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**Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for
sustainable development in Africa: How to design and
implement an effective response through education and
training systems**

Sub-theme 1

**Common core skills for lifelong learning
and sustainable development in Africa**

Care and Support for Teaching and Learning:
a SADC response for ensuring the education rights of vulnerable
children and youth are realized

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ABSTRACT

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1. ABSTRACT

Across the SADC Region, millions of children face challenges to realizing their right to education. SADC Ministers of Education have recognized that fundamental changes need to take place in all education systems and institutions. In response to this, they have adopted the **Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)** initiative as a comprehensive response to the health and socio-economic challenges facing vulnerable learners, and to make schools *inclusive centers of learning, care and support*.

This paper explains how **CSTL** — which provides a coordinating mechanism for ministries of education to lead a multiple-sectoral response to mainstreaming care and support — can *impact positively on the education rights of vulnerable children and youth*. The initiative builds on existing care and support programs, and is being implemented incrementally across the SADC Region (initially in five Member States).

SADC's *Strategic Framework for OVC&Y* and the “Minimum Package” of services are described, and **CSTL's** role in operationalizing the framework from the education sector's perspective is explained.

The program's potential to impact positively on education outcomes at school level is discussed. Although the program is still in its infancy, it is argued that past care and support interventions do support **CSTL's** underlying theory of change.

Systematizing care and support requires an enabling policy environment. A policy review was first conducted in all SADC Member States before an overarching regional policy framework was developed, the processes, findings and recommendations of which are outlined.

It is concluded that **CSTL** provides a unique response to the multiplicity of challenges facing the vulnerable learner in the SADC Region.

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