



ECD
NETWORK
FOR KENYA

**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
IN KENYA SUCCESS STORIES
(AUGUST 2022)**



The ECD Network for Kenya is thrilled to feature this month, success stories of two of her members **Worldreader** and **Lwala Community Alliance**. We take you through their story as narrated from their own lens.



Through years of programming, Worldreader uses digital platform to promote reading, literacy outcomes and parental engagement in non-formal settlements in Nairobi City. A nine month project called Keep Children Reading (KCR) enabled Worldreader to reach more than 12,000 children, parents, and caregivers identified via 86 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), trained 273 ECDE teachers to effectively use digital reading and learning resources, and engaged 4,600+ people via a community radio program across three informal settlements of Nairobi: Kibera, Kawangware and Mukuru. The project used a digital reading and learning solution, BookSmart, to deliver literacy development materials for children, families, teachers, and educators in adverse settings.

The project has established that parental engagement is critical to building a child's reading habit. Addressing traditional gender roles is necessary to facilitate paternal engagement in social emotional learning activities. Most importantly, digital solutions encourage reading in low literacy environments. Children from low literacy households have limited access to quality reading materials and opportunities for one-on-one reading to take place. Technology-assisted interventions not only ensure that children, parents, caregivers, and educators gain access to digital reading materials and engaging activities, but also are encouraged to find value in reading and positive benefits it confers.

Through years of programming, Worldreader uses digital platform to promote reading, literacy outcomes and parental engagement in non-formal settlements in Nairobi City. A nine month project called Keep Children Reading (KCR) enabled Worldreader to reach more than 12,000 children, parents, and caregivers identified via 86 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), trained 273 ECDE teachers to effectively use digital reading and learning resources, and engaged 4,600+ people via a community radio program across three informal settlements of Nairobi: Kibera, Kawangware and Mukuru. The project used a digital reading and learning solution, BookSmart, to deliver literacy development materials for children, families, teachers, and educators in adverse settings.

The project has established that parental engagement is critical to building a child's reading habit. Addressing traditional gender roles is necessary to facilitate paternal engagement in social emotional learning activities. Most importantly, digital solutions encourage reading in low literacy environments. Children from low literacy households have limited access to quality reading materials and opportunities for one-on-one reading to take place. Technology-assisted interventions not only ensure that children, parents, caregivers, and educators gain access to digital reading materials and engaging activities, but also are encouraged to find value in reading and positive benefits it confers.

Find out more about worldreader
<https://www.worldreader.org/where-we-are/kenya/>

In traditional African context, men took the general roles in mentoring the boy child into manhood through series of age groups /sets activities. With the changing gender roles and formulation of policies and global trends in gender, men have taken up cross cutting roles to meet the demands of life and parenting. Nevertheless, men have not embraced fully the holistic upbringing of their children, but things have been different for Mr. Kevin Juma from Katagaya Village South Kamwango Community Unit, a father of three who has taken up parenting to a higher notch due to the ECD program. Mr. Juma was noticed by our team when he had brought his son Jared Okeyo who is one and a half years old to an integrated Parenting session for immunization. The Program officer and the lead CHV made a follow up to his home to find out his motivation on taking keen interest in the welfare of his child. He shared with the team that his wife shares back parenting messages with him each time she comes back from the ECD sessions.

“Each time I come back from the sessions I share with him the messages and that has really changed his attitude and he helps with bathing the children, house chores, reading and playing with them” a statement from his wife Mary Anyanjo Juma.



Hellen Otieno who is the CHW in that village conducts monthly visits to his home. She checks on health status of the family, counselling, WASH compliance and conducts referral to health facility whenever there is a need. Juma’s children are up to date with their immunization schedules and he screens his son Jared for malnutrition using the family MUAC tape which was provided and demonstrated by the CHW. Juma helps in developing a variety of locally made toys for his children and has established a play corner at home, when he has free time he plays and reads stories to his children to stimulate their thoughts and curiosity. Through the ECD Program, the CHW ensured that all his children have obtained birth certificate and the family is up to date with NHIF contribution. As a result of the CHW visits, health seeking behaviours in the community has improved, parental involvement and caregiving practices have gone a notch higher and the parents are more responsive to their children’s needs.

His wife says that she appreciated the messages on exclusive breastfeeding from the CHW during her visits which has helped her to improve communication between her and the child. “My husband even sits besides me when am breastfeeding which makes me happy” she jokingly says. Mr. Juma’s relationship with his family has improved greatly since he started embracing the messages. Mr. Juma is a male champion who shares his testimonies in community activities and he encourages fathers to actively take part in the upbringing of their children. “As a father, it is my responsibility to ensure that I fully support my wife in raising up our children”

Find out more about Lwala Community Alliance
<https://www.worldreader.org/where-we-are/kenya/>