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THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT NETWORK FOR KENYA NEWSLETTER 2ND ISSUE 2024



Dear Esteemed Readers,

I trust this message finds you well. As we journey through 2024, the ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) continues to take charge in advancing the Early Childhood Development initiatives across our nation. Our collective efforts and steadfast dedication have been pivotal in driving positive change for young children and their families.

In recent months, we have actively engaged in a series of impactful initiatives. From hosting insightful webinars and workshops to participating in critical policy dialogues and community-centered events, our focus remains on fostering multisectoral collaboration, promoting inclusivity, and advocating for the rights of every child.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce upcoming events and projects that will further amplify our advocacy efforts and expand our footprint in supporting ECD initiatives nationwide. Your continued support and partnership are instrumental as we work towards ensuring every child in Kenya has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to Early Childhood Development in Kenya. Together, we are making a significant difference and building a brighter future for our children.

Warm regards,

Dr. Teresa Mwoma,

National Coordinator ECD Network for Kenya

NEWS

Celebrating the Day of the African Child 2024: Media Press Conference and Launch of the Childcare Dialogue Campaign

The ECD Network for Kenya, in partnership and collaboration with the Africa Early Childhood Network and stakeholders in the childcare sector, seeks to intensify childcare advocacy initiatives through a nationwide awareness campaign on the importance of quality and affordable childcare. The childcare dialogue campaign, themed "Universal Access to Quality Childcare and Protection for Children 0-5 Years," will span from June to December 2024.



Figure 1: Group photo

A media breakfast meeting to celebrate the Day of the African Child and launch the Childcare Dialogue Campaign was held at Tamarind Tree Hotel on June 14th, 2024, from 9:00 to 11:00 am. The meeting brought together 40 participants drawn from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Education, Africa Population Health Research Center (APHRC), African Early Childhood Network (AfECN), Tiny Totos, Kidogo, House Managers Association Agency, MtotoNews, WIEGO, media personnel, and the ECDNeK secretariat.



The campaign seeks to raise nationwide awareness about the importance of quality and affordable childcare, emphasizing the country's achievements and contributions to the continental goal. It will highlight the critical role of childcare services for children aged 0-5 years in supporting children, families, businesses, and societies, as well as underscore the importance of providing safe, stimulating environment during these critical years of children's developmental.

Commemoration of Day of the African Child.

The Day of the African Child is observed annually on June 16th to commemorate the Soweto Uprising of 1976 in South Africa, where thousands of black school children protested against the apartheid regime's imposition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in their

schools. The peaceful demonstration turned tragic when police opened fire on the students, resulting in numerous deaths and injuries.



Figure 2: Children during the launch of DAC in Kitui

This year's launch of the Day of the African Child was held on June 9th, 2024, at Ithookwe Primary School in Kitui County. The theme was "Education for All Children in Africa: The Time is Now." ECD Network for Kenya, in its endeavor to advance the children's agenda, was delighted to join other organizations, government leaders (national, county, sub-county), caregivers, and children in the launch event. Organized by the National Council for Children Services (NCCS), ECDNeK was an integral part of the planning team.



The **national celebrations** took place on June 16th, 2024, at Mwatate Primary School in Taita Taveta County, organized by the Ministry of Labour & Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs through the coordination of the NCCS. Represented by the Communication Officer, ECD Network for Kenya joined other organizations in commemorating this important day. The combined efforts of the government, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other stakeholders are crucial in creating a supportive environment where every child can thrive. Together, these efforts pave the way for a brighter future, honoring the legacy of the past while building a foundation for generations to come.



Figure 3: First Lady Mama Rachel Ruto Conversing with children during celebrations of DAC in Taita Taveta

Day of the African Children Celebrations in LREB

The ECD Network had an opportunity to participate and support LREB in celebrating DAC



Figure 4: 1st Lady Migori County joining in the walk of DAC celebration in LREB

2024. The event began with a walk that highlighted children joined by various stakeholders conducting a match across Bondo town to voice the day's festivities and celebrations. They were received at JOOUST by the first lady Siaya County who ushered them to their host for the day. Dignitaries present were Deputy Governor Bomet, Siaya County First Lady, County Secretary, County Commissioner, CEO Lreb, MCA's, CEC's, Chief Officers

and Former First Lady. Chief Guest Deputy Governor Bomet county in his remarks shared that "It is a decade since our collective efforts towards African children began in 2014. Education is a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution. Education is the cornerstone in fighting discrimination. Investing in Education ensures quality education for children irrespective of background." LREB will ensure the aspirations manifest and become more relevant. No child should be left behind. We need to review our education system to ensure alignment with constitution provision. People should be trained to be able to understand the needs of children." He concluded by saying that decisions made at the right time create wealth.

The day's festivities were concluded by the launch of the nurturing care for early childhood development training curriculum. The Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development Curriculum consists of Training, capacity building, policy makers and other stakeholders developed by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology.

The Early Childhood Funders Group Convening Nairobi

Dr. Mwoma represented the ECDNeK in the early childhood Funders & Partners convening that happened in Nairobi from 4th to 7th June 2024. Themed *Bridging funders, young people and community for collective impact and global early childhood funders' annual meeting*, participants held conversations, highlighting critical challenges in the early childhood sector. In Kenya, access to affordable and quality childcare remains limited, particularly affecting working mothers. High costs render formal childcare options unattainable for many families,

leading to reliance on informal arrangements with younger siblings or elderly relatives. Existing daycare facilities often fail to meet essential safety, hygiene, and developmental standards. Consequently, parents grapple with balancing work and childcare responsibilities, impacting employment consistency and household income negatively. Addressing these challenges necessitates collaborative efforts and support from funders to enhance childcare accessibility and standards nationwide.



Figure 5: Funders Group Convening Nairobi, right Dr. Teresa Mwoma

Msingi Bora: Responsive Parenting Training Workshop

Dr. Mwoma joined Dr. Frances to train mentors on responsive parenting during the training of trainers (ToT) on the Msingi Bora curriculum with a focus on parenting sessions 9-16. The Msingi Bora project is being implemented in Kisumu and Vihiga Counties. The training targeted mentors/trainers who will cascade the knowledge to Community Health Promoters (CHPs) and caregivers. The focus was on capacity-building caregivers through deliberate efforts in responsive parenting. Dr. Frances and Dr. Mwoma led a role-play activity as a caregiver and child to demonstrate how to conduct a play activity. This session aimed to show Msingi Bora mentors the practical aspects of implementing the curriculum. The training was held at Shammah Hotel in Kisumu County.



Figure 6: right, Dr. Mwoma ECDNeK Left, Dr. Frances USC

Mother's day

Mother's Day was celebrated on 12th May 2024 to honor the love, dedication, and sacrifices of mothers worldwide. The National Coordinator joined others in wishing mothers a Happy Mother's Day, highlighting that ECDNeK recognizes the crucial role mothers play in nurturing and raising their children.



Figure 7: Dr. Teresa Mwoma, National Coordinator, ECDNeK

Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) Introductory Meeting with ECD Network for Kenya Delegation



Figure 8: Left Mr. Abdullahi Maalim, 2nd left Dr. Teresa Mwoma, center CEO Dr. Farah, 2nd right Rachel Makena & King Kiranga

ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) represented by the National Coordinator, Programme & Partnership manager and finance officer held an introductory meeting with the Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) on 29th June 2024 to raise awareness about the upcoming ECD National Conference in Garissa. The meeting was held at the FCDC offices focusing on exploring potential areas of collaboration for

the 2025 ECD Stakeholder Conference. The CEO FCDC Dr. Farah appointed Mr. Abdullahi Maalim, sector lead for Education & Governance, to join the full planning committee alongside the Liaison Director and the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education from Garissa County.

International Day of Play

The International Day of Play, marked on June 11, is a global initiative dedicated to celebrating the importance of play in the development, education, and well-being of children and adults alike. This day aims to highlight the benefits of play, promote active and creative playtime, and advocate for the right to play as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the



Figure 9: International Day of play with partners

Child. The theme for this year's celebration was "Play for All: Inclusivity and Joy." ECDNeK joined Early Start Africa, in partnership with state and non-state child development actors, in celebrating the International Day of Play on June 11, 2024, held at Little Rock ECD Inclusive Centre in Kibra.



Figure 10: Dr. Teresa Mwoma speaking at KBC radio

The celebrations included parent-child play engagement activities, a 2km walk, and a keynote address. The primary purpose of the International Day of Play celebration is to raise awareness about the vital role of play in healthy development and to encourage communities to prioritize play in daily life, especially for children. For more on this event, find [here](#)

On the same day, Dr. Mwoma represented ECDNeK by joining UNICEF in celebrating the 1st International day of play at a talk show at KBC English Radio station.

Exploring ECD Multi-Sectoral Coordination Strategies in Kenya

The ECD Network for Kenya held her 2nd webinar on 14th May 2024. The webinar focused on exploring ECD Multi-sectoral coordination strategies in Kenya. The webinar attracted 141 participants drawn from 17 counties and 14 countries. The 1-hour webinar delved into diverse approaches aimed at enhancing ECD across critical stages of children's development and lives: ensuring survival, promoting health and holistic well-being, and fostering an enabling environment for growth and development. Click [here](#) for the proceeding.



PATH Living Labs Nairobi Exhibition of Health Care Solutions

ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) participated in an event organized by PATH on 3rd April 2024 at Radisson Blu Hotel Upper hill, highlighting significant milestones in inclusive innovation for advancing Primary Health Care through the Human Centered Design model. The exhibition showcased simple, low or no-cost solutions co-created to address longstanding challenges in service delivery in Kakamega, Turkana, Homabay, Kisumu, and Siaya counties.



Figure 11: Participants participation in the PATH workshop

The event provided a platform to amplify the voices of users and stakeholders involved in various innovations. Stakeholders from Kisumu, Kakamega, Siaya, Turkana, and Garissa counties attended, alongside other local implementing partners and relevant Ministry of Health officials at the county level. The event promoted cross learning among counties, where every county was given a chance to share updates on what their counties had achieved in regard to implementation of the health component of nurturing care.

National Symposium on Kenya Prisons Reforms

ECDNeK participated in the National Symposium on Kenya's Prisons Reforms, themed "Harnessing Collaborations Towards the Realization of Correctional Services' Reforms." The symposium was held on 17th April, 2024 at Pride Inn Azure which brought together a diverse array of stakeholders including:

The Vice Chancellor, Strathmore University; Representatives from the Embassy of Netherlands, Faraja Foundation, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), Clean Start Kenya, Kituo cha Sheria, Justice Defenders, Resources Oriented Development Initiative (RODI)-Kenya, Independent Medical-Legal Unit



Figure 12: Group photo

(IMLU), Nafisika, Crime si poa, CLEAR Kenya, Thriving Child, Roul Wallenberg Institute (RWI), Uthabiti, Kidogo, Section 4, Flora C & Company Advocates, Girl Child Network among others. The symposium sought to cultivate strategic partnerships to advance the reform agenda of the Kenya Prisons Service in a coordinated, efficient, effective, and consultative manner. It sought to enhance the visibility and strategic positioning of the Prisons Reforms Working Group, identify areas of mutual interest amongst actors in the sector, and establish a framework to strengthen the reform agenda with the ultimate goal of reforming minds and rebuilding communities.

Discussions centered around children accompanying their mothers into prisons. Participants focused on the strategies implemented to safeguard the rights of prisoners, ensure access to essential developmental services, and facilitate reintegration into society. A need to establish monitoring systems for assessing their progress post-reintegration was also emphasized.

The next steps identified emphasized on complementarity rather than competition among existing programs and collaborating actors in the sector. Organizations were acknowledged for their respective operational areas and expertise. There was a unanimous call for synergy

among various actors, aiming to align efforts toward achieving common goals and improving conditions within the prison system. This collaborative approach fosters efficiency, minimizes duplication of efforts, and maximizes the impact of interventions aimed at enhancing the welfare of incarcerated individuals and children of incarcerated mothers.

Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Policy's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework and costing

ECDNeK participated in the IECD policy workshop held in Machakos from April 29th to May 3rd, 2024, following a previous session in Naivasha. The workshop focused on finalizing the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Policy's Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework and costing. It brought together key stakeholders drawn from the National Council for Children's Services, Department of Children Services, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and PATH. They addressed seven strategic policy directions including: promoting inclusive nurturing care for ECD services, enhancing stakeholder coordination, advocating for ECD, strengthening capacity development for duty bearers and caregivers, establishing an integrated M&E system, mobilizing resources for ECD initiatives, and promoting research and innovation in ECD. While the workshop primarily developed the M&E framework, the final costing will be refined in a subsequent session. ECDNeK's active participation underscores its dedication to advancing robust early childhood development policies in Kenya.



Figure 13: Group photo in the IECD workshop

Migori Sub-National Multisectoral Collaboration Entry Meeting

On May 7th, 2024, the ECD Network for Kenya, in partnership with the Lake Region Economic Bloc Secretariat, Lwala Community Alliance, PATH, and KMET, convened a multisectoral meeting with the Migori County Government at Vannah Hotel that sought to foster collaboration across sectors for Early Childhood Development (ECD).

The event brought together 62 participants drawn from Migori county leadership, First Spouses from 4 counties, the County Secretary, County Executive Committee members (CECMs), Chief Officers, and directors from various departments including



Figure 14: Group photo Migori

health, education, gender and social protection, trade, livestock, human resources, communication, nutrition, and the Department of Children Services. Academic representation from Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology and Civil Society Organizations also contributed to the discussions.



Figure 15: Partners who participated in the panel presentation

Next steps outlined include training sessions for Directors and CECMs on SECD (multisectoral), as well as training for sub-county multisectoral teams, ward representatives, and Community Health Promoters (CHPs). These initiatives aim to strengthen collaborative efforts in promoting ECD within Migori County.

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES CELEBRATION

ECDNeK participated in the International Day of Families Celebrations hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, alongside partners drawn from; UNICEF, World Vision, and World Bank on 15th May 2024 at Kenyatta International Conference Center (KICC). The event focused on the theme of climate change and its impact on family well-being. The event resulted in the launch of the Policy on Family Promotion and Protection. Key dignitaries in attendance included Her Excellency the First Lady Rachel Ruto, E.G.H, CS Ministry of Labour and Social Protection Hon. Florence Bore, and UNICEF Representative Dr. Shaheen Nilofer.



Figure 16: 1st Lady leading the CS labour and partners in the International Day of families

Validation of Early Childhood Development Social Behaviour change communication package and advocacy strategy

ECDNeK participated in a multi-sectoral workshop in Machakos organized by the Ministry of Health with support from UNICEF. The workshop brought together stakeholders drawn from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health at both national and county levels, NCCS, DCS, DSD, UNICEF, PATH, AOSK, IRCK, LWALA, KPA, and others. The objectives of the workshop were to; (1) **validate the ECD Social Behaviour Change and Communication (SBCC) strategy**, (2) **Share the Kuwa Kocha campaign materials**, and (3) **validate the Advocacy Strategy**.



Figure 17: Group photo

The SBCC strategy aims to enhance the promotion, uptake, and practice of nurturing care behaviors and services related to early childhood development.

NITA Child Caregiver III curriculum review

ECDNeK joined AfECN, Kidogo, NurtureFirst, and the National Industrial Training Authority in the review and finalization of a new training curriculum for childcare workers in Kenya. This curriculum aims to dignify the profession of childcare, transforming it into a career of choice for both current and aspiring childcare micro-entrepreneurs and domestic workers nationally. Currently, over 100,000 childcare micro-entrepreneurs and 2 million domestic workers care for millions of children under five in Kenya, yet access to training and certification has been challenge. This new curriculum seeks to fill this critical gap by providing essential skills to caregivers and domestic workers and recognition to those dedicated to nurturing our youngest generation. This initiative marks a significant step towards making childcare a respected and rewarding profession in Kenya.



Figure 18: Group Photo Nita Curriculum review

Launch of the Kenya Economic Update Edition No.29; Fostering Trade for Robust Growth and Dynamic Job Creation

ECD Network for Kenya was privileged to participate in the launch of the Kenya Economic Update Edition No. 29, titled "Fostering Trade for Robust Growth and Dynamic Job Creation," organized by the World Bank Kenya on June 5th, 2024, at the Sarova Stanley Hotel. The event was attended by representatives from the National Treasury and Economic Planning, International Budget Partnership, Kenya Private Sector Alliance, Kenya Association of Manufacturers, State Department of Investment, University of Nairobi, and the Macro Economics Trade and Investments department, among others.



Figure 19: Launch of the Kenya Economic Update

THE EDTECH SUMMIT

The Finance Officer represented ECDNeK at the EdTech Summit, organized by EdTech East Africa, held on June 11, 2024, at Garissa University. This summit was a significant gathering aimed at exploring the future of educational technology in Kenya's Frontier Counties. It brought together policymakers, education technology practitioners, educators, researchers, and government representatives from across the region to discuss and demonstrate the potential of EdTech in transforming education in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) regions.



Figure 20: The EDTech Summit

The event was attended by key partners, including the Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) and the Raspberry Pi Foundation. The summit culminated in the launch of a pilot project for a digital literacy program designed to benefit the ten frontier counties. The summit promised to be a pivotal event in advancing educational technology across our counties. We are excited about the collaborative efforts and the potential impact on enhancing learning experiences through innovative solutions.

Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy

The ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) joined stakeholders in the costing of the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy at Lake Naivasha Simba Lodge, Naivasha. The workshop brought together key partners, including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, LWALA, Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Health (MOH), and the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS). This collaborative effort aims to finalize the financial framework necessary to support the effective implementation of the IECD policy, ensuring comprehensive and sustainable early childhood development programs across Kenya.



Figure 21: IECD Policy group photo

Finalization of Monitoring & Evaluation and Cost Implementation Plan IECD

ECDNeK participated in a workshop aimed at finalizing the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan and costing the implementation plan for the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy. The workshop was held at Kyaka Hotel in Machakos from June 24th to 28th, 2024. Participants included representatives from WHO, UNICEF, Mathematica, Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Health (MOH), National Council for Children's Services (NCCS), Department of Children Services (DCS), and Department of Social Development (DSD). This collaborative effort is crucial for ensuring the successful implementation and sustainability of the IECD policy.



Figure 22: IECD Policy group photo

The Action Foundation for Inaugural Care Conference

ECDNeK joined The Action Foundation and development partners for the Inaugural Care Conference at Dagoretti Special School, themed "Lived Experiences of Caregivers of Children with Disabilities: Nurturing Care, Representation, Voice, Agency, and

Grassroots Advocacy." This conference brought together caregivers of children with special needs from Nairobi County to connect and learn about effective caregiving strategies. The event resulted in the launch of a fourth therapy center at Dagoretti Special School to further support the needs of children with disabilities in the region.



Figure 23: Inaugural Care Conference

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sustaining and Scaling-up Change in ECD - Learning Event

In continuation of the dialogue initiated during our previous webinar held on 14th May 2024 ([Click here to be updated](#)), ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK), in partnership with Upward Bound funded by Comic Relief, is organizing a hybrid learning event. This event aims to delve into strategies for sustaining and scaling-up change in Early Childhood Development (ECD) on 23rd July 2024.

This learning event will bring together stakeholders and experts to explore innovative approaches and best practices in ECD, focusing on practical steps to ensure lasting impact and broader implementation of effective ECD initiatives.



[Register Now for this interactive learning event.](#)

Policy in Early Childhood Development (ECD) Webinar

Join us for a deeper understanding on policy in Early Childhood Development (ECD)! ECD Network for Kenya (ECDNeK) is hosting a webinar dedicated to exploring the intricacies of ECD policy. This webinar will provide valuable insights into the policy landscape governing ECD, discussing key frameworks, challenges, and opportunities for advocacy and implementation. It's an excellent opportunity for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and advocates in the ECD sector to deepen their understanding and contribute to shaping effective policies. [To participate in the upcoming webinar, click here to register.](#)

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Join our vibrant community as an individual or organizational member and gain access to up-to-date trends on early childhood development. As a member, you will enjoy networking opportunities, including the upcoming 6th National ECD Stakeholders Conference, workshops, and more. Together, we can make a meaningful impact on shaping the future of ECD. Don't miss out - [join us today!](#)

Join us in spreading the word! Share this newsletter with your contacts and network. We look forward to connecting with you!

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