

CHILDREN'S

NDP

FINAL PROCESS REPORT





INTRODUCTION

South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) was approved by Parliament in 2012. The plan was crafted by the first National Planning Commission (NPC). The second National Planning Commission appointed from 2015 to 2020 was tasked with monitoring the implementation of the NDP. The Children's National Development Plan (NDP) is an initiative of the second NPC.

The Children's NDP initiative aims to give children in South Africa an opportunity to express their views about Vision 2030 as articulated in the NDP. Workshops were conducted from 2017 to 2019 with a purposive sample of 20 to 30 children in each of the nine provinces of South Africa — selected by a civil society or government partner in the child rights sector. A stakeholders' workshop was conducted with potential government and civil society organisations in February 2017 to identify implementation partners for the initiative.

At this workshop, 17-year old Thlomphe Kekana from Mpumalanga advised that the Children's NDP initiative should not only target happy and good children. The provincial workshops engaged boys and girls, mostly aged 12 to 18 years, from different backgrounds.

Workshops were conducted with: children experiencing disabilities in North West; Grade R learners in Northern Cape; juveniles in conflict with the law (aged 15 to 25 years) in Western Cape; and children living in child and youth care centres in Free State. In total, 12 children's workshops were conducted during this initiative. The final workshop from 29 – 31 March 2019 convened the nine provincial workshop representatives to develop the Children's NDP story.

AIMS OF THE INITIATIVE

The children were guided to think about how government works and given insight into children's rights in the South African Constitution. Most importantly, they were asked to engage on Vision 2030 in the National Development Plan. The ultimate aim of the initiative is to develop child-friendly products, like a storybook, that communicates the NDP to children.

The initiative was supported by the following personnel in the National Planning Commission secretariat: Xoliswa Dilata, Phuti Moloto, Nokwenama Ndlovu, Bright Nsovo, Nqobile Shange, Silondile Mpotshane, Zarina Adhikari, and Mastoera Sadan.

METHOD AND APPROACH

Experiential learning approaches were used to encourage children to be free to play and speak. Most of the workshops were conducted over a two-day period at a time that minimised the disruption to schooling.

The workshop in Groot Drakenstein Correctional Facility and the Grade R workshop in Northern Cape were conducted for one morning only to fit the particular circumstances of these participants.





WORKSHOP AGENDA

DAY 01

- Introductions (*alliterative labels of our names after discussing the right to a name*).
- Branches of government (*with an actual tree branch*).
- Campaigning to be the President (*with posters*).
- Identifying local political figures (*from newspapers*).
- Conducting a session of Parliament (*e.g. on child abuse or teenage pregnancy*).
- Introducing the National Planning Commission.
- Demonstrating levels of government (*with puzzles*).
- Explaining functions of government.
- Introducing the budget process (*using a three-tiered cake*).
- Prioritising children's issues.

DAY 02

- Discussing children's rights (*e.g. dignity of persons with disability*).
- Introducing the chapters of the NDP.
- Reading the Preamble to the Constitution.
- Reading NDP vision messages (*posters*).
- Roleplaying socio-economic rights.
- Co-creating Vision 2030 (*making creative posters comparing present day realities to 2030 visions*).
- Selecting a provincial representative.
- Informing the children of child-friendly NDP outputs to be developed.

2017

WORKSHOPS

This report provides an overview of each provincial workshop held between 2017 and 2018.

The following information is provided in each report: place and date of workshop; partner hosting the workshop; workshop facilitators; Commissioners attending the workshop; key concerns raised by children; topics of Vision 2030 posters and the provincial representative selected.



WESTERN CAPE

The first engagement with children was conducted in Groendal, Franschhoek in the Western Cape from 27-28 March 2017, in partnership with Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN), The Lords Acre Mission and Youth Empowerment Action.

Alexander Henry (specialist facilitator in disability rights) was a guest facilitator at the workshop and introduced the rights of children with disabilities and demonstrated reasonable accommodation to the children. Commissioners Sithole, Dutton, Essop and Karaan visited the workshop. Commissioner Nomdo assumed the main responsibility for workshop facilitation.

Commissioners were technical experts, resource people for the children's group work, judges of Vision 2030 posters but mostly friendly ambassadors of the NPC. The key issues of concern for the children were: pollution, drugs, education, abuse, housing and toilets as well as service delivery. They focussed their 2030 Vision posters on health and education. Ten-year old Keano Franse was selected as the provincial representative at this workshop.

On 29 March 2017, the NPC represented by Commissioners Nomdo and Sithole also engaged juveniles in conflict with the law at the Groot Drakenstein Correctional Facility. A 15-year old boy in this workshop reported that his main concern was that children were used by older men in criminal activities.

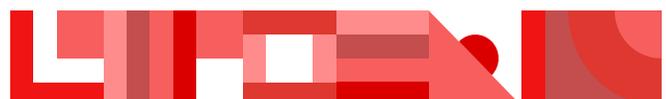


GAUTENG

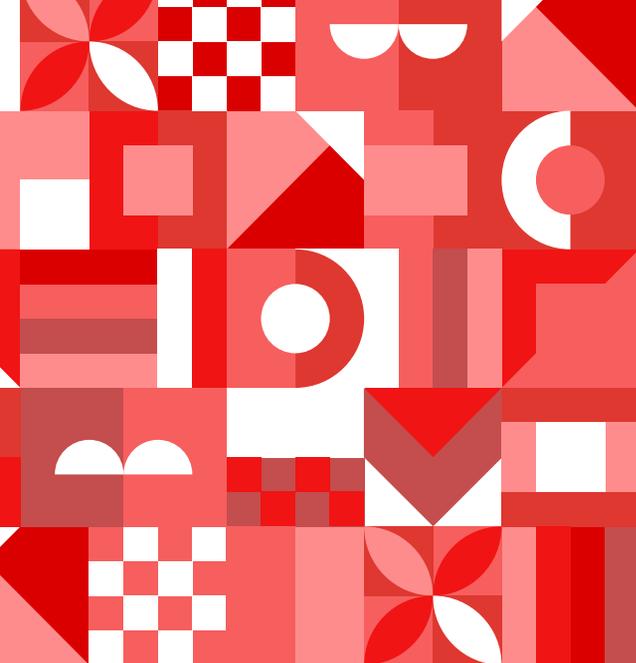
The second provincial engagement took place at Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council in Gauteng, in partnership with Media Monitoring Africa and the Junior City Council of the Ekurhuleni Metropole from 1-2 July 2017. Commissioners Molokwane and Doods attended the workshop.

Twenty participants formed part of the workshop, some attending without consent forms. Commissioner Nomdo explained the importance of informed parental consent as part of children's rights. A sexual and reproductive health rights discussion was also inserted into the workshop programme after a request from the children.

The children listed their key issues of concern as: service delivery, unemployment, lack of knowledge (of sexuality), lack of lifeskills, and substance abuse. They focussed their 2030 Vision posters on racism and education. 17-year old Tselisihang Mahloko was selected as the representative from this workshop.







MPUMALANGA

The third provincial engagement took place in Mpumalanga in partnership with the Mpumalanga Department of Social Development (DSD) from 13-14 July 2017. This workshop consisted of children who were organisational leaders.

Elsina Mhlongo from DSD (who hosted the workshop) invited a child rights veteran, Ms Joyce Siwani and the MEC of Social Development to address the participants. Commissioners Mocumi and Molokwane attended the workshop and Commissioners Nomdo and Dooms co-facilitated the workshop.

The Secretary of Planning, Mr Matona also attended the workshop and shared his experiences of childhood political activism. This group spoke extensively about their views on the value of inclusive education. Their other issues of concern included: teenage pregnancy, human trafficking, excluding children from education, lack of motivation and substance abuse. Their 2030 Vision posters focused on inclusive education, social grants and health.

Theo Van Der Westhuizen, a 17-year old boy was selected as the workshop representative. He was unable to attend the final workshop convening provincial representatives and Kethukuthula Nyanlunga represented this group in his stead.



KWAZULU-NATAL

The fourth provincial engagement took place in Eshowe, KwaZulu-Natal working in partnership with KwaZulu Regional Christian Council (KRCC) on the 25-26 August 2017. This was a mixed age group of participants, from the intermediate phase of primary school up to and including matriculants.

Commissioner Nomdo organised the children in groups with a mix of ages in order for all children to be included in the discussions. Commissioners Bhengu, Dooms, Molokwane and Sithole participated in the workshop.

The group identified rape (mostly by known men), poverty, physical and emotional abuse of teens, teenage pregnancy and crime as their top issues of concern.

These children read the NDP ethos and preamble of the Constitution with much interest. Then they presented Vision 2030 posters on: rural areas, education, environment, health, jobs and housing. Siyabulelo (Thabiso) Ngobo and Nsikelelo Thabethe, both Grade 11 learners, were selected as workshop representatives. Nsikelelo attended the final workshop including all provincial representatives.





2017 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

There were two main activities aimed at giving children the opportunity to share their views on the NDP. The first activity was to establish the core issues of interest or concern to children in each province.

The word cloud (*on the next page*) and the below information represents the issues identified by the children in the first four provincial workshops and the Groot Drakenstein Correctional Facility workshop. In the workshops, the second activity was to request input to create their Vision 2030.



KEY ISSUES OF CONCERN



WESTERN CAPE -

Pollution, Drugs, Education, Abuse, Service delivery, Housing and toilets.



GAUTENG -

Poverty, Service delivery in South Africa, Unemployment, Lack of knowledge, Lack of skills and Substance abuse.



MPUMALANGA -

Teenage pregnancy, Human trafficking, Excluding kids from education, Lack of motivation, Substance abuse and Bullying.



KWAZULU NATAL -

Rape (Mostly by known men), Poverty, Physical and emotional abuse (Teens), Teenage pregnancy, Crime and Domestic Violence.

CHILDREN'S VISION 2030

WESTERN CAPE - EDUCATION

2017: "Children are being thrown out of class and they feel bad about it"

2030: "We will not be beaten and we will work on tablets and laptops"



GAUTENG - RACISM

2017: "Is this the freedom you fought for?"

2030: "We say no to racism!"



MPUMALANGA - EDUCATION

2017: "Same old classrooms, no talent development"

2030: "Children being given the opportunity to go to different forms of school, academic schools, art schools and vocational schools"



KWAZULU-NATAL - HEALTH

2017: "A lot of families suffer losing their loved ones because of HIV."

2030: "A cure for HIV and other deadly diseases like TB and Cancer can do the country some good"



2018

WORKSHOPS

NORTH WEST

The fifth provincial workshop was conducted with special needs Further Education and Training (FET) learners from schools in North West on 13 -14 March 2018 at the Tlamaleng Special School in Gelukspan, North West province. The NPC partnered with Disabled Children's Action Group (a support group for parents of children with disabilities) and Disabled People South Africa (a lobby group for people with disabilities) to identify workshop participants.

Alexander Henry facilitated the introductory session on reasonable accommodation to set the tone of inclusivity and acceptance for the workshop. Alexander is our guest facilitator on the Children's NDP initiative and as a quadriplegic wheelchair user with Cerebral Palsy, his identity as a person with disabilities set the participants at ease.

Commissioners Nomdo, Dlamini and Dooms formed part of the facilitation team at this workshop. This group of participants consisted half of children under 18 and the other half of young people over 18 still completing their FET learning phase. The group listed 20 challenges for children with disabilities trying to live a life in the mainstream.

They identified the following top five key concerns: environment not friendly for wheelchairs; finding an occupation; stigma (to be older at school and to be told by teachers you do not belong at school); government / media / television not sharing information about people with disabilities; and travelling long distances (facing discrimination by drivers and passengers).

The participants divided into groups to develop posters on wheelchair friendly environments, occupations for people with disabilities and profiling of people with disabilities in the media for their Vision 2030. At the end of the workshop, 17-year old Kgosi Molawa in Grade 11 was selected as the provincial representative.



NORTHERN CAPE

The sixth provincial workshop was conducted in partnership with the Early Learning Resources Unit (ELRU) with Grade 7s in Danielskuil (150 km from Kimberley) in Northern Cape. The workshop for Grade 7's was conducted on 7-8 May 2018 with learners from two schools which resulted in a racially diverse group of participants.

Commissioners Nomdo, Molokwane, Dlamini and Dooms formed part of the facilitation team at this workshop. In this workshop we altered the programme to test whether a story book and board game are good project outputs to communicate the NDP vision. We learnt from the children in the workshop that their primary concern was child hunger.

Very sadly when we discussed the matter they noted: 'children are selling themselves for food'. The facilitation team reminded the group that this was in fact rape as adults should not take advantage of hungry children. Some of our other take home messages from the children emerged as a song: "Zizojigi Izinto Thulamtwanam Wenu' Kalelane" which loosely translated means "When a child is crying we must respond. Change is coming".

In their Vision 2030 posters the children focused attention on parks, clinics, housing, a clean environment, crime, and employment. Janisha Muller, a 12-year old, Grade 7 girl was selected as the provincial representative.

DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY



The Grade R workshop, of children aged between 5 and 6 years old, was conducted on 9 May 2018 in one of the classrooms of the Kuilsville Primary School including two schools in the area. Commissioner Nomdo facilitated this workshop with support from the educators and NPC secretariat. The Grade R workshop focused on the elements of national identity such as the colours of the flag and the national anthem as well as reading a child rights storybook. The story was told in Afrikaans and Setswana, the children's mother tongues.

LIMPOPO

The eighth workshop was conducted in partnership with NACCW in Thohoyandou, Limpopo 28-29 November 2018. Commissioners Nomdo, Molokwane and Ramatsea attended this workshop. This workshop also provided input into the Global Child study which is aimed at developing child-informed indicators for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

As one of the countries selected to participate in the Global Child study, South Africa was tasked to focus on identity (articles 7 & 8) and freedom rights (articles 13 to 17) of the CRC. Some children in Limpopo workshop participated in a campaign to support the Constitutional Court case challenging the reasonable chastisement defence for parents in the home.

They sent a picture of themselves with an anti-corporal punishment slogan to a network of lobbyists. They also expressed strong and opposing views about the value of traditional leadership in their communities. Their 2030 posters focussed on traditional houses, safe houses, schools and the forest. Rudzani Mundalama, a 17-year old girl, was selected as the workshop representative.



EASTERN CAPE

The seventh workshop was conducted in Alice, Eastern Cape on 26-27 September 2018 in partnership with the National Association for Child and Youth Care Workers (NACCW). Commissioners Molokwane and Dlamini attended the workshop. The workshop was co-facilitated by Commissioners Nomdo and Dooms and included a guest facilitator, Dr Selina Palm (specialising in children's rights and religion).

The facilitators conducted a sexual and reproductive health rights session on request from the children. Children were concerned about: how to protect themselves from pregnancy, attitudes about sex, and sexual orientation. Children in Eastern Cape spoke of the following as their key concerns: killing of children for muti; called by names that make one feel sad and have low self esteem; children are not being given a chance to make their own choices; their privacy rights are not being respected as well as concerns about lack of puberty information; parents denying children the opportunity to attend school; sexual harassment and having no shelter or clothing.

Their 2030 posters focussed on health, education and social grants. Ukhona Gulwa, a 17-year old boy, was selected as the workshop representative.

FREE STATE

The final provincial workshop was conducted in Bloemfontein, Free State on 5-6 December 2018. Commissioners Molokwane and Nomdo attended this workshop. We took the most care with conducting the final provincial workshop as it included children from the child protection system.

Each group of children was accompanied by a designated child protection agent and feedback was provided to the social workers in charge if special debriefing was required by the children. The co-facilitators were qualified child and youth care workers from NACCW – Gwendaline Palmer, Them bani Yende and Kananelo Tsotetsi. These NACCW facilitators attended a special training session on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with Commissioner Nomdo before facilitating this workshop with children.

The Free State workshop participants also provided input into the Global Study to develop child-informed indicators for the CRC. Their Vision 2030 posters focussed on environments where they live; child participation; jobs for youth; and living in a drug free world. Kananelo Dew, who just turned 17 on the first day of the workshop, was selected as the provincial representative.

2030 VISION FOCUS AREAS



EASTERN CAPE

Grants, Schools and Healthcare in clinics.



LIMPOPO

Traditional houses, Safe parks, Schools and The forest.



FREE STATE

Enviornments in which they line, Child participation, Jobs for youth and living in a drug free world.



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CONCLUSION

The NPC experienced joys and challenges in every workshop setting. Some of the most poignant joys are the trust the children demonstrated towards the NPC team and the ease with which they shared their views and learnt about citizenship with us. Most challenging was listening to the painful realities in which most of the children lived. They did not articulate easily the abuse they experienced in all settings including home, the lack of basic necessities and their hope that adults would improve their lived realities. These insights were uncovered in one-on-one conversations during or after the provincial workshops.

The final workshop of the Children's NDP initiative was conducted from 29-31 March 2019 at the Irene Country Lodge in Pretoria. This workshop convened all the representatives from nine provincial workshops conducted during 2017 and 2018. The purpose of the workshop was to develop the content for the Children's NDP storybook which is intended to communicate the children's Vision 2030 in an accessible illustrated format. Development of the storyline during the workshop was facilitated by a child participation and story writing expert, Deborah Ewing.

The representatives reviewed the provincial Vision 2030 posters (including those from the Groot Drakenstein Correctional Facility) to understand common themes highlighted by children in the workshops. The stories of three characters spanning from 2019 to 2030 were developed.

The representatives decided to focus on stories that communicated children's progress through education, health and social welfare challenges leaning on the support of their community, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and government.

These stories will be woven into one narrative to tell the Children's NDP story in a storybook. Throughout the process five NPC Commissioners supported the implementation of the project consistently. While Commissioner Nomdo was lead facilitator, Commissioners Molokwane, Doods, Mocumi and Dlamini gave invaluable support to the initiative by providing specialist skills and input when needed. They attended more than one provincial workshop with children. Each of these commissioners reflected on the how the Children's NDP workshops affected their views of the capabilities of children to contribute towards governance. Commissioner Mocumi, a disability activist, expressed passionately: "Every human being has got the ability, however, with a person with impairment, it is the environment, attitude and stereotypes that disable him/her, not the impairment."

Commissioner Dlamini, a development economist, said in his detailed reflections report: "Having tolerance to listen, you are able to realize the beauty of learning from others like this group of young people." Adding Commissioner Dr Molokwane, a nuclear physicist, noted: "Now we know what the future leaders of this country think." Finally, Commissioner Doods, an African youth development worker, contends: "Our democracy will be incomplete if we do not take seriously the contributions and capabilities of children to be drivers of change in the South Africa we strive to realize in 2030 and beyond."



Eleven of the 22 sitting commissioners participated in at least one Children's NDP workshop. The five commissioners – Nomdo, Molokwane, Doods, Mocumi and Dlamini in concert with the nine provincial children's workshop representatives committed to finalizing the Children NDP storybook. Commissioner Nomdo and the NPC secretariat, supported by Dr Selina Palm, will analyse the children's input to produce a policy and practice brief.



Posters of the Children's NDP storybook elements



Design supported by UNICEF