the matter
- Any hardship that may be suffered by others
- The effect of the order on the person's freedom of expression, dignity, security and privacy of that person or a relative

The hearing of the application is held behind closed doors and no one other than those whose presence is necessary to the application may attend the hearing or authorised by the court. The verdict is given in open court and the court may refuse to reveal facts on which the verdict is based if this will expose the identity of another whose identity is protected.

The contents of the application and evidence provided to the hearing and any information that may reveal with identity of another may not be disclosed by another unless authorised by the court.

Conclusion

The Bill provides that the identity of child witnesses, child victims, and children in conflict with the law are protected and may not be published except under



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very specific circumstances. This encourages child victims and witnesses to report and participate in legal proceedings, and children in conflict with the law to acknowledge their behaviour and remain motivated to participate in diversion, restorative justice and rehabilitation programmes.

The SA National Coalition on Child Rights therefore supports the Bill with the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The delegation of the National Commissioner of Police's authority should be clarified to ensure that the exposure of children in the media is tightly controlled and compliance with the conditions is ensured. The process of delegation and application to the National Commissioner should be added to the standing instructions to the South African Police service attached to the Child Justice Act and the Children's Act.



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CHILD PROTECTION

NEW LAWS & POLICIES AFFECTING OUR PRIORITY

Whilst there have been no new developments on which we can report, our esteemed member, Joan Van Niekerk, will be sharing a monthly review of a key law that is central to children's well-being, protection, and development.

Readers are welcome to contact the SANCRC Secretariat to suggest content. This month she has provided an invaluable summary of the Child Justice Act.



THE CHILD JUSTICE ACT IN BRIEF

Introduction

Some workers in the child rights sector confuse the Children's Act and the Child Justice Act. These two pieces of legislation have a very different focus. The Children's Act focuses on holistic care and protection, whereas the Child Justice Act focusses and makes provision for children in conflict with the law. Three pieces of legislation, the Child Justice Act, the Children's Act, and the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (commonly referred to as the SORMA) were developed at the same time via the SA Law Reform Commission and the three committees working on these laws attempted to ensure that the three bills complemented each other for the purpose of protecting children.

Once the draft legislation was given to the Government Department which had commissioned it (the Children's Bill by the Department of Social Development, and the Child Justice Act and the SORMA, by the Department of Justice) different views and political agendas impacted on the final bills that were passed into law and implemented in 2010.

All 3 Acts have been subsequently amended several times and when accessing copies online one may find that they differ from older paper copies that one might have purchased/had access to at the time of their implementation in 2010.

Summary of content: Child Justice Act

The Child Justice Act is based on restorative justice principles and provides for

- Establishing an age of criminal capacity (the age at which a child is considered old enough to take responsibility for their behaviour, at present 12 year with the possibility of up to 14 years, as determined by an assessment)
- Understanding the child in conflict with the law and the reasons for their behaviour via assessments by probation officers

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NEW LAWS & POLICIES AFFECTING OUR PRIORITY (continued)

- Encouraging children to take responsibility for their behaviour and if and where appropriate making some effort at reparation such as engaging in community service for children over the age of 14 years
- Providing rehabilitation options which address the child's behaviour via diversion programmes and treatment programmes for children below the age of criminal capacity
- Establishing a child justice system and child justice courts
- Establishing a range of diversion options
- Establishing a range of sentencing options if the case goes to trial (the child must have criminal capacity) and the child is found guilty. Prison is seen as the very last option and can only be give as a sentence or for awaiting trial children as a last resort.
- Minimising the arrest of children, via instructions to the South Africa
 Police to provide children in conflict with the law with written notices or
 summonses to attend court.

The opportunity to participate in a diversion programme and successfully completing it enables the child to avoid a criminal record, which might have a lasting impact on the child's adult life and opportunities.

The assessment of the child by probation officers is a key process that applies to all children in conflict with the law. This enables the circumstances of the child to be considered by the prosecution and presiding officer in the Child Justice Court and where appropriate the child and family may be referred to the Children's Court for processes provided for by the Children's Act.

Children may only be diverted or go to trial if they have criminal capacity, a complex concept and assessment involves a two-step process of assessment

- Does the child know the difference between right and wrong?
- Does the child have the ability to act in accordance with that knowledge?

Probation officers make a preliminary assessment of criminal capacity and where this assessment is uncertain, and the crime considered serious, the child may be referred to a clinical psychologist for assessment which includes a consideration of multiple aspects of maturity, emotional, cognitive, social, moral, and other factors.

The needs of children without criminal capacity are also provided for via assessment, the establishment of rehabilitation programmes, and referral to other services such as those provided for via the Children's Act and Children's court.

The Act applies to all children, including children with disability. The assessment conducted by the probation officer takes the child's disability

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into account and where the disability impacts on criminal capacity, this assessment will be included in the report to the Child Justice Court.

The details of children who commit sexual crimes may not be placed on the Child Protection Register or Register of Sexual Offenders except when advised by a probation officer and accepted by the Court, and where the child has been given the option of a diversion programme and this has not resulted in behaviour change.

The Child Justice Act is considered a progressive law both nationally and internationally, and many countries have included its provisions in their own law reform relating to children in conflict with the law. Implementation is driven by the Inter sector Committee on Child Justice, a very functional committee, but constrained by a lack of resources.



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CALL FOR COMMENTS ON THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL EXTENDED TO 12 NOVEMBER 2021

The Select Committee on Security and Justice has called for written submissions on the Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill [B 12B - 2021] (National Assembly – sec 75), to be submitted by 12 November 2021. The Bill seeks to amend the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977, so as to further regulate the publication of information which reveals or may reveal the identity of an accused, a witness or person against whom an offence has allegedly been committed who is under the age of 18 years; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Bill can be viewed here:

https://static.pmg.org.za/B12B-2021_Criminal_Procedure4188.pdf

Submissions must be in writing and mailed to

CPABill12B2021@parliament.gov.za by no later than Friday, 12 November 2021.

Click here to view the **SANCRC's submission** on the proposed bill.

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CHILD PROTECTION NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

JELLY BEANZ SHARES CRITICALLY IMPORTANT RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CHILD PROTECTION ADVOCACY

One of our very active member organisations, Jelly Beanz has shared the following critically important resources with the wider membership. They may be accessed on their website at: http://www.jellybeanz.org.za/downloads/

Rainbows of Hope – Healing Stories for Africa's Children

Stories can be a powerful tool for healing. Rainbows of Hope: Healing Stories for Africa's Children contains 24 stories with healing messages about difficult topics like abuse, neglect, depression, anxiety, witnessing domestic violence, being different, and many more. These stories are written by therapists who work in the field of trauma and abuse and use these in therapy with hurting children.

Protect Children and Help them Heal

Many children in South Africa are traumatised, abused and neglected. For parents, caregivers and professionals, knowing how best to help these children isn't easy. Jelly Beanz, with the support of UNICEF South Africa, has developed a resource for caregivers called "Protect Children and Help them Heal". This resource booklet aims to assist parents and caregivers to better understand the responses of children post-trauma, which processes may take place to protect and care for these children and how they can provide support to the children. This will involve the formal child protection system and the criminal justice system, therapeutic interventions and giving information to help caregivers deal with the child's emotions after a traumatic event.

Psychological First Aid for children, adolescents and families experiencing trauma.

Children in South Africa are exposed to a lot of trauma, violence, abuse and neglect. In these situations, children have little control, and they need someone to step up and hold their hand through the storm that trauma brings. All caregivers have a responsibility to protect and care for children in these traumatic situations, and this resource provides invaluable guidance to all first responders to provide comfort and to help soothe the child's pain and confusion. First responders may include community workers or leaders, nurses, child and youth care workers, teachers, social workers, paramedics and police officers.



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Our bodies

In South Africa one in three children will be sexually abused by age 17 (Optimus 2016). Jelly Beanz believes that parents and caregivers need to engage children in open and honest conversations about bodies and sexuality to help prevent sexual abuse. These conversations need to start before children access formal schooling. Many parents do not know how to approach the topic. This resource helps parents and caregivers talk to young children about bodies, sex and body rules. The activity book is written in a way that engages children and guides parents and caregivers' step by step in making a serious discussion fun. The parent thus has the privilege of being the first person to discuss sexuality with the child and to cement healthy values in this arena.



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INCLUSIVE, BASIC EDUCATION

GOAL

Inclusive basic education from birth until the completion of formal basic education 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 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 groups experience chronic educational exclusion.

The goal of this thematic area 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.

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INCLUSIVE, BASIC EDUCATION NEW RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENTS

UNICEF PUBLISHES NEW REPORT ON THE SCALE OF EDUCATION DISRUPTIONS DUE TO COVID

UNICEF's latest report - <u>Education Disrupted</u> - is cause for concern. It reports that children across the work have lost 1.8 trillion hours of in-person learning since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, young learners have been cut off from their education and the other vital benefits schools provide.

Globally, around 131 million schoolchildren in 11 countries have missed three quarters of their in-person learning in the past year and a half. Among them, 59 per cent – or nearly 77 million – have missed almost all in-person instruction time.



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INCLUSIVE, BASIC EDUCATION NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS



EELC INVITES YOU TO THE LAUNCH OF ITS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW REPORT

The Equal Education Law Centre has shared an invitation to participate in the launch of its Inclusive Education Policy Review report on 3 December 2021. Please save the date and join them for this critically important blended event.

QUICK LINKS

ENDNOTES

