



CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

THEME: Responsive Caregiving for Children in Diverse Circumstances: Innovations and Inclusivity

#4thECDconference

#4thECD

FOURTH NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDERS' CONFERENCE (2021)

25th - 27th October, 2021

**Jaramogi Oginga Odinga
University of Science and
Technology, Siaya
County, Kenya**



H.E GOVERNOR CORNEL RASANGA AMOTH, EGH

2013 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governor, County Government of Siaya, Republic of Kenya
Profession:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement Specialist ▪ Lawyer/Advocate
Date of Birth:	1957
Nationality:	KENYAN
Marital status	Married
Membership in Professional Societies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Law Society of Kenya ▪ Kenya Institute of Supplies Management ▪ Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Kenya Branch) ▪ Member of National Committee on International Humanitarian Law ▪ East African Association of Professionals
Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LLM (Masters of Law – Public Finance and Procurement) ▪ LLB (Bachelors of Law), University of Nairobi - 2003 ▪ Bachelors of Arts (Economics), University of Nairobi - 1981 ▪ Advanced Certificate Level (Kisii High School) - 1977
Professional Qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate of the High Court 2005 ▪ Post Graduate Diploma in Law, Kenya School of Law 2005 ▪ Diploma in Supplies Management from KIA - 1985



H.E Rosella Njaya Rasanga

H.E Rosella Njaya Rasanga is a former Public Relations Practitioner with extensive knowledge and experience in Government Communications. With her history in Public Service, Rosella has used her platform as the First Lady of Siaya County to spear head initiatives that touch the under-served in the Community. She is a champion of Wadagi Initiative, a program that promotes Maternal and New-born health by encouraging Women to give birth in Hospitals. Rosella also leads AMPPAD, a mentorship program for adolescent girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. With the distinction of being an ambassador and Patron for Nurturing Care for Early Childhood

Development dubbed 'Nyathi en Mwandu' meaning 'A child is wealth' Program in Siaya, Rosella is committed to scaling her involvement in ECD advocacy to increase investment, foster partnerships, create and execute policies that promote Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development in Siaya County and beyond. Rosella is a mother to seven children and when she is not working for her community, Rosella likes to work on her farm. H.E Rosella welcomes everyone to the 4th National ECD Stakeholder's conference that will be taking place from 25th to 27th October 2021 at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology in Siaya County.



Dr. Teresa Mwoma
Senior Lecturer Kenyatta University
National Coordinator, ECDNeK
Executive Director African Council for
Distance Education

I welcome all of you to the 4th National early childhood development stakeholder's conference 2021. In the last six years, we have held three successful similar conferences in collaboration with the Ministry of **Education**, Ministry of Health and County Governments through the Council of Governors with technical and financial support from UNICEF and other ECD stakeholders. This year's conference is organized by the County Government of Siaya, in collaboration with ECD Network for Kenya, the Ministry of Education, and

the Ministry of Health. Our focus this year is on childcare because this is one area that has not received adequate attention in relation to children from diverse circumstances. The theme for this year's conference is: *"Responsive Caregiving for Children in Diverse Circumstances: Innovations and Inclusivity."* Consideration is made on all children in emergencies and other circumstances such as; Covid-19 crisis/Response; early learning, health systems/workers; home child-cares and related facilities such as prisons, refugee settings and places of worship. By the end of this conference it is expected that as participants we will commit to raising the profile of the ECD agenda in Kenya through strategic financial investment, multi-sectoral collaboration and engagement in relation to public policy processes both at the National and County levels. Similar to the second conference, we are lobbying the political leadership to prioritize ECD as a critical sector and showcase best practices from counties currently scaling up ECD initiatives. I wish all of us good deliberations during this conference.



**FOURTH NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)
STAKEHOLDERS' CONFERENCE (2021)**

**Theme: Responsive Caregiving for Children in Diverse Circumstances:
*Innovations and Inclusivity***

Early Childhood Development: The Kenya We Want!

Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) guarantees a child's best interest as of paramount importance for national development, which is a shared responsibility by all stakeholders. Investing in Early Childhood Development (ECD) therefore, is critical for everyone - governments, businesses, communities, parents, and caregivers, and most of all, babies, and young children. Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development (NCfECD) not only ensures the survival of the voiceless children but also goes further to ensure that those who survive also thrive and live to transform their communities. This is aptly reflected in the vision of ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK), "A society where all children aged 0-8 years realize holistic ECD for lifelong success." The Nurturing Care Framework (WHO, 2018) draws on state-of-the-art evidence on how ECD unfolds to set out the most effective policies and services that will help parents and caregivers provide nurturing care for young children. It is designed to serve as a roadmap for action, helping mobilize a coalition of parents and caregivers, national governments, civil society groups, academia, the United Nations, the private sector, educational institutions and service providers, to ensure that every baby gets the best start in life.

About ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK)

ECDNeK exists to strengthen coordination and collaboration between the Government of Kenya and non-state actors and support the development and implementation of relevant ECD policies and programs in Kenya through capacity development, research and advocacy. The Network works closely with National and County governments, organizations, parents and community members to ensure that children are able to access and participate in high-quality, holistic ECD programs. Specifically, the Network seeks to:

1. Promote equitable access to quality ECD services in Kenya for all children.
2. Develop and work for an enabling environment that encourages local research in ECD.
3. Strengthen ECD stakeholders' collaboration and coordination.
4. Influence financial resource allocation and utilization towards ECD programs in Kenya.

Childcare amidst COVID-19

The United Nations (2020) recognizes that COVID-19 is a universal crisis. Children of all ages have been affected by the socio-economic impacts and, in some cases, by mitigation measures that may unintentionally do more harm than good. The negative effects of this pandemic were anticipated to impact children in the most deprived countries, in the low-income communities, neighborhoods, and for those in already disadvantaged or vulnerable situations. Children living in institutions, prisons, refugees, camps and informal settlements have also been highly affected. Therefore, greater investment is required to support these groups of children to ensure they are not left behind, which promotes equality for all children in reaching their developmental potential. In adjusting to the new normal, the 2021 national

conference will bring together a pool of ECD experts, policy makers, practitioners, development partners, researchers and academicians, who will discuss the best workable strategies to ensure no child is left behind. These will have a guided focus on:

- Promotion of access to services for children through prioritizing integrated child-centered programs.
- Provision of practical support to parents and caregivers to enable them in supporting early learning.
- Provision of inclusive programs that target all children regardless of their circumstances.

The Fourth National Early Childhood Development Stakeholders' Conference

The Ministries of Education and Health in collaboration with the ECD Network for Kenya, Council of Governors, and Siaya County government are co-hosting the Fourth National ECD Stakeholders Conference in Siaya County, Kenya. The conference is anticipated to bring together over 300 ECD practitioners, researchers, policy makers and leaders from national and county government as well as research institutions, civil society organizations, the private sector, donors, and the media. The conference provides an opportunity for participants to discuss and share insights on the status of ECD programs in Kenya, innovations, challenges and create resolutions to establish a holistic/multi-sectoral approach towards ECD in Kenya, which will enhance policy and practice on implementation of the Nurturing Care Framework (NCF). Conference objectives include:

1. To create awareness on the need for integration of nurturing care practices in ECD service delivery.
2. To advocate for systemic change through policy, at National and County levels.
3. To push for increased sustainable nurturing care investments in Kenya.
4. To interrogate the social fabric and its impact on holistic child development.

DAY 1: MONDAY, 25TH OCTOBER 2021

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Modality</i>	<i>Facilitators</i>	<i>Minutes</i>
8:15 - 8:20am	<i>Pre-Opening</i>	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p>2 MCs - Partners & government: Oscar Kadenge and Auscar Wambiye</p> <p>Session chair: Immaculate Salaon, Community Initiatives Agenda (CIA)</p> <p>Lead Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p> <p><i>Participants to be seated /log in 20 minutes' prior</i></p>	5 Mins
8:20 - 8:30am	<i>Children's presentations - pre-recorded</i>	<i>Pre-Recorded Videos playing Synchronous</i>	<i>Formal opening Virtual & physical</i>	10 Mins
8:30 - 9:00am	<p>Opening Addresses Dr Teresa Mwoma <i>National coordinator, ECD Network for Kenya, Senior Lecturer - Kenyatta University, Executive Director ACDE</i></p>	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p>Session chair: Immaculate Salaon, Community Initiatives Agenda (CIA)</p> <p>Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p>	30 Mins
9:00 - 9:25am	<p>Remarks from JOUST & KU Prof Joseph Bosire <i>DVC Academics</i></p>	<i>Synchronous</i>	Session chair: Immaculate Salaon, Community Initiatives Agenda (CIA)	25 Mins

	<p>Prof. Stephen Gaya Agong' Vice Chancellor Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University</p> <p>Prof. Paul Wainaina Vice Chancellor Kenyatta University</p>		<p>Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p>	
9:25 - 10:05am	<p>Formal opening</p>	Synchronous	<p>Session chair: Immaculate Salaon, Community Initiatives Agenda (CIA)</p> <p>Lead Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p>	40 Mins
	<p>Keynote speaker - Ms Maniza Zaman The role of UNICEF in supporting caregiving initiatives for children under three years.</p> <p>MoE (Guest Speaker) Status of Pre-primary Education, Policy Implementation</p> <p>Ambassador Richard Phillip Owade, The County Attorney</p> <p>Joseph Onyango Ogutu The County Secretary</p> <p>Brief Remarks Mr. Wakla Dismas Odhiambo, County Executive Committee member for Health and Sanitation</p> <p>Mrs. Rosenell Odondi, County Executive Committee Member</p>	Synchronous	<p>Session chair: Immaculate Salaon, Community Initiatives Agenda (CIA)</p> <p>Lead Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p>	

	<p>for Education, Youth, Training, Gender and Social services.</p> <p>H.E Dr James Okumbe Deputy Governor Siaya County</p> <p>Guest Speaker: H.E. Rosella Rasanga, First Lady of Siaya County Upscaling Smart Start Siaya Nurturing Care model</p> <p>Keynote address: H.E. Cornel Rasanga Amoth, Governor, Siaya County</p> <p>Chief Guest: Prof. George Magoha CS Ministry of Education; Importance of parents in supporting implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum for preschool children</p>			
10:05 - 10:45am	Tea break / participants to view gallery / poster presentations/exhibitions - 40 Minutes/group /online photo			
10:45 - 1:10pm	<p>Concurrent Sessions</p> <p>Breakout Room 1 (Chair – Dr. Hudson Ouko, Kenyatta University COVID 19 and Child Care / Teen Motherhood and the plight of children of teen mothers</p> <p>Breakout Room 2 (Chair – Dr. Roseline Olumbe, Daystar University): Childcare in the urban</p>	Synchronous / Break-Out Rooms	<p>Session Chair: Dr. Hudson Ouko, Kenyatta University. Rapporteur: Penina Nyamori</p> <p>Session Chair – Dr. Roseline Olumbe, Daystar University. Rapporteur:</p>	145 Mins

	<p>informal settings</p> <p>Breakout Room 3 (Chair – Linzy Nyamboki, Build Africa): The Nurturing Care Framework /childcare in diverse religious and cultural settings / protection and safety in childcare</p>		<p><i>Bernard Ashiono</i></p> <p>Session Chair: Linzy Nyamboki, Build Africa. Rapporteur: Janet Ndeto</p>	
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1.1. COVID 19 AND CHILDCARE, TEEN MOTHERHOOD AND THE PLIGHT OF CHILDREN OF TEEN MOTHERS

Breakout Room 1; Chair: Dr. Hudson Ouko, Kenyatta University

Rapporteur: Penina Nyamori

1.1.1. The rollout of m2m eservices to support nurturing care for young and vulnerable children in Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Charles Muruka, Melissa Wallace, Fiona Burt, Ann Marjorie Mbule and Kathrin Schmitz*

1.1.2. Community Health Volunteers adopt strategies to help children thrive amidst the COVID19 pandemic. *Miruka R, Oyugi B, Omedo D, Obong’o C, Oyugi A, O, Kadenge, Odero L, Ungadi J, Atieno J, C, Burudi*

1.1.3. Home learning in the context of COVID-19: A Case of the Madrasa Early Childhood programme – Kenya (MECP-K). *Barke Ramadhan & Everlyne Okeyo*

1.1.4. Teen Motherhood and the plight of children of teen mothers: Integrating Responsive caregiving into DREAMS project in Siaya County. *Miruka R, Oyugi B, Omedo D, Obong’o C, Oyugi A, O, Kadenge, Odero L, Ungadi J, Atieno J, C, Burudi*

1.1.5. Understanding and impacting Early Childhood Development knowledge, attitudes and practices among teenage mothers and caregivers in Kenya. *Dr. Anastasia Mirzoyants, Head of Knowledge and Learning, Norah Kopi, Qualitative Research Coordinator, Joyce Wanjeri, Account Manager*

1.1.6. Early years care and education in the face of COVID-19 pandemic: A case of Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. *Dr. Ogogo Joyce and Dr. Ouko Hudson, Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs Education Kenyatta University.*

1.1.7. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupting nutrition intake: Nutrition response to malnutrition among under 3 years in Ugenya, Siaya county. *V. Omondi. O. Kambona*

1.2 CHILDCARE IN THE URBAN INFORMAL SETTINGS

Breakout Room 2 (Chair - Dr. Roseline Olumbe, Daystar University)

Rapporteur: Bernard Ashiono

1.2.1. The effects of mushrooming daycares on holistic child development in the informal settlements, Kajiado County. *Allan Ragi; Stephen Ikonya; Jack Ndegwa; Peter Kamau; Charity Wachira*

1.2.2. Engaging caregivers to enhance achievement of desirable learning outcomes for children with disabilities in low resource settings. *Maria Omare*

1.2.3. “Kuishi na Kustawi” - Transforming early childhood development outcomes in Korogocho slum, Kenya. *Jimiya Kome, Maryclare Nyore*

1.2.4. Challenges facing children in urban informal settings and effect on early childhood development. *Linet Kaloki*

1.2.5. Using IDELA approach for ECD learners’ assessment. *Bentinck Ochieng (M&E Coordinator), Patrick Ooko (ECD Coordinator) and Irene Wali (CP & Education Specialist)*

1.2.6. Parental employment and holistic child rearing practices: Parental perceptions from an urban informal settlement. *Stella Ndugire Mbugua (Daystar University, AfECN), Dr Roseline Olumbe (Institute of Child Development, Daystar University), & Dr Ruth Walioli (Daystar University).*

1.2.7. Can tech-enabled distance learning work in lower income settlements? *Chepkoech Faith and Mildred Obuya*

1.3. THE NURTURING CARE FRAMEWORK / CHILD CARE IN DIVERSE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL SETTINGS /PROTECTION AND SAFETY IN CHILDCARE

Breakout Room 3 Chair: Linzy Nyamboki, Build Africa

Rapporteur: Janet Ndeto

1.3.1. Childcare and Safety for Children accompanying their Mothers in Prison and Children in the Juvenile Justice System. *Christine Odero, Jane Kuria*

1.3.2. Community participation in the delivery of holistic and inclusive early learning and education in rural areas of Gilgil Sub-County-Nakuru County. *Linzy Nyamboki, Aron Mativo*

1.3.3. Early Childhood Development Programming Bridging the Spiritual and Material to Support Holistic Human Development. *Anil Khamis, PhD*

1.3.4. Inclusion and aspects of child protection: A case study of Nyota care Dandora, Nairobi Kenya. *Janet Ndeto Mwitiki*

1.3.5. APHRC PANEL PRESENTATION; CHILDCARE IN URBAN INFORMAL AND DIVERSE CULTURAL SETTINGS

Chair: Ruth Muendo

Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo

1.3.5.1. Improving the quality of childcare centers through supportive assessment and communities of practice' in informal settlements in Nairobi.

1.3.5.2. Exploring the childcare market in Mukuru Slum: The Nairobi Early Childcare in Slums (NECS) study

1.3.5.3. Caring practices and support for early childhood development and learning among nomadic pastoralists – Key lessons from stakeholder engagement activities

1.3.5.4. Community Perceptions and Practices of Early Childhood Development in an Urban-poor Setting in Nairobi: Uncovering contextual Drivers beneath Poverty

1.3.5.5. The feasibility and effects of a mobile phone technology for optimizing, tracking and responding to children's developmental progress in Korogocho, Nairobi, Kenya: findings of a quasi-experimental study

Presenters: Margaret Nampijja, Elizabeth Mwaniki, Ruth Muendo, Silas Onyango, Maurice Mutisya, Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo

1:10 - 1:55pm	Lunch break / participants to view gallery - 45minutes			
Time	Activity	Modality	Facilitators	Minutes
1:55 - 2:40pm	<i>Breakaway Sessions</i>	<i>Synchronous</i>	<i>Session Chairs</i>	45 Mins
	<p><u>Concurrent Sessions</u></p> <p>Breakout Room 1 (Chair - Leonard Chumo, Uthabiti Africa) Policies, guidelines, regulations, and financing in childcare settings</p> <p>Breakout Room 2 (Chair Carol Linda Awuor, Lwala Community Alliance): Childcare and women's economic empowerment & Male involvement in childcare</p>	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p>Session Chair – Leonard Chumo, Uthabiti Africa. Rapporteur: Sally Moraa</p> <p>Session Chair: Carol Linda Awuor, Lwala Community Alliance. Rapporteur: Racheal Makena.</p> <p>Session Chair: Linda Kharemwa, UNICEF. Rapporteur: Regina Mwasambo</p>	

work

**Breakout Room 3 (Chair
Linda Kharemwa, UNICEF):**
Childcare in Humanitarian
situations

1.4. POLICIES, GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS AND FINANCING IN CHILDCARE SETTINGS

Breakout Room 1: Chair: Leonard Chumo, Uthabiti Africa

Rapporteurs: Sally Moraa

1.4.1. Systems strengthening approach to scaling up Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development; Smart Start Siaya initiative *Dr. Elizabeth Obinge Omondi (PhD)*.

1.4.2. Priority Setting for Early Childhood Initiatives: Analysis of policies, guidelines and financing across Lake Region Economic Bloc counties in Kenya. *Dr. Elizabeth Obinge Omondi (PhD)*

1.4.3. Collaborative action to invigorate steady policy and regulatory framework for childcare in Kenya. *Leonard Chumo; Asayya Imapa; Joyce Wesonga; Gladys Muthara*

1.4.4. The state of the early childhood care workforce in Kenya: Preliminary findings and insights. *Gladys Muthara, Sofina Merinyo, Tracy Koske, Asayya Imapa, Joyce Wesonga, Sharon Macharia, Masheti Masinjila*

1.4.5. Strengthening Early Childhood Care and Education in urban settings: Reflections on policy and practice. *Asayya Imapa; Joyce Wesonga; Leonard Chumo; Gladys Muthara*

1.4.6. Strengthening Early Childhood Development (ECD) Delivery in Kenyan counties
Eva Masinde – Programme Manager, Wadzi Katsidzira- Initiative Lead

1.5. CHILDCARE AND WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & MALE INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDCARE WORK

Breakout Room 2: Chair: Carolinda Awour, Lwala Community Alliance

Rapporteurs: Racheal Makena

1.5.1. Improving breastfeeding and nurturing care practices among working mothers in a Kenyan tea estate: The role of C4D. *Betty Samburu (Dr.), Laura Kiige, Susan Jobando, Nicholus Kirimi, Bridget Job-Johnson and Patrick Codjia- UNICEF, Kenya*

1.5.2. Provision of childcare services in rural & remote tertiary institution to grant vulnerable young mothers an

opportunity for economic empowerment. *Emmanuel Ogwel*

1.5.3. Child Care and women in the agricultural labour of Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Dr. Ruth Walioli

1.5.4. Integration of Nurturing Care in young mothers empowerment in Kisumu East-Angola

Winnie Alando, Roseline Orimbo, Irene Olweny, Simon Peter

1.5.5. Father's involvement in Early Childhood Development and Care in Kenya. *Makori O. Bonface, Namonyo M.*

Nancy and Obunga O. Elijah

1.6. CHILD CARE IN HUMANITARIAN SITUATIONS & CHILD CARE FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS (e.g. disability, orphans, institutionalized, children in incarceration, street children)

Breakout Room 3: Chair: Linda Kharemwa, UNICEF

Rapporteur: Regina Mwasambo

1.6.1. The role of traditional birth attendants in supporting pre and postnatal care for women in refugee camps: A case of Ifo Camp Dadaab Kenya. *Teresa Mwoma, Jacqueline Kituku, Josephine Gitome, Newton Kahumbi, Priscila Ndegwa, Muthoni Maina, Jen Bagelman*

1.6.2. Addressing factors hindering optimal early childhood development of children with disabilities in Kilifi County. *Dennis Kitsao*

1.6.3. Mainstreaming appropriate quality disability interventions mechanisms into the Care for Child Development concept *Raphael O. Owako MSc.*

2:40 - 3:00pm	Day 1: Close / Announcements and overview of day activities	Synchronous	Rapporteur: Bernard Ashiono & Janet Ndeto	20 Mins
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DAY 2: TUESDAY, 26TH OCTOBER 2021

Time	Activity	Modality	Facilitator	Minutes
8:15 - 8:35am	Registration/Exhibitions and Presentations	Synchronous	Session Chair and Rapporteur	20 Mins
8:35 - 8:50 am	Recap of Day 1	Q & A Session	Chair: Tobias Opiyo, Catholic Relief Services	15 Mins

			(CRS) Lead Rapporteurs: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo	
8:50 - 9:50 am	<p>Guest Speaker: Teen motherhood and the plight of teen mothers</p> <p><i>Dr Elizabeth Omondi, Member of Smart start Siaya Executive team and Lecturer and JOOUST</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Pediatric Care amidst COVID-19 Dr Caroline Mwangi <i>Head, Division of Neonatal and Child Health (DNCH), Ministry of Health</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker: Childcare for the Vulnerable groups Prof. Amina Abubakar <i>Director, IHD, Aga Khan University (AKU)</i></p> <p><i>Using IDELA approach for ECD learners' assessment, Irene Wali, Save the Children</i></p> <p><i>Community Health Volunteers adopt strategies to help children thrive amidst COVID-19 pandemic, Beatrice Oyugi, PATH</i></p> <p><i>Endline Study on Let's Play, Spaces for Kids to be Kids, Samburu and Isiolo Counties, Agnes Ngonyo / Fariza Baidaly.</i></p>	Synchronous	<p>Chair: Tobias Opiyo, Catholic Relief Services (CRS)</p> <p>Rapporteur: Stella Ndugire Mbugua & Ruth Muendo</p>	60 Mins

	UNICEF			
9:50 - 10:20 am	Tea break /Participants to view Gallery / Poster Presentations- 30 Minutes			
10:20 - 11:05 am	<p><u>Concurrent sessions</u></p> <p>Breakout Room 1 Chair – Dr. Anil Khamis, Institute of Human Development (IHD/AKU): Rethinking childcare workforce & SDGS and emerging issues</p> <p>Breakout Room 2 Chair – Dr. Benson Odong’o, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST): Implication for Practice and Policy & Community responsibility and responsive child caregiving</p> <p>Breakout Room 3 Chair: Elizabeth Gitonga, Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN): AfECN Catalogue of Abstracts for ECDNeK Conference</p>	Synchronous	<p>Session Chair: Dr. Anil Khamis, Institute of Human Development (IHD/AKU).</p> <p>Rapporteur: Racheal Makena & Bernard Ashiono</p> <p>Session Chair: Dr. Benson Odong’o, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST)</p> <p>Rapporteur: Sally Moraa & Penina Nyamori</p> <p>Session Chair: Elizabeth Gitonga, Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN). Rapporteur: Regina Mwasambo</p>	45 mins

2.1. RETHINKING CHILDCARE WORKFORCE & SDGS AND EMERGING ISSUES

Breakout Room 1; Chair: Dr. Anil Khamis, IHD/AKU

Rapporteurs: Racheal Makena & Bernard Ashiono

2.2.1. Reading at home as an essential to learning to read in school: African Storybook. *Dorcas Wepukhulu*

2.2.2. Nutritional Status and Health of Early Childhood: A Case Study of Nairobi and Kajiado Counties *Munaweza Muleji, Lydia Asiko.*

2.2.3. Testing means to scale Early Childhood Development interventions in rural Kenya - Msingi Bora *Edith Alu, Jill Luoto, Alie Eleveld, Alex Mwaki,*

2.2.4. Rethinking childcare workforce: The Human Factor Approach. *Dr Lynn Kisembe, Moi University - Department of Linguistics, Literature, Foreign Languages and Film Studies*

2.2.5. Factors affecting the implementation of learning through play in the Zambian public preschools and community. *Sarah Bwalya, Derrick Kambadzo, Jerry Banda, Grant Mapoma Mwinsa,*

2.2.6. The role of ECD mentor coordinators in integrating nurturing care within health system in Siaya County. *Omedo D, Oyugi B, Oscar K, Obong'o C, Burudi C*

2.2. IMPLICATION FOR PRACTICE AND POLICY & COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPONSIVE CHILD CAREGIVING

Breakout room 2: chair: Dr. Benson Odongo, JOOUST

Rapporteur: Sally Moraa & Penina Nyamori

2.2.1. Delivering Nurturing care through Community Health Workers (CHWs): A case of Lwala's Community Health – Led model. *Caroline Linda Awuor, Erick Auko, Steve Okongo, Lwala Community Health*

2.2.2. Understanding and impacting Early Childhood Development knowledge, attitudes and practices among teenage mothers and caregivers in Kenya. *Dr Anastazia Mirzoyants - Shujaaz*

2.2.3. Understanding caring practices and opportunities for early learning among Nomadic Pastoralists in Kajiado County, Kenya. *Maurice Mutisya and CAPS ECD Research Team, Elizabeth Mwaniki, Paula Griffiths, Emma Haicraft, Teresa Mwoma, Judith Kimiywe.*

2.2.4. Associations between exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) duration and children's developmental outcomes: Evidence from Siaya County, Kenya. *Silas Onyango, Elizabeth Kimani-Murage, Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo, Nelson Langat, Kenneth Okelo, Christopher Obong', Jürg Utzinger & Günther Fink*

2.3. AfECN CATALOGUE OF ABSTRACTS FOR ECDNeK CONFERENCE

Breakout room 3: Chair: Elizabeth Gitonga, AfECN

Rapporteur: Regina Mwasambo

2.3.1. Quality of Early Childhood Care in informal, home-based daycare centers in Dagoretti North and Naivasha Sub-Counties, Kenya. *John Kariuki Chege – Children's officer Naivasha sub county.*

2.3.2. Status of Pre-primary Education Policy Implementation. *Ministry of Education*

2.3.3. Using Community Activators as Grassroot Advocates and Promoters of Quality ECD Services.
Moses Abiero, and Elizabeth Gitonga, AfECN

2.3.4. Kenya County ECD Profiles Report. *Dr. Elda Onsomu – Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA)*

11:05 - 12:05 pm	Plenary	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, ED-ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Racheal Makena & Penina Nyamori	60 Mins
12:05 - 12:45 pm	County governments sharing on progress made in ECD	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, ED-ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Racheal Makena & Penina Nyamori	40 Mins
12:45 - 1:45 pm	Lunch break	Asynchronous	Free activities	60 Mins
1:45 - 2.45 pm	Emmanuel Korir, Rose Iminza and Prof. Alexandra Gottardo, World Vision Kenya Using Technology to Improve Literacy in the Global South	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Olumbe, Daystar University Rapporteurs: Janet Ndeto & Sally Moraa	60 Mins
2:45 - 3.00 pm	Day two close announcements	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Olumbe, Daystar University Rapporteurs: Janet Ndeto & Sally Moraa	15 Mins

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, 27TH OCTOBER 2021

Time	Activity	Modality	Facilitator	Site information / Time
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8:15 - 8:30 am	Registration	Synchronous	Session Chair and Rapporteur	15 Mins
8:30 - 8:45am	Recap of Day 2	Synchronous	Session Chair: Mumbi Muguongo, CleanStart Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	15 Mins
8:45 - 9:25 am	Keynote Address: Madam Florence Omundi , Deputy Commissioner General, Kenya Prisons Service- Caregiving for children accompanying imprisoned women: Challenges and opportunities for collaboration Chief Guest: Hon. Mutahi Kagwe , CS Ministry of Health. Role of stakeholders in supporting government initiatives in implementing health protocols on COVID-19 pandemic	Synchronous	Session Chair: Mumbi Muguongo, CleanStart Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	40 Mins
9:25 – 9:45 am	Dr. Sam Mburu; Miriam Antonia; Irene Wali, Save the Children; Integrated Child Survival Project for Marginalized Communities in Kenya	Synchronous	Session Chair: Mumbi Muguongo, CleanStart Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	20 Mins
9:45 – 10:25 am	Counties sharing on progress made in early childhood development.	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National coordinator, ECDNeK Rapporteur: Racheal Makena & Sally Moraa	40 Mins
10:25 - 10:55 am	Launch of the strategic plan	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, - National coordinator, ECDNeK	30 Mins

			Rapporteur: Racheal Makena & Sally Moraa	
10:55 - 11:25 am	Break / Participants to view Gallery / Poster Presentations and Exhibitions - 30 Minutes			
11:25 – 12:05 pm	National Advocacy Strategy	Synchronous	Session Chair: Elizabeth Gitonga, AfECN Rapporteur: Stella Mbugua	45 Mins
12:05 - 12:25 pm	Conference Communique Stella Ndugire Mbugua - DNCH-MoH, Ruth Muendo, Dr. Roseline Olumbe, & Dr. Anil Khamis	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National coordinator, ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	20 Mins
12:25 - 12:45 pm	Voting for the host county the Fifth ECD Stakeholders Conference (County host)	Synchronous Virtual voting	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National coordinator, ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	20 Mins
12:45 - 1:10 pm	Closing plenary Vote of thanks Lily Oyare - Board members	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National coordinator, ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	25 Mins
1:10 - 1:40 pm	Conference announcements and close	Synchronous	Session Chair: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National coordinator, ECDNeK Rapporteurs: Regina Mwasambo & Janet Mwitiki	30 Mins

ABSTRACTS

The role of traditional birth attendants in supporting pre and postnatal care for women in Refugee camps: A case of Ifo Dadaab Kenya

Teresa Mwoma¹, Jacqueline Kituku², Josephine Gitome³, Newton Kahumbi⁴, Priscila Ndegwa⁵, Muthoni Maina⁶, Jen Bagelman⁷ Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs, Department of Community and Reproductive Health Nursing, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Department of Business Administration, Department of Sociology, Gender and Development Kenyatta University and Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University UK

Access to skilled birth attendance is critical in improving maternal and newborn health. However, in low resource settings, rural and refugee camps, professionally trained staff are often in short supply hence women tend to rely on traditional birth attendants (TBAs) for delivery. To understand the care provided to refugee women during pregnancy and after birth, in a refugee setting, a qualitative study was conducted in Ifo Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. This paper therefore, documents findings on participants' perspectives on pre and post-natal care provided to women and neonates in refugee camps during pregnancy and after birth. Nine participants were purposely selected for the study including, two married men, three traditional birth attendants, two Somali pregnant women and two refugee safe mothers. Data was collected through focus group discussions and interviews.

Findings revealed that TBAs play a critical role in supporting women during pregnancies and after birth. However, they are not able to attend to complications associated with delivery. Among the caring support cited include; guiding and counselling pregnant women, educating them on the importance of attending antenatal clinics, praying for the baby after birth, and escorting women to the health facilities to take their babies for immunization. In addition, they advise women to breastfeed their babies immediately after birth. In view of this, it is recommended that TBAs should be encouraged to guide and advise pregnant women to deliver in the health care facility, where they can escort them to get professional attention during birth to avoid any complications associated with delivery.

Delivering Nurturing Care through Community Health Workers (CHWs); a case of Lwala's Community Health – Led model.

Caroline Linda Awuor, Erick Auko, Steve Okongo, Lwala Community Health

A baseline survey conducted by Lwala Community Alliance to establish the status of Nurturing Care components among caregivers of under 4 children within North Kamagambo – Rongo revealed 98% of our target respondents knew the Community Health Worker (CHW) who visited their households; this to Lwala was an indication

that adding Nurturing Care to the CHW service delivery would enhance quality service delivery to children and their caregivers. Caring for a child in their own home environment has a profound impact on their ability to survive and thrive during their first 1000 days. Families need knowledge and skills to give best care for their children. ^[1] CHWs are able to reach people in their homes, enabling them to target families with necessary resources to improve the care environment for children and their families. Lwala has over the years worked with CHWs and reformed Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) to improve key maternal child health indicators like skilled delivery rates, from 26% to the current 95% ^[2]. In 2020 Lwala added Nurturing Care into our CHW delivery package. By integrating Nurturing Care into our community-led health model, we now address holistic outcomes for children and caregivers; this is also one of the ways in which caregivers have continued to support and stimulate children even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Improving the quality of childcare centres through supportive assessment and communities of practice' in informal settlements in Nairobi

Margaret Nampijja, Elizabeth Mwaniki, Ruth Muendo, Silas Onyango, Maurice Mutisya, Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo, African Population and Health Research Center

Worldwide, over 250 million children under five years are at risk of not achieving their developmental potential due to extreme poverty, malnutrition, infections, and environments that lack cognitive stimulation. Caregivers' knowledge, attitudes and practices of childcare is a salient yet important factor in determining early childhood development (ECD) outcomes. However, in many low income settings, the quality and experiences of child

rearing and how they are influenced by contextual factors have not been examined. We aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of ECD, and associated challenges in an urban-poor setting in Nairobi, Kenya. A qualitative survey was conducted among parents and other community members in Korogocho, Nairobi within a larger study which examined the feasibility and impact of a mobile phone application for monitoring child developmental milestones. We conducted focus group discussions and key informant interviews with 64 primary caregivers, 64 community health volunteers (CHVs), and 11 representatives from county and sub-county government on their knowledge, attitude and practices, and challenges they faced in supporting child stimulation, nutrition and health care. Interviews were audio-recorded, and the data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that the community (parents, and CHVs) appreciated the importance of ECD. However, their perceptions and care-giving practices were generally poor and were driven by poverty and cultural and religious beliefs and practices, and family factors that act in the background of poverty. Implications of these findings for future research, policy and interventions for improving these practices are discussed.

Understanding caring practices and opportunities for early learning among Nomadic Pastoralists in Kajiado County, Kenya

Maurice Mutisya and CAPS ECD Research Team, Elizabeth Mwaniki, Paula Griffiths, Emma Haicraft, Teresa Mwoma, Judith Kimiywe

Over 66% of children in sub-Saharan Africa are affected by poor development and learning in the early years which are attributed to a lack of responsive care

including feeding practices, stunting and poverty. This is shown to impact young children's emotional, social, physical and cognitive development. Many of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs in the rural and urban poor areas aim to address the challenges. Nonetheless, mobile populations such as nomadic pastoralists face a unique set of challenges with regard to responsive care and early learning support. Yet, a dearth of information exists on the caring practices and support for early learning among children 0-36 months in nomadic settings. In this study, we assess the caring practices, support for caring practices and early learning opportunities among the Maasai Community in Kajiado using a mix of methods and a sample of 670 caregiver-child dyads. Preliminary results show high levels of child malnutrition with one in every three children surveyed stunted. Based on the international ASQ3 cut points, the majority of children were meeting the required milestones, safe for gross and fine motor in which about 35% of the children experienced delayed development. We however noted a high variability in the ASQ3 scores, indicating possible extremes in child development. There was a mix of caring practices, with the mother being central while early learning opportunities centred around playing with local materials that were noted sometimes to be unsafe and not stimulative. The information gathered in this study will be used to generate evidence to support the development of a community-based programme to foster optimal ECD and early learning of children aged 0 to 36 months from populations with nomadic lifestyles.

Using IDELA approach for ECD learners' assessment.

Bentinck Ochieng (M&E Coordinator), Patrick Ooko (ECD Coordinator) and Irene Wali (CP& Education Specialist), Save the Children

IDELA is a Play-based assessment tool designed for children in the 3-6 age group. It takes about 30 minutes per child and includes 24 core items that cover four developmental domains + learning approaches and aspects of self-regulation. The purpose of the study was to establish children's school readiness when schools reopened after closure due to COVID-19 Pandemic by examining their physical skills, emergent language and literacy skills, emergent numeracy and problem solving skills, social-emotional skills, and their approaches to learning. Key results indicate that 96% of children assessed correctly mentioned their first and last names, only 50% knew their correct ages. Children's skills in identifying numbers were relatively low, 48% of the children could not identify the number 12 among others. On emotional skills, 68% of the children identified things that made them sad, and 67% identified one way to deal with their sad feelings. On story comprehension, 93% of the children correctly reported who stole the cat's hat but only 84% correctly stated the colour of the hat. The assessment further employed a health and hygiene data collection tool The children's knowledge of at least three critical times that handwashing is necessary was rather low with approximately 18% reporting before eating, after going to the toilet and after playing. Overall, nearly all children were motivated to complete the tasks. In order to maintain the children's curiosity and interest, we recommend parents and teachers to enhance children's learning by playing interesting games

involving storytelling, basic literacy and math.

Improving breastfeeding and nurturing care practices among working mothers in a Kenyan tea estate: The role of C4D

Betty Samburu (Dr.), Laura Kiige, Susan Jobando, Nicholas Kirimi, Bridget Job-Johnson and Patrick Codjia- UNICEF, KENYA

In Kenya, the exclusive breastfeeding rate is at 61% at six months. Mixed feeding starts early, especially when mothers return to work. The component of nurturing care integrated into optimal nutrition for children is less understood. Most working mothers face numerous other barriers to optimal childcare. **Objectives:** To strengthen support to mothers working in a private tea estate to improve optimal breastfeeding and nurturing care of their children.

Intervention: The model was implemented in a vast agricultural setting by the Ministry of Health (MOH) in collaboration with the African Population and Health Research Centre and Kenya Private Sector Alliance with UNICEF technical support. The initiative employed Communication for Development (C4D) to design evidence-informed social and behavioural change approaches. Mixed-method formative and baseline research was conducted to understand breastfeeding context, behaviours, motivators, and barriers. The intervention targeted pregnant / breastfeeding women and consisted of workplace support policies, day-care centres (crèches) and lactation centres with facilities near workplace; home-based nutritional counselling for pregnant, breastfeeding women and community by trained BFCI volunteers, baby friendly gatherings targeting influencers. **Results:** Two day-care centres for children of working mothers at

initial and additional 2 more demand driven were established, from the time of their return to work to the start of pre-school (age three). Private breastfeeding rooms were created next to the day-care centres. The prevalence of EBF improved from 20.2% pre intervention to 80.8% post intervention. **Implications:** This experience demonstrated improved breastfeeding rates and nurturing care and demand creation at community for improved childcare.

Integrated Child Survival Project for Marginalized Communities in Kenya.

Dr. Sam Mburu; Miriam Antonia; Irene Wali - Save the Children.

Integrated Child Survival Project (ICSP) for marginalized communities are implemented by Save the Children in Turkana North and Mathare slums in Nairobi. The project aims to create an environment where children below 5 years are able to survive, thrive and be transformed. We conducted a midline evaluation to measure progress made in the implementation of health, nutrition, livelihoods, WASH and early childhood interventions for the integrated child survival project in Mathare and Turkana North in August 2021.

The evaluation looked at caregivers' information, respondents and household demographic characteristics, knowledge of prevention of major common illnesses, child morbidity and nutrition status, food consumption and minimum dietary diversity, WASH, ECD and poverty index components. A total of 789 respondents were interviewed in the household survey that included 404 in Mathare and 385 in Turkana North sub-counties.

Key highlights, knowledge on malaria prevention was high in Turkana North (88.1%) compared to Mathare (69.8%).

About 68% of the women interviewed in the focus group discussions did not have health insurance cover while 32% did have NHIF insurance cover and Linda mama cover. Majority (95.2percent) of the caregivers are aware of the presence of CHVs in the community and over 92 percent said CHVs conduct HH visit as part of their work. A total of 70.6percent of the households interviewed had children under three years. Of these children 79.0percent were attending ECD centres (Mathare 59.2percent and Turkana North 92.2percent). Meals availability in the ECD centres was at 72.2percent (90 percent in Turkana North and 46 percent in Mathare).

Endline Study on Let's Play, Spaces for Kids to be Kids, Samburu and Isiolo Counties

Agnes Ngonyo / Gulmira Tussupbekova, UNICEF Kenya

Early years are critical for child survival, growth, and development yet one out of three under 5 years of age children are not achieving their development potential. In fragile contexts, this ratio is even worse. Moreover, many children do not receive adequate nutrition, healthcare, and opportunities required to reach their full potential because of their families' income status, geographic location, ethnicity, disability, or socio-cultural issues. Education seeks to provide a solution to societal problems. After conducting the baseline in 2017, UNICEF Kenya, through funding support from IKEA Foundation supported Isiolo and Samburu counties to model community based ECD services through the "Let's Play" Good Cause Campaign, Space for Kids to be Kids project. The endline assessment was conducted in the two counties of Isiolo and Samburu in July – August 2020, with sampling based on their respective sub-counties. The purpose of the

endline study was to assess the changes made overtime against the objectives and baseline findings and to generate evidence for future programming of integrated ECD. The study approach was a cross-sectional mixed-method approach. The targeted sample was from communities that the baseline was conducted since the project implementation adopted a whole community approach to integrated ECD services. A total sample size of 766 parents with at least one child who is under 5 years old was targeted and a total of 745 parents were reached. On improved integrated ECD services, findings on nutrition indicate that there is an increased intake of water, proteins, and vitamins compared to baseline. On health, the findings showed that creation of play spaces promote intake of child health services and stimulation promotes the child's wellbeing. On early learning, there is over two times the proportions of homes that were stimulating under 5s through different activities compared to baseline with different family members taking up different roles; the assessment confirmed availability of materials in ECD center's even though disproportionately across the two counties (more in Isiolo). The critical enablers for the integrated ECD include proper and effective coordination of the existing structures and systems, the commitment of the county governments and the line ministries/departments, and the willingness of the communities to participate and support the ECD systems. The assessment recommends the partner organizations and county governments to continue supporting the structures (such as Technical Working Group, advisory committees) to facilitate the coordination of the integrated ECD services; The county governments to scale up the project with support from the partners and the MoH and MoE to continue working together in integrating child caregiving services and through the Community Health

Volunteers. At the county level, the findings showed how to run integrated ECD services to inform the planning, coordination, and implementation of ECD at county levels, particularly how to engage the county governments in the management of integrated ECD services as a focal coordination point. The success story of multi-sectoral collaboration in the delivery of ECD services and in identifying the existing gaps and shortfalls and linking the county governments to the households offers the government and citizens another avenue for a partnership which generally improves service delivery. The integrated ECD services is an innovative model that led to replicable results and therefore one that ought to inform future ECD programming and contribute to the growing body of knowledge around ECD.

Uptake and Utilization of ECE Accelerator Toolkit

Moses Abiero -AfECN

Despite the proven benefits of ECE, at least 175 million children are not enrolled in any form of ECE. In low-income countries, 8 out of 10 children are missing out on ECE opportunities, with only 33% of eligible children accessing pre-primary education. Close to 57 million children are not accessing any form of ECE programmes in Africa; and for those who do have access to ECE, quality is a key issue. Globally, an average of 6.6% of domestic education budgets is allocated to ECE. However, in African region, the average budgetary allocation to ECE is less than 2%. Moving ECE from the margins of Education Sector Plans (ESP) to their centre ensures that ECE is a part and parcel of the broader education systems and early childhood development landscapes. To achieve this ambition, it is important to ask a key question: How can countries effectively plan, implement, and assure quality of early

childhood education at scale? To make these monumental movements and to accelerate progress, the focus on ECE must be elevated so that it is systematically integrated and/or strengthened within national budgets and cycles of education sector planning and policy implementation. To this end, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and UNICEF have partnered under the Better Early Learning and Development at Scale (BELDS) Initiative to pilot an innovative and consultative approach to strengthen national capacities to plan; cost and finance; and monitor ECE programmes and ensure that they are a crucial part of the processes for education sector planning and implementation. The ECE resources therefore provides interactive, customizable, and action-oriented tools which support the “how-to” of education sector analysis and planning, such as fit-for-purpose indicators, checklists, templates, and guiding questions that may be populated with recommendations provided in real-time. The aim is to: i) Support countries in consultatively developing and mainstreaming evidence-based, Early Childhood Education (ECE) subsector plans into the broader education sector plans and budgets; and ii) build capacity in basic ECE data analysis, prioritization, planning, and costing for enhanced overall sub sector development.

Using Technology to Improve Literacy in the Global South

Emmanuel Korir, Rose Iminza and Prof. Alexandra Gottardo, World Vision Kenya

Using Technology to Improve Literacy in the Global South is a 42-month research project funded by IDRC through its KIX grant. The project is being implemented in Matete and Kirindon Area Programmes in Kakamega and Narok counties respectively. The general objective is to achieve significant, scalable, sustainable, and cost-effective increases in

student learning, enhancements to teaching practices through engagement with ABRA/READS professional development, and wide-scale changes to educational policies concerning educational research in general and educational technology in particular. Through the implementation of the ABRA@HOME program, learners continued to interact with reading materials (stories and worksheets) from the LTK software. The project facilitated provision materials to the teachers and learners on a ratio of 1:1 who converged at designated community-based points with strict adherence to COVID-19 prevention protocols. The 20 weeks' program which integrated support of parents and older siblings in support of children's education reached a total of 182 (100 boys and 82girls) and 100 (40 boys 60 girls) in Kirindon and Matete respectively. Additionally, Matete Education and Child Protection Project in partnership with the Ministry of Education supported training of 450 (213M 237F) teachers.

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Testing Means to Scale Early Childhood Development Interventions in Rural Kenya – Msingi Bora

Edith Alu, Jill Luoto, Alie Eleveld, Alex Mwaki, Safe Water and AIDS Project (SWAP) RAND Corporation

Early childhood development (ECD) parenting interventions can improve child developmental outcomes in low-resource settings. This study presents results from an implementation evaluation of Msingi Bora, a group-based responsive stimulation and nutrition education intervention recently tested in a cluster randomized controlled trial across 60 villages in rural western Kenya. Msingi Bora successfully improved child cognitive, receptive language, and socioemotional outcomes, as well as parenting practices. We conducted a mixed methods implementation evaluation between April 2018 and November 2021. We collected qualitative and quantitative data on program inputs, outputs, and outcomes, with a view to examining how aspects of the program's implementation, such as program

acceptance and delivery fidelity, related to observed program impacts on parents and children. We found that study areas had initially very low levels of familiarity or knowledge of ECD among parents and CHVs. We increased training and supervision in response, and provided a structured manual to enable CHVs to successfully lead the sessions. There was a high level of parental compliance, with median attendance of 13 out of 16 fortnightly sessions over eight months. For CHVs, all measures of delivery performance and fidelity increased with program experience. We conclude that a group-based parenting intervention delivered by local CHVs can improve multiple child and parent outcomes. An upfront investment in training local trainers and CHVs, and regular supervision, appear key to our documented success. Our results represent a promising avenue for scaling similar interventions in low-resource rural settings to serve families in need of ECD programming.

Nutritional Status and Health of Early Childhood: A Case Study of Nairobi and Kajiado Counties

Munaweza and Asiko, Upward Bound Company Limited/Karatina University

Malnutrition and ill-health are some of the determinants impeding the developmental potential of children globally. In Sub-Saharan, children are also disadvantaged by food insecurity and poverty. In Kenya, majority households represent low and middle-income settings and present more vulnerability to this early childhood phase. Complementary feeding practices and nutritional status was assessed on children 6-59 months in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. Standardized Methodologies for Assessments in Relief and Transitions cluster-sampling technique was used to target the population of children between 6-

59 months of age. Based on the December 2011 Soweto survey that estimated stunting at a prevalence of 18.2%, average household size at 4.38, a desired precision of ± 5 , 16.2% of children under 5, a design effect of 1 and 3% of non-response household, realized 369 households and sample size of 229 children. The nutritional status of children in Nairobi wasting, under-weight and stunting was 2.1%, 5.3% and 23.4% respectively; while 12.3% wasting, 14.7% underweight and 20.1% stunting in Kajiado. Only 1 out of 10 children in Nairobi consumed either fish or eggs. More than half (55.5%) of the children consumed three meals/day. Evidence of sub-optimal complementary feeding was noted. Gaps in complementary feeding e.g consumption of only two meals /day were identified in Kajiado. Health seeking behaviour was a challenge with reports of low adherence to clinic visits and evidence of childhood illness which contributed to the high malnutrition levels, hence the need to improve household food security.

Rethinking childcare workforce: The Human Factor Approach

Dr Lynn Kitembe, Moi University- Department of Linguistics, Literature, Foreign Languages and Film Studies

Toddlers' needs can be grouped in various categories: The Basic Necessities of Life, caring for; Fellowship/Conversations, Playing and Having Fun Doing So, Academic Work: Reading to the Child, Stimulating and Seasoning the Senses to Develop Using Questions and Tasks (Adjibolosoo, 2018). Understanding that childcare institutions can only be as good as the people who make it, this work examines quality and effective childcare provision under the Human Factor approach. Quality childcare services remain a debate, crippled with various challenges, and most importantly the current COVID-19 period

that brings along new sets of challenges. What are the barriers to provision of quality child care services that are related and revolve around the Human Factor (HF)? The HF is based on the fact that desire and willingness are critical factors in whatever an individual finds him/herself doing and which require a great deal of commitment. A positive HF gives these characteristics, such that those who possess positive HF qualities have a greater edge over others. Available research reveals that provision of quality childcare services contribute to lifelong health, education and social development of the child. We argue that becoming successful in the provision of quality and effective childcare services through the development and nurturing of positive Human Factor qualities will enhance community development and nation building. Participants will learn to provide long-term solutions to childcare challenges through learning, understanding, adopting, applying and pursuing effective problem-solving approach models.

Engaging Caregivers to Enhance Achievement of Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children with Disabilities in Low Resource Settings

Maria Omare-Founder and Executive Director, The Action Foundation (TAF)

The Action Foundation's 2020 Baseline Study on Caregiving and Safeguarding for CWDs in urban informal settlements found that CWD enrollment is at a dismal 12% in 8 regular schools in Kibera and Kawangware. A survey conducted in 2014 by the VSO Jitolee, a non-governmental organization, established that there are more children with disabilities (CWDs) out of school than those without disabilities. The survey also found home-based and systemic

factors that hindered CWDs' school attendance, persistence of stereotypes, misconceptions, stigma and discrimination towards children with disabilities in the schools and community. In addition, lack of Special Need Education teachers to support CWDs, lack of specialized learning materials and equipment in schools to accommodate those with special needs limits their access to education. Lack of awareness on disability and poor integration into the community, has seen many caregivers keep their children at home resulting in poor school enrollment. Poverty levels in low resource settings limits the ability of caregivers to invest in the holistic development of their children. These factors combine to produce low learning outcomes, poor growth and development which consequently affect enrollment, retention and transition rates for CWDs. We engaged caregivers to enhance achievement of desirable learning outcomes for children with disabilities in Kibera and Kawangware using Education Above All's Activity Bank for Disabilities. Caregivers/parents of children with disabilities contribute significantly to a child's learning and well-being. Thus, partnerships with principal caregivers enhance the likelihood of children having positive and successful health, development and learning experiences. Empowering Caregivers with skills and resources on caregiving, play and learning improves the early development outcomes for CWDs thus preparing them to join formal learning.

Understanding and impacting Early Childhood Development knowledge, attitudes and practices among teenage mothers and caregivers in Kenya

Dr. Anastasia Mirzoyants, Head of Knowledge and Learning Norah Kopi,

Qualitative Research Coordinator Joyce Wanjeri, Account Manager

PMA2020-2017/Kenya reports that 22% of rural and 13% of urban girls give birth by the age of 18. Yet, teen mothers are misunderstood and mistreated by their communities: stigmatized, excluded from social activities, denied services, and in extreme cases endure emotional and physical abuse. Shujaaz Inc and The Kays Foundation partnered to deliver a media-driven action research campaign to (1) understand the experiences, knowledge, attitudes and practices of teen mothers; and (2) identify effective persuasive techniques to engage teen mothers and their communities in social and behavior change. We've learned that the hostile social environment taints the experiences of young mothers, and makes their ECD journey atypically traumatic. Added to that, teen mothers deal with shortage of information/resources and financial and mental-health challenges – all of which have a negative impact on ECD. Shujaaz Inc carried out comprehensive formative and action-research studies to inform the persuasive strategy and media campaign. The studies included a collection of qualitative, quantitative and experimental data-collection methods, and resulted in a comprehensive, nuanced account of teen mothers' lifestyles, mindsets, barriers and motivators to advancing their KAP. Using the findings, Shujaaz Inc implemented a year-long holistic media campaign addressing ECD via a three-prong approach: (1) recognizing/validating the experiences of teen mothers, (2) celebrating positive parenting practices via relatable role models, (3) motivating other youth to support young moms in their communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupting nutrition intake; nutrition response to

malnutrition among under 3 years in Ugenya, Siaya county

Authors V. Omondi and O. Kambona, County Government of Siaya, Department of health

Ugenya Sub County, Siaya County has a stunting rate of 24%, wasting rate of 4.7% and most of the diseases that cause child mortality are related to undernutrition. Between 0-3years, children are most susceptible to environmental influences. It lays the foundation for health, well-being, learning and productivity throughout life, has an impact on the health and well-being of the next generation. The community should invest in kitchen gardens. They need nurturing care – the conditions that promote health, nutrition, security, safety, responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning to reach their full potential. With most markets having been closed during the onset of COVID-19 it was hard for families. The well-being of the community was disadvantaged and needed an intervention that works to make their lives better. There was undocumented increase of malnutrition. The fear of covid-19 also made the general population not willing to go to the health facilities, reducing malnutrition identification rates. During April – December, 2020, the CHVs were sensitized to identify undernourished children and refer them for care and visit them where they provided fortified blended flours and carried out growth monitoring. They were taught how to create materials to help stimulate the babies. Without better public understanding of the science of early childhood and brain development, policies and programs that could make a significant difference in the lives of children and all of society stand the risk of being rejected or undermined. Thus, there is a compelling need to educate the public and its representatives about how to choose wisely among competing demands. We also need more research and studies to

find better ways to support the locals in the community.

Child Care and Women in the Agricultural Labour of Kirinyaga County, Kenya.

Dr. Ruth Walioli, Daystar University

Childcare, also known as daycare, has been construed as those activities that are organized to care for young children especially those below the age of eight (8) years. This study aimed at understanding the situation of women and childcare in Kenya's Kirinyaga county. The sample consisted of 109 respondents. These were eighty-five mothers, twelve fathers, eight maids (ayahs), and five old caregivers. Four preschool teachers were studied in detail and the available data was procured for understanding the strength and weaknesses of child care services. A Semi structured interview schedule and an observation checklist were used to collect data. Results revealed that mothers were primary givers. Other caregiving patterns were care of children by siblings, other relatives, non-relatives, old caretakers, fathers and finally institutions. Factors influencing the pattern of childcare arrangements were family type, family income, age of siblings, childcare services and mothers' occupation. For those mothers who were married, help from fathers was mainly in time of sickness and financing of the family. More than 50% of the respondents desired alternative child care services. This study revealed the need for extension of present services to cater for infants and toddlers. It also revealed several weaknesses in relation to timing of availability of services and program quality. Recommendations made included review of the operational hours of childcare facilities, need for more supervision of the centers by the quality assurance officials, as well as

training of caregivers including house helps to ensure standards.

Community participation in the delivery of holistic and inclusive early learning and education in rural areas of Gilgil Sub-County-Nakuru County

Linzy Nyamboki, Aron Mativo; Build Africa Kenya

Growth and development of children is mainly influenced by the family and parental involvement and support can positively contribute to their learning outcomes, overall development and other outcomes in life. The biggest threats to early childhood development affects ECD caregivers and this has an impact on the quality of care that children receive. However, families living in poverty and struggling to survive cannot provide adequate care and developmentally appropriate early education support which is crucial to children's holistic development. To achieve optimum results, it is important for families to understand the roles they play in their children's holistic and inclusive growth, development and learning. Our intervention fosters community participation by facilitating involvement across essential services offered to young children and their families. This is managed across five key areas through: Improving access to linkages to health services which addresses critical factors for child development; community sensitization and support to address gaps that exist in the delivery of early learning; Increased skills capacity among ECD Centre teachers to deliver holistic skills; Inclusion at the ECD centres for pupils with disabilities and improved capacity for parental support and learning that will assist ECD in the family home through creation of Parental care centres. Therefore, targeted programming on caregiver and community participation is key to providing an enabling environment. For ECD programming, focus

on the quality provision of learning environments, teachers and engaging families with early care and education programs are vital for improving learning experiences of young children and their educational outcomes.

Childcare and Safety for Children accompanying their Mothers in Prison and Children in the Juvenile Justice System

Christine Odero and Jane Kuria; Faraja Foundation

The Lang'ata Women's Prison is one sample institution for this paper. It's a 2 maximum female security in Kenya institution has more inmates than any other female prison in Kenya. It also has more children living in the prison with their imprisoned mothers. Its proximity to the capital city of Kenya has attracted many well-wisher organizations that help the children to grow up and attain development in a relatively conducive environment. One such charity organization is Faraja Foundation that has built an early child development center inside the prison to cater for the children's needs. This proposal is justified because although Faraja provided the prison with the children's day care center, the effectiveness in meeting the social, spiritual, educational and psychological challenges of the children is enhanced but fully guaranteed as the children still have to join their mother in the cells in the evening. This Abstract paper seeks to address the gaps with the children in prison Institutions maintaining its focus on childcare and safety with regards to Early childhood development. The paper brings out observations by stakeholders, information from similar research and documented data. The methodologies applied to put together this abstract are based on day-to-day interactions with children and their mother in the Kenya Prison Service.

Systems Strengthening Approach to Scaling Up Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development; Smart Start Siaya Initiative

Dr. Elizabeth Obinge Omondi (PhD), Public Health, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Smart Start in Siaya County, Kenya is one of the first early childhood initiatives identified in the African region to take a multidimensional systems strengthening approach. Smart Start brings together a diverse array of actors, including government decision-makers, civil society organizations, health facility staff, preschool teachers, community leaders, local champions, and community health volunteers. The initiative looks at every entity from the point of "a glass that is half full" and thus emphasizes strengthening systems and structures. Although several strides have been made, uncertainty exists regarding the effectiveness of the Initiative. The aim of this study was therefore to build evidence on the effectiveness of the smart start initiative to inform policy and future scale up of NCfECD. The study took a strengths-based approach to identify what smart start initiatives have done well, how they have been done, and lessons that other people can learn from their experience. It applied systems thinking to provide insight on how local, national, and international systems can be leveraged on for effective Scaling up Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development. Greater political prioritization for Nurturing Care investment has been achieved; High Level Multi-Sectoral Committee Coordinating Nurturing for ECD in place and Operational; Public-Private Partnership realized; Enabling Policies; Local Nurturing Care champions empowered; Integration of NCfECD

services in available service delivery platforms; Capacity of County leadership and frontline workforce improved; Child Health indicators improved. Critical to the success of scaling early childhood initiatives is Government taking Lead; Creating Enabling Environment; Continuous Advocacy and Integrated Service Delivery.

The State of the Early Childhood care workforce in Kenya: Preliminary Findings and Insights

Gladys Muthara; Sofina Merinyo; Tracy Koske; Asayya Imay; Joyce Wesonga; Sharon Macharia and Masheti Masinjila

The study sought to investigate the challenges faced by female early childhood care workers in Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa. The specific objectives thereof were: to document the age profiles of young women working in households and ECCE centres in low-income urban settlements - specifically to assist in taking care of children 0-5; to document the challenges facing these workers as they seek employment and within employment; to propose policy and regulatory reforms necessary to improve the working situation of childcare workers in Kenya and to make recommendations for policy and practice. The initial study was conducted between August and September 2020. Data was collected in the 3 target counties; Kisumu, Nairobi and Mombasa. The initial sample size was 50 respondents divided into 5 categories of service providers in the sector including; Caregivers, employers, childcare centers, childminders and bureau managers. The distribution was as follows; caregivers 15, employers 14, childcare centers 8, child minders 9 and 4 bureau managers. Further data was collected through continued interaction with over 160 home-based and centre-based childcare workers, parents between October 2021 and May 2021.

Collection of data was done via questionnaires, individual interviews and focus group discussions. In the resultant analysis pie-charts, frequency tables and bar graphs were used to present the quantitative data. The research's findings indicated that there is a huge gap in the development of the early childhood care workforce in urban settings. Pay for childcare workers is arbitrary and it is difficult to enforce changes due to the dynamics of the labour force and insufficient policy and regulatory frameworks; preliminary data indicates employers, specifically, parents, would prefer paying less for an untrained childcare worker than a qualified, trained one. There is little connectedness among childcare workers in the ecosystem, which affects their social capital and capacity to negotiate better working conditions. Most caregivers do not have contracts and can therefore be dismissed without notice. In order to counter the above it is recommended that among others, policies targeting an attractive environment should include salary that is offered should be within the minimum wage of 13,572 Kenya shillings, enforcing of contracts for caregivers before they begin working and provision of off days. Other measures include implementing policies and programmes on sensitizing caregivers on negotiating terms of offer, their rights and saving habits. Policies on minimum standards for the training of childcare workers and guidelines outlining minimum standards for working conditions and environment for caregivers should be put in place. Initiatives to sensitize employers should be put in place. Furthermore, policies around forming a union for caregivers are needed to facilitate better bargaining power for salaries, considerations of a saving group (SACCO) and promote benefits such as medical cover. This will also facilitate the improvement of their welfare at county and national level

Collaborative action to invigorate steady policy and regulatory framework for childcare in Kenya

Leonard Chumo; Asayya Imapa; Joyce Wesonga; Gladys Muthara, Uthabiti Africa

The first few years of life and its experiences set the stage for a child's future and inform social, emotional and cognitive development, as well as overall health. Knowing the great impact investments and focused interventions can have at this critical stage of development necessitates collective action, partnerships and mobilization of diverse sectors, including families, communities and policymakers—to transform early childhood systems. The deep system flaws, incoherent and haphazard policy and regulatory frameworks render sector efforts largely inefficient and hence the need for anchoring quality care for children reforms in sound policies and legal underpinnings. The non-negotiables for children must be both in spirit and in paper. Beginning in 2019, Uthabiti spearheaded sector mobilization toward supporting counties of Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa to take stock of a facilitative childcare environment through the Collaborative Action for Childcare in Kenya initiative. The consortium brought together these counties and key resource organizations with invaluable insights and diverse expertise in child development. What are key findings, lessons learned and challenges from the sector collaborative approach? What evidence has been adduced to support scale?

Strengthening Early Childhood Care and Education in Urban Settings – Reflections on Policy and Practice

Asayya Imapa; Joyce Wesonga; Leonard Chumo; Gladys Muthara

The study sought to establish the gaps in policy and regulatory reform in Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa. The specific objectives thereof were: to document review existing ECCED Policies at national and county level, specifically focusing on the 3 counties; to document the gaps that need to be filled to accelerate quality ECCE and to make recommendations for the creation of a supportive policy and regulatory environment. An initial broad review of policies was conducted in 2019, followed by a more comprehensive one focused on in 3 target counties; Kisumu, Nairobi and Mombasa was conducted in 2020. This involved review of grey literature, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Furthermore, the team engaged with county governments in Kisumu, Nairobi and Mombasa to develop mechanisms for policy and regulatory reforms in each county. The study indicated that there is a huge gap in the implementation of early childhood care policies at national and local level. Where policies exist, implementation is not sufficiently happening. Guidelines for minimum quality standards for the ECCED sector do not exist – including licensing and registration of childcare enterprises. There is little coordination among actors focused on policy and regulatory reform. In order to counter the above it is recommended that among others, there is coordinated multi-sectoral effort at county level to ensure sufficient ECCED policies are developed and implemented. Minimum standards for quality should be developed, alongside minimum standards for training, licensing and certification, among others.

Teen Motherhood and the plight of children of teen mothers: Integrating Responsive caregiving into DREAMS project in Siaya County

Miruka R, Oyugi B, Omedo D, Obong'o C, Oyugi A, O, Kadenge, Odero L, , Ungadi J, Atieno J, C, Burudi; PATH

Children born to teenage mothers are more likely to have challenges reaching their full developmental potential. Determined, Resilient, Empowered, Aids-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS)- a project targeting adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) aged 15-24 with a package of interventions to reduce their risks for HIV and cases of Gender based violence is implemented in Siaya County by Impact Research and Development Organization (IRDO). Previously, AGYW with young children would leave them under the care of their old grandmothers while they attend sessions at the safe spaces. PATH collaborated with IRDO to train AGYW accessing DREAMS group-based services on childcare and stimulation with an aim to improve their knowledge and practices on responsive caregiving. The training empowered AGYW with knowledge and skills to make play items and interact with their children in age-appropriate stimulating activities. The AGYW now bring their children to group sessions and have designated play spaces with assorted play items for the children. This has improved retention in DREAMS group activities and enabled them to monitor their children's development using simple developmental milestone charts. More collaboration is necessary among stakeholders in DREAMS projects to help children who are already at risk of poor development thrive to reach their full developmental potential.

COVID-19 and childcare: Community Health Volunteers adopt strategies to help children thrive amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Oyugi B, Omedo D, Obong'o C, Oyugi A, O, Kadenge, Odero L, Miruka R, Ungadi J, Atieno J, C, Burudi; PATH

COVID-19 remains a global pandemic that continues to disrupt delivery of health services. PATH supports Siaya County to enhance COVID-19 surveillance and response efforts while continuing with essential health services for children and their caregivers. PATH and county government conducted a simple assessment to understand the effects of COVID-19 on delivery of integrated Nurturing care for Early Childhood Development (NCfECD) services and to establish strategies employed in response to the pandemic. PATH conducted Focus Group Discussions with Community Health Volunteers and observed their interactions with caregivers during household visits. COVID-19 disrupted delivery of routine health services within Communities. CHVs were trained on COVID-19 surveillance, response and prevention and were mentored to integrate COVID-19 services into ongoing Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development (NCfECD) counseling. As a result, CHVs have adopted new strategies to support child development while minimizing cross infection. These included conducting sessions outside the house, supporting families to have functional handwashing facilities, encouraging families to make and use their play items for age-appropriate stimulation activities and demonstrating stimulation activities without physical contact with caregivers. With adequate capacity building and support, CHVs can seamlessly integrate COVID-19 surveillance and response efforts into NCfECD services that help children to survive and thrive amidst the pandemic.

Rethinking childcare workforce: The role ECD mentor coordinators in integrating nurturing care within the health system in Siaya County.

Omedo D, Oyugi B, Oscar K, Obong'o C¹, Burudi C; PATH

Children in low-income settings have lower odds of attaining developmental milestones and are in need of nurturing care for early childhood development (NCfECD). Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 66% of the 250 million children under five who fail to reach age-appropriate developmental milestones. In efforts to support the Siaya County health system deliver NCfECD, PATH engaged four mentor coordinators to support the integration of NCfECD into health systems. The health system offers easy reach as caregivers and children routinely visit health facilities for pre- and post-natal care services. We conducted a qualitative assessment on integrating NCfECD services supported by the mentors. We assessed, 1) contributions of the mentors on sub county level NCfECD integration in health facilities, 2) contributions of the mentors on sub county level NCfECD activities in community settings, and 3) how the mentors' role can be embedded in the county health system of Siaya. In general, the mentor coordinators played a vital role in coordinating and ensuring the integration of NCfECD in community and health facilities settings. We identified their significant contribution on capacity building of health providers, supportive supervision, and quality improvement as well as coordination of community level activities. Lessons will guide in institutionalizing the mentor coordinator's role within the health system for quality NCfECD services in Siaya County and beyond.

Quality of Early Childhood Care in informal, home-based daycare centers in Dagoretti North and Naivasha Sub-Counties, Kenya.

John Kariuki Chege – Children's officer Naivasha sub county

The study was designed to describe the status of childcare service provision for children of

0-3 years in vulnerable communities in Kenya and Ethiopia and to identify opportunities for creating environments that support and sustain quality childcare service provision at the family, service provider, community, and local and national levels. The study had five broad objectives: (1) to determine the childcare interests, requirements and needs of caregivers living in vulnerable communities, (2) conduct a mapping of childcare services available in vulnerable settlements/communities, (3) establish the support structures needed from key stakeholders to support provision of childcare services, (4) analyze existing policy and legislative support targeting young children and their families across all sectors and (5) to propose childcare solutions to address existing barriers to achieving and maintaining good quality services. For this conference, we will present findings on objectives 2 and 5. The study utilized a concurrent parallel mixed methods research design; a design that involves the simultaneous collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Ethical approval was obtained from the Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee and authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). The study was conducted in Naivasha commercial horticultural farms associated with informal settlements, Kawangware slums in Dagoretti North sub-county and at Langata Women's Prison. Planning meetings were held with key government officials and community entry meetings convened prior to data collection. The community meetings involved key gatekeepers and opinion leaders as well as ECD stakeholders. To facilitate data collection community health volunteers were involved in mapping of households and developing a list of mothers with 0-3-year-old children. A digital version of a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from

324 households randomly selected from a list of 600 households across the study sites. We also conducted interviews with 28 key informants, 22 in-depth interviewees and 12 FGDs from purposely selected participants across the study sites. The Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) was used to assess quality of services in 17 home-based daycare centers. Informed consent was obtained from participants before data collection. Quantitative data was analyzed descriptively and presented in tables and charts and graphs whereas qualitative data was transcribed, thematically coded, and analyzed and presented in the form of quotations. Findings revealed that main service providers included the health services of the County health departments, children's services, flower farms and home-based daycare service providers. The main types of services were maternal and child health including ante-natal and post-natal care, growth monitoring, deworming, immunization, and nutrition services. Daycare services were mainly provided in the context of homes of caregivers. These were mostly informal facilities with no registration status. Findings also revealed a lack of guidelines/policies to guide the provision of services in home-based daycare center with lack of clarity on which government department should provide supervisions to assure quality of the services. The main recommendation of the study is that the government should develop clear policy and formulate guidelines to support provisions of daycare services in informal.

Priority Setting for Early Childhood Initiatives: Analysis of policies, Guidelines and financing across Lake Region Economic Bloc Counties in Kenya

Dr. Elizabeth Obinge Omondi (PhD); Public Health, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Priority Setting is core to the scale-up of early childhood development (ECD) initiatives, as it ensures that laws, policies and financing mechanisms are established to support specialized initiatives such as Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development (NCfECD). The Kenyan Constitution devolved to County governments the responsibility to deliver quality Healthcare Services and Early Childhood initiatives. Counties are therefore expected to prioritize development / domestication of policies that support holistic development of young children alongside investments in NCfECD. This analysis sought to explore the priority-setting for Early Childhood Development initiatives across the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) Counties in Kenya in order to ascertain their readiness for Scaling up of Nurturing Care for ECD initiatives. Quantitative and qualitative study design was adopted. Desk reviews of existing county documents and Key informants interviews were carried out. Across the 10 sampled LREB Counties only 2 (20%) of the Counties had domesticated policies and guidelines that anchored NCfECD. There was evidence that all (100%) of the counties were apportioned some funds for health and early childhood education services annually. However, the investment in nurturing care for early childhood development was very minimal as largely the funds were meant for infrastructure, recruitment of teachers and healthcare workers. The results amplify the need to build capacity of County Government leadership on Science of ECD; carry out advocacy for creation of an enabling environment and prioritize investing in ECD initiatives to support holistic development of young children; thereby, build a strong foundation for lifelong educational attainment and socio-economic development.

The effects of mushrooming daycares on holistic child Development in the informal settlements, Kajiado county

Allan Ragi, Stephen Ikonya, Jack Ndegwa, Peter Kamau, Charity Wachira, Kenya AIDs NGOs Consortium (KANCO)

The study assessed the effects of the mushrooming daycares on holistic child development. Research on the quality of childcare is a requisite demand if practitioners and policy makers intend to ensure children are provided with a healthy environment to develop their full potential. An assessment of 56 centres indicates, the existing culture in most (81%) informal daycares is mostly unregulated and without adequate supervision on quality practices; 43.1% of caregivers lack skills and capacity on care for child development, management of their centres; caregiver-to-children ratio is very low with little or no availability of play materials; 38.9% have inadequate space; 45.6% don't have adequate water provision and soap; 66.7% don't have health records; 51% don't prepare food. The increasing number of malnutrition and development delays for under 5's as indicated by their MUAC of < 13.5 and health facility records in Kajiado East is due to lack of nutritional meals and the quality of the daycares centres in the informal settlements. Efforts should be made over time to improve quality practices in the daycares including ; the county government working with existing avenues e.g women support groups and community health volunteers (CHVs) to provide ECD and business management courses at a subsidized cost to enhance the competence of the caregivers; strengthening referral networks; empower CHVs; ensuring that caregivers regularly interact with children and provide them with age appropriate play materials; encourage parental participation and targeted support supervision to improve

quality of practice. County government should adopt an incremental, systematic and inclusive approach towards addressing challenges faced by daycares to improve nutrition, health, safety and care for children.

Early Childhood Development Programming Bridging the Spiritual and Material to Support Holistic Human Development

Anil Khamis, PhD^{1,2}, The Aga Khan University Institute for Human Development; Institute for Global Health and Development (AKU-IHD) and University College London Institute of Education (UCL-IOE)

This paper presented a critical analysis of the early childhood development programming in Kenya over the past four decades with a focus on the religious and spiritual component of existing curricula. Such curricula aim to bridge the material and spiritual development needs of children and offer lessons to other faith-based communities. Principal debates and issues underpinning the process of curriculum development and the resources, pedagogical approaches, and training needs to mount an integrated curriculum are discussed. These highlight the need to improve children's life chances based on empirical research of child development whilst also grounding children in their traditions, values, and heritages spanning from their cultures and faiths. It is expected the paper will be of value to faith-based communities and education and policy makers who are charged with developing appropriate curricula to serve the needs of children who face fast-paced and uncertain and unforeseeable challenges in the age of the Anthropocene (UNDP, 2020).

Early years care and education in the face of covid-19 pandemic: A case of Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya

*Dr. Ogogo Joyce and Dr. Ouko Hudson,
Department of Early Childhood and Special
Needs Education
Kenyatta University*

Coronavirus pandemic is redefining every sector of the global economy including health and education. The virus has spread to and is ravaging every continent in the World. It has impacted negatively on Early Years Education particularly in the hard to reach areas including refugee camps (Kakuma and Dadaab). The purpose of this study will be to investigate early years care and education in the face of covid-19 pandemic in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. The study will focus on the extent and forms refugee children participate in early year's education. The objectives of the study will be: to determine the levels of participation of children in Kakuma refugee camps; to establish the extent to which covid-19 pandemic has affected children's participation in early years care and education. To examine the specific challenges children of school going age face in accessing early years care and education. To determine the role played by various agencies in promoting childcare and early years' education. This study will use an ethnographic approach. The main sources of information will be primary data sources. Questionnaires, observation checklists and ICT gadgets will be utilized in generating the required data. Piloting of the study instruments will be done at Ifo which is also a refugee camp with similar characteristics as the study participants. Collected data will be analyzed thematically using descriptive methods. The findings may inform policy by advising the government on the benefits of homeschooling virtually. The sampling techniques will be purposive sampling and a sample of 50 participants. Data analysis will

be done thematically, and findings put in frequency distribution tables and charts.

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Reading at home as an essential to learning to read in school

Dorcas Wepukhulu, African Storybook and Saide

For 2020 International Literacy Day, the United Nation reminded us to reflect on “Literacy teaching and learning in the COVID-19 crisis and beyond,” against the stark reality that “617 million children and adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.” This hinders the achievement of UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its literacy targets which aims to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” One of the indicators tracking the SDG target “By 2030, ensure all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education,” is the “Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in learning.” A key obstacle to the under 5 year old children failing to be developmentally on track in learning from home, a prerequisite to learning to read in school, is the shortage of appropriate stories for early reading in languages familiar to the young African child. Conventional publishing models are unable to provide sufficient numbers or variety in the multitude of languages on the continent. Saide’s African Storybook digital publishing, responds to this shortage through

its vision of *Open access to picture storybooks in the languages of Africa, for children’s literacy, enjoyment and imagination*. Its [website](#) has thousands of storybooks with 221 languages of Africa represented. It also has two apps, the Reader and Maker downloadable onto a phone or tablet from Google Play or App Store.

Parental Employment and Holistic Child Rearing Practices: Parental Perceptions from an Urban Informal settlement

Stella Ndugire Mbugua^{1,2,4}, Dr Roseline Olumbe,^{1,3} & Dr Ruth Walioli^{1,3}, Daystar University - Institute of Child Development¹, Child Development & Communications Specialist², Ph.D.³, Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)⁴

One in five children under age five lack nurturing from an adult for at least an hour, weekly. Many parents are unconscious that employment can negatively affect the quality of caregiving and subsequently, child outcomes. The study sought to find out perceptions of parents in Babadogo regarding ways employment affects their child-rearing practices. Through descriptive design, the researcher conducted interviews to elicit parents’ perceptions on child rearing. Employed parents of children aged below six years formed the target population of 600, purposely sampled at 15% calculated using Fisher’s formula. The sample constituted 83 families as respondents, and 84 caregiving environments for observations in 83 households. Interview guides and observation checklists, respectively were utilised. The study established a statistically significant ($\chi^2=7.840, p=.000<0.05$) association between parental employment and child-rearing practices. Majority (95.2%) of the parents perceived their child as happy, healthy and growing well. They also reported the need for support from

others for holistic nurture of young children. The support needed included: “Free daycare” services, “Access to good medical services”, “Safe environment for leaving the child while at work”, and “financial support to provide basic needs for the children.” Employed parents mentioned the need for economic empowerment, and capacity building on child development, to balance child-rearing demands. Most, 78.3% of the parents perceived their children as being very safe while working: whether supported by others (51.8%) including grandparents, older siblings, friends, neighbours, and other relatives, or left in daycares (48.2%). The study concluded that establishment of child-friendly workplace and social protection supports for parents of young children in the informal settlement was necessary. This study recommended that child development interventions in low-income contexts ride on existing government and community structures for sustainability; and that parental knowledge of child development for enhanced childcare was essential.

Challenges facing children in urban informal settings and effect on early childhood development

Linet M. Kaloki, Kidogo Innovations Limited

The Purpose of the study is to establish the challenges that children in urban informal settings face that affect their achievement of full development potential. Child care crisis In Kenya’s urban informal settlement where nearly 60% of the population resides, there are limited options for affordable and accessible childcare services. It’s estimated that 30% of the children in Nairobi live in

informal settings. In these settlements’ child development faces hardships which limits their potential and realization of optimal development. Children and caregivers face the problem of extreme poverty which undermines their ability to provide nurturing care and environments that are responsive, safe and stimulating to their children. Young children (0-4years) are mostly left in one of the ~3500 ‘informal’ childcare centres leading to children missing out on a good start to life, they lack proper nutrition, healthcare, and access to quality early learning opportunities. The lack of these important aspects in early life leads to effects that last a lifetime including stunted growth, low level of skills necessary for working in life, limited future productivity and risk of a cycle of poverty. The neglect of children leads to failure in building human capital necessary for global development. Quality childcare is hindered by the lack of proper sensitization on its importance and lack of resources to facilitate safe and stimulating environments for children. More than 1 million children growing up in the informal settlements within Nairobi, have their ability to reaching their full potential compromised.

Home learning in the context of COVID-19: A Case of the Madrasa Early Childhood Programme – Kenya (MECP-K)

Barke Ramadhan & Everlyne Okeyo, Madrasa Early Childhood Programme – Kenya (MECP-K)

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck Kenya in March 2020, the government ordered closure of all learning institutions. In this context, MECP-K had an even greater dedication and commitment to supporting early year’s educators, families and children. In collaboration with county governments and other partners, MECP-K

developed innovative approaches and adapted existing programming based on a suite of resources developed by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). Prior to this, MECP-K conducted rapid assessment surveys to establish stakeholders' concerns, challenges and opportunities of the pandemic's impact on health and education. Findings indicated concerns around reduced learning opportunities for children and parents' uncertainties about how they can support children's safety and learning during school closure. The organization developed key messages to support pre-primary children's home-learning through engaging 90 ECD champion teachers who in turn worked with 10 parents each. The messages were shared virtually between teachers, parents and children reaching a total of 857; 95% of the targeted parents. In addition, posters on health messages were developed, printed and distributed amongst communities that have limited access to mainstream media channels. Additionally, MECP-K worked with 20 selected Madrasa Resource Training Institute (MRTI) alumni teachers and developed more than 100 teaching and learning resources to support home learning during COVID-19 and beyond. A final selection of 35 outstanding resources was then developed into a resource pack that was printed and distributed amongst teachers. In the extended home learning model, parental engagement and technology integration played a pivotal role in children's learning during school closure.

Male Involvement in Childcare Work

Richard Madiangi and Jenevive Ayila, IDEO.org

Male caregivers are traditional in nature and are slow in embracing new ways of bringing up children. They believe that being a good

parent is taking a child to school, good clothing, good health and instilling discipline into their children. Most of them practice RCG unknowingly. Male caregivers care so much about a child who is disciplined and fear God than any other thing. The culture of religion is very key for the majority of the men for their children. Religion as a disciplinary method is used to instill good behaviour with the fear of punishment by God for bad behaviour. Cultural practices such as Polygamy and wife inheritance affects the quality of responsive caregiving i.e. it requires a great balance which most men fail to strike in terms of equal quality caregiving. Role of male caregiving during 0-1 years still feels unnatural to most men. Since male caregivers are rarely reached through traditional health outreach models, our campaign sought to meet them in the spaces where they naturally congregate and connect. This has been made possible through Champions, Media campaigns and the extensive use of assets (IEC Materials). NB: Men have a desire to connect with their children but often don't know how best to do this. They focus on being a provider and a disciplinarian and many fear they will be looked down upon playing a more caring role that the community associates with mothers.

Mainstreaming appropriate quality disability interventions mechanisms into the CCD Concept

Raphael O. Owako MSc, PT, CBR Mgt, Private Consultant: Child Health Rights / Disability and Rehabilitation

In Kenya, like many developing countries, the health care system reaches more young children and their families than other services. Health services often have home-visits and outreach services. Nutrition and good health are essential to children's

development. Health services and community activities for health must use their opportunities to strengthen families' efforts to promote children's development. The United Nations "Convention on the Rights of the Child" (CRC) calls on all countries to enable children to develop their full potential and support families in the process. The CRC advocates for children's rights to development in addition to survival. Health-care systems must aim for better growth and development among all children including those with disabilities. CCD intervention provides recommendations for cognitive stimulation and social support to young children, through sensitive and responsive caregiver-child interactions. These should involve all children including CWDs and those with impairments. The Convention on the Rights of Children with Disabilities (CRPD) states that "*persons with disabilities* include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others". The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) mentions the special needs of children with disability (CWD). The prevalence estimates of childhood disability vary considerably because of differences in definitions and the wide range of methodologies and measurement of disability as adopted by different sources. As a result, many children with disabilities may neither be identified nor receive needed services making their vulnerability worse.

Provision of childcare services in rural & remote tertiary institution to grant vulnerable young mothers an opportunity for economic empowerment

Emmanuel Ogwell, Kidogo Innovations Limited

There are over 130 vocational training institutions across Kenya that provides skill based training to learners including those from vulnerable backgrounds in every sub-county. The aim is to improve their skills and provide economic empowerment to Kenyans. UNICEF (2004) report indicated that girls' education leads to more equitable development, stronger families, better services, better child health and effective participation in governance. With that in mind, the young mothers in the rural areas of Kenya who come from a vulnerable background have a hard time going back to resume their studies. This is due to their role in providing unpaid care that takes up their time from seeking opportunities to empower themselves through skills acquisition compared to their male counterparts. This reduces their ability to meaningfully contribute to the economy. Upon the reopening of school at the beginning of 2021, after the 9 months' closure in 2020, some of the vocational training colleges in Kisumu had their female students report back to class with their children ranging from 3 months to 4 years. This made the level of concentration in the class sessions minimal due to the random disruption from the children. This takes away the chance for these young mothers to acquire skills necessary to be successful in life and leaves these young mothers trapped in the same poverty cycle that is generational. Ignoring the need for this intervention will make the economic gap between men and women in the rural setting to widen in the future

Addressing factors hindering optimal early childhood development of children with disabilities in Kilifi County

Dennis Kitsao; Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT)

Children depend on the environment they are brought up in, to develop their cognitive, sensory-motor, social emotional and communication skills. Through the family and community system, the children have a base to depend on for growth, development, and learning, from infancy to adulthood. However, for children with disability (CWD) in Kilifi county, the family and community structures are not only insufficient to care for them, but even propagate abuse and neglect against them. ***AMURT identified the following issues that affected children development;*** Inadequate knowledge of disabilities among family and community members: Stigma and discrimination of CWDs leads to abuse and neglect in terms of health, hygiene, and protection; Under-utilization of social protection services and opportunities: Families with CWDs have inadequate knowledge of the safety-nets available, hence, CWDs miss out on opportunities that would improve their health, and development and weak family and community support system for CWD: Underlying challenges including poverty, young motherhood, and single-parenting poses risks that inhibit growth of CWDs to their maximum potential. ***As a result, the following strategies were proposed;*** Changing community attitudes towards CWD by addressing myths and misconceptions associated with CWDs, increasing access to social protection services for CWDs and Improving care for CWD through strengthening social & family support systems. ***The program had the following expected outcomes;*** Reduced stigma and discrimination of CWDs in family, Increased number of CWD accessing health, education, and social protection services, Improved quality of early childhood development care for CWDs and Increased investment in interventions targeting CWD.

“Kuishi na Kustawi” - Transforming early childhood development outcomes in Korogocho slum, Kenya

Jimiya Kome, Maryclare Nyore; Terre des Hommes Foundation

About 60 % of Nairobi’s population live in and around informal settlements, of whom an estimated 300,000 children are below 4 years. Children living in informal settlements are susceptible to malnutrition, childhood illness, abuse and delayed development. Factors affecting childcare in urban informal settings include; Lack of government institutions providing childcare services for children below 4 years, leading to mushrooming of private informal daycares run by untrained caregivers at a fee, Majority of parents are unable to pay for these services leaving their children under the care of older siblings and neighbors. There is limited knowledge on ECD among parents and caregivers which majorly influence children development. Parents need mentoring on nutrition, hygiene, psychosocial stimulation using local play materials. There is low birth registration of children in the informal settlements leading to poor access to services like education and health care. Lack of coordinated multi-sectoral approach in service delivery among ECD actors also affects childcare. In this context, Terre des Hommes (Tdh) through its ECDE program in Korogocho, is working with ECD centers and existing formal and informal structures to address childcare issues. The program seeks to; Improve the ability of ECD centres and their staff to respond to the development needs of children aged 0 to 6 years. Strengthening parents’ and community stakeholders’ capacities to actively nurture the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth of young children, and influencing policy choices of the local and national child

development services to prioritize early childhood development.

Strengthening Early Childhood Development (ECD) Delivery in Kenyan counties

Eva Masinde and Wadzi Katsidzira; Global Development Incubator (GDI)

There is a growing body of evidence that investing in children (aged 0-8 years) has significant dividends to individuals, communities and national economics through improved livelihoods, greater workforce participation and GDP growth. Every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood development (ECD); (1) yields between four to nine dollars in economic returns over the long-term. (2) Investing in the development of young children has a multiplier effect on human and economic development. Nevertheless, ECD remains underfunded, not well regulated and unable to meet the demands of the growing population in Kenya. Counties receive lump sum funding from the National Government with no comprehensive guidelines for budgeting to enable proper planning and costing for ECD needs. Even with the limited available data, public spending on pre-primary education is still much lower than the recommended. 10% target which tends to be biased towards capital expenditure items including physical infrastructure and neglects other operating expenditure items such as teacher training and quality assurance. The initiative proposes to provide comprehensive and tested budget guidelines to enable proper planning and costing for needs in cross cutting sectors that contribute to ECD pre-primary schools with the input of both budgeting experts and county government officials. The programme will focus on

several areas; identifying and prioritizing ECD needs in an efficient, effective and equitable manner as well as developing and implementing harmonized budget templates.

Can tech-enabled distance learning work in lower income settlements?

Chepkoech Faith and Mildred Obuya, Tiny Totos Kenya

Tiny Totos, a Kenyan social enterprise works to upgrade childcare amongst private, home-based, informal daycares in Nairobi's informal settlements. With families stuck at home during COVID, we launched a home-based child learning programme, consisting of a physical learning pack, texts, video clips delivered to the 72% of our parents with smartphones, a biweekly radio show, and monthly calls to track content use and feedback. Three months into the programme, we undertook a distance development assessment (DDA1) to evaluate impact. We conducted physical, linguistic, cognitive and socio-emotional developmental assessments virtually across 4 age groups, from a sample of 108 children. Three months later, we undertook a second DDA (DDA2) comparing results between the two. Learning depends both on; Content - blended parent and child-led content is critical for learning to be embraced and effective as well as Parental engagement. Findings from DDA 2 were generally better than DDA 1 with parents by then embracing the programme and excited about their ability to influence their children's development, a task they had previously delegated entirely to daycares. The decline in cognitive findings between the two assessments needs to be explored to determine if this is an absolute outcome or result of more discerning parental assessment. Whereas pre COVID learning

was concentrated in daycares, and during COVID lockdown, in homes, a hybrid strategy to sustain learning in both is recommended to accelerate child learning. Further study and investment to support scaled preschool learning in lower-income settings is warranted.

Factors affecting the implementation of learning through play in the Zambian public preschools and community

Grant Mapoma Mwinsa & Derrick Kambadzo School of Early Childhood Studies, Chalimbana University. Jerry Banda, Department of Monitoring Evaluation and learning, Zambia Anglican Council Outreach & Sarah Bwalya, Department of Special Education, Zambia Institute of Special Education

Research has demonstrated that a strong curricula focus on learning through play at community and school level has a quadruple effect on learning outcomes and child development. This study assessed the implementation of learning through play in the Zambian public preschools and the community. A case study design was employed with 100 participants who were sampled purposefully due to their positionality as teachers and experts of ECCDE. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, focus group discussions and survey. Qualitative data was analysed thematically by identifying common themes or patterns within data for purposes of describing a phenomenon. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse quantitative data. Findings of the study revealed that teachers and parents were aware of the importance of play as children in schools and the community but lacked skills on how to use this pedagogical approach. It was also established that public schools usually lack space and time to apply learning through play due to over enrolment.

Evidence suggests that applying playful learning benefits learners a hundredfold than unadventurous learning. The study argues that training of teachers and the community in learning through play pedagogy should be an important aspect. It further posits that continuous professional development (CPDs) for educators be an ongoing practice in schools. Most importantly, supervisors in schools and communities should also receive some form of basic training in learning through play in order for them to support this pedagogical approach.

The rollout of m2m e-services to support nurturing care for young and vulnerable children in Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic

Charles Muruka, Melissa Wallace, Fiona Burt, Ann Marjorie Mbule and Kathrin Schmitz, mothers2mothers (m2m)

In response to COVID-19, m2m rapidly developed and rolled out a virtual service delivery model known as eServices to complement limited peer face-to-face services, due to the urgent need for continued and safe delivery of vital health services at scale. It includes peer-via-phone (PvP) services, involving one-on-one structured phone conversations and a Virtual Mentor Mother Platform (VMMP), consisting of two interactive WhatsApp lines for staff and clients. The client line provides social and behaviour change messages on healthy pregnancy and motherhood, nurturing care and healthy childhood, HIV prevention, living with HIV, teen health, chronic illnesses and COVID-19. PvP was designed through the DHIS2 mobile tracker application, and m2m Mentor Mothers were equipped with smartphones to perform guided, scripted and free flow calls to clients. VMMP content was translated into 27 African languages including Kiswahili, Gikuyu and Dholuo. eServices

were rolled out after training of Mentor Mothers in April 2020. We tracked registration and uptake of calls over a 12 month period, and use of the VMMP to determine feasibility of this eServices range. In 12 months, frontline staff registered 908 pregnant and breastfeeding women on the eService platform with 60% consenting to peer-via-phone interactions. On average, the call success rate was 85%. 667 new and return clients were reached on the VMMP client line. The m2m eService platform is a feasible and scalable service delivery model for reaching vulnerable populations during epidemics and normal times and has been fully integrated into m2m's direct service delivery model.

Inclusion an aspect of Child Protection (A case study of Nyota Care Dandora, Nairobi-Kenya)

Janet Ndeto Mwitiki, Nyota Care Innovation

Inclusion of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) highlight the active participation of children with disabilities in the community. Inclusive education is one aspect of a rights-based quality education which emphasizes equity in access and participation, and responds positively to the individual's learning needs. Thus, the dire need in our ECD Programs. Nyota's approach to inclusion Nyota is a social enterprise that believes in the power of inclusion as an aspect of child protection in the child's early years. Nyota achieves this by building the capacity of both biological and extended caregivers as described below: Enabling learning environments. Learning environments that promote holistic development are essential to all children. Caregivers affiliated to Nyota are trained on how to design enabling environments that meet the unique needs of individual

children. Caregiver empowerment: Parental wellbeing is key in promoting the holistic growth of children. Caregiver - empowerment through training and counselling are provided to improve the caregiver's mental Health. Inclusion Teaching Methodology: Nyota affiliated caregivers serve as key supporters in encouraging interaction and engagement of all children during activities to support the child's development based upon the needs, interests of the children's Results / Impact. The project has impacted on two ECD centres in Dandora, 20 children with various special needs have been admitted while five counselling sessions have been provided to over 50 caregivers by experts from KISE as well as volunteers from CBOs and NGOs.

Using Community Activators as Grassroot Advocates and Promoters of Quality ECD Services

Moses Abiero, and Elizabeth Gitonga, AfECN

Community activators better known as Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) occupy a special space in service delivery at the grassroot levels as they advocate for and support efforts at providing highly valued programmes and services at local levels reaching several of their community members. Through community activators, various investments targeted at upstream human services such as Early Childhood Development, helping families especially in marginalized and hard to reach areas access quality ECD services helping children to achieve their full potential in a way that is transformative for our society. Community-based organisations have been well positioned to deliver community based ECD services, undertake community development activities that support access to child focused service. Despite a consensus on the

role of Community Activators in the delivery of ECD services, most of these organizations remain at the periphery of service delivery with low investments, lack of recognition, severe resource limitations which continue to affect their work and achievements in service delivery. Understanding the landscape of Community Activators is key to addressing the challenges affecting provision of ECD services at the local level. It is based on this that AfECN in collaboration with the ECD Network for Kenya, Council of Governors and County Governments conducted mapping of community activators supporting ECD work in Kenya. The findings of the mapping are expected to provide models of engaging community activators to advocate for and promote delivery of quality ECD services at local levels, with greater impact on children in marginalized and hardest to reach areas

Father's Involvement in Early Childhood Development and Care in Kenya

Makori O. Bonface, Namonyo M. Nancy and Obunga O. Elijah, Kisii County Government

The significance of father's involvement in early childhood development and care cannot be overrated. It is assumed that fathers' involvement promotes equitable access to quality ECD services for all children, strengthen ECD stakeholders'

Associations between exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) duration and children's developmental outcomes: Evidence from Siaya County, Kenya.

Silas Onyango, Elizabeth Kimani-Murage, Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo, Nelson Langat, Kenneth Okelo, Christopher Obong', Jürg Utzinger & Günther Fink

Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) during the first 6 months of life is widely promoted as a key strategy to enhance child health, growth, and development. Even though a high

collaboration and coordination, influence financial resource allocation and utilization towards ECD programs and enhance the

development and work for an enabling environment that encourages local research in ECD. The purpose of this paper is to explore father's involvement in early childhood development and care in Kenya. Mwoma in her study 2010 used ex post facto research design, sampled 160 preschoolers and 160 fathers from a target population of 84076 households headed by males. Questionnaires and achievement tests were used to collect data. Content validity and test-retest reliability were used. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, ANOVA and chi square were used to analyse data. Njeru sampled 512 preschoolers and 104 fathers from a target population of 5000 fathers and 6260 children. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Content validity was used and data was analysed using qualitative narration. It was found out that the age, occupation, type of preschool the child attended and fathers' belief in their role with children significantly related to children's development and care. It is recommended that school managers, non-governmental organizations, micro finance institutions and administrators to ensure that fathers closely monitor and participate in their children's development and care.

proportion of children in Kenya are currently breastfed exclusively, relatively little is known regarding the developmental benefits during the first year of life. The paper aims to establish the association between EBF and early childhood developmental outcomes among children aged between 0 - 6 months in Kenya. We used data collected as part of a cluster-randomized controlled trial conducted in Bondo sub-County in Western Kenya to assess the associations between exclusive

breastfeeding and development in the first year of life. The primary exposure variable was exclusive breastfeeding, and the outcome variable was child development as measured by the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Third Edition (ASQ-3). We analyzed data for 585 children ages 0 - 6 months at the time of the interview. Breastfeeding children exclusively between 3 – 6 months was associated with a 0.46 SD increase in overall ASQ-3 scores in the adjusted model. When we considered

Panel presentation by APHRC

Childcare in urban informal and diverse cultural settings

Presenters: Margaret Nampijja, Elizabeth Mwaniki, Ruth Muendo, Silas Onyango, Maurice Mutisya, Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo (pwekulo@aphrc.org; Tel: +254 0723834487)

Institutional affiliation: African Population and Health Research Center

Improving the quality of childcare centres through supportive assessment and communities of practice' in informal settlements in Nairobi

Investing in children during the critical period between 0-5 years can have long-lasting benefits throughout their life. Children in Kenya's urban informal settlements face significant challenges to healthy development, particularly when their families need to earn a daily wage and cannot care for them during the day. In response, informal and poor quality childcare centres with untrained caregivers have proliferated. We are undertaking a study to co-design and test the feasibility of an intervention of supportive assessment and skills-building for child-care centre providers. The study is employing a sequential mixed-methods approach. We have conducted qualitative interviews with

specific domains, the estimated associations between EBF in the 3 - 6 months period and ASQ scores were 0.22 SD for communication, 0.17 SD for gross motor, and 0.16 SD for problem-solving. EBF in the 3 – 6 months age range has positive associations with child development, especially for communication, gross motor and problem-solving. Programs encouraging mothers to continue EBF in this period may have substantial benefits for children.

various teams (Nairobi metropolitan service, n=10; Ruaraka and Makadara sub-county health and ECD teams, n=20; CHVs from both sub counties, n=20; center care providers, n=44; and parents, n=47) to understand their opinion of the state of childcare in informal settlements and their thoughts on what can be done to improve childcare in these communities. Based on the information obtained from these interviews, and working with Kidogo (experts in childcare), an intervention was drafted and discussed with the stakeholders in two co-design workshops who improved the content and mode of its delivery. We mapped and profiled child-care centres in two informal settlements in Nairobi, including assessing the quality of care provided and the knowledge and skills of the center providers before receiving the intervention. The intervention involves monthly trainings of center providers on health and early childhood development and support by CHVs for a period of 6 months while observing and recording key learnings on the feasibility and acceptability and costing its implementation. At the end of the 6 months, we will repeat the quality and knowledge/skills assessment and qualitative interviews and compare with baseline assessments to see if there are improvements attributable to the intervention. Descriptive statistics and thematic framework approach

will respectively be used to analyse quantitative and qualitative data and identify drivers of feasibility. We present key findings on the profiles/status of childcare centers in informal settlements as obtained from qualitative interviews, the co-design workshops, and the mapping and profiling and skills assessments phase of the research.

Exploring the childcare market in Mukuru Slum: The Nairobi Early Childcare in Slums (NECS) study

The early years are vital; if children receive the nurturing care they need in this critical period, it lays the foundation for human capital accumulation, with lifelong benefits. Shifting family and work structures means that paid, largely informal, childcare seems to be becoming the ‘new normal’ for millions of pre-school children growing up in rapidly urbanising Africa, but little is known about the quality of this childcare. To document, understand and link the demand and supply sides of the emerging childcare market. Qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and focus groups) with parents/carers will seek to understand decision making around childcare. A household survey will estimate use of different childcare strategies by parents/carers in the slum. The provision of paid childcare in the slum will be documented and the quality of care assessed through mapping of childcare providers followed by a quantitative provider survey and quality assessment which will be triangulated with further qualitative work including semi-structured observation of childcare, interviews, focus groups and ‘mystery shopper’ visits to childcare facilities. The NECS study will provide much needed information on the distribution of childcare facilities within Mukuru, as well factors that influence the use of these services. The policy implications of the evidence provided through this study will be concerned with quality childcare service provision which

remains poorly implemented.

Caring practices and support for early childhood development and learning among nomadic pastoralists – Key lessons from stakeholder engagement activities

Over 66% of children in sub-Saharan Africa are affected by poor development. Nomadic farmers (14% of Kenya’s population) have very specific needs for programmes to support early learning because of their semi-nomadic lifestyles and the low status of women. This project aims to understand the caring practices/ support for early childhood development (ECD)/ learning among the Maasai (nomadic farmers) in Kenya. It will use this information to support the development of a community-based programme to foster optimal ECD (up to 36 months). The project seeks to ensure impact/ co-evolution of the research by working closely with the Ministry of Health/ County Health Department to generate evidence on: 1) Maasai support practices for ECD and early learning; 2) How this support can be used in interventions; and, 3) How existing Kenyan interventions to support ECD would need to be adapted to support nomadic pastoralists. A stakeholder engagement meeting including different stakeholders was held to explore areas of synergy and support. The project will provide information on the linkage between the components of the nurturing care framework and the Baby-Friendly Community Initiative (BFCl). There are few initiatives within the community that focus on children under the age of three years. Stakeholders within the county government are interested in evidence that will inform policies, particularly in implementation of BFCl. Most of the care for young children is provided by mothers, neighbours, siblings and grandmothers, and fathers are mostly absent. Policy stakeholders are open to

collaborate and explore synergies with development partners and non-governmental organizations in the generation of evidence to inform their actions including policy formulation and implementation and monitoring the progress of existing programs/initiatives. Therefore, involving the stakeholders in our programming is key and a pathway to ensuring their voices/needs are incorporated into the research and for buy-in.

Community perceptions and practices of Early Childhood Development in an urban-poor setting in Nairobi: Uncovering contextual drivers beneath poverty

Worldwide, over 250 million children under five years are at risk of not achieving their developmental potential due to extreme poverty, malnutrition, infections, and environments that lack cognitive stimulation. Caregivers' knowledge, attitudes and practices of childcare is a salient yet important factor in determining early childhood development (ECD) outcomes. However, in many low income settings, the quality and experiences of child rearing and how they are influenced by contextual factors have not been examined. We aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices of ECD, and associated challenges in an urban-poor setting in Nairobi, Kenya. A qualitative survey was conducted among parents and other community members in Korogocho, Nairobi within a larger study which examined the feasibility and impact of a mobile phone application for monitoring child developmental milestones. We conducted focus group discussions and key informant interviews with 64 primary caregivers, 64 community health volunteers (CHVs), and 11 representatives from county and sub-county government on their knowledge,

attitude and practices, and challenges they faced in supporting child stimulation, nutrition and health care. Interviews were audio-recorded, and the data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that the community (parents, and CHVs) appreciated the importance of ECD. However, their perceptions and care-giving practices were generally poor and were driven by poverty and cultural and religious beliefs and practices, and family factors that act in the background of poverty. Implications of these findings for future research, policy and interventions for improving these practices are discussed.

The feasibility and effects of a mobile phone technology for optimizing, tracking and responding to children's developmental progress in Korogocho, Nairobi, Kenya: findings of a quasi-experimental study

The massive use of technology can be leveraged to facilitate access to growth and development programs for children. Existing programs supporting such initiatives for children younger than three years are inadequate and not accessible to most families particularly in resource limited settings. In most cases, primary caregivers are unable to identify delayed milestones in their children's growth and development due to inadequate information. They therefore often report the cases when they have become very severe and difficult to reverse. To promote early identification of possible developmental delays, we developed, implemented and evaluated the use of mobile phone technology to help caregivers track their children's developmental outcomes. The study employed a quasi-experimental design and a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In one arm, 110 caregivers were trained on the use of a mobile phone application to assess child

growth and development. The other arm, with 110 caregivers, received standard which included informal unscheduled household checks on child health by community health volunteers. Study outcomes i.e. child developmental outcomes, caregiver knowledge, attitude and practices, and parenting stress index were assessed in both arms. Feasibility of the intervention was determined quantitatively based on the numbers of participants who were willing to participate and the proportion who completed the intervention over the 12 month period, and qualitatively using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with caregivers, CHVs and other stakeholders. Outcomes data were compared between the two arms using mixed linear models to assess the effect of the intervention on the different outcomes. The results showed that the intervention was associated with improvements in child developmental scores particularly in the () domain, as well as improvement in caregivers KAP scores. The intervention was well received with the target participants recruited and at least 80% responded to the monthly text messages each month. Qualitative interviews revealed that caregivers, CHVs and policy makers (county and sub-county) teams were positive about the intervention. Use of a mobile phone technology to optimize, track and respond to children's developmental progress in real time is feasible and can improve ECD outcomes.

Feasibility of improving women's economic empowerment through improved Child Care opportunities in informal settlements of Nairobi: Lessons from the WCSP study

Worldwide, there is a wide gap between what women can contribute to the economy and what they actually contribute. The main barrier to women's engagement in the labour market and productivity at work is the fact

that they have to take care of their families in addition to meeting the demands of their employment. Evidence from Western settings demonstrates significant benefits of interventions such as the provision of childcare services to optimize women's participation in the labour market, as well as improve their incomes and child welfare. We undertook a study to assess the feasibility and acceptability of providing quality childcare centers in the workplace, the direct effects on women's economic empowerment as well as indirect effects (if any) on child growth and development. The study had a quasi-experimental design and was to be implemented in two workplaces – one workplace assigned to the intervention arm, and the other to the comparison arm. The intervention arm was to receive support to set up well-facilitated childcare centers providing full-time childcare services with facilities including hand-washing equipment, refrigerators, child-sized tables and chairs. The comparison workplace would not have a childcare centre. Women in both workplaces would receive monthly parenting talks. At baseline and at endline, participants (women, caregivers and workplace managers) would be interviewed using questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to collect information to assess the feasibility (including costing), acceptability and impact of the intervention.

Process and Lessons learned from the study:

- The project began in 2019. We were able to list the workplaces that employed many women from informal settlement settings. We endeavored to identify companies which had a substantial proportion of women with children under the age of three years
- The APHRC team (with support from RUBICOM) made arrangements to meet the managers

of the different workplaces individually, to tell them about the project

- We made several visits to more than 10 industries. A few of the visits were successful but majority were futile. Many did not keep the set appointments and requested the meetings to be rescheduled. While some of the industry players were willing to meet the team to discuss the project, others declined straight away. For some, it took a long time for them to declare that they were not interested in the project
- It was difficult to convince at least two industries that we needed for inclusion in the study. Many of these industries have highly bureaucratic processes, and the decision to allow the setup of the childcare facilities lay with the vision bearers/ owners

of the firm, who were not necessarily those that the team met with in the first instance

- It emerged that industries were unwilling to set up childcare facilities within their premises as they viewed it as a liability that would affect their bottom line
- The team noted that majority of the industries did not have a lactation station, even though there is a law/ policy on this requirement

There is still a big challenge with regards to involving employers in supporting women empowerment initiatives, particularly as it relates to childcare since they do not appreciate the benefits and hence do not give it priority. More sensitisation and advocacy through the Ministries of Gender, Labour and Social Services, as well as Education are required

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The convening of this conference was made possible through generous financial and technical support from Government of Kenya, various actors, institutions in the ECD space and *all participants who registered to participate*. Without your support, the Fourth National ECD Stakeholders' conference would not have been possible.

Asanteni Sana!

The Government of Kenya through the support of: Division of Neonatal and Child Health at Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Council of Governors and the County Government of Siaya.

ECD Network for Kenya Board Members: Dr Teresa Mwoma, Lilly Oyare, Dr Hudson Ouko Ong'ang'a and Joyce Wesonga

Development Partners and ECDNeK Partners: UNICEF, AfECN, Kenyatta University, Aga Khan University - Institute for Human Development, Institute of Child Development (ICD) at Daystar University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST), Save the Children, PATH, Child Fund Kenya, Catholic Relief Services, Lake Region Economic Block, Lwala Community Alliance, Smart Start Siaya (SSS), World Vision International, APHRC, Community Initiatives Agenda, Little Rock ECD, Mtoto News, KANCO, AOSK-Score ECD, Opportunity International, SWAP-Kenya, Build Africa, Kidogo Innovations, Mothers2Mothers, Madrasa Early Childhood Programme (MECP), Uthabiti Africa, GRADIF-K, Upward Bound Kenya, IDEO.ORG, Clean Start Kenya, Faraja Foundation, Nutrition International, Terres Des Hommes, Global Development Incubators and Tiny Totos.

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Thank you very much!

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