



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE WESTERN CAPE COMMISSIONER  
FOR CHILDREN

2020/1



**Commissioner  
for Children**  
OF THE WESTERN CAPE



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The children and their parents who partnered with the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC) to lend credibility to the office deserve our gratitude.

The stakeholders who lobbied for the office and continue to support its functioning give us strength.

The staff of the WCCC (Samantha Morris, Tessa Goldschmidt, Rofhiwa Ntlantsansa and Cameron Cyster) for supporting the development of this report.

The WCCC would like to acknowledge the significant role that the Department of the Premier played in enabling the establishment of the office and the expression of its mandate.

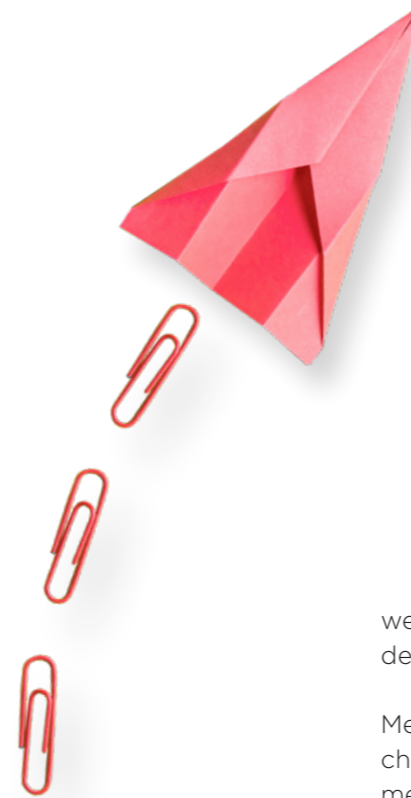
# FOREWORD

I was honoured to be appointed the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC) on 1 June 2020. It was a landmark achievement for South Africa — a historic first ombudsperson for child rights. The office has independent legal standing in the province, although it is administratively embedded in the Department of the Premier. This does not meet international best practice standards for a truly independent oversight mechanism. We will investigate what we need to do to make the office an autonomous governance institution.

Many people are confused about the mandate of the WCCC. Some believed this office would be the panacea for all challenges facing children in the province. This was an unrealistic expectation but reflects the angst of society about the character of childhoods. For many children, childhoods are characterised by deprivation and violence. I believe that the initial mandate of the Commissioner is well-conceived to focus on oversight of the provincial government departments that can best address the qualms related to the wellbeing of children. The Western Cape Departments of Education (WCED), Health (DoH), Social Development (DSD), as well as the Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) are well-placed to lead the prevention of violence and to enable child wellbeing.

For the office to deliver on its mandate it must be fully resourced. Yet, the approval of the staffing structure was delayed for several months and the Cost of Employment allocation in the budget only made provision to employ three (3) staff members. A fourth member of staff was appointed on a 2-year contract, as a result of operational savings from setting up office during the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources should be allocated in line with the approved staff structure, if the office is to address its entire mandate.

During 2020 and beyond, the pandemic raged and had dire effects on the lives of children. Taking office just three (3) months after South Africa's 'hard' lockdown, presented many challenges but also opportunities for innovation. Reaching children in their communities became difficult, thus using WhatsApp for consultations and building partnerships with children became the norm. Recognising children as the experts in their own lives, it was important to develop practice models to engage them. The Child Government Monitors (CGM), Community Child Rights Workshops (CCRW), and Consultations with Children became key models to engage children. I am most proud, that during the COVID-19 pandemic,

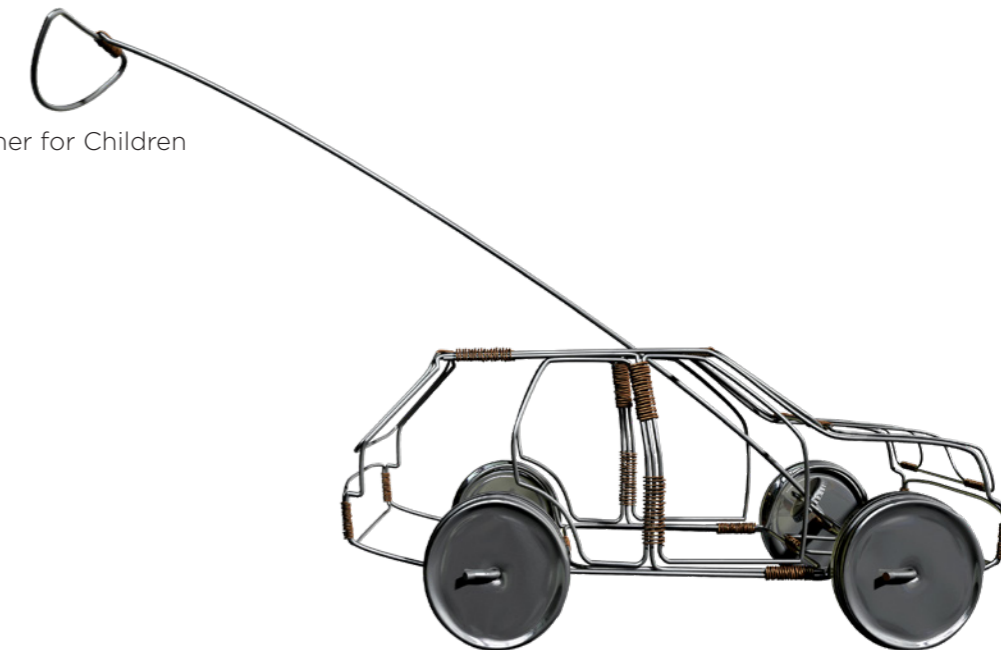


we were able to provide children with opportunities to raise their voices to be heard by key decision makers in governance.

Meetings with stakeholders were key to building trust and spheres of influence to promote child rights. Political and administrative heads of key provincial government departments meet with me regularly to respond to queries and complaints as well as reflect on systemic changes required to protect and promote child rights. I regularly connect with child rights advocacy groups which include civil society organisations and academics who are important partners to move strategic child rights agendas forward. The office has also established international links, such as, with other Children's Commissioners as well as with bodies such as the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Children. My role is to be the bridge between children with these influential adults.

There have been some wins to be proud of including employing the first staff member in the office, children presenting at National Parliament, and building a blueprint for a governance institution.

Christina Nomdo  
Western Cape Commissioner for Children  
September 2021





## ABBREVIATIONS

- CCO - Children's Commissioner Officer
- CCRW - Community Child Rights Workshops
- CEO - Chief Executive Office
- CGE - Commission for Gender Equality
- CGM - Child Government Monitor
- COE - Cost of Employment
- COO - Chief of Operations
- COVID-19 - Coronavirus Disease
- CSG - Child Support Grant
- DCAS - Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport
- DG - Director General
- DOH - Department of Health
- DSD - Department of Social Development
- ECD - Early Childhood Development
- ENOC - European Network for Ombudspersons for Children
- GCIS - Government Communication and Information System
- GHS - General Household Survey
- HOD - Head of Department
- NIDS-CRAM - National Income Dynamics Study - Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey
- NSC - National Senior Certificate
- MEC - Member of Executive Committee
- MTBPS - Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement
- PCGC - Provincial Coordinating and Governance Committee for Child Health, Neonatal Care and Paediatrics
- SALGA - South African Local Government Association
- SASSA - South African Social Security Agency
- Stats SA - Statics South Africa
- UNCRC - United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
- WCCC - Western Cape Commissioner for Children
- WCED - Western Cape Education Department

26

26 MAY 2020  
Christina first engaged the  
DG in the Province

1

1 JUNE 2020  
Christina receives  
her superpowers

1

1 JUN 2020  
Chelsey Botha from  
Elsies River became  
the first CGM

4

4 JUNE 2020  
WCCC first met with  
management team  
of WCED

9

9 JUNE 2020  
WCCC presented to Standing  
Committee on Premier and  
Constitutional Development

JUN 2020



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**10** 10 JUN 2020  
WCCC first met with the HOD of DSD

**11** 11 JUN 2020  
WCCC first met with the Children and Young People’s Commissioner of Scotland

**11** 11 JUN 2020  
WCCC met with the CEO Chief Executive Office of the South African Human Rights Commission

**24** 24 JUN 2020  
WCCC first met with the management team of the DCAS

**24** 24 JUN 2020  
WCCC met with the Provincial Police Ombudsman

# A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN IN THE WESTERN CAPE

This situational analysis serves as a baseline report of childhood indicators; which will be tracked annually to determine points of advocacy and intervention.

## CHILDHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS AND FAMILY MAKE-UP

Of the 19.7 million children living in South Africa, 2 012 781 children between the ages of 0-17 reside in the Western Cape, which makes up a third of the provincial population<sup>1</sup>. When broken down into age and gender, table 1 below illustrates a **roughly equal spread between female and male, as well as among the key age<sup>2</sup> categories<sup>3</sup>**.

**Table 1: 2020 child (age 0-14) population figures for the Western Cape**

LIFE PHASE	AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Early Childhood	0-4	286 855	277 213	564 068
Primary Childhood	5-9	289 631	280 715	570 346
Early Adolescence	10-14	291 331	285 027	576 358

Source: Stats SA (2020). Mid-Year Population Estimates

Many children in South Africa do not live consistently in the same household as their biological parents. **The national percentage of children living with both parents decreased from 39% in 2002 to 34% in 2018<sup>4</sup>**. In 2018, 43% of all children (8.5 million children) lived with their mothers but not with their fathers, whereas only 3% of children lived in households where their fathers are present and their mothers absent. There is substantial provincial variation within these patterns. **In the Western Cape, the proportion of children living with both parents is significantly higher than the national average, with around half of children residing with both parents (54%)<sup>5</sup>**. Similarly, the number of children living with neither parent is relatively low in the Western Cape, demonstrated by 8% of children living with neither of their biological parents.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PREVALENCE OF CHILDHOOD DEPRIVATION

Realising the rights and wellbeing of such a significant population size requires an understanding of the deprivations that children across the province may face. It has been well-documented that poverty affects many aspects of child rights and wellbeing as it affects access to quality healthcare, education outcomes, living in physical environments that compromise safety, and opportunities for sport and recreation<sup>6</sup>. When assessing income poverty in the country, Stats SA applies the upper bound poverty line, which equates to monthly income of R1 268, 00 per person in 2020. Using the upper bound poverty line as a benchmark, **it was estimated that in 2018, 461 000 children in the Western Cape (23,4%) lived in poor households<sup>7</sup>**.

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, many more citizens were left in a more vulnerable state, as job losses and salary cuts increased as a result of economic restrictions. **In the**

**Western Cape alone, official unemployment rates steadily increased each quarter since January 2020, which can be seen in table 2 below.** While there are no official statistics on childhood poverty during COVID-19, there were direct impacts of increasing unemployment for children living in households where job losses occurred. This may have increased food insecurity, inability to afford fees for school and early childhood development programmes, and limited access to healthcare<sup>8</sup>.

**Table 2: Official unemployment rates as of quarter 1, 2021**

	JAN-MAR 2020	OCT-DEC 2020	JAN-MAR 2021
South Africa	30,10%	32,50%	32,60%
Western Cape	20,90%	22,50%	23,70%

Source: Stats SA (2021). Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Quarter 1: 2021

The final waves of the NIDS-CRAM survey demonstrate increasing food insecurity. Evidence shows that **2.3 million households across the country reported child hunger in the week before they were interviewed<sup>9</sup>**. **Of those 2.3 million households, around 620 000 reported that a child had experienced hunger almost every day or every day the week before they were interviewed in April/May 2021.** Altogether, 2% of respondents reported child hunger in their household consistently in every wave of the study, which means that respondents in households with just over 400 000 children reported that at least one child went hungry in their household in every wave between May 2020 and May 2021.

Childhood poverty is, however, a multifaceted condition that includes more than just the experience of income poverty and food insecurity. In a recent UNICEF analysis of the 2015 Living Conditions Survey, the multidimensional nature of childhood poverty is explored by assessing the experience of multiple deprivations (nutrition, health, child development, education, child protection, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), housing and information<sup>10</sup>). In this context, a child is considered multidimensionally poor if she/he is deprived in at least three dimensions out of the seven analysed. Using this framework, **the analysis reveals that 37,1% of children residing Western Cape are multidimensionally poor. This means that one (1) out of every three (3) children experience at least four (4) types of deprivations across every age group in the province.** When compared to the rest of the country, the Western Cape fairs generally well, as 62,1% of children across South Africa are considered multidimensionally poor.

## CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Access to social assistance is a crucial right to alleviate the experience of poverty, and government is obligated to directly support children when their parents or caregivers are unable to. During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, poverty and deprivation were more exacerbated, which had a knock-on effect for childhood poverty. To ameliorate some of the income shocks, the South African Government introduced several interventions, including emergency grants (COVID-19 Temporary Employer Relief Scheme<sup>11</sup>) and top-ups to already existing grants. For six months, starting in May 2020, an extra R250 per month was added to all grants with exception of the child support grant (CSG), where the top-up was R500 per caregiver from June<sup>12</sup>.

2

2 JUL 2020  
WCCC met with the first ever Children's Commissioner for India

6

6 JUL 2020  
Member of Executive Committee for Social Development welcomes Children's Commissioner

14

14 JUL 2020  
WCCC shared her mandate at a SALGA meeting

20

20 JUL 2020  
WCCC logo launched

According to the 2018 GHS, **44,3% of South African households benefitted from one or more grants in 2018 and those grants are considered the second most important source of income across the country**<sup>13</sup>. Table 3 demonstrates access to the CSG, Foster Care Grant and Care Dependency Grant in 2021 in the Western Cape, specifying the number of children benefitting from said grants across the province.

**Table 3: Active children per grant type in the Western Cape (March, 2021)**

AGE COHORT	CARE DEPENDENCY GRANT	CHILD SUPPORT GRANT	FOSTER CARE GRANT
Age 0-4	1 863	255 992	2 327
Age 5-11	6 963	450 997	11 674
Age 12-17	7 311	348 502	15 664
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16 137</b>	<b>1 055 491</b>	<b>29 665</b>

Source: SASSA (2021), Active Children per Grant

When considering the prevalence of pre-COVID income poverty levels amongst children in the Western Cape, grant coverage outweighs the raw numbers of children that fall below the upper bound poverty line; thus, demonstrating good grant coverage. **According to Stats SA, access to all child support-related grants has been the lowest in the Western Cape since 2014 – and is consistently ranked as below the national average.** This most likely owes to lower levels of income poverty experienced in the province.

### CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The early childhood development (ECD) sector has been described as one of the pandemic's hardest hit sectors across the country, which was a sector already hanging in the balance in pre-pandemic times. **Before the onslaught of the risk adjusted lockdown, access to early learning and care programmes in the Western Cape was low to moderate as of 2017, which was largely comparable with national access figures** (see table 4 below for these figures):

**Table 4: Children's access to ECD programmes in the Western Cape (2017)**

INDICATOR	SOUTH AFRICA	WESTERN CAPE
Children 0-2 years reported to attend a preschool, nursery school, creche, educare centre or playgroup	21%	29%
Children 0-2 years reported to be in the care of a daymother / childminder / gogo	9%	10%
Children 0-2 years cared for at home / not with a childminder or in a group environment	70%	61%
Children 3-5 years reported to attend an early learning group programme or Gr R	69%	66%

Source: Stats SA (2017). Data analysed by Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

While 2020/21 ECD attendance figures for the Western Cape are not yet available, the various waves of the NIDS-CRAM surveys provide good insights into the impact of COVID-19 upon ECD access across the country. Much like the education sector, ECD programmes were mandated to remain closed during the hard lockdown. **In July-August 2020, after ECD programmes were allowed to reopen, only 7% of NIDS-CRAM respondents living with children aged 0-6 indicated that any child in the household had attended an ECD programme in the past 7 days**<sup>14</sup>.

**According to the latest Wave 5 report, 36% of households reported that at least one child aged 0-6 was attending an ECD programme in the past 7 days**<sup>15</sup>. Levels of ECD attendance are thus recovering to their pre-pandemic levels, where about 39% of NIDS-CRAM wave 3 and 4 respondents living with children aged 0-6, indicated that at least one child had attended an ECD programme in February 2020. Additionally, it should also be noted that the Western Cape Government has assisted 95% (3 801) of registered ECD centres in the Province to re-open safely via the provision of PPE and safety materials<sup>16</sup>.

### CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Since 2016, the Western Cape education system has made great strides in supporting a child's right to access education. This can be demonstrated by **increasing rates of education access, high rates of learner retention, increased rates of learners benefitting from the 'no-fee' policy, and high National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rates** – shown in table 5 below.

**Table 5: Education access data between 2016-2019.**

YEAR	LEARNER POPULATION	RETENTION RATES FOR GR 10-12 (%)	LEARNERS BENEFITTING FROM 'NO-FEE' POLICY (%)	NSC PASS RATES
2016	998 925	67	58	86
2017	1 020 642	68	58	82,8
2018	1 044 596	66,8	58,3	81,5
2019	1 063 293	70	62,9	79,9

Source: Western Cape Education Department Annual Performance Plan (2020/2021 – 2022/2023)

While high numbers of children are benefitting from their right to education access, **the quality of education in the Western Cape has, however, straggled behind, which is on par with national performance rates.** This can be demonstrated by low levels of literacy and mathematics outcomes for grade 3 and 9, and the low rates of bachelor pass in the NSC. Table 6 below shows these outcomes.

**22** 22 JUL 2020  
MEC for Health welcomes WCCC into office

**29** 29 JUL 2020  
WCCC first met with the HOD of DoH

**5** 5 AUG 2020  
MEC for Education welcomed WCCC into office



WCCC with Child Government Monitor and family

Table 6: Education outcomes data

YEAR	% OF GR 3 PASSING SYSTEMIC ASSESMENTS IN MATHS	% OF GR 3 PASSING SYSTEMIC ASSESMENTS IN LANGUAGE	% OF GR 9 PASSING SYSTEMIC ASSESMENTS IN MATHS	% OF GR 3 PASSING SYSTEMIC ASSESMENTS IN LANGUAGE	BACHELOR PASS RATE (NSC)
2016	57,7	42,5	23,6	55,1	40,9
2017	58,3	46,6	22	53	39,1
2018	56,6	45,8	23	52,6	42,3
2019	58,1	44,9	22,7	53,6	43,6

Source: Western Cape Government (2021) Measuring results using key outcome indicators (Report, March 2021)

Education access and quality are two facets that have also been severely impacted by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Part of the country's response to containing the spread of the virus was to limit large numbers of children from gathering at schools, which included

several school closures and the implementation of rotational timetables between March 2020 to July 2021. Insights from the NIDS-CRAM survey reveals the following impacts of school closures nationally and provincially<sup>17</sup>:

- Learning losses in South Africa are estimated to be 70%-100% in quintile 1-3 schools (which make up 80% of South African schools). **This means that most learners across the country have lost almost a full year of learning.**
- **Nationally, 650,000 to 750,000 children aged 7 to 17 years old were not attending school by May 2021.** This represents an increase in the number of absent learners of approximately 400,000 – 500,000 when compared to 'normal' times, and a decline in the attendance rate amongst this age group from 98% to 93.4 – 94.2%.
- Average household attendance rates were lower in April 2021(95%) than in November 2020 (97%) with significant differences across provinces. **In the Western Cape, attendance figures were at 67% in June 2020, whereas it significantly increased to 95% in April 2021.**

### CHILDREN'S STATE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

When trying to understand the status of child health, key indicators include infant (children under one years old) and child (children aged one – five) mortality rates. **Between 2009 and 2016, the overall mortality rate for children between one and five decreased by 38%**<sup>18</sup>. This reduction was due to declines in deaths in almost all categories, with the biggest declines in number of deaths due to HIV/AIDS (76%), diarrhoea (71%) and malnutrition (69%). Similarly, **the number of newborn deaths (infants aged 0-27 days) decreased by 29% from 2009 to 2016.** Deaths due to most causes decreased by 30%, but deaths due to severe infection dropped by 48%.

In line with global trends, the prevalence of COVID-19 infections amongst children have been relatively low across the province. **In the Western Cape, approximately 12 300 children were documented to have contracted COVID-19 between March 2020 and March 2021, accounting for only 4% of all laboratory cases confirmed in the province**<sup>19</sup>. Mortality was also quite low, with only 59 child deaths reported in 2020; with the majority of these deaths occurring in young children and in older adolescents. While COVID-19 infection rates have largely spared children, the collateral impacts of the pandemic can be demonstrated in several unexpected ways. These include:

#### Access to healthcare services

Access to primary healthcare (PHC) was limited during the risk adjusted lockdown, which owed to the de-escalation of services, travel restrictions and hesitance to travel, lack of public transport, and financial constraints. These limitations resulted in the following:

- **There was a 23% decrease in PHC visits amongst children under five years from 2019 to 2020 – with 483 275 fewer children seen for the year.**
- **5% fewer children under 1 receiving their measles vaccine.**
- **11% fewer children between 12 and 59 months receiving their deworming dosage.**
- **7% fewer children between 12 and 59 months receiving their Vitamin A dosage.**<sup>20</sup>

**19** 19 AUG 2020  
MEC for DCAS welcomed WCCC into office

**20** 20 AUG 2020  
WCCC met with the Provincial Police Commissioner

**24** 24 AUG 2020  
WCCC met with CGE



**Prevalence of Injury**

During the lockdown, many children were confined to their homes, which created the potential for increased exposure to risks for intentional (purposeful human acts of violence intended to cause harm) and unintentional injuries (unplanned and unexpected injuries). Data provided by the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital shows how the prevalence of certain types of injury have fluctuated. In terms of unintentional injuries, the following was documented:

- **Overall decreases were found for unintentional injuries (15% decrease)**, which owed to a significant reduction in road traffic injuries, children not at school, and an alcohol ban.
- **There was, however, increases in unintentional injuries occurring in the home (falls increasing by 5%, burns increasing by 10%, and dog bites increasing by 13%).** These increases are largely due to more children being confined to the home, which placed younger children at greater risk for injury at home.<sup>21</sup>

With regard to intentional injuries, the following was noted:

- **A 10% decrease in intentional injuries from 2019 to 2020.** This decrease may also signal the challenges that some women and children faced while trying to access services during the lockdown.
- **Between March and May 2020, there was more than 50% decline in intentional injuries,** partly attributed to the alcohol ban which is known to impact violence in the home<sup>22</sup>.

**Nutrition**

Before the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, children across the country were already experiencing the threat of malnutrition. According to a recent UNICEF report, **27% (1564 000) of children in South Africa were stunted in 2016 - this implies that their height was not adequate for their age<sup>23</sup>. Child wasting (low weight for their height) was experienced by 2% (140 000) of South Africa’s children.** In the Western Cape, these figures are slightly lower than the national average, **which shows a 22% rate of childhood stunting, and a 1.7% rate for childhood wasting in the province.**

As noted above, children’s access to health services were negatively impacted – particularly access to essential nutrition interventions such as deworming and vitamin A supplementation. **Despite the rise in child hunger, the incidence of severe malnutrition decreased between 2019 and 2020. There was a 40% decrease in severe malnutrition and 55% decrease in moderate malnutrition<sup>24</sup>.**



WCCC with a family in Bitouville

★ *Access to social assistance is a crucial right to alleviate the experience of poverty, and government is obligated to directly support children when their parents or caregivers are unable to care for them.*

**8** 8 SEP 2020  
WCCC in office for 100 days

**9** 9 SEP 2020  
WCCC Facebook and Twitter launched

**10** 10 SEP 2020  
Premier hosted WCCC on a Digicon to reflect on her first 100 days

**14** 14 SEP 2020  
WCCC welcomed 4 graduate interns to work in her Office

**15** 15 SEP 2020  
WCCC submitted to Provincial Parliament on the Social Assistance Amendment Bill

**VISION**  
Re-imagine  
and remake  
childhoods

**GOALS**



**MISSION** #LITTLEVOICESMUSTCOUNT #KLEINSTEMMETJIESMOETSAAKMAAK #AMAZWIAMANCINCIMAKAVAKALE



**SUPERHERO SQUAD FACES CHILDREN'S LIVED REALITIES**

The appointment of the WCCC was managed by the Standing Committee of Social Development in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and the appointment was confirmed by the Premier on 1 June 2020. The 12-person office structure proposed in policy was approved by the national government. The budget required to employ all staff members and the Commissioner is just over R7.6 million, in 2021. **The existing budget envelope, R3.1 million for COE in year one (April 2020 - March 2021), is insufficient to realise this goal.** The WCCC was allocated R8 million (R3 million allocated to office set-up) in the year one and R5 million in the two outer years of Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. Start up spending was slow owing to the global pandemic, no permanent accommodation being identified and staff recruitment processes. In year one the office spent R1, 412M of the R8M, as permanent accommodation was not yet identified. In year two, spending will increase on COE, workshops, research and the permanent office accommodation.

Establishing an office amid the global COVID-19 pandemic was challenging and required adaptations to operations and programming. The office *domicilium citandi et executandi* was at Norton Rose House, Riebeek Street in Cape Town for the first year. However, the pandemic has resulted in remote working due to constraints with setting up office and constantly fluctuating COVID-19 alert levels in the country, restricting movement. **The vision for the Commissioner's office accommodation is to create an iconic, child-friendly, fantasy house.**



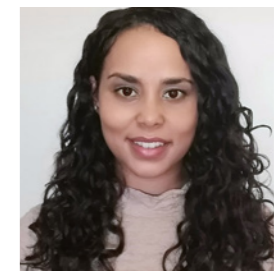
**CHRISTINA NOMDO**

The Western Cape Commissioner for Children since 1 June 2020

Christina has 30 years of work experience

She has three social sciences university degrees

Her special talent is that she knows how to listen to children and amplify their voices for key decision makers to hear



**TESSA GOLDSCHMIDT**

The Children's Commissioner Officer since 1 February 2021

Tessa is a Research Psychologist, studying towards her doctoral degree

She specialises in understanding parenting of children in the early years

Her special role is to support the Commissioner in the child participation practice models

**16** 16 SEP 2020  
WCCC met with the Provincial Head of the Prosecuting Authority and the Provincial Head of Childline

**18** 18 SEP 2020  
WCCC met with the Regional Commissioner of Corrections

# PROPOSED ORGANISATION AND ESTABLISHMENT

## OFFICE OF THE WESTERN CAPE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN

### PURPOSE:

To support the Commissioner for Children in the execution of its responsibilities.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. Monitor and investigate the wellbeing of children in the Western Cape and report thereon.
2. Promote and create awareness and advice on the rights of children and the role of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children in this regard.
3. Provide administrative support services.

1 Director (SL 13)  
1 Personal Assistant (SL 7)

## SUBDIRECTORATE MONITORING AND INVESTIGATIONS

### PURPOSE:

To monitor and investigate the well-being of children in the Western Cape and report thereon.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. Monitor the level of service delivery to children within the Province.
2. Initiate investigations and enquiries into allegations of service delivery efficiencies to children.
3. Submit reports to the Western Cape Provincial Parliament and other institutions where applicable.

1 Deputy Director (SL 11)  
2 Assistant Director (SL 9)  
2 Children's Commissioner Officer (SL 8)

## SUBDIRECTORATE AWARENESS AND ADVICE

### PURPOSE:

To promote and create awareness and advice on the rights of children and the role of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children in this regard.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. Create awareness and an understanding of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children's functions.
2. Provide information and advice on children's rights and access to services.
3. Initiate and conduct research with regard to policies and legislation pertaining to children.
4. Render support in the lobbying of members of the national or provincial parliament and other bodies related to the interests of children.

1 Deputy Director (SL 11)  
1 Assistant Director (SL 9)  
1 Children's Commissioner Officer (SL 8)

## SECTION ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

### PURPOSE:

To provide administrative support services.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. Render support services with regard to:
  - a. General administrative and office support
  - b. Financial and supply chain administration
  - c. Secretariat services
  - d. Registry and messenger services
  - e. Logistical services e.g. accommodation and transport.

1 Administrative Support Officer (SL 7)  
1 Personal Assistant (SL 7)  
(for utilisation by the Western Cape Commissioner for Children)

## CHALLENGES TO ESTABLISH THE OFFICE

- Commissioner worked alone for 8 months of the first year
- Protracted approval of the structure from national level led to late recruitment of staff
- COVID-19 pandemic determined a remote working norm
- Difficulty setting up temporary office infrastructure due to limited access to service providers during the pandemic

## CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

I behold  
The beginning  
I behold  
The new  
The first

At first, my mind  
Wasn't pleased  
Who this person is  
Upon age, I speak

Hasn't the world full  
Of the naive, stubborn minded.

Yet growth intervened  
And I saw,  
This is a child like being

Listening and understanding  
To children like me  
Working in relation like partners  
Working a dream

Guiding but letting us lead  
Government systems  
Children's rights  
Policies at work

Seemingly seemed perfect  
But needs to work  
Now I see

Walls have fallen  
Now I see

Now working with this child like being  
Is like letting my voice sing  
Feeling like the world gives an ear to me  
Well it does at this point as you can see.

Children are we  
And the Commissioner is a mike so  
You can hear us speak.

- By Dr.Luks

Poem capturing the views of CGM, Lukhanyo Sonyamba, about the WCCC



13

13 OCT 2020  
WCCC presented to the Standing Committee on Social Development in Provincial Parliament

14

14 OCT 2020  
CGM involved in WCCC office accommodation viewing

29

29 OCT-2 NOV 2020  
WCCC conducted CCRW in Matzikama Municipality

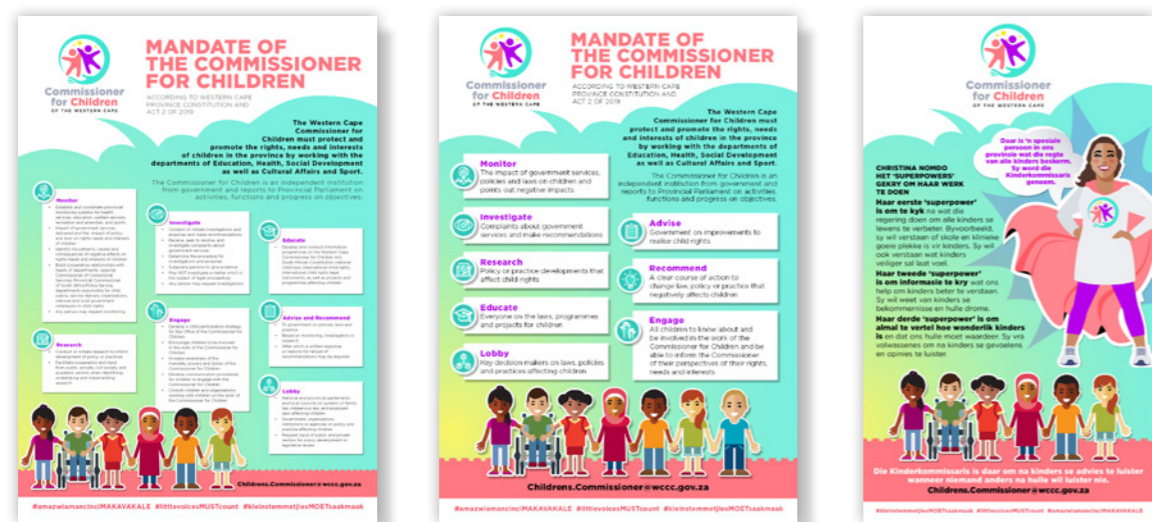


# COMMISSIONER'S WORK IS CHILD'S PLAY

## TOWARDS BUILDING OUR BRAND

The WCCC needed to set itself apart from other governance institutions. The branding of the office needed a look and feel that was appealing to children. The only way to ensure this, was to work in **full partnership with children**. For example, the logo of the office was developed by consulting broadly with children throughout South Africa. Even though we were operating remotely due to the pandemic, networks of child rights activists acted as the bridges between children in their networks and the WCCC, providing feedback on logo proposals. In July 2020, the Child Government Monitors voted to approve the final logo. These children also guided the look and feel of every other product that the office has produced.

Communicating the mandate and work of the WCCC is made easier by developing child-friendly communication methods. Using the symbolism of 'child's play' the office was able to translate, for example, the law that frames the mandate for the office into a children's story. All elements of the WCCC's brand takes us back to the happy times of play during childhood.



## BUILDING A BRAND

- A logo is designed with children across the country in the space of a month
- WCCC's law is translated into child-friendly posters
- RX Radio child journalists partnered to read the children's story version of the mandate in three languages to create public service announcements
- Our Child Government Monitors and their siblings become our brand ambassadors (so that we can use pictures of real children we know)



We understood the importance of building the credibility of the office of the WCCC, by giving regular feedback on our activities and how we were building our strategies to address our mandate. The Commissioner first used her personal Twitter account from 1 June 2020, when she was appointed, to keep people informed of the activities in her office. From September 2020, the official Twitter and Facebook accounts were launched for the WCCC. The Commissioner is also accessible on her personal WhatsApp as well as her special email address: [Childrens.Commissioner@wccc.gov.za](mailto:Childrens.Commissioner@wccc.gov.za). The office's website provides news and access to the resources developed.

**8** 8-12 NOV 2020  
WCCC conducted CCRW in Bergrivier Municipality

**16** 16 NOV 2020  
WCCC participated in the ENOC annual Conference



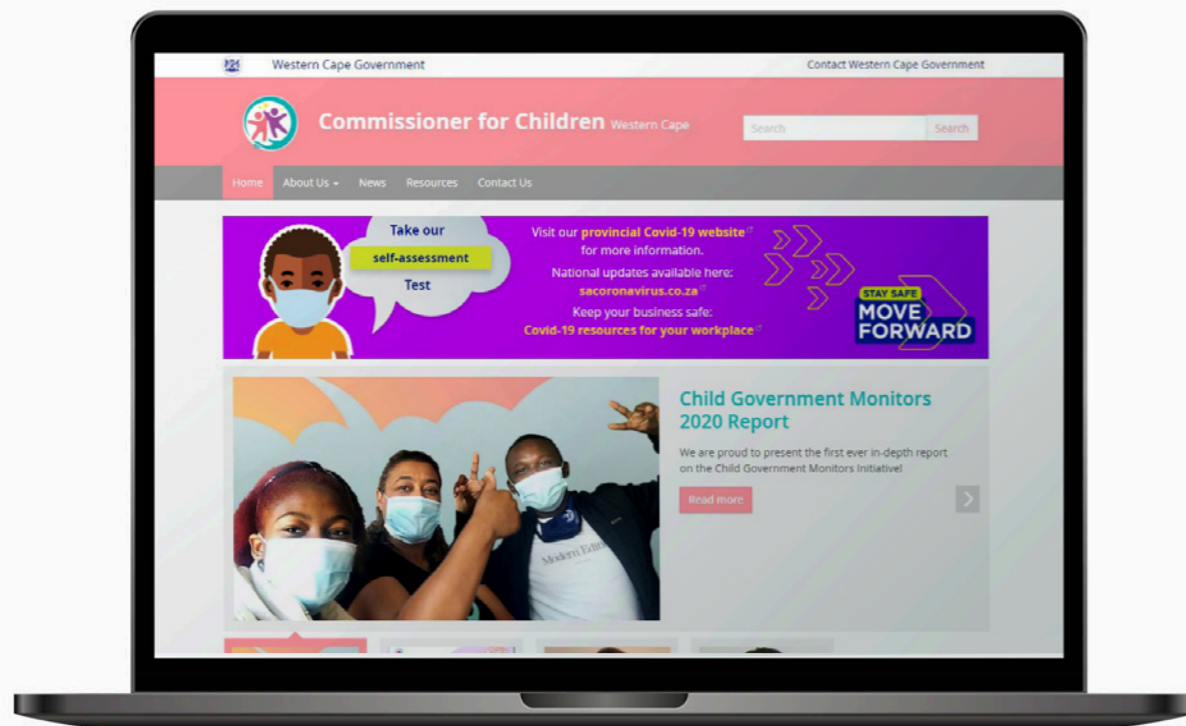
## CENTERING CHILDREN IN OUR WORK

### CHILD PARTICIPATION PRACTICE MODELS

The WCCC is committed to substantive **child participation**. Prioritising the development of child participation practice models enabled the WCCC to develop authentic partnerships with children. Child participation is a key strategy to give effect to her mandate. The three child participation practice models include: working with child advisors in her office (named Child Government Monitors); engaging children in the places where they live (by means of Community Child Rights Workshops); and conducting topical consultations on WhatsApp with children (Consultations with Children).

### ENGAGEMENT WITH TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Official Twitter and Facebook accounts are operational from 9 September 2020
- By the end of the first year in office on 31 May 2021, we had 719 followers on Facebook and 141 followers on Twitter
- The office posted 113 Facebook posts and 178 Tweets in the first year
- WCCC website was launched on 15 March 2021
- The website reached 2 000 people by the end May 2021
- 48 Online articles profiled the WCCC in the first year of office



**19** 19 NOV 2020  
WCCC made a submission to National Parliament on the MTBPS 2020

**19** 19 NOV 2020  
CGMs made a submission to the UNCR

**9** 9 DEC 2020  
CGMs first sat in on WCCC staff interviews



★ Many Children's Commissioners include children as advisors, but for South Africa the direct involvement of children in a governance institution, is a first.



### MODEL 1: CHILD GOVERNMENT MONITORS

Children are involved in the office of the WCCC as part of good governance, programmes, and ad hoc projects. The Commissioner requested nominations of children who could work directly with her. These children were nominated by child rights organisations (or organisations working with children) or elected as representatives of children in communities. Children could also nominate themselves for involvement with the Commissioner by contacting her on social media.

The children who work with the Commissioner are known as 'Child Government Monitors'. Their primary function is to **draw from their lived realities and provide inputs** to the Commissioner to fulfil her monitoring and research duties. Child Government Monitors were asked to provide service feedback to inform the Commissioner's advice and recommendations to government departments. Many Children's Commissioners include children as advisors, but for South Africa the direct involvement of children in a governance institution is a first.



Child Government Monitors presentation team at Parliament.



### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS REPORTED BY CHILD GOVERNMENT MONITORS

- Developed an understanding of different childhood realities from engaging each other
- Included in operational matters such as staff interviews and visits to potential office
- Participated in monthly RX radio interviews on topical issues for children

Child Government Monitors discuss **issues of interest and concerns** weekly and distill their insights into submissions to the WCCC. They submit their inputs in the form of art, poetry, hand-written letters, collages, or position statements. The role of the WCCC is to listen to children and enable them to present their input to key decision makers to influence governance. Submissions by the Child Government Monitors have reached international, regional, national, and provincial governance stakeholders.

### INSTITUTIONS THAT RECEIVED SUBMISSIONS

- United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child to inform the List of Issues Prior to Reporting
- African Peer Review Mechanism focused on youth development strategies
- South African Parliament on the Children’s Amendment Bill 2020
- Children’s Institute, University of Cape Town to inform Children and COVID-19 policy briefs

The aim of the WCCC is to **amplify the voices of children** and demonstrate their capability for governance as active citizens. Advocacy by the Child Government Monitors has been profiled on television, radio, and newspapers. The authentic voice of children became part of mainstream media and contributed to societal discussions.



### MODEL 2: COMMUNITY CHILD RIGHTS WORKSHOPS

Community-based child rights workshops are conducted by the WCCC to **understand the lived realities of children**, especially in the rural parts of the province. The Commissioner travelled to three rural municipalities during her first year — Matzikama, Bergrivier and Hessequa municipalities. She only travelled when the pandemic allowed safe engagements with children, still adhering to COVID-19 health protocols. For the first two workshops the Commissioner was accompanied by a staff member from the Premier’s Office. By the third workshop, the newly appointed Children’s Commissioner Officer (CCO) supported these engagements.

**1** 1 FEB 2021  
Tessa joined the superhero squad

**1** 1 FEB 2021  
WCCC welcomed 1 graduate intern to work in her office

FEB 2021

Supported by the Department of Local Government, the Commissioner was able to reach out to **key child rights champions** in the selected municipalities. Community development workers mobilised parents and their children to attend child rights workshops with the Commissioner in Matzikama and Bergrivier Municipalities. Both workshops employed consultation methods such as community safety mapping, discussing dreams and worries, sharing child rights basics with parents and children in separate workshops. All workshop participants were able to make recommendations for service improvements, the parents with voice notes and the children with drawings. The Commissioner also engaged government stakeholders in child rights workshops – 9 stakeholders in Vredendal and 8 stakeholders in Piketberg. She travelled 1782 km over 7 days to conduct 9 workshops with 6 communities, engaging 89 children, 84 mothers and 1 father in Matzikama Municipality during October 2020. For the engagements in Bergrivier Municipality in November 2020, the Commissioner travelled 822 km over 5 days to visit 3 communities and engaged 40 parents and 58 children.

As fear of COVID-19 transmission increased during March 2021, the consultation methods in Hessequa Municipality consisted of engaging grade 8 and 9 children in their classroom spaces. The focus of the workshop was to collect information about their **dreams and worries** as well as provide them with the opportunity to make **recommendations for service improvements** to government departments. The WCCC spent 9 days in Hessequa Municipality, travelled 1486 km, conducted workshops at 8 high schools, visited 4 early childhood development centres, and collected inputs from 520 children in 5 communities.



The municipality with the largest population was Matzikama (71,045), followed by Bergrivier (67,474) and Hessequa (54, 236). Matzikama was also the most economically disadvantaged compared to Bergrivier and Hessequa. Matzikama has a greater number of households (20, 822) and a higher percentage of informal dwellings (11,1%) in comparison to Bergrivier (19, 074 households, 5.6% informal dwellings) and Hessequa (54, 236 households, 1.3% informal dwellings). Furthermore, data shows Matzikama has a lower estimated average annual household income (R 29, 400) than Bergrivier and Hessequa (R 57, 300). Thus, it makes sense that there are more multidimensionally poor youth in Matzikama (21%) than Bergrivier and Hessequa (14%) . In terms of education, Matzikama had a higher percentage of youth between the ages of 20 and 35 who matriculated (56%) compared to Bergrivier (29%) and Hessequa (29%), while they had a lower percentage of youth, aged 16-17 years, who passed Grade 9 (44%) when compared to Bergrivier (62%) and Hessequa (67) . The socio-economic indicators of the municipalities visited by the Commissioner, (based on data from 2016 Community Survey and 2011 Census), is reflected in table 7 on next page.

**11** 11 FEB 2021  
WCCC presented initial findings from the West Coast CCRW to the MEC and management team of DCAS

**23** 23 FEB 2021  
WCCC met with the Children's Commissioner for Jersey



Table 7: Socio-economic indicators of municipalities

	MUNICIPALITIES		
	BERGRIVIER	MATZIKAMA	HESSEQUA
<b>POPULATION</b>			
General population	67 474	71 045	54 236
Child population	22 098	24 612	16 279
<b>HOUSING</b>			
No. of households	19 074	20 822	17 371
Informal dwellings (%)	5.6 %	11.1 %	1.3 %
<b>INCOME</b>			
Estimated average annual household income (Rands)	R 57 300	R 29 400	R 57 300
<b>YOUTH POVERTY</b>			
Multidimensionally poor youth aged 15-19 years (%)	14 %	21 %	14 %
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
Matric achieved by youth aged 20-35 (%)	29 %	56 %	29 %
Grade 9 achieved by youth aged 16-17 years (%)	62 %	44 %	67 %

Sources: Stats SA (2016); Stats SA (2011)

Reports are produced by the WCCC to distill lessons learnt from these community engagements. The West Coast report which reflected findings from the Matzikama and Berggrivier Municipality visits, was shared publicly on the WCCC's website on 16 March 2021. The report can be accessed at the following link: [www.westerncape.gov.za/childrens-commissioner/files/atoms/files/Final%20CC%20CR%20Workshops%20Report\\_16032021\\_.pdf](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/childrens-commissioner/files/atoms/files/Final%20CC%20CR%20Workshops%20Report_16032021_.pdf)

The Hessequa Municipality findings were still being analysed by the WCCC by the end of her first year in office.

### The West Coast report provides local insights on:

- The costs of marginalisation and disadvantage
- Dreams deferred
- Ethos of care
- Weight of parental responsibilities
- Power of one active citizen
- Children as active citizens

### Recommendations for government:

- Safety: Protect children from dangers
- Health: Improve the quality of care
- Education: Educators must help, not harm
- Social Development: Prevention is better than cure
- Cultural Affairs and Sport: Level the playing fields



### MODEL 3: CONSULTATIONS WITH CHILDREN

The WCCC is mandated to engage children in the work of the office. The **topical consultation** conducted at the start of 2021 was geared at gaining insights into **#LearninginCOVIDtimes**. The Commissioner invited children to complete a survey on WhatsApp to understand the experiences and recommendations of children to improve their learning experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interns Zamanthungwa Khumalo provided important literature reviews about schooling and Stephan Paulsen conducted data analysis and developed infographics to help the Commissioner understand children's experiences about learning and school.

### Infographics that highlighted children's insights about

- Concerns about finishing off the old year and starting the new year
- Mixed feelings about returning to school in 2021 COVID-19 pandemic
- Coping with COVID health protocols in schools
- Adapting to distance learning in COVID times



2

**2 MAR 2021**  
WCCC released first reflective report on Child Government Monitors initiative

MAR 2021

12

**12 MAR 2021**  
WCCC website launched

15

**15 MAR 2021**  
WCCC met with the Speaker of the Provincial Parliament of the Western Cape

16

**16 MAR 2021**  
WCCC released West Coast Community Child Rights Workshop report



## TOWARDS CREATING CHILD RIGHTS CHAMPIONS

### RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY DECISION MAKERS

#### The Provincial Legislature

Parliament was responsible for the selection of the WCCC. The WCCC's reporting responsibility on progress towards objectives, programmes, and special matters lies with **Parliament**. She was asked to present to the Standing Committee of the Premier and Constitutional Development, and the Standing Committee on Social Development at the inception of her office. She also engaged the Speaker of Parliament on being embedded within the Executive branch of government.

#### The Provincial Executive

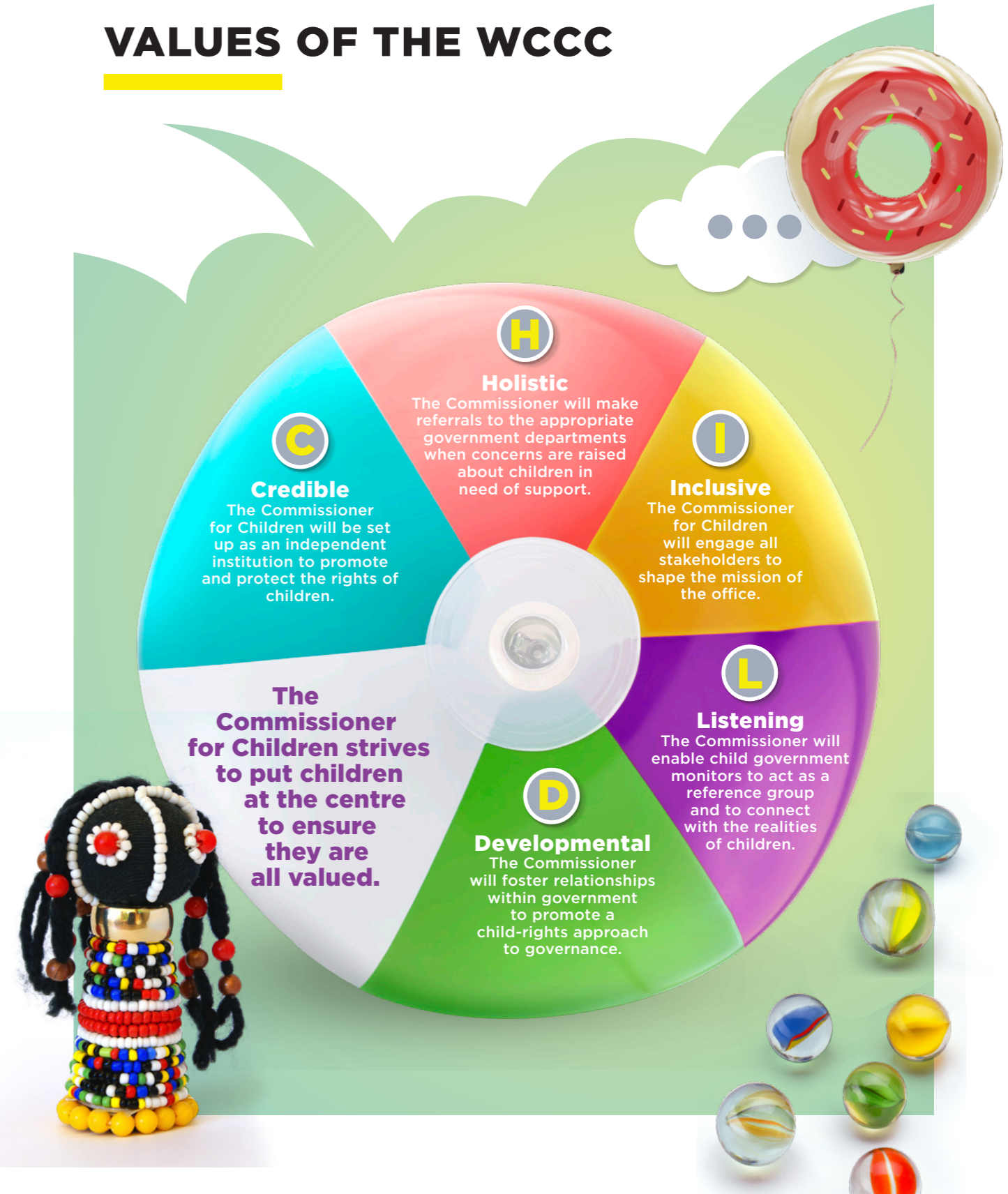
The priority was to establish **sound working relationships** with the political and administrative heads of the government departments which formed part of the Commissioner's oversight role. Upon commencement in the office, the Commissioner set out child-centred values for approaching the work of her office and the key relationships to be built (see image on the next page). To remain true to the Commissioner's goal of systemic change to realise child rights, these government players needed to be open to listening to the voices of children.

Heads of government departments received the referrals of **enquiries and complaints** about service delivery from the Commissioner's office. These enquiries and complaints (presented on page 34) were received by telephone or email or from community workshops conducted by the WCCC. The Commissioner is also able to **monitor service delivery** when she travels to communities and standard monitoring tools will soon be developed. The complaints mechanism in the office will need to be strengthened to enhance accountability in governance. More focus will be placed on **investigations** by the WCCC, especially in response to issues raised by children themselves.

#### The Commissioner met with the following HODs and MECs

- Mr. Brian Schreuder (Superintendent General (SG): Western Cape Education Department (WCED)); Mr. Brent Walters (SG: Designate: WCED); Ms. Debbie Shafer (Member of Executive Committee (MEC): Education)
- Mr. Brent Walters (Head of Department (HOD): Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS); Ms. Anroux Marais (MEC: Cultural Affairs and Sport)
- Dr Robert Macdonald (HOD: Western Cape Department of Social Development (DSD); Ms. Sharna Fernandez (MEC: Social Development)
- Dr Keith Cloete (SG: Western Cape Health Department); Dr Nomafrench Mbombo (MEC: Health)

## VALUES OF THE WCCC



18

18 MAR 2021  
WCCC presented West Coast CCRW report to WCED management

23

23-31 MAR 2021  
WCCC conducted CCRW in Hessequa Municipality

8

8 APR 2021  
PCGC from the DoH presented to the Children's Commissioner

# ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

Between June 2020 and May 2021, a total of 50 complaints/enquiries were received from citizens across the Western Cape concerning the Social Sector Departments. Of the complaints received, the majority were linked to the Department of Social Development (DSD), whereas the following significant proportion were linked to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). Specifically:

<p><b>64%</b></p> <p>of enquiries/complaints were linked to the DSD. The nature of enquiries/complaints is further explained below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 were children and families related cases.</li> <li>• 1 was a development and research related case.</li> <li>• 2 were linked to restorative services, and</li> <li>• 2 were linked to social welfare services.</li> </ul>	<p>In terms of the investigative outcomes for DSD, the following can be reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90.6% were resolved</li> <li>• 6.3% are still in progress (The case was still active or being investigated).</li> <li>• 3.1% were undetermined (meaning there was no information on record to follow-up on the enquiry/complaint).</li> </ul>	<p><b>34%</b></p> <p>of enquiries/complaints to the office were linked to the WCED. The nature of enquiries/complaints is further explained below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 cases were related to public ordinary schools.</li> <li>• 2 cases were related to independent schools.</li> <li>• 1 case was related to administration, and</li> <li>• 1 case was related to public special school education.</li> </ul>	<p>In terms of the investigative outcomes for the WCED, the following can be reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 64.7% were resolved.</li> <li>• 29.4% are still in progress (The case was still active or being investigated).</li> <li>• 5.9% were undetermined (meaning there was no information on record to follow-up on the enquiry/complaint).</li> </ul>
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The remaining case to the office was linked to the Department of Culture, Affairs and Sports. This case was however undetermined because of incomplete information.

A total of 11 enquiries/complaints were also received outside of the provincial total, which were linked to Government entities outside of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children's oversight powers. These were still reported to the relevant entities, and are illustrated below:

<p><b>2 cases</b></p> <p>were linked to the Department of Justice.</p>	<p><b>3 cases</b></p> <p>were linked to the Department of Home Affairs (2 of those cases were related to citizen affairs and 1 was related to immigration affairs)</p>	<p><b>3 cases</b></p> <p>were linked to South African Police services (2 of those cases were related to visible policing and 1 was related to detective services).</p>	<p><b>1 case</b></p> <p>was linked to the Gauteng Department of Social Development</p>	<p><b>1 case</b></p> <p>was linked to the Limpopo Department of Social Development</p>
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## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTOR

Child rights defenders in South Africa as well as abroad are important partners to realise the vision and mission of the WCCC. Our country has a **strong civil society movement**, and the child rights defenders collaborate to elevate the concerns of the citizens to the attention of the government. Accountability mechanisms, such as the office of the WCCC, are in part due to lobbying of child rights activists. The Commissioner is well-connected with these structures to keep abreast of information in the sector and created productive feedback mechanisms between her office and child rights defenders in the first year. This is illustrated by her inclusion in professional WhatsApp groups below. **Some of the WhatsApp based groups the Commissioner is linked to included:**

- Stop hitting children (76-member group of national child rights activists)
- Child health and COVID-19 (79-member group of health professionals)
- NCRICC team (39-member group of social service professionals)
- Serious LINC Pineapple (25-member group of Learning and Innovation Network in the Child Rights sector)
- COVID-19 WC Vulnerable Group (28-member group of social actors)
- Black Sash Broadcast Group (21-member group of social actors)
- GCIS Garden Route District (82-member group of social activists)

In addition, the WCCC is part of various organisations' broadcast list including UNICEF ECD and the Witzenberg Justice Coalition. More effort must go into connecting with community-based child rights champions when the pandemic abates.

### THE WCCC ALSO MET WITH VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS IN THE FIRST YEAR OF OFFICE

✓ A Chance to Play SA	✓ Media Monitoring Africa
✓ Advancing Child Rights Strategic Litigation (ACriSL)	✓ Missing Children SA
✓ ACVV	✓ Molo Songololo
✓ Advance Edukos Foundation	✓ National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)
✓ Association for the Sensory Disabled	✓ Nal'iBali
✓ Cause for Justice	✓ National Planning Commission
✓ Centre for Child Law	✓ NG Kerk in SA
✓ Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results	✓ Ntataise
✓ Child Justice Forum	✓ Open Society Foundation
✓ Child Safe	✓ Parent Centre

**12** 12 APR 2021  
WCCC met with DoH's COO

**16** 16 APR 2021  
WCCC met with the Swedish Children's Ombud

**23** 23 APR 2021  
WCCC released key findings of the #LearninginCOVIDtimes consultation with children

**28** 28 APR 2021  
WCCC met with HOD DSD

✓ Child Welfare	✓ Phalisa Abafazi Bethu
✓ Children's Institute	✓ Project Playground
✓ Civilian Secretariat for the Police	✓ Rx Radio
✓ Community Keepers	✓ Safety and Violence Initiative
✓ COSAS, WC	✓ Save the Children South Africa
✓ COSATU	✓ Scalabrini Centre of Cape Town
✓ Danish Embassy	✓ Seven Passes
✓ Deaf SA	✓ South African National Child Rights Coalition
✓ Department of Local Government	✓ South African Paediatric Association
✓ Die Plein Het Lyn	✓ Stellenbosch University, Law Faculty
✓ Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU)	✓ Swim for Change
✓ ENSAfrica	✓ THAT Network
✓ Equal Education	✓ The African Ombudsman Research Centre
✓ Equal Education Law Centre	✓ The Everyday Spokesperson Project
✓ Forum of CYCC Directors	✓ UNICEF
✓ Girls and Boys Town	✓ University of Cape Town, Law Faculty
✓ Give a Child a Family	✓ University of Newcastle
✓ Grow Great	✓ University of Western Cape: DVC Research
✓ International and Canadian Child Rights Partnership (ICCRP)	✓ University of Western Cape: Law Faculty
✓ Inceba Trust	✓ Violence Prevention
✓ Institute for Security Studies	✓ Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability

✓ Iziko Museums	✓ Western Cape Liquor Authority
✓ Jelly Beanz	✓ Wits University
✓ Krom Rhee	✓ You Silence We Amplify
✓ Kronendal Music Academy	✓ Youth Capital
✓ Lighthouse Church	✓ Youth Lab

### STRATEGIC LINKS WITH INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONERS

Strategic links were also formed with Children's Commissioners across the world. The Chair of the **European Network of Ombudspersons for Children** invited the Commissioner to their national conference in November 2020, where she could engage more than 30 Children's Commissioners and their child advisors working in Europe. In the past year, we have been able to connect substantively with the first Children's Commissioner for **India** and the current Commissioners in **Scotland, Jersey, Sweden**, and the **Parliamentary Ombud in Denmark**. More energy will need to go into connecting with Children's Commissioners on our continent and in the global south, to **learn lessons applicable to our context**.

Interns helped us to understand Children's Commissioners abroad

- Wai'Oca Gray analysed the child rights approach in the work of the Children's Commissioner of India and the child participation models of the Children's Commissioner for Northern Ireland, New Zealand Children's Commissioner, and the Children's Commissioner for England
- Inari Cilliers reviewed the website of the New Zealand Children's Commissioner
- Candice Warner assessed child protection, provision, and participation rights in the United States of America.

In the first year, the WCCC had a total of 184 online meetings since July 2020 with various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Table 8 below shows a breakdown of meetings

**Table 8: Meetings**

MEETING PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF MEETINGS
<b>Department of the Premier</b>	50
<b>Western Cape Government</b>	36
<b>Stakeholders</b>	98
<b>Total number of meetings</b>	<b>184</b>

**5** 5 MAY 2021  
WCCC received response on West Coast CCRW report from DoH

**7** 7 MAY 2021  
WCCC released children's voices infographics from #LearninginCOVIDtimes consultation

**14** 14 MAY 2021  
WCCC banners first displayed

**14** 14 MAY 2021  
9 CGMs presented to National Parliament on the Children's Amendment Bill

# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Children are the present not the future

## Outcomes

little voices must count

Promote awareness of child rights

Understand issues affecting the rights, needs and interests of children in the province

Influence key decision makers to uphold child rights in law, policy and practice

**Impact**  
Active child participation by influencing decision making that has adirect impact on children's lived experience

Advise on aligning law, policy and practice to child rights realisation

Understand the challenges and gaps in governance for aligning to child rights

**Vision**  
#littlevoicesMUSTcount  
#kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak  
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE

Understand the impact of government laws, policy and services on children

**Vision**  
Reimagining and remaking childhoods

Children influence decisions relating to the planned and executed work of the commissioner



# NEXT STEPS TOWARDS REALISING OUR MANDATE

Building a blueprint for a new office of the WCCC is well underway. With more staff coming on board in 2021, the office can start focusing on building its systems, policies, and procedures for effective functioning. This **institutional framework** accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation logical framework will keep the office on track and clarify the theory of change and strategic plan for all stakeholders.

We will continue to foster good **relationships** with government, civil society, communities, and international partners.

Our **child participation practice models** are world-class and a new offering for the South African child rights landscape. Never before have children partnered fully in the operations and strategic direction of a governance institution. This has attracted the attention of international players and we already have two transcontinental initiatives starting in 2021.

We would also like to better understand the lived realities of children in **state care** through child participation.

The office can also extend itself to **analysing public budgets** to realise child rights. Children will be involved in assessing the resourcing of government service delivery for rights realisation. This will start by understanding whether the Western Cape Government's budget, especially the social sector cluster, is child rights friendly.

**Monitoring visits and awareness raising** will be a strong focus of our work when the pandemic abates.

The campaign for the **prevention of violence** will persist throughout the Commissioner's term.



**20** 20 MAY 2021  
WCCC met with the MEC for DCAS

**21** 21 MAY 2021  
WCCC met with the MEC for DSD

**25** 25 MAY 2021  
WCCC met with the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman

**27** 27 MAY 2021  
WCCC received response on West Coast CCRW report from DCAS

**31** 31 MAY 2021  
About 50 CGMs worked with the WCCC in the first year

**31** 31 MAY 2021  
WCCC received commendation from National Parliament

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Statistics South Africa. (2020). *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2020 Single ages by Province 2002-2020*.

<sup>2</sup> Only ages 0-14 are illustrated in table 1 because Statistics South Africa combines 15-19-year-olds in one category. Since childhood in South Africa only extends until age 17, the 15-19-year-old age-group was omitted from our analysis for now.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Statistics South Africa. (2019). *General Household Survey 2018*. Pretoria: Stats SA. Analysis by Katharine Hall & Winnie Sambu, Children's Institute, UCT.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> May, J., Witten, C. & Lake, L. (Eds.). 2020. *South African Child Gauge 2020*. Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics South Africa. (2003; 2019). *General Household Survey 2002; General Household Survey 2018*. Pretoria: Stats SA. Analysis by Katharine Hall & Winnie Sambu, Children's Institute, UCT.

<sup>8</sup> Hendricks, M., Hall, K., Goeiman, H., Henney, N., Borraine, A., Murray, J., Hendricks, L. & Lake, L. (2021). *Children and COVID-19: Nutrition and food security*. Children's Institute, UCT

<sup>9</sup> Van der Berg, S., Patel, L., & Bridgeman, G. (2021). *Food insecurity in South Africa - Evidence from NIDS-CRAM Wave 5*.

<sup>10</sup> Statistics South Africa & UNICEF (2020). *Child Poverty in South Africa: A multiple overlapping deprivation analysis*.

<sup>11</sup> Drawing on the temporary employer relief scheme (TERS), initially introduced in December 2019 to assist companies in financial distress, a COVID-19 TERS was created through the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). This scheme aimed to prevent the destruction of jobs due to temporary closure of business operations for up to 3 months during lockdown, by covering the cost of salaries for employees on an income replacement rate sliding scale of 38% (for high earners) up to 60% (for low earners).

<sup>12</sup> Van der Berg, S., Zuze, L. & Bridgman, G. (2020). *Coronavirus, Lockdown and Children: Some impacts of the current crisis in child welfare using data from NIDS-CRAM Wave 1*.

<sup>13</sup> Statistics South Africa. (2019). *Education Series Volume VII: Children's education and well-being in South Africa*.

<sup>14</sup> Wills, G. & Kika-Mistry, J. (2021) *Early Childhood Development in South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from NIDS-CRAM Waves 2-5*.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>16</sup> Premier Alan Winde (2021) *State of the Province Address, Western Cape*

<sup>17</sup> Sheperd, D. & Mohohlwane, N. (2021). *Changes in education: A reflection on COVID-19 effects over a year*.

<sup>18</sup> Western Cape Department of Health (2019). *Western Cape Burden of Disease: Rapid Review Update 2019*

<sup>19</sup> Scott, C., Morden, E., Buys, H., Shung-King, M., Lake, L., Rhoda, N., Meiring, M., Carrihill, M., Evans, J., Brown, C., Urgoiti, G. & Ngomani, N. (2021). *Children and COVID-19 Advocacy Brief: Towards Child-Centered COVID-19 Care*. Children's Institute, UCT.

<sup>20</sup> Mathews, S., Baker, Y., Brown, C and van Niekerk, J. (2021). *Children and COVID-19 Advocacy Brief: Violence and Injury*. Children's Institute, UCT.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>23</sup> UNICEF. (2020). *South Africa: Nutrition Brief. Data obtained from the South Africa Demographic and Health Survey (2016)*.

<sup>24</sup> Hendricks, M., Katharine, H., Goeiman, H., Henney, N., Borraine, A., Murray, J., Hendricks, L. & Lake, L. (2021). *Children and Covid-19 Advocacy Brief: Nutrition and food security*. Children's Institute, UCT.



#littlevoicesMUSTcount #kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak  
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE



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