

Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence



A Holistic Approach to Child Development: Nurturing Values & Spirituality in Early Childhood

Toolkit Piloting highlights by the Africa Early Childhood Network

21-23 June, 2022

Organizations



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Sarvodaya



TOOLKIT – One of the Main Outputs

**Spiritual
Development of
Children in the Early
Years - for the
Prevention of
Violence and
Children's Holistic
Well-Being**





The toolkit aims to enhance the engagement of faith actors in actively influencing parents, caregivers, educators, and community members to foster children's holistic well-being by nurturing their spiritual development in the early years; ultimately contributing to violence prevention

Our Objectives

1

Create spaces and opportunities for faith actors, parents, and caregivers to reflect on the importance of the spiritual development of children in the early years and identify the benefits for children's holistic development and well-being.

2

Encourage self-examination of religious and spiritual principles, teachings and practices that affirm the dignity of the child and **challenge those that can be used to condone violence against children** in child upbringing.

3

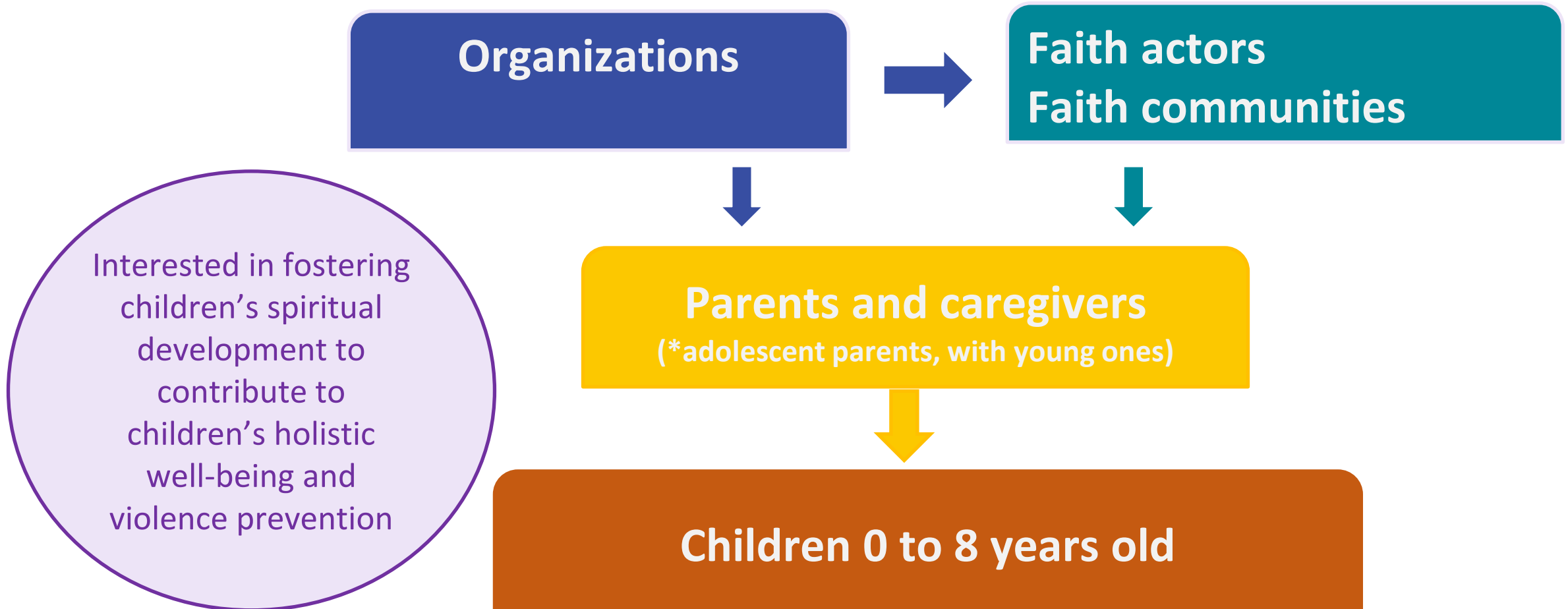
Provide tools for **building caregiving practices and skills** for nurturing the spiritual development in children, as one key avenue contributing to the prevention of violence in child upbringing.

Spiritual Development of Children



A holistic approach to child development simultaneously addresses the physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and physical aspects of a child's life. But, the spiritual domain of development is a core aspect for their holistic development, as it influences their well-being and affirms their human dignity.

WHO is the Toolkit for?



Model for the Spiritual Development of Children

PREMISE 1

Each adult involved in supporting the spiritual development of children, either as a facilitator or caregiver, needs to be equipped to **understand and internalize why spiritual development** is critical for children's holistic development and well-being, and how it contributes to the prevention of violence in child upbringing.

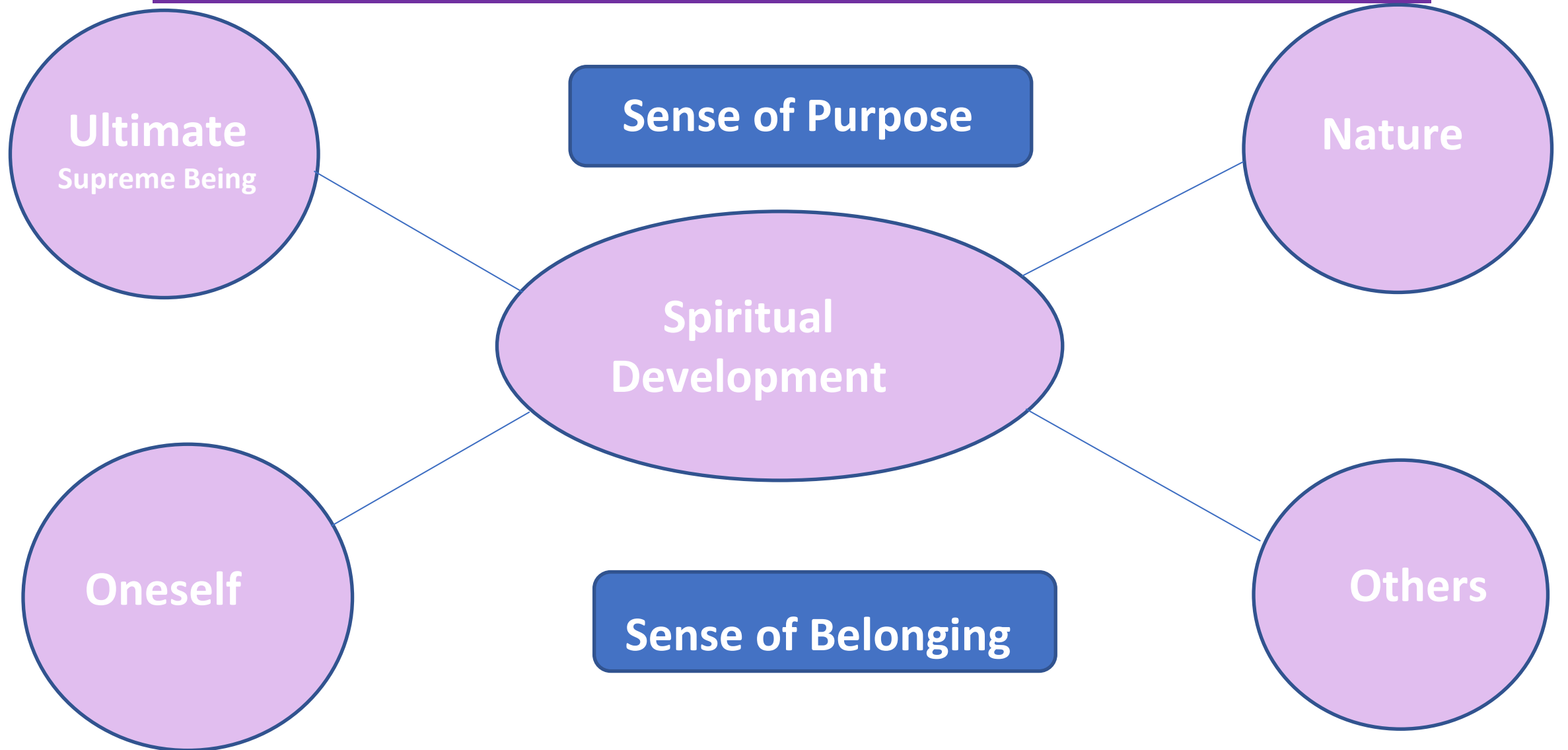
PREMISE 2

Nurturing care and the spiritual development of children require that adults work on their own spiritual development.

PREMISE 3

Children's spiritual capacities are fostered and flourish by promoting positive and nurturing relations with caregivers; creating a safe, free of violence and empowering environment for children; and building opportunities and experiences for children to develop **prosocial behaviors and nurture ethical values and reflections** that allow them to connect with themselves and others in empathic and respectful ways, and develop their sense of belonging, community, purpose and interconnectedness with others.

Spiritual Development & Interconnectedness



About the Validation Pilots

Validation Pilots (March - June 2022) draw participants from:

4 Continents! Africa, Asia, America, Europe!

14 Countries ++

- ✓ **Validation workshops:** AfECN-**Kenya**; Shanti Ashram-**India**; WVI-**Albania, Ghana, Palestine, Philippines, Rwanda & Zimbabwe**; Islamic Relief Worldwide - **Jordan, Pakistan and Lebanon**; GNRC Honduras (Passionistas) - **Honduras**; Pastoral da Criança - **Brazil**
- ✓ **Workshop with parents/caregivers & children:** CRS and WVI
- ✓ **Planned workshops:** INEB – **Thailand**; Sarvodaya – **Sri Lanka**; Projecto Família – **Portugal**; **TBC:** Aga Khan, World Bank & Early Childhood Peace Consortium

1. Toolkit presents a model for fostering early spiritual development: involves building positive relationships, creating supportive environment, and providing opportunities for safely pursuing and nourishing early spiritual development.

2. Toolkit presupposes that parents and caregivers are the main influencers of children during the early years and that faith communities have a critical influence in many communities around the world, particularly Africa.

3. AfECN's pilot held highly interactive pilots with regional and in-country trainers and facilitators (most were parents & caregivers). Participants were drawn from diverse faiths & multiple disciplines.

Example of the Toolkit's Implementation Plans

1. The Validation pilot was an opportunity to understand how the toolkit could be mainstreamed into the AfECN already existing programs and platforms and provided valuable inputs to the toolkit development

2. CHANGE STARTS WITH ME!
Participants – who included parents to young children/working with adolescent parents of young children - want to Champions

3. All participants are active members of a faith community, thus have opportunity during weekly faith convenings for example

4b. IMPLEMENTATION:
Integrating to AfECN's work, alongside existing ECD modules

NURTURING CARE + (PLUS): AfECN serves as a platform to champion excellence and collaboration in protecting children's rights, influence policy and practice, strengthen partnerships, and share experiences and knowledge in ECD on the African continent. To advance holistic child development, AfECN will integrate the spiritual domain of development into ECD:

4a. OPPORTUNITY:
Integrating Spiritual domain of development to Advocacy & Childcare agenda with U4s accompanying their incarcerated mothers to prison.





Program Implementation Outline

- ✓ **Firstly, a Toolkit launch:** Rome, **November 17th 2022** at Gregorian University, during the celebration of the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, a global movement convened by Arigatou International that brings together people of goodwill on every 20 November, to advocate for children's well-being.
- ✓ **Implementation Program 2B for a 2-3** Year period with **5** organizations globally; will include organization's customization/planning, training of trainers & facilitators; delivery of workshops for parents and caregivers, and activities with children.
- ✓ **Systematic implementation/M&E Framework** to be developed in collaboration with the Global Center for the Development of the Whole Child, University of Notre Dame.

THANK YOU ALL!!!

ASANTE SANA!!

SHUKRAN!!