



## **THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT NETWORK FOR KENYA PROFILE, OCTOBER 2023**

### **Establishment of ECD Network for Kenya**

The Early Childhood Development Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) is a membership organization that was established in September 2015. This was after a realization of a gap in coordination of *Early Childhood Development (ECD)* initiatives in Kenya provided by various actors and organizations that were engaged in service provision, capacity development, research and advocacy. Subsequently, in September 2019, the network was registered with the NGO's Coordination Board of Kenya as a non profit organization.

The ECD Network for Kenya undertake programs in relation to research in ECD, Nurturing Care for ECD advocacy, effective partnerships and coordination of state and non-state actors. This ensures strengthening of multi-sectoral collaboration among actors and in the end promote access, quality and holistic ECD programs for children in Kenya.

Although incepted in 2015, the network was launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and stakeholders, during the 1st National ECD stakeholders' conference, held at Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in Nairobi. ECDNeK secretariat is hosted in Kenyatta University's (KU's) Department of Early Childhood and Special Needs Education, in Kenya.

ECDNeK has held a series of annual and biennial conferences from 2016 to 2023. The conference themes included; Accelerating Early Childhood Development through partnerships (Nairobi County, 2018), Promoting synergies: inclusive approaches to Early Child Development (Mombasa County, 2019), Responsive caregiving for children in diverse circumstances: Innovations and Inclusivity (Siaya County, 2021), From Policy and Evidence to Action (Turkana County, 2023). These conferences have acted as avenues where ECD actors exchange knowledge and learning, promotes partnerships and networking, advances ECD advocacy, ECD actors interacts with policy makers, promotes collaboration in program implementation and promotes synergy among actors.

The ECD Network for Kenya is managed by nine Board of Directors, and under it, is a secretariat headed by the Executive Director. The Board was constituted in 2019 and convenes on a quarterly basis, with Annual General Meetings with members. Details for the leadership and Board can be found [here](#)

### **Our Vision**

Strong multi-sectoral collaborations advancing Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development in Kenya.

### **Our Mission**

Promote, support and sustain an enabling environment for the implementation of Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development through research, advocacy, effective partnerships, and coordination

### **Our Goal**

Our goal is to contribute to inclusive and equitable quality Early Childhood Development opportunities for children 0-8 years in Kenya, through the following strategic objectives:

1. To influence an enabling policy environment for ECD.
2. To influence increased Investment and Accountability for ECD.
3. To strengthen coordination of ECD initiatives.



## **Current Programmes**

**Membership:** The ECD Network for Kenya has an active membership subscription that comprises both Individual and Organization membership. The members exist to strengthen coordination and collaboration between state and non-state actors, through participating in the development, adaptation and implementation of relevant ECD policies and programs in Kenya.

**Research:** ECDNeK has adopted a research agenda to provide evidence to advance implementation of Nurturing Care for ECD, through generation of evidence-based decisions on policy formulation and implementation, financing and governance for ECD. In order to understand the ECD systems in Kenya, ECDNeK in collaboration with Mathematica a US based research organization, are carrying out a research on ECD systems in Kenya with a focus on policy, governance, multi-sectoral coordination and financing in ECD. This is funded by Conrad and Hilton Foundation. In addition, to strengthen the implementation of Nurturing Care through responsive Caregiving, ECDNeK is conducting research on achieving sustained Early Child Development impacts at scale with a role of influencing policy around ECD interventions using innovative m-Health tools, both at the national and local level in Kisumu and Vihiga Counties, in Partnership with University of South California and SWAP Kenya.

**Advocacy:** Advocacy is an important tool that ECDNeK uses to voice the need for prioritization and provision of quality ECD services for children. This is done both at National and sub National levels, where all implementers both state and non-state actors, convene on conversations that impact the life of children in relation to policies around; education/opportunities for early learning, good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security and responsive caregiving. At national level, ECDNeK works closely with the Ministries of Health, Education and Labour (through the National Council for Children Services). Through partnership with Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN) and the Ministry of Health, ECDNeK has participated in the harmonization of the Nurturing Care Advocacy Strategy steered by MOH, with Children Act, 2022 and has identified advocacy areas from the strategy. This is being implemented in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB), together with the Nurturing Care for ECD advocacy program funded by Conrad Hilton Foundation through AfECN.

**Webinars:** ECD Network for Kenya conducts webinar series to ensure valuable insights and knowledge are shared widely to catalyze positive change in the landscape of Early Childhood Development. The ECDNeK webinar series also plays a pivotal role in ensuring effective implementation of the Conference calls to action. This promotes translating the outlined strategies and commitments into tangible initiatives that drive positive change in the landscape of Early Childhood Development. These webinar series are aimed to foster collaboration, knowledge dissemination and policy advocacy. The webinar addresses critical aspects of ECD highlighting best practices, sharing success stories and delving into innovative approaches. It sensitizes participants about the transformative potential of replicable practices. These sessions are designed to be interactive, incorporating Q&A segments and discussions to encourage active engagement. These webinars are conducted quarterly, providing a regular and strategic pace for stakeholders to convene.