

In 2019, the SADC Ministers of Education agreed to pilot the Future Life Now! Programme in four Member States to develop the agency of children and youth through CSTL schools as educational eco-systems to address persistent development challenges in the region, including: HIV, early and unintended pregnancies, and climate change.

Each of the pilot states has identified 10 schools where the CSTL framework, as augmented by the Child and Youth Agency Framework will be tested as vehicles for establishing educational eco-systems for inclusive education for sustainable development of agency.

The CSTL Policy Framework was endorsed by all SADC Ministers of Education in 2016 and provides an implementation road map to ensure:

1. The inclusion of all learners, especially the most marginalised in education, through the provision of support to address barriers to access, retention, and completion; and
2. That every learner is provided with quality education for development of their agency to address pressing challenges.

The CSTL Policy Framework mandates the sustained provision of a package of socio-economic support through schools as coordinating hubs to ensure the inclusion of all learners. Whilst it explicitly requires the provision of quality education for sustainable development of agency, it does not, as in the case of the package of social and economic support, provide the same level of guidance on what is required to achieve this.

The Child and Youth Agency Framework has been developed, based on the 21st century education and education for sustainable development (ESD) frameworks, to fill this gap.

The Child and Youth Agency Framework directs that youth agency be advanced as a core, measurable educational outcome. To achieve this, it requires that all schools become coordinating hubs that bring together a continuum of co-educators, including teachers, parents, NGOs, supporting ministries (like environmental and health ministries), and learners themselves, to provide the following essential elements of ESD:

1. **Relevant information** about development challenges, governing laws, rights and responsibilities, and the procedures and platforms at a local, national, regional, and global level through which change, and accountability may be pursued.
2. **The development of learner's skills and competencies** to use the information to drive sustainable change.
3. **Make opportunities available** in and through schools for learners to exercise their agency and to apply the information they have learned to make changes.

Information Note continued

As a contribution to the FutureLife-Now! goals, the Child and Youth Agency Framework is being operationalised in the 10 pilot schools under the banner of the Act Now! project. In the initial testing phase, the focus will be on climate change, but the principles and lessons learned will be equally applicable to all development challenges.

Working with the national FutureLife-Now! Task Team and other relevant partners, schools will be supported to develop and deliver an enriched climate change curriculum that will prepare and support learners to participate in key opportunities where they can make change, including:

1. Their participation in the United Nation's process for the co-development, with children, of a General Comment on Climate Change.
2. Participation in regional climate change initiatives.
3. National policy dialogues and law reform affecting climate change.
4. Local government climate change processes, such as development of mitigation plans.
5. Community and family-based advocacy.
6. School-community processes, including the development of peer-based advocacy campaigns.

