



 flourish
Introduction

When was the organisation founded, by whom and why?



**GROW
GREAT**

Grow Great is a multifunder initiated campaign with the aim to galvanize South Africa towards a national commitment to zero stunting by 2030. Stunting is a (largely preventable) condition where young

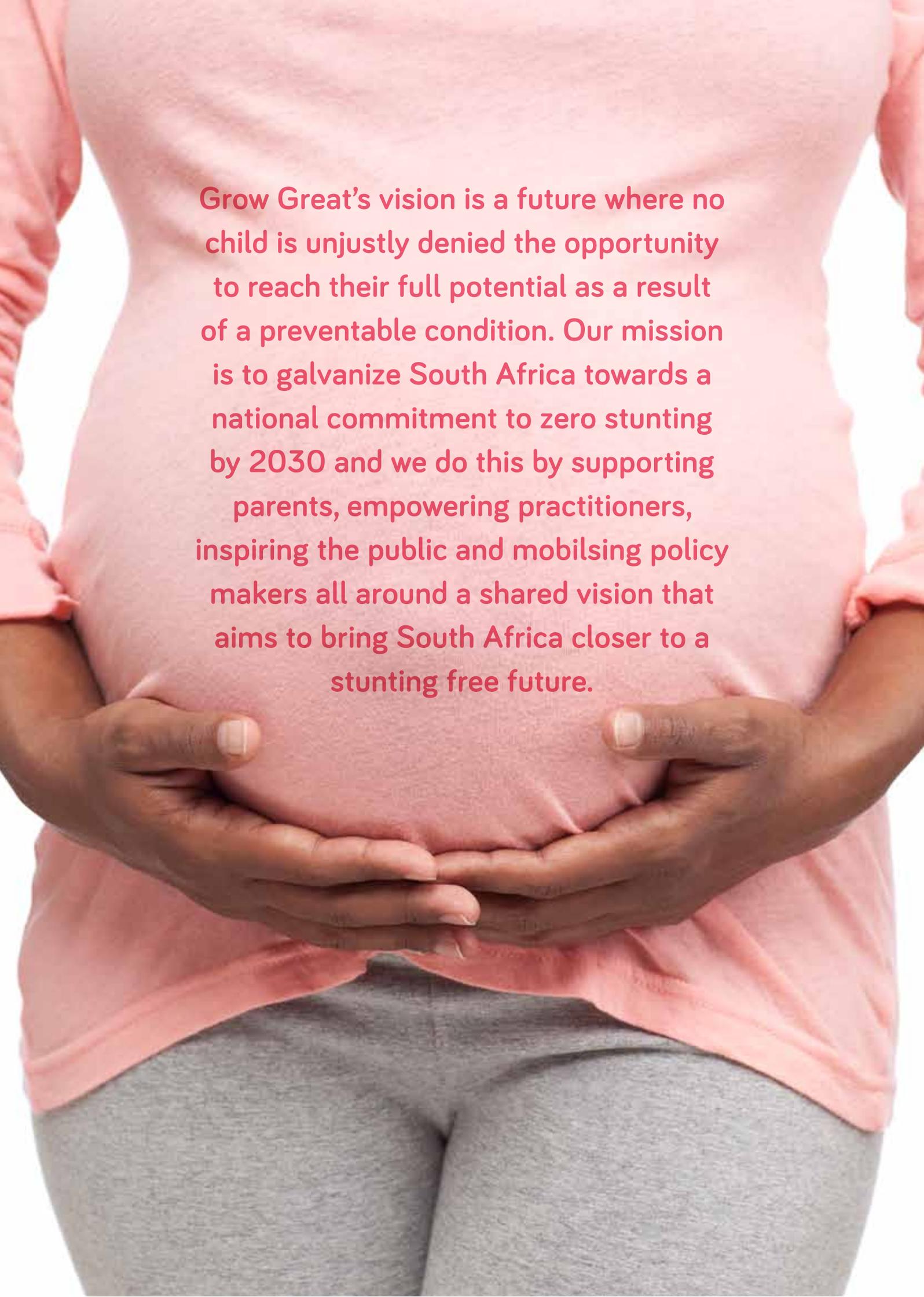
children are excessively short for their age and do not reach their full growth potential due to chronic nutritional deprivation, repeated infections and poor psychosocial stimulation. Stunting is associated with lifelong cognitive defects, educational and employment challenges, increased risk of chronic diseases in adulthood and cycles of intergenerational poverty.

The campaign was initiated in 2017 and publicly launched in 2018 in response to South Africa's high levels of stunting that have persisted for at least the last two decades. As many as 27% (and 36% among the poorest wealth quintiles) of children under five in South Africa suffer from stunting. South Africa's burden of stunting is far higher than would be expected for an upper middle income and far higher than many of South Africa's developing country counterparts. This is of grave concern because stunting has long term consequences for children's health, education and economic prospects across the life course. Children who suffer from stunting

perform worse at school than their non-stunted counterparts, they are less likely to finish school, they are more likely to live in poverty & unemployment as adults, they are at risk of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease & hypertension in adulthood and on average have lower life expectancies than non-stunted children.

Economic models suggest that there is a sizeable economic penalty to not reducing stunting. It is estimated that stunting places a GDP per capita penalty on African and South-Asian countries of approximately 9%. In other words, if the current South African workforce had not been stunted as children, South Africa's GDP per capita would be approximately 9% higher.

The good news though, is that stunting can be beaten. Countries, like Ghana, Chile, Senegal, Peru and Brazil, with similar resource constraints to South Africa, have demonstrated that through evidence based interventions targeting women of reproductive age and children under five, with an emphasis on the critical first thousand days of life, that adopt a multisectoral approach and have high-level government prioritisation, stunting can be beaten. The Grow Great Campaign seeks to achieve similar such results in the South African context.

A pregnant woman is shown from the waist up, wearing a light pink long-sleeved shirt and grey leggings. Her hands are gently resting on her bare pregnant belly. The background is plain white.

Grow Great's vision is a future where no child is unjustly denied the opportunity to reach their full potential as a result of a preventable condition. Our mission is to galvanize South Africa towards a national commitment to zero stunting by 2030 and we do this by supporting parents, empowering practitioners, inspiring the public and mobilising policy makers all around a shared vision that aims to bring South Africa closer to a stunting free future.

Grow Great's strategic objectives

Supporting parents through Flourish social franchise of mom & baby classes

We support parents to provide responsive caregiving to their children through our rapidly growing national social franchise of Flourish mom & baby classes, that provide a community of support for new and expectant mothers and empowers and equips them with the skills and information they need to care well for themselves and to provide nurturing care to their child in the critical first 1000 days. Since launching in mid 2018, we have licensed over 100 franchisees who are operating across all of our 9 provinces and who collectively have reached over 12 000 pregnant and new mothers to date, with the aim to be reaching at least 1/3rd of all pregnant women at scale.

**In this document, we zoom in
on this first strategic objective.**

Empowering practitioners through Grow Great Champions Clubs

In addition to supporting parents, through our Grow Great Champions clubs, our campaign supports and empowers Community Health Workers whose courageous job it is to enter homes and care for mothers and young children in the early years of life when children are most vulnerable to stunting and when caregivers are forming their approaches to parenting and require all the support they can get. These CHWs are supported to identify early and refer children with additional needs and vulnerabilities.

To date our Grow Great Champions clubs have supported CHWs to routinely growth monitor over 40 000 young children to date with the intention to be reaching at least 1/3rd of children under 2 in South Africa at scale.

The logo consists of two overlapping white squares on a pink background. The top square is larger and contains the text 'GROW GREAT' in white, bold, uppercase letters. The bottom square is smaller and overlaps the bottom-left corner of the top square.

**GROW
GREAT**

Inspiring the public through mass media campaigns

In addition to our programmatic interventions we run mass media campaigns that aim to increase public awareness on the injustice of stunting and encourage primary care givers, their families, communities and our leaders to enable exclusive breastfeeding in homes, communities and workplaces and to create healthy food environments for our children.

Mobilising policy makers through data driven advocacy

Lastly, part of the challenge in our context, is that we do not have good and sufficiently detailed data on the nutritional status of South Africa's children. This makes it difficult to target interventions and focus programs and resources on at-risk communities. So whilst advocating for greater investments in more regular and detailed national surveys of the nutritional status of South Africa's children, our campaign is running community based surveys in our most nutrition insecure communities across the country that aim to profile the nutritional status of our children, identify vulnerable communities and inform policy and local program implementation.



Supporting
parents through
Flourish social
franchise of
mom and baby
classes



We support parents to provide responsive caregiving to their children through our rapidly growing national social franchise of Flourish antenatal & postnatal classes, that provide a community of support for new and expectant mothers and empowers and equips them with the skills and information they need to care well for themselves and to provide nurturing care to their child in the critical first 1000 days (i.e. the period from conception to age two when children are most susceptible to environmental influences and when the foundation for health and wellbeing is established).

We know from the literature that the determinants of stunting are not limited to an absolute lack of food alone but are perpetuated by both the so-called nutrition sensitive (or underlying) and nutrition specific (immediate) factors such as poor maternal health, including maternal mental health, low birth weight, poor breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, infant gastrointestinal infections and a lack of dietary diversity. Furthermore, early intervention during pregnancy has potential to result in significant gains on stunting.

While the more 'clinical' nutrition interventions are being delivered in South African health facilities, behaviour change interventions that provide education, counselling and support services to otherwise healthy clients are not

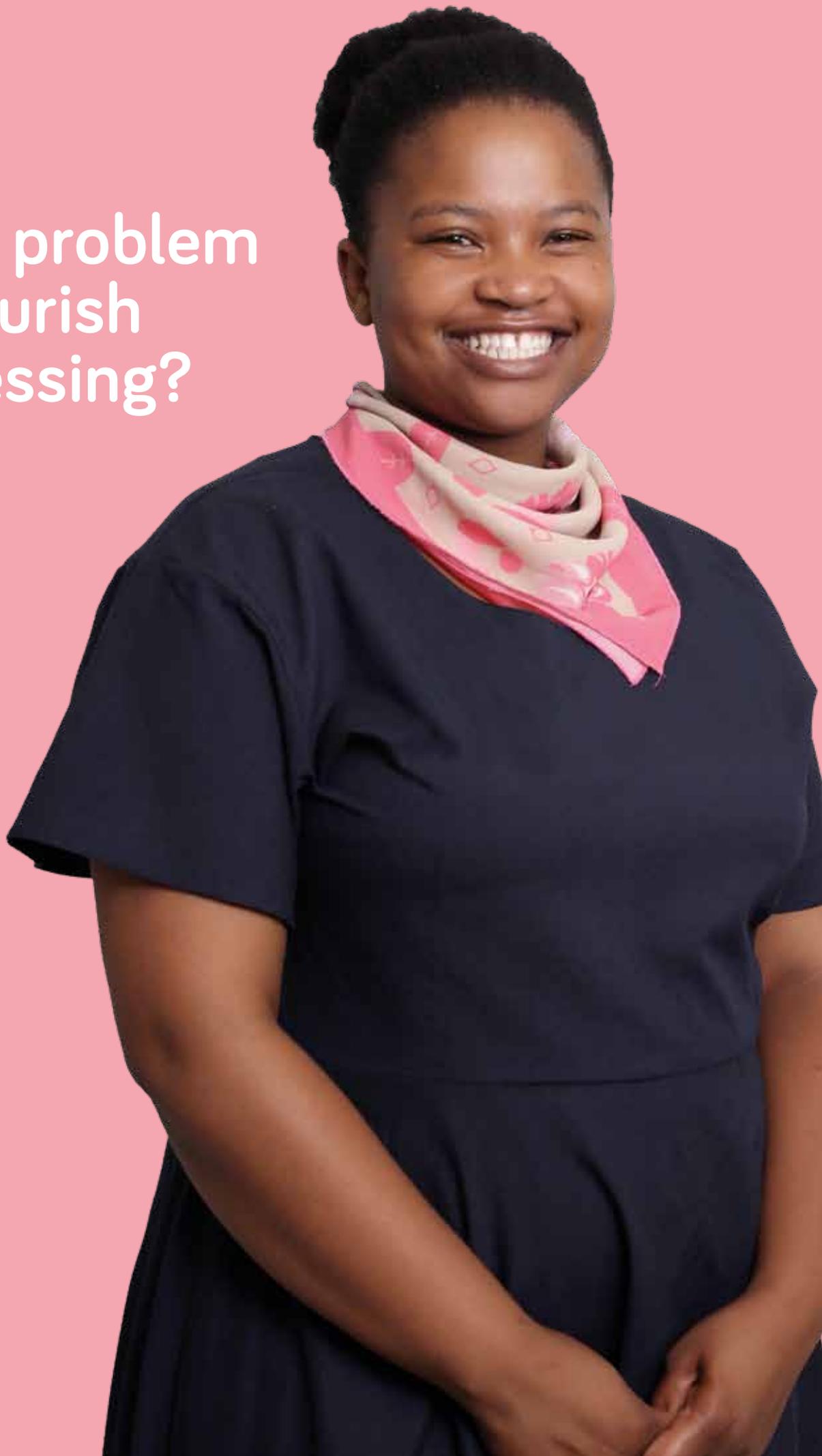
readily available to the neediest moms and where they do exist, are particularly poorly implemented.

Our theory of change is that through the use of a carefully crafted curriculum that speaks to the various drivers of stunting, a delivery method that excites and affirms mothers and passionate local franchisees, the Flourish antenatal & postnatal classes will drive mom-empowered behaviour change that results in improved maternal health (including maternal mental health), reduced drug and alcohol consumption, improved exclusive breastfeeding, healthy complementary feeding practices, early antenatal care booking, early uptake of the child support grant and greater understanding and community around the long-term benefits of healthy pregnancy and childcare practices.

At present, access to the kind of support in pregnancy and during the post-partum period described above is a luxury enjoyed largely by South Africa's wealthiest communities. However, with stunting rates alarmingly high, and antenatal and postnatal classes providing an intervention entry point that could disrupt a number of the key drivers of stunting, we think access to the community of support and empowerment a well-crafted antenatal and postnatal class could provide should be accessible to all of South Africa's mothers.



What problem
is Flourish
addressing?



Twenty-seven percent of children under 5 suffer from stunting in South Africa. For children living in poorer wealth quintiles, the prevalence of stunting is estimated to be as high as 36%.

In addition, 30% of pregnant women in South Africa suffer from poor mental health. Twenty-three percent of children between 6 and 24 months do not receive a minimally acceptable diet and only 32% are exclusively breastfed up until the age of six months, well below the World Health Assembly target of 50%.

The Flourish curriculum is designed to support mothers to adopt healthy behaviours related to exclusive breastfeeding, antenatal clinic attendance, compliance with micronutrient supplementation and timely introduction of appropriate complementary foods. In addition, the Flourish classes provide moms with a community of peers to support them through their pregnancy and postpartum journeys. Through the 10 week program, moms form relationships with other moms facing similar challenges from their same communities. These relationships extend well beyond the 10 week program and create nodes of support for pregnant women in their communities.

In addition to positively impacting the lives of South Africa's pregnant women and children, Flourish creates income generating opportunities for the women i.e. the

franchisees who run these groups. Flourish franchisees are themselves mothers, who come from the very communities they serve and face many of the same challenges their clients grapple with on a daily basis.

Through Flourish they are able to empower themselves as micro-entrepreneurs and earn an income to supplement their own livelihoods. Considering that the majority of the 3 million people who lost their jobs in the COVID19 early lockdown in April-May 2020 were women, and that women have been hardest hit by the pandemic and its economic effects, Flourish plays a critical role in enabling women to earn an income whilst simultaneously addressing critical social needs.



Are you an entrepreneurial mother who is passionate about helping women and children reach their full potential?

We believe every woman should have the opportunity to earn her own income whilst making a difference. If you are prepared to do the work, we are prepared to invest in you!
Find out more about us at www.flourishnetwork.org.za

flourish

INCLUDES TRAINING AND COACHING PLUS MARKETING SUPPORT

Join today!

To apply dial ***134*48333*04#** today.
Limited opportunities available, so do not delay!

How does Flourish work?

The Flourish social franchise is made up of ten classes which run over a period of 10 weeks, each with a group of 10 new or expectant mothers. These classes run throughout the year, in four 10 week cycles. Flourish classes are run by trained and licensed Flourish franchisees, who themselves are mothers, community activists, passionate about women and young children and committed to supporting them through the critical first 1000 days. Flourish groups meet in local communities, in a venue identified by the host that is safe and easily accessible for her clients.

Flourish is managed within Grow Great by a franchisor team comprising of the Flourish Programme Lead, Master Trainer and franchisee coaches. We use a social franchising model because through it one can rapidly scale up a package of evidence-based interventions and universalise access to a high-quality service whilst ensuring consistency of programme delivery across economic & demographic divides.

The franchisor designs and develops the Flourish curriculum and all Flourish materials based on the latest evidence based and aligned to National Department of Health guidelines. The franchisor trains franchisees, monitors and evaluates the impact of Flourish groups

and manages the brand integrity. The Flourish franchisor provides each Flourish franchisee with the necessary materials to host her Flourish groups. In addition franchisees are equipped with a valuable product that they can take to market and offer to their community. They are supported with a dedicated coach, marketing materials, continuous professional development and a career progression opportunity within Flourish that allows successful franchisees to become coaches.

Flourish franchisees set fees for their classes (currently R210 for the full 10-week program). In addition, Flourish subsidizes franchisees R21 per mom per Flourish visit to ensure moms who are unable to pay are not excluded.

Since launching in mid 2018, Flourish has licensed close to 250 franchisees, all of whom are mothers themselves, living in largely disadvantaged communities. Approximately half of our franchisees are youth (i.e. 35 and younger) and at the time of reporting 70% of our franchisees are economically active across four of South Africa's nine provinces. Collectively our Flourish franchisees have reached almost 12 000 pregnant and new mothers to date.



What are the outcomes?

Flourish conducts baseline and endline 'Knowledge, Practices & Attitude' surveys with all moms participating in Flourish groups.

These surveys are designed to assess whether Flourish is successful in improving maternal knowledge on early childhood development and nudging attitudes towards behaviours that promote the optimal development of children.

A total of 465 mom surveys were matched between baseline and endline for the Flourish antenatal journeys for quarter 2-4 of 2019, and the following encouraging findings were found:

- We found statistically significant mom reported improvements from baseline, related to Flourish mom's sense that they could after Flourish better cope with the demands of pregnancy, that they had more information on pregnancy and motherhood than they did at baseline, that they at endline were more confident about being a parent than they were at baseline and that they after Flourish had gained a community of pregnant women that could support them through their pregnancy.
- Secondly, we observed statistically significant improvements from baseline related to moms having improved information on nutrition, health & social protection practices during the first 1000 days.



We noted improvements between baseline and endline in Flourish moms correctly identifying the following behaviours: Taking micronutrient supplements, eating a balanced diet, washing hands with soap & water before feeding a child or preparing food, attending antenatal classes, identifying healthy coping mechanisms for stress management, exclusively breastfeeding, applying for a child support grant and introducing solid foods after six months as important for ensuring a healthy child.

In addition, our exclusive breastfeeding rates among Flourish moms who had completed both Flourish antenatal & postnatal journeys, had babies over 14 weeks but under 6 months, and correctly defined exclusive breastfeeding was 72% . This is a very encouraging finding when compared to national statistics that report exclusive breastfeeding to be 48% at 14 weeks. In addition, ours is probably an understatement of exclusive breastfeeding at 14 weeks as the babies in our analysis were on average 17 weeks of age, and breastfeeding rates tend to come down with age.



Who is the team, and what is their experience?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr Kopano Matlwa Mabaso

Grow Great is led by Dr Kopano Matlwa Mabaso. Kopano is a medical doctor by training, Rhodes Scholar and an alumnus of the University of Oxford where she gained both her Masters in Global Health Science and DPhil (PhD) in Population Health. Kopano has received a number of accolades for her work as a social entrepreneur, including the first ever Aspen Idea Award, Aspen New Voices Fellowship and Tutu Fellowship. Kopano provides strategic oversight to the entire Grow Great Campaign, of which Flourish is one of four strategic priorities.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPER AND MASTER TRAINER

Ruth Mathys

Ruth Mathys is Flourish's curriculum developer and master trainer. Ruth is an Occupational Therapist with a Masters in Public Health. Before joining Grow Great in 2018, Ruth spent four years with Medecins sans Frontieres' (MSF) HIV and TB project in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. Ruth's personal and professional experiences of pregnancy, early childhood and motherhood have made her acutely aware of the vulnerability faced by parents and the potential impact of this on their children. This understanding is her motivator as Flourish works towards creating a network of empowered moms, supported to raise children capable of reaching their full potential in life.

FLOURISH PROGRAM LEAD

Thabang Mametse

Thabang Mametse is Flourish's program lead. Thabang is a qualified Social Worker and has been working in the development sector since 2004. She worked at Grassroot Soccer as a Programme Manager, providing oversight on the Community Responses Programme and managing grantees. Previously, she worked at the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund as a Programme Specialist, managing funded partner organisations and providing strategic guidance to the Fund's initiatives in the North West Province. Prior to her lengthy experience at the Fund, she worked at Heartbeat Centre for Community Development as a Social Worker, overseeing the design, implementation and monitoring of the Children's Empowerment Programme.

To find out more, please contact Dr Kopano Matlwa Mabaso

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