

Parenting for Social Impact: How can support for Families Impact Social Change?

Report of the 2nd Families Indaba held at Salt River Community House, Salt River, Cape Town

25 & 26 October 2023



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Executive summary

The 2nd Families Indaba with the theme, *Parenting for Social Impact: How can support for Families Impact Social Change?* was organised in Salt River Community House, Cape Town. The Indaba built on the learnings from 2022 with a focus on ensuring government, the non-profit sector, academics and donors were able to engage and network in an encouraging space.

In total, over 200 participants attended over the two days with high attendance from government, academia and the non-profit sector. For next year, more donor and private sector collaboration will be a priority. SAPPIN also wanted to ensure that the voice of parents and caregivers were heard which was the realism required



in an otherwise professional forum. This voice can be developed further in 2023 to ensure parenting programmes can be presented as a universal tool/skill for all families.

The panellists brought with them a wide range of experience and knowledge which highlighted the need for other sectors to be communicating and collaborating more in community of practices and avoid silo work.

Open Space Technology and break-out sessions worked well with several key initiatives developed as a strategic way forward.

- A collaborative funding proposal led by SAPPIN to enhance parenting as early intervention work.
- Frameworks for sharing best practices while maintaining programme fidelity.
- Strategic partnerships aimed at fostering holistic family well-being within communities.
- An upcoming Fatherhood Workshop to be hosted by SAPPIN in March 2024.

SAPPIN appreciates all the speakers, panellist participants and facilitators, as well as the generosity of donors for a highly successful event with inspiring participation and commitment from all delegates.





SAPPIN Background

SAPPIN builds a secure future for all who live in South Africa by helping families create warm and non-violent homes for children.

The purpose of the network is to strengthen the voice of civil society working with families through collaboration and shared learning. SAPPIN aims to enhance civil society's capacity in the realm of implementation, research, fundraising, communication and advocacy, to collectively ensure that quality programmes are available and sustainable across the country in communities where they are needed.

SAPPIN exists to contribute to a larger theory of change by linking to South African and international policies for the protection and security of children and the prevention of violence in childhood. Positive parenting interventions, informed by these policies, have been proven to have a direct link to the reduction of violence within homes and the promotion of alternative disciplinary strategies, contributing to more securely attached children. These children have increased resilience and have more improved opportunities for a better future, impacting all of South Africa.

This network has its origins within the Dialogue Forum (now called Violence Prevention Forum). All original implementing partners within the network were present in the forum. The purpose of the network was to strengthen the voice of parenting programme implementers, to strengthen our research capacity, particularly in the realm of implementation research, and to collaborate with regarding fundraising and communication. This effort of joining implementers in such a network ultimately serves to strengthen our capacity to collaboratively reach greater numbers of children and families, with quality, evidence-based parenting interventions.

The principles and values of the network guide the way it operates and who can become a member.

Values

Care and Support: We honour the role of the family, seeking to support parenting relationships that use non-violent communication, encourage nurturing and responsive care and the prevention of violence against children.

Accountability: We commit ourselves to quality and excellence in our work with families and children. We commit to open and honest relationships with each other where we uphold good practice, share in mutual learning and hold each other to what we commit to be and do.



Collaboration: Working together is better than working alone. We share knowledge and learning in practice and commit to operating with integrity, openness, transparency and professionalism. We celebrate success and growth together.

Respect: We value cultural sensitivity and diversity, seeking to understand the intention of parenting practice, while earning the right to present alternative ways of being with children that reduces harm and increases emotional well-being in the home.

Principles

Principle 1:

The parenting programmes of SAPPIN members promote warm and non–violent family (caregiver-child) relationships.

Principle 2:

SAPPIN members are guided by an ethos of collaboration and learning amongst themselves and also with stakeholders.

Principle 3:

Quality programmes are being implemented. SAPPIN members are committed to ensuring that (1) M&E and (2) supervision are applied, that programmers are (3) evidence—based or informed and that they occur within (4) a basket of services (referral network) to ensure optimal service delivery towards the families served.

Principle 4:

Parenting programmes are informed by relevant social, cultural and religious practices.

Principle 5:

All SAPPIN members uphold the principle of "do no harm". All programmes apply ethical and respectful practices of implementation and research with regard to beneficiaries and staff.

Principle 6: Governance

SAPPIN members are registered, compliant entities in South Africa, and have child protection and safeguarding policies.



Meeting using Open Space Technology

The decision to use Open Space Technology (OST) was intentional, building on the 2022 Indaba experience. OST enables all participants to create inspired meetings and events. Over the last 30 years, it has also become clear that OST, as an inclusive peace-building practice, can lead to motivated communities and organisations, where participants work together to create extraordinary results with regularity.

In Open Space meetings, participants create and manage their own agenda, working sessions around a central theme of strategic importance. In the case of the Families Indaba, the question: *Parenting for Social Impact: How can support for Families Impact Social Change?* was posed to lead and guide the conversation.

To summarise why OST was chosen for the Indaba is that the model fits SAPPIN values and principles where everyone is equal, everyone makes an equal contribution, and is respected and honoured for being part of the process. It further aspires to create a family atmosphere.

OST works best when objectives are complex, diverse people and ideas are involved, a passion for resolution (and potential for conflict) is high, and the time to get it done was yesterday.

For those who did not attend the Families Indaba, here are the fundamentals of OST. The information will give a clearer understanding of the processes that were followed.











The fundamentals of Open Space Technology

Theme: What are the current issues and possibilities?

Parenting for Social Impact: How can support for Families Impact Social Change?

Four principles

- Whoever comes is the right people
- Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened
- Whenever it starts is the right time
- When it's over, it's over

One Law:

The Law of Two Feet.

The law encourages people to leave a conversation if it doesn't interest them anymore. They can then move to a different conversation. This creates more conversation and also cross-pollination within the different conversations.

Extra:

Be prepared to be surprised!

The surprise was that real conversations were had. People felt comfortable and took ownership of the Indaba. It was not just a talk shop.

Invitation

This is sent out beforehand and gives the theme with the instruction to be brief, compelling, intriguing, to allow the imagination to grow, and contains the promises:

- Every issue of concern to anybody will have been raised if they took responsibility for doing that.
- All issues will have received full discussion, to the extent required.
- A full report of issues and discussions will be given to all participants.
- Priorities will be set and action plans made.

Issues (visible to all)

The invitation prepares attendees with what the discussion will entail.



DAY 1

Parenting panel – Mahlatse Diale

The Parenting Panel facilitated by Mahlatse Diale, featured three parents –Nothemba Nkope, Solomzi Deon, and Yolanda Mona – who shared insights into the impact of parenting programmes they participated in. Nothemba joined the Sinovuyo Programme to improve her relationship with her teenage daughter, learning to communicate



and understand her child's perspective. She highlighted the positive effects of the programme, including changing her parenting style from strict to more communicative and supportive. She found the budgeting aspect challenging initially but discovered its benefits in teaching her child financial responsibility.

Solomzi and Yolanda both participated in the Mikhulu Trust Book-sharing Programme, emphasizing its positive influence on parent-child bonding. Solomzi appreciated the opportunity to connect with his 4-year-old son, understanding his thoughts and fostering an enjoyable activity between them. Yolanda found the programme helpful in gauging her son's comprehension, addressing school-related concerns, and deepening their connection. Both parents extended the Book-sharing initiative beyond their families, engaging with preschool-aged children in their communities.

All three parents expressed gratitude for the valuable insights gained from their respective parenting programmes, acknowledging the positive impact on their relationships with their children. Nothemba has further integrated her learnings of the Sinovuyo programme, allowing her to support other parents in her community and generate income for her family.

Keynote speaker – Mastoera Sadan

Mastoera Sadan, the Chief Sector Expert in the National Planning Commission Secretariat and a Social Policy Analyst, discussed various aspects of family policies during a keynote address at the SAPPIN Indaba 2023.

She emphasized the need for a comprehensive understanding





of families in government, beyond narrow family policies. She highlighted the importance of respectful engagement when families interact with the government, particularly in sectors like health and education. Mastoera expressed the desire for greater collaboration between government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly those involved in parenting and caregiver support programs. She sees the SAPPIN Indaba as a platform to learn more about such initiatives and explore partnerships.

During her keynote address, Mastoera addressed the current gap in understanding children's lives in South Africa and the importance of acknowledging the role of parents and caregivers. She emphasized the need to support families and society for meaningful social change, stressing the term 'support' over 'help.' She discussed the diversity of family structures, highlighting the necessity of considering various family forms in policy development. She pointed out the challenges of policy implementation and called for a shift in government's perception of families, advocating for a more profound understanding and collaboration with partners to build a cohesive society.

Mastoera also touched upon the complexities of policy interventions, particularly in the realm of childcare and parenting programs. She highlighted the importance of addressing policy incoherence and engaging in partnerships that involve meaningful collaboration rather than one-sided directives. In conclusion, Mastoera underscored the significance of collective efforts in social transformation, emphasizing the potential for government and its partners to achieve more when working together.

Funder address - Makiba Yamano

Makiba Yamano, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF South Africa provided insights into UNICEF's global and South African roles, underscoring the significance of supporting parents rather than usurping their responsibilities. She emphasized the need for increased focus on families through collaborative efforts and research, pinpointing challenges like fatherhood, teenage pregnancies, and extreme poverty.



Expressing a strong conviction that the SAPPIN Indaba should not merely be a talk show, Yamano stressed the crucial importance of actionable outcomes. Urgency is paramount, especially given the prevalent issues of extreme poverty and hunger globally and in South Africa. She called for joint cooperation between SAPPIN and UNICEF to address these pressing challenges effectively.



Makiba urged all participants to actively contribute and make a difference. Her message resonated with support and encouragement, emphasizing the collective responsibility to collaboratively tackle the outlined issues.

Summary of each group discussion – day 1

The OST process started by asking everyone in attendance to identify a question, related to the overall theme of *Parenting for Social Impact: How can support for Families Impact Social Change?* that they are grappling/wanted to grapple with. Different topics were discussed during the two time slots of day one. The full conversations were immediately sent to participants (Appendix 1). The different themes discussed were:



- Mental Health There is a country-wide crisis at hand in particular for adolescents. Make mental health part of parenting programmes, change language around mental health. Secondary trauma of workers. Use existing programmes – lots of different options, but diversify how to address mental health as services on offer are unable to handle the workload. Have good M&E for mental health.
- Support to parents who are not attending a parenting programme Use other networks such as SAPS, churches, get fathers involved, radio stations and social media – careful of messages. Start with first 1000 days. Add to school curriculum. Revise perceptions that only bad parents need parenting programmes.
- Workplace intervention –
 Establish working group to determine programmes, collaborative methods, financial and M&E structures. Revise perspective of how we think about parenting programmes eg. only poor black people need parenting programmes.



• Voice of parents and children in programmes – Not disempowering parents. Changing our perspectives of how we view and talk to parents.



Evidence-based (RCT's) versus indigenous practices of parents. Start from child perspective, then parents, not with assumptions or new learning. Cocreation and community should form a continuum of care. Parents = caregivers

- Fathers' involvement in parenting programmes gender norms different perspectives on "father"
 - Programmes designed with mothers in mind and first entry point pregnancy
 - Absent fathers own trauma and growing up with absent fathers.
 Investigate solutions to these factors and focus specifically on fathers, not parents. Father wound processes of forgiveness with fathers
 - o Make systemic and structural changes
 - o Grannies and mothers as gatekeepers separate processes to address this social ill.
 - o Find champions to mentor, invite and acknowledge fathers safe space to share challenges: men speaking to men
 - o Go to places/locations where fathers are and change programmes according to them
 - o Children voice involvement with fathers
 - o Acknowledge and build on the role of social fathers.
 - o Change perceptions and focus on all fathers, not just the 1 in 5 that is violent
- Better involvement from government through supporting NGOs, policies and engagements – departments work in silos, find champions in departments, NGOs improve their understanding of government, buzz words and internal functioning. Engage and address government within existing platforms.
- Provide products that can benefit families: NGOs still use traditional methods, and should be more creative in marketing new products in new ways that can benefit families. These products should make NGOs sustainable and not rely on funding.





 Social change: What does it mean and how do communities acquire more ownership or have their voices heard? – who are current change agents and how do we change that to parents/communities but make change positive not negative?

Change is slow and happens over time. Parents need to acknowledge their own trauma and not pass it on to the next generation, that is how change happens. Parents need to advocate for themselves, what is required to heal inter-generational trauma?

Systems are complex – workplace, patriarchy, economy etc. people are resistant to change. Access to resources. Be positive, see SA as good country going through a difficult time.

Research / Implementers: Similar
to panel discussion except
suggestions were included on
how to work together, reasons for
working together, as well as
SAPPIN's potential to advocate
for implementation research,
upskilling NGOs through MOU's
and other practical tips in relation
to academia. Researchers write



for specific audience, implementers for another. How to combine the two?

- Prevention and early intervention for children: Very complex structure in SA with most focus on statutory work and stats for government. More focus on prevention and early intervention is required—long term investment. This is separate from statutory work. More training for social workers, community awareness of the role of SW through churches, organisations etc.
- Child Reunification from CYCC to home: Revise perceptions that a child is better off at a centre, parents are not taking responsibility. CYCC front-line workers have a high turnover of staff due to burn-out. Trauma-informed and trained workers are required. Collaboration between parenting programme NGOs and SW and CYCC to support parents for reunification. A suggestion was to start small, for example during holidays.



Theatre Nizibone

Clown Without Borders South Africa (CWBSA) project lead, Delia Meyer and team, Anele Kose, Abigal Mei and Natasha Magengelele produced a performance into 4 skits based on the Parenting for Lifelong Health (PLH) Kids programme for parents and caregivers of 3–9-year-old children. It was an interactive show where the highs



and lows of parenting and families were addressed, offering audience members an opportunity to give feedback and find solutions. The theatre performances were conducted between sessions and during lunchtime. Several short performances focused on one-on-one time, conflict resolution and praise. The drama group wanted the delegates to engage in challenging and joyful moments that parents have with their children.

DAY 2

Panel 1 – Facilitated by Ayanda Mazibuko

The first panel discussion at the SAPPIN Indaba 2023 focused on "Creating a conducive environment between implementers and research around evidence-based programming." The panel included Dr. Sara Naicker, a researcher at the DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Human Development; Gwen Dereymaeker, Director at the Violence Prevention Unit,



Department of Health and Wellness in the Western Cape Government; Dr. Nyasha Manjengenja, representing Clowns Without Borders South Africa and chaired by Ayanda Mazibuko, a researcher at the Institute for Security Studies. The discussion addressed the challenges and opportunities in bridging the gap between researchers and implementers.

Sara reflected on her diverse work experiences, starting at the Science Research Council, where research collaboration with communities and NGOs was emphasized, and later at Save the Children, where the focus shifted to implementation research within programs. She contrasts the collaborative



environment at the Science Council with the more detached academic setting at Wits University. She gained insights into different approaches to research across institutions. She highlights the success of a model at Save the Children, where resources allowed for a dedicated research unit, enabling full-time engagement in research activities, proving effective for her.

Gwen emphasized the government's struggle to generate evidence, suggesting a preference for leveraging existing evidence. She detailed the Western Cape government's approach to co-designing parenting guidelines, involving workshops with NPOs, researchers, and government representatives. This collaborative process aimed to implement evidence-based programs, enhancing NPOs' capacity to align with guidelines. Challenges included time constraints for researchers in the relational, non-transactional process.

Nyasha discussed Clowns without Borders SA's, Sinovuyo Teens program, emphasizing its inception within the Parenting for Lifelong Health programme. Research, ongoing since 2011, has informed program adaptations. Challenges involve trust in researchers, timing, and making research comprehensible for implementers. The SUPER study evaluates Sinovuyo's global effectiveness.

Sara highlighted structural issues impacting collaboration and suggested breaking systems conflicting with shared goals. Gwen emphasized the time required for trust building, acknowledging power dynamics' influence on implementation-research relationships. Audience questions raised concerns about setting the research agenda, researchers providing feedback to communities, incorporating local knowledge, and involving children's voices without compromising innocence.

Discussion on Sinovuyo adaptations and separating economic from decision-making power ensued. Sara urged researchers and civil society to challenge existing systems and reclaim the power to set the research agenda. She noted the disparity in pace between implementation and research. Gwen called for increased government involvement in research discussions.



In summary, the dialogue emphasized collaborative approaches to evidence-based programme development, challenges in research implementation dynamics, and the need for inclusive, community-centered research agendas. The role of power dynamics, trust, and the imperative to challenge existing systems were recurring themes in the discussion.



Panel 2 – Facilitated by Tarisai Mchuchu

The panel was facilitated by Advocate Tarisai Mchuchu-MacMillan. Participants were: Marcel Korth — Principal: Gender-Based Violence, Anglo-American, Jacqueline Boulle — Western Cape Government: Youth and After School Programme Office and Makiba Yamano — Chief, Child Protection, UNICEF South Africa. In the panel discussion, the theme was on Innovative Partnering for Community Wellbeing with a Focus on Families, several speakers shared insights.



Tarisai emphasized the influence of money in decision-making and the need for resources to support community initiatives. Marcel discussed the importance of equal partnerships, sharing a case where a mining company collaborated with NGOs on a Gender Transformative curriculum. Jacqui highlighted the government's role, emphasizing collaboration with organizations already engaged in community work and promoting a learning mindset. Makiba, representing the United Nations, explained their partnership model, involving member states and a focus on scalability.

The discussion delved into partnership criteria and processes. Jacqui explained their yearly call for partners, briefing sessions, and the importance of aligning visions. Marcel highlighted the need for shared values and principles in partnerships. Makiba discussed the United Nations' platform for registration and emphasized the importance of aligning with partners' visions and avoiding duplication. Tarisai raised questions about accessing partnerships, addressing frustrations related to siloed approaches, and seeking clarity on criteria.



The audience raised questions on agenda setting, challenges in working with youth, and openness to partner directions. Marcel discussed the challenge of advocating for collaborative approaches internally, emphasizing the need for a learning mindset. Makiba highlighted the importance of aligning with partners' visions and priorities. Jacqui

emphasized transparency, stating that parameters are set, but adaptations and innovations occur once partners are involved. In response to accessing



partnerships, Jacqui explained their annual call, briefing sessions, and ongoing communication. Marcel discussed the importance of putting principles on the table and finding willing partners. Makiba highlighted the role of platforms and emphasized the need for a shared vision and scalability. Tarisai encouraged open discussions in networks to overcome siloed approaches.

The discussion concluded with reflections on influencing agenda setting, addressing challenges in working with youth, and the need for open communication to adapt to community needs. The speakers emphasized the importance of learning together, transparent communication, and building trust in effective partnerships.

Summary of action plans - day 2

- Collaborative funding proposal: A proposal was made that SAPPIN lead with a funding proposal to include relevant and interested organisations.
- Collaborative funders engagement: Another proposal was made that funders work collaboratively to enhance and support opportunities. SAPPIN to negotiate this process and to collaborate with all NGOs and researchers to create communication across sectors.
- Developing a framework to share programmes and maintain fidelity:
 - Investigate alignment between fidelity and how adaptations are developed. Strengthen implementation research through common elements approach/shared principles. Undertake a survey to find commonalities/ essential ingredients and provide a return on investment for funders



- Structure collaboration/partnership within organisation and network: The group proposed collaboration within existing networks appointing a key person in organisations to participate and advocate.
- Strategic partnerships for community wellbeing: Develop a framework to encourage holistic family wellbeing, starting within communities when developing. Using existing networks/systems/ knowledge is paramount.
- Collaborate on better understanding of social change: Workshop the understanding in communities to understand what is meant by social change



in different communities, sectors and individuals, ensure to communicate through existing networks such as SAPPIN, to develop M&E around assessing and following and establishing social change – photo voice and lived experience.

- Fatherhood Community of Practice: Erika Jooste (from Sesame) will share
 a needs analysis that was done with fathers in SA with Indaba attendees.
 Child participation on fathers' involvement. Organise organisation to share
 best practices. Get corporates involved for funding.
 SAPPIN (Jonathan, Wilmi) and Erika to convene a meeting to discuss future
 steps to establish CoP. This will be followed by a Fatherhood workshop held
 by SAPPIN in March 2024.
- Collate services: This will be done by SAPPIN. All the attendees of the Families Indaba (1 & 2) will be collated. SAPPIN will then share this information with the attendees.

Feedback from attendees

\bigcirc	I am not an official partner/member of your family (yet) but THANK YOU for
	feeling like I belong!
\bigcirc	It was a riveting space with a diversity of ideas.
Q	I found it a powerful networking time and so enlightening to hear from a variety of panellists and speakers – BIG PLUS – Open Space Learning.
Q	This Indaba posed a lot of challenges for me in terms of the panels and discussions. I felt it was removed from the people and communities I engage with
\bigcirc	I commend the organisers for bringing together experts in the field.
Q	Balancing direction with engaging issues in the moment, would really help in making the time spent here feel a lot more productive.
\bigcirc	The venue was excellent — I liked the connection Mastoera had with the venue.
\bigcirc	Please include more parents in the next Indaba.
\bigcirc	Great (intentional) mix of people – government (DSD), funders, civil society.
0	I value the panel discussions – I got to think critically about issues of violence prevention, families, fatherhood and I got to connect with amazing organisations.





Conclusions: What we learned from the Indaba

The themes that came to the forefront during the Indaba were:

- Even though it is an extremely difficult time for our country, there is immense hope and opportunity for those who want to contribute to change.
- We have learnt that the model of OST works to provide participants with equality and equal opportunity to define the key themes of the Indaba. This created an opportunity for participants to be part of the agenda of the meeting.
- The role of prevention and early intervention SAPPIN does not primarily do statutory work, the network is focussed on prevention and early intervention work. It has again become apparent how important this work is.
- The urgent requirement for collaboration across sectors NGOs, government departments, academia, donors and the private sector. There is a definite movement towards collaboration. SAPPIN has been joining forces for a long time. The need, willingness, and excitement to work together was visible at the Indaba, not just between non-profits but between different sectors.
- Fathers/fatherhood and involvement with children and parenting

programmes was a key theme. This topic however is difficult to summarise because there were different aspects encompassing fatherhood such as toxic masculinity, sharing the "motherload", cultural sensitivity and how to go about getting fathers to attend a parenting programme.



Future steps

Many aspects were articulated in the different breakaway rooms with not much responsibility taken for action points. This might create an unrealistic expectation from SAPPIN to make all of these action points happen.

The focus areas identified by SAPPIN are:

1. Expand the current SAPPIN fatherhood workshop to include other relevant role-players and invite all interested parties. The workshop will be held in Johannesburg on 18 & 19 March 2024 – depending on funding. An invitation



- will be submitted as soon as funding is confirmed. SAPPIN will share a collaborative research document after the Fatherhood Workshop in March to all participants.
- 2. SAPPIN will send a survey to collate/map the current services of attendees of the first and second Indabas. This will include a shared principle/commonality approach to programmes, potential collaboration such as collective funding proposals, research opportunities and referral systems.
- 3. SAPPIN will create an advocacy document/s for parenting and parenting programmes as early intervention and violence prevention programmes.

 SAPPIN will continue to advocate on behalf of its members and like-minded organisations in specific situations.
- 4. SAPPIN will receive membership applications. The network specifically didn't focus on gaining membership during the Indaba but will include a membership form for interested parties. SAPPIN believes that membership/partnership takes time, to build strong relationships doesn't happen overnight and the members cannot build trust with many new organisations at a time. New membership is therefore a slow and deliberate process.
- 5. The 2024 Families Indaba is on our agenda, for 1-2 October 2024, but is subject to receiving the relevant funds.

Acknowledgements

SAPPIN wishes to thank all the sponsors who contributed to the success of the Families Indaba – UNICEF, World Childhood Foundation and the Two Lilies Fund.

SAPPIN wishes to thank Jika Productions for their hard work and their creativity. No task was too small and everything was done with kindness and friendliness.

SAPPIN wishes to thank all participants who attended the two-day Indaba.

SAPPIN wishes to thank all their members for contributing and working together to make this a memorable event.

SAPPIN wishes to thank the Driver Group members, especially Suzan Erickson who went the extra mile to make this Indaba happen.





Appendices

Appendix 1: Families Indaba Report – day 1

Appendix 2: Families Indaba Report – day 2

Appendix 3: List of Participants/Registered

Appendix 4: Membership Application Form

Appendix 5: Family Play Needs Assessments of Fathers





