



The UN Summit of the Future: What's in it for children's and Africa's development?

A child rights civil society perspective

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Representing a civil society perspective

- More than 120 organisations with a shared vision
- **All children in South Africa (and Africa) realise their right to develop and exercise their full potential to achieve transformation to ensure inclusive, sustainable development, peace and good governance**
- That is at the heart of the SDGs and explicitly Africa's Agenda 2063





- To realise the youth dividend, the right of every child to develop their full potential must be realised (Africa's Agenda for Children 2040 is intrinsic to Agenda 2063)
- So, they have the means, knowledge and commitment to be actively engaged, responsible citizens
- And to nurture future generations of children who will sustain change

Africa's
child-
centred
developme
nt agenda
in
summary



Spelled out in treaty and development commitments

The global Nurturing Care Framework for ECD and the INSPIRE framework provide a road map for Member States to implement their responsibilities

All children must receive nurturing care in age-appropriate combinations across their life course

- Health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, education from birth and safety and protection
- From conception until exit childhood

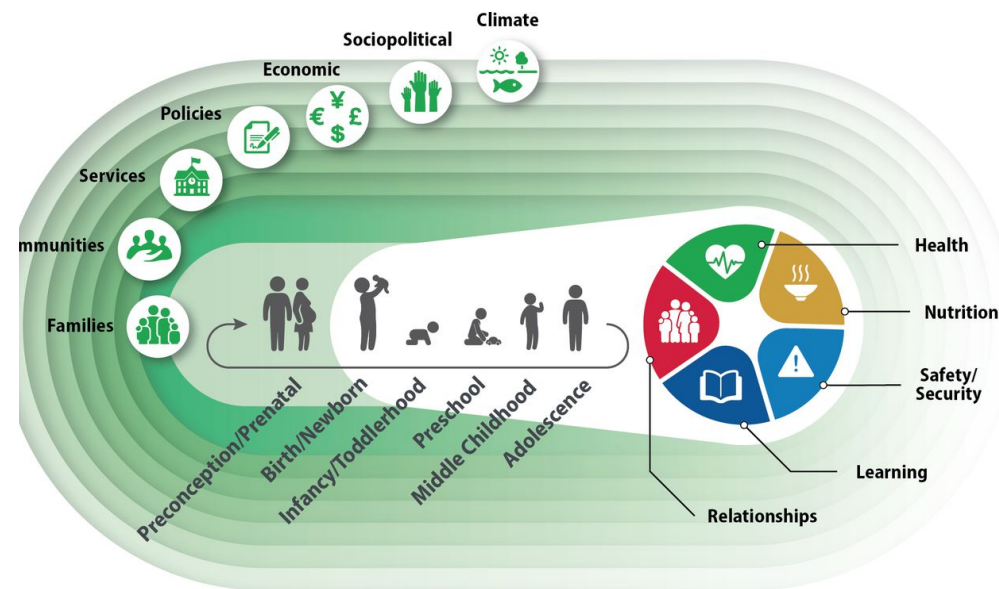
From empowered primary parents and caregivers

- Supported by community members, ECD centres, health workers, schools and teachers, the media and business community

Because it is a right and development imperative

- Governments must enable all caregivers, especially parents and caregivers to provide the required nurturing care and protection

How is this to be done?



Nurturing care will equalise and optimise potential only if governments invest in and deliver...



Sustained combinations of services to enable parents in the home, and supporting caregivers in communities, centres and schools overcome risks and harness strengths to provide children with nurturing care



Ensure the foundations are laid. Prioritise parental support in the 1st 3 years through public platforms with universal reach such as health systems, public media



Targeted measures to reach parents of especially vulnerable children

Poverty

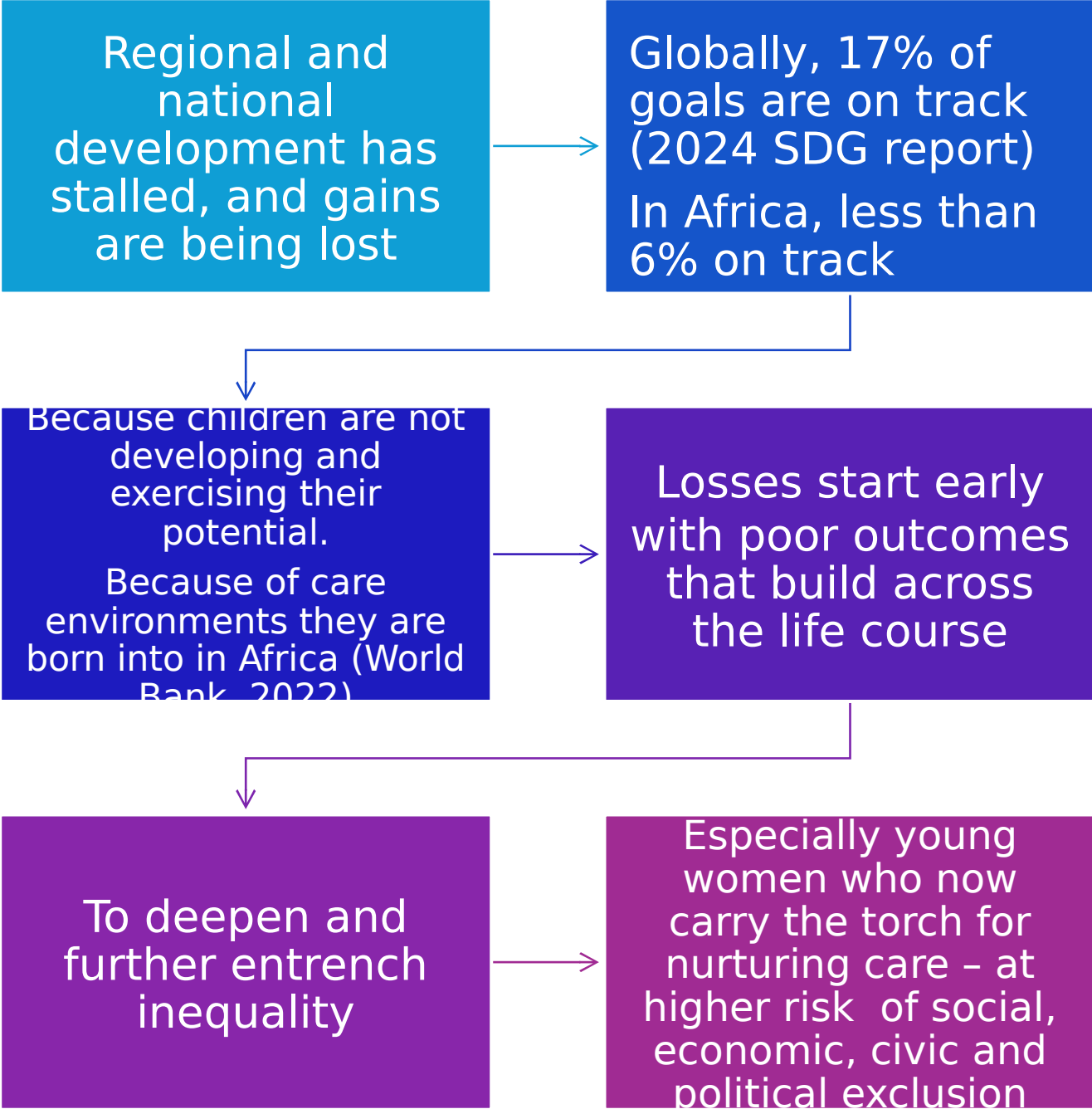
Disability

Teen parents

Mothers with mental health issues

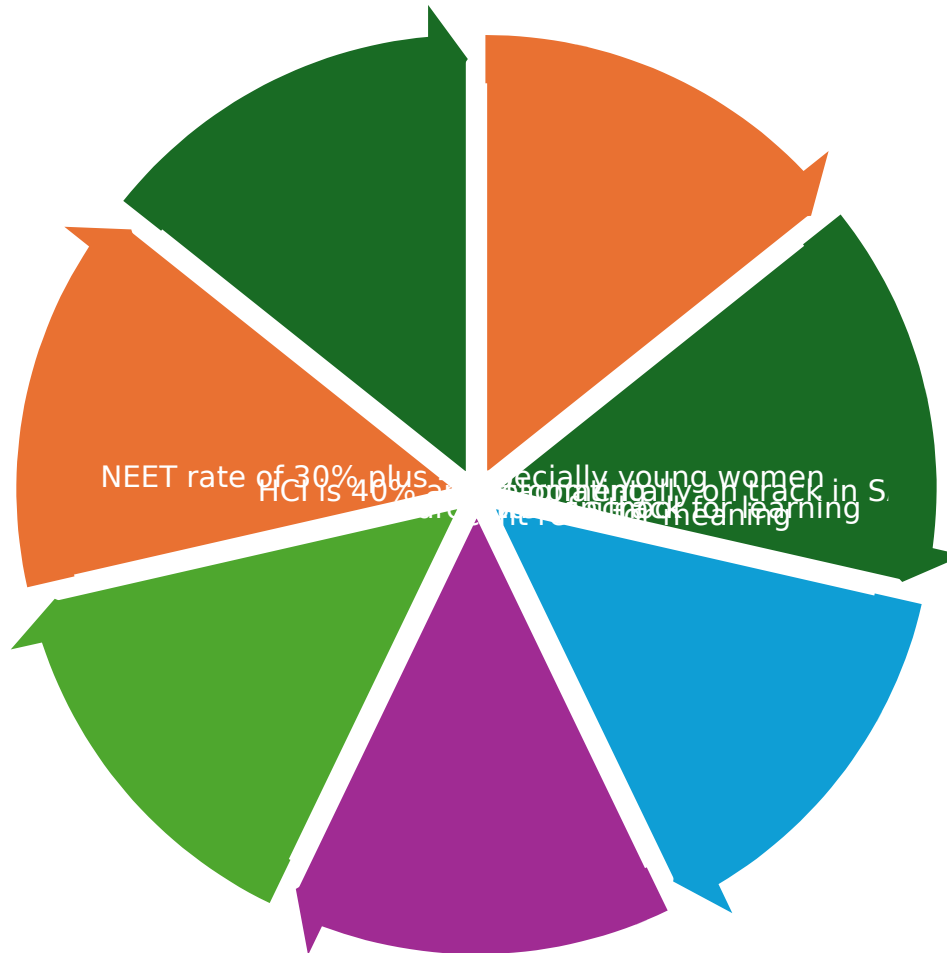
Humanitarian crises

Situation in South Africa and Africa: Unique – for wrong reasons

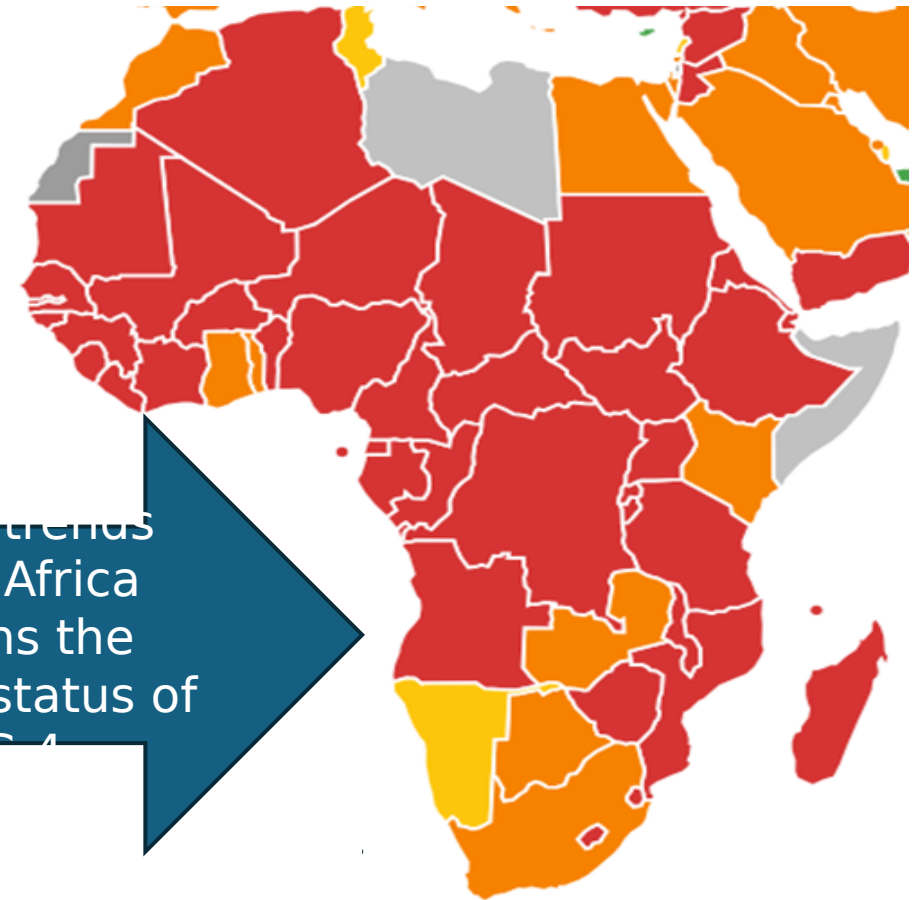


Extent of losses are unique to Africa and erode the continent's human capital foundations

Negative cycle of child and human development outcomes



SDG 4 status in Africa in 2024



Regional and national child development outcomes are poor despite past efforts

- After 15 years of increased investments in health and education
- Returns are poor and declining
- Africa is losing 60% of its human capital potential
- South Africa - losing 57% - but this has not improved in 10 years. Middle income countries like South Africa can't escape inequality trap.
- Where human capital is developed, marginalised lack agency to exercise it



Implications for Africa: ticking time bomb

- **In 2023, 185 million plus children under 5 in SSA – set to grow to 200 million by 2030**
- **If 65% are at risk – this means 120 million under 5s are at risk of poor development**
- **They will be adolescents when the SDGs end and will be the new generation of parents in the next agenda – but lack the capacity to do so**
- The numbers grow every year as the child population increases
- By 2050, Africa will be home to 1 billion children
- We are losing 60 percent plus of their potential, and this may increase as socio-economic challenges increase
- We face a growing child rights, child development and ultimately a regional development crisis
- Why???



1

Treaty and development commitments to children and their families are not being honoured by governments across Africa

2

Investments are skewed and limited to only some services, some of the time for some children

3

Child development is equated with formal education
Investments are in formal education & health for survival

4

Support for parental capacity is key, but neglected in global and regional instruments

5

SDG 4 - only goal addressing child development (early care and education)
In 2024 - no data on the care component - just access to pre-school

6

This creates a planning and accountability framework for countries that drives omissions in national responses across Africa



The result



And the solution

Achieve the SDGs

Human capital for sustainable inclusive development increased

Every child develops to their full potential

Parents and caregivers access combinations of services and are enabled to provide age-appropriate nurturing care in all five domains for all children across their life course receive

Health + Nutrition + responsive caregiving + Early learning from birth + Safety and protection

0 - 3

4 - 9

10 - 19

Integrated primary health care programmes

Integrated child-centred social protection

Integrated community outreach

Integrated home-based services

School / ECD health and development programmes

Health service in homes, communities, facilities

Nutritional support, education, micro-nutrient supplementation for healthy growth and development

Parenting / family support to improve knowledge of importance of and how to provide responsive care, including positive parenting and parenting for children with special needs

Age-differentiated learning services in homes, centres and schools

0 - 3 years in homes and communities

Birth registration
Basic services – WASH
Protective laws – such as maternity leave and labour laws
Social

Water and sanitation

Health ministry

Nutrition and food security

Social development

Education

Gender

Civil registration

Labour

Primary and secondary school

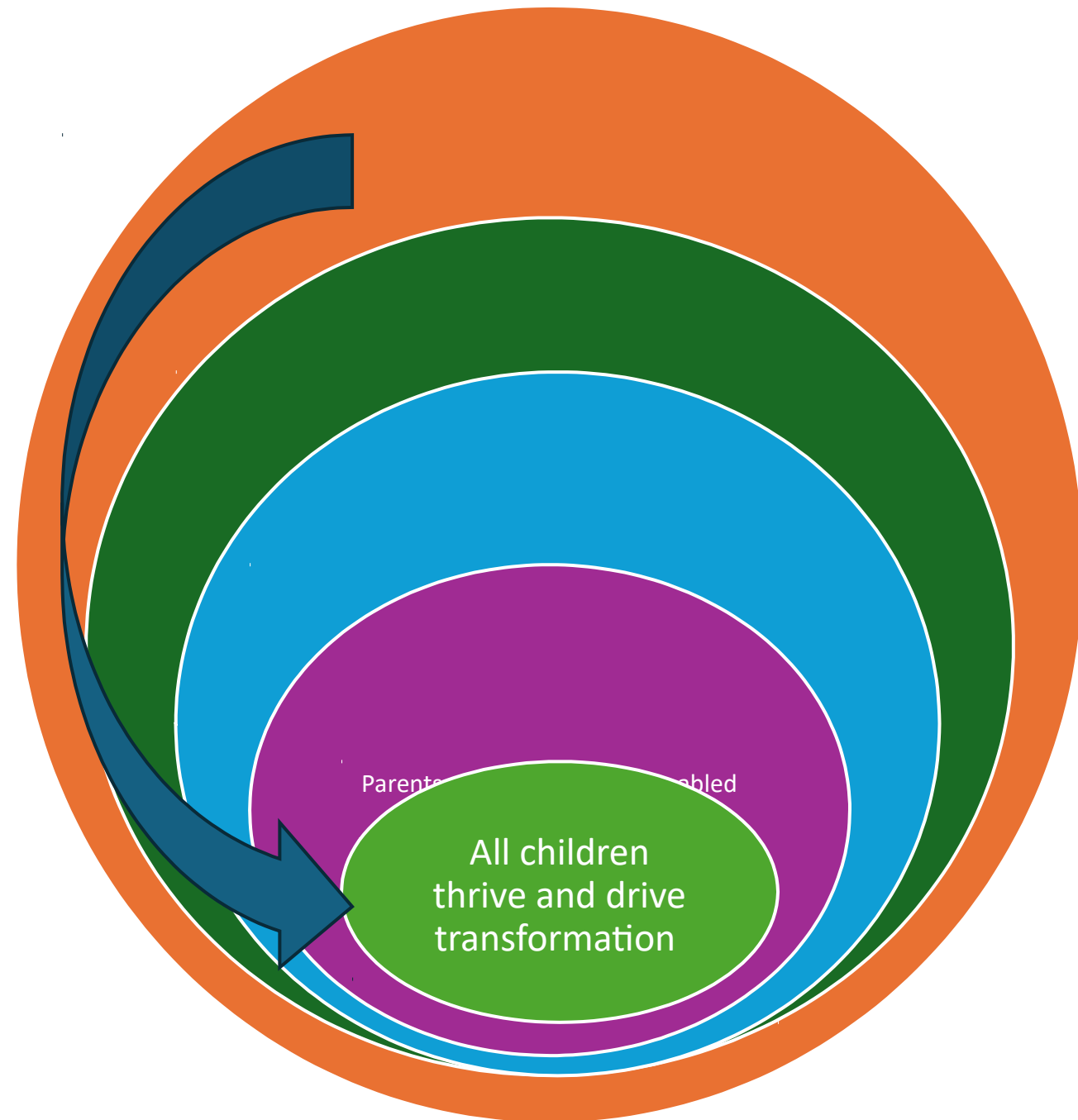
National childcare and protection system that ensures all ministries recognise child development as a priority and use their resources to provide parenting support services in required combinations to enable it



SOF and Pact are key to regional progress

Must strengthen
multilateralism by ensuring all
and most strategic
commitment to realise
children's development are
implemented and accounted
for

- By strengthening the global and regional legal and accountability framework
- To shift national planning and accountability in all countries across Africa
- By making improved child development a cross-cutting outcome with targets - measured through SOF follow-up monitoring
- The SOF must strengthen the legal framework of implementation measures to enable nurturing care
- By elevating the Nurturing Care Framework and others into mandatory implementation measures - binding General Comments
- To compel development of stronger policies and increased, balanced spending on sustained parental support for nurturing care alongside the usual education and health
- Secure explicit commitments in the Pact to invest in parent support to enable nurturing care for development, especially in the 1st 3 years, along with improved survival, ECD centres and schools



Thank you

A copy of the submission on the SOF and revision 2 of the Pact will be shared by the network of CSO partners

Provides detailed analysis and specific recommendations

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