



help us put the **FIRST THOUSAND DAYS** on the map



Step (pedal or push) in where it matters most – The First Thousand Days. Each of us can change the story of young lives, and ultimately that of our country.

While South Africa has made big steps in prioritising the First Thousand Days with the adoption in 2015 of a National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy, and a number of programmes focused on maternal and newborn health, much work remains to be done. As it stands up to **up to half of children** in our nation don't receive enough of the love, stimulation, nutrition, safety and good healthcare that they need to thrive. It will take a **Whole of Society Approach (WOSA)** to ensure that enough attention is given to this important phase of life, with all sectors of society playing their part.

One of the challenges is that many people are simply unaware of this once-in-a-lifetime window of brain development. The **#FTDonTheMap Campaign** is working to create this awareness and raise support for **Sikunye** – an organisation that equips faith communities to care for children in this pivotal phase.

The First Thousand Days | Key Facts



The First Thousand Days is a once-in-a-lifetime period of development between conception and 2 years of age.

80%

When you turned 2, your brain was at **80%** of its current size. While the brain continues to develop thereafter, it's in the early stages that the emotional, physical and mental foundations for the future are set.



The time when your brain is most receptive to language development is between **6 and 12** months of age.



During the First Thousand Days, the neural connections in the brain are connecting at **a million** times per second.

FTD

The First Thousand Days is a never-to-be-repeated time of brain development when the foundations for future learning are laid. It is a time of great opportunity (good foundations laid for the future) AND a time of great risk (it is much harder to put those foundations in place later in life).

1/2

Half of the children born in South Africa will not consistently receive enough of the essential building blocks for their brains to reach their full potential.

3/10

South Africa has one of the highest rates of stunting in the world, with **3 out of 10** children under the age of 5 impacted by the irreversible effects of nutritional deprivations.



Sikunye's Work in The First Thousand Days

Sikunye, an initiative of Common Good, inspires, mobilises and equips communities, like local churches, to support families in providing the nurturing care their children need. This is part of a Whole of Society Approach and recognises that there are many different stakeholders that are playing important roles. Sikunye leverages the existing assets within communities to provide care and support for families with children in the First Thousand Days. This sector of society is well positioned: with **80%** of South Africans identifying themselves with a faith, and **43 000 church communities** across the country, millions of families are within reach. **JOIN US** as we seek to see all families in South Africa receive support so that they can provide the care their young child needs to reach their potential.

Find out more about the work that Sikunye does [here](#) or head straight to our #FTDonTheMap Campaign page [here](#).