



**MINISTRY OF GENDER, CULTURE
AND CHILDREN SERVICES**

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN
SERVICES

CHILDREN SERVICES *Newsletter*

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REFLECTIONS IN SERVICE TO THE CHILD: NATIONAL INSIGHTS AND FIELD PERSPECTIVES

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FOREWORD FROM THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY'S DESK

| By CPA Carren Ageng'o, Principal Secretary, State Department for Children Services |

This edition of Children Services Newsletter reflects the continued efforts of the State Department for Children Services to strengthen child protection and justice systems through strategic partnerships, institutional collaboration, community-based approaches and responsive public service.

Stories featured in this edition highlight engagements aimed at advancing the rights, dignity and wellbeing of children, including strengthening child-friendly justice, improving oversight of child protection institutions, taking protection services closer to households and communities, and promoting greater inclusion of children and families who may face particular vulnerabilities. They also underscore the importance of addressing emerging and interconnected challenges, including human trafficking, migration, environmental sustainability and maternal and child nutrition.

Partnerships remain central to these efforts. The engagements with Government institutions, development partners, international organisations and civil society demonstrate the value of collective action in strengthening protection systems and developing sustainable solutions for children and families. Equally important is the continued commitment of our Children's Officers and frontline institutions, whose work ensures that national policies and programmes translate into meaningful services and protection for children where they live.

As we build on these efforts, the State Department remains committed to strengthening systems that identify and respond to risks early, supporting families and communities, and ensuring that every child, regardless of circumstance, is protected, included and given the opportunity to grow and thrive.

CPA Carren Ageng'o

Principal Secretary, State Department for Children Services

ADVANCING DIGNITY AND INCLUSION FOR INTERSEX PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES

| *Reflections from the National Desk* |



Protecting the rights and dignity of every child requires systems that recognize and respond to the needs of all children, including intersex children. Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services held a consultative engagement with the Association of Intersex Parenthood Kenya (AIP) to explore collaborative approaches to advancing the rights, inclusion and wellbeing of intersex persons and their families.

The engagement brought together Government representatives and stakeholders to discuss progress on the Intersex Persons Bill, alongside opportunities to strengthen legal and policy frameworks,

expand public awareness and deepen multi-sectoral collaboration.

Discussions also focused on improving access to services and protection for intersex children and adults, underscoring the importance of coordinated action in addressing the challenges faced by intersex persons and their families.

The engagement reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to working with stakeholders to promote equal protection, access to services and an environment in which every child, including intersex children, can grow, develop and thrive with dignity and support.



“Protecting the rights and dignity of every child requires systems that recognize and respond to the needs of all children.”

PARTNERSHIP OPENS NEW PATHWAYS TO STRENGTHEN MATERNAL AND CHILD NUTRITION

| Reflections from the National Desk |



Healthy mothers and well-nourished children are fundamental to stronger families and healthier communities. Recognizing the importance of sustained action on nutrition, the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services explored potential areas of collaboration with MotherFood International during an engagement in Nairobi.

The Ministry, represented by Principal Secretary for Gender and Affirmative Action, PS Anne Wang'ombe, hosted a delegation from MotherFood International led by its Country Director, Mr. Victor Koech, to learn more about the organisation's work and explore opportunities for collaboration. The Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, was represented by the Secretary for Children Services, Mr.

Shem Nyakutu.

MotherFood International shared its approach to addressing maternal and child malnutrition by empowering local entrepreneurs to produce and distribute affordable, nutritious foods through sustainable, market-based solutions.

Discussions explored how the organisation's expertise and innovations could complement the Ministry's mandate and contribute to improving nutrition and wellbeing for mothers and children. The engagement underscored the value of purposeful partnerships in developing sustainable solutions that strengthen families and give every child a healthier start in life.



“The engagement underscored the value of purposeful partnerships in developing sustainable solutions that strengthen families and give every child a healthier start in life.”

PROTECTING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: GOVERNMENT AND IOM EXPLORE STRONGER SAFEGUARDS

| Reflections from the National Desk |



As migration patterns become increasingly shaped by conflict, economic pressures and climate-related disruptions, protecting people on the move is becoming an ever more important part of safeguarding vulnerable communities.

The Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services is exploring stronger collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to advance safe, orderly and regular migration while strengthening protection for vulnerable groups. The engagement brought together the Ministry, represented by Principal Secretary for Gender and Affirmative Action, PS Anne Wang'ombe, and an IOM delegation led by Chief of Mission Ms. Nomagugu Nkuba.

Discussions centred on some of the most pressing risks facing vulnerable populations, including trafficking, exploitation, child labour and sexual exploitation, as well as the growing effects of climate change on

human mobility. Women and children were identified as facing heightened risks in these circumstances.

Priority areas proposed for collaboration include strengthening victim identification and protection, access to justice, voluntary repatriation and reintegration, psychosocial support, gender protection and economic empowerment. The discussions also considered support to Government-run shelters and efforts to strengthen existing protection systems.

The engagement concluded with agreement on the need for a structured framework of collaboration and a follow-up engagement to define priority interventions in greater detail. The proposed partnership seeks to strengthen protection and support for migrants, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups while contributing to more inclusive and resilient communities.



JUSTICE SECTOR RALLIES AROUND A MORE PEOPLE-CENTRED AND CHILD-FRIENDLY SYSTEM

| Reflections from the National Desk |



The justice sector is advancing reforms aimed at making justice more coordinated, accessible and responsive, with particular attention to the needs of children.

From 27 to 29 July 2026, the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, participated in the 38th Meeting of the National Council on the Administration of Justice (NCAJ) in Mombasa, chaired by the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Hon. Justice Martha Koome, EGH.

The meeting considered key reforms, including child-friendly justice and the proposed National Guidelines on Interviewing Children, alongside electoral justice preparedness, responses to sexual and gender-based violence, legal aid and other justice-sector priorities. Five reform instruments were also launched to strengthen digital transformation, institutional coordination, survivor-centred services, people-centred justice and justice-sector outreach.

Also representing the State Department for Children Services were the Secretary for Children Services, Mr. Shem Nyakutu; the Head of the Child Justice Section, Ms. Anne Thiong'o; and Mr. William Ochieng of the Child Justice Section.

In a further focus on child justice, the PS, together with the Principal Secretary for Justice, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Hon. Judith Pareno, inspected the Likoni Children's Remand Home to assess progress on previously identified concerns. The visit noted significant improvements, reaffirming the Government's commitment to strengthening child justice and safeguarding the rights and welfare of children.

The engagements reinforced the importance of a justice system that works as one, while respecting the distinct mandates of each institution, to ensure that every child who comes into contact with the law receives timely, appropriate and protective services.



PS REAFFIRMS KENYA'S COMMITMENT TO ENDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

| Reflections from the National Desk |



The fight against human trafficking requires vigilance, strong institutions and a coordinated response that puts the rights and dignity of survivors at the centre.

That commitment was reaffirmed by the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, who joined stakeholders in Cheptais, Bungoma County, to commemorate the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2026, held under the global theme, "Trapped Behind the Scam."

The commemoration provided an opportunity to reflect on the evolving nature of human trafficking and the need to strengthen the systems that prevent exploitation and protect those at risk. The Principal Secretary reaffirmed the importance of advancing

the four pillars of the national response: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships.

She emphasized that effective action must be supported by stronger institutions and closer collaboration among government agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and communities. Such partnerships are critical to identifying vulnerabilities early, protecting victims and ensuring that those responsible for exploitation are brought to justice.

The Principal Secretary further underscored the need for a survivor-centred response, one that protects the rights and dignity of every victim while ensuring access to appropriate support and protection.

For the State Department for Children Services, the fight against trafficking is closely linked to the broader responsibility of safeguarding children and other vulnerable persons from exploitation. The engagement in Cheptais therefore reaffirmed the State Department's commitment to working with partners and communities to strengthen protection systems and prevent children from falling victim to trafficking.

The message from Cheptais was unequivocal: ending human trafficking requires collective responsibility and sustained action. Kenya must continue strengthening its institutions, deepening partnerships and ensuring that every child is safe, protected and free from exploitation.



BRINGING CHILD JUSTICE INTO SHARPER FOCUS IN BUNGOMA

| Reflections from the National Desk |



A child-responsive justice system depends on strong coordination between the institutions responsible for protecting children and delivering justice. This commitment took centre stage during the working visit of the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Hon. Justice Martha Koome, to Bungoma County, accompanied by the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o.

The programme began with a courtesy call on the Governor of Bungoma County, H.E. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka, EBS, CBS, EGH, followed by engagements with justice sector stakeholders on improving service delivery and strengthening coordination within the administration of justice.

At the Bungoma County Children's Office, the Principal Secretary engaged the Regional Coordinator, Ms. Esther Wasige, County Coordinator, Mr. Maingi Musee, and Children Officers on service delivery, operational priorities and challenges affecting child

protection. She subsequently participated in the Court Users Committee meeting chaired by the Chief Justice.

A key focus of the engagements was the need for timely justice for children. The Chief Justice reaffirmed the Judiciary's commitment to prioritizing children's matters before the courts, recognizing that timely determination of cases is essential to protecting children's rights and best interests.

The visit also resulted in several key resolutions aimed at strengthening child protection, addressing emerging vulnerabilities and enhancing collaboration between the Bungoma County Government and the State Department for Children Services.

The engagements underscored the importance of bringing justice, protection and social support systems closer together so that children can access timely, coordinated and responsive services.



TAKING CHILD PROTECTION OVERSIGHT TO THE FRONTLINE

| Reflections from the National Desk |



Strong child protection systems depend not only on sound policies, but also on regular oversight of the institutions entrusted with putting those policies into practice. In this spirit, the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, undertook a spot check of key child protection institutions across Busia and Kakamega Counties, accompanied by the Regional Coordinator for the Western Region, Madam Esther Wasige.

The visit began in Busia with a courtesy call to the Office of the County Commissioner,

followed by an engagement with Children Officers at the Busia County Children's Office on service delivery and ongoing child protection interventions. The Principal Secretary also inspected the Child Protection Unit at the Busia County Police Headquarters, focusing on its role in safeguarding children in contact with the law.

In Kakamega, the Principal Secretary inspected the Kakamega Children's Rehabilitation School before paying a courtesy call to the Office of the County Commissioner. The visit concluded at the Kakamega

Children's Remand Home, where she inspected service delivery and the care provided to children within the institution, including their overall wellbeing.

The field engagement underscored the importance of regular monitoring, institutional support and continued engagement with frontline officers and child protection institutions. Such oversight remains central to strengthening service delivery and ensuring that children within the protection system receive the care and support they require.



STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER BETTER OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

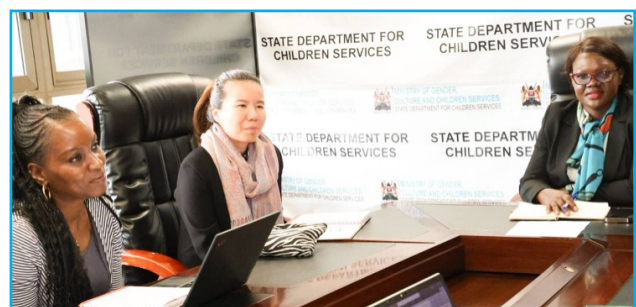
| Reflections from the National Desk |

Protecting children and strengthening the systems that support them requires sustained collaboration between Government and partners. In this spirit, the State Department for Children Services is deepening its engagement with Save the Children to advance shared priorities for children and families across Kenya.

The Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, hosted the Country Director of Save the Children, Ms. Pornpun Jib Rabilossaporn, and her delegation for discussions on strengthening collaboration between the two institutions.

The engagement focused on priority areas including child protection and participation, positive parenting, environmental sustainability, and stronger child protection systems. The discussions also emphasized the importance of aligning the proposed partnership with Government priorities and ensuring that interventions translate into meaningful and sustainable outcomes for children and families.

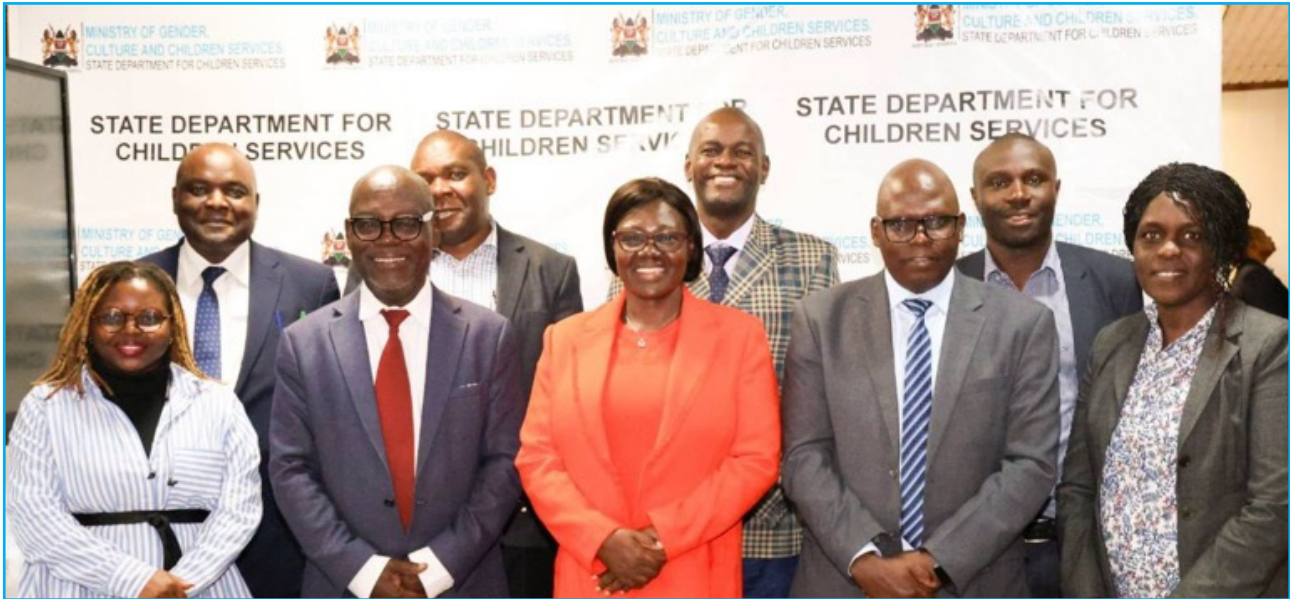
The engagement reaffirmed a shared commitment to strengthening child protection systems and advancing sustainable interventions that enable children to grow up safe, supported and able to thrive.



“Protecting children and strengthening the systems that support them requires sustained collaboration between Government and partners.”

TAKING CHILD PROTECTION TO THE HOUSEHOLD

| Reflections from the National Desk |



For child protection to be effective, support must reach children where they live, not only where services are delivered. This was the focus of discussions between the State Department for Children Services and World Vision Kenya on strengthening collaboration to scale up the Household Cluster Implementation Approach.

Led by Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, the State Department hosted World Vision Kenya to explore how the approach can complement existing child protection systems by bringing community-level vigilance and response closer to individual households.

The Household Cluster Approach organizes communities into small, manageable units where child protection needs can be identified early and addressed before risks escalate. Through Child Protection Promoters, the model seeks to identify and support vulnerable and often invisible children, including children with disabilities, orphans and children living in extreme poverty.

The approach is aligned with Kenya's Village Administration and Nyumba Kumi structures, creating a platform for continuous monitoring of children's wellbeing, early identification of protection concerns and timely intervention.

For the Principal Secretary, the model offers a practical way of extending child protection services to the household level and strengthening the Government's efforts to ensure that children are reached within their own communities.

At its heart is a simple ambition: that no child should remain unseen, unprotected or unsupported simply because their vulnerability is hidden from formal systems. The discussions therefore marked an important step towards strengthening community-based child protection and building systems capable of identifying and responding to children's needs closer to home.

"No child should remain unseen, unprotected or unsupported simply because their vulnerability is hidden from formal systems."

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF A GREENER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

| Reflections from the National Desk |



Environmental conservation is increasingly part of the conversation about the kind of future children will inherit. This was at the heart of discussions between the State Department for Children Services and the Green Generation Initiative (GGI), as both sides explored opportunities to link environmental action with child wellbeing.

Representing the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, the Head of Advocacy, Partnerships and Compliance at the State Department for Children Services, Mr. Samuel Ochieng, received a delegation from GGI led by its Founder, Ms. Elizabeth Wathuti, for discussions on potential areas of collaboration.

The engagement focused on supporting the Presidential tree-growing initiative, environmental restoration and strengthening the role of children in advancing sustainable development. GGI shared its experience in greening schools and nurturing

environmental stewardship among young people, highlighting the potential of children and schools as important partners in building a culture of conservation.

For the State Department, the discussions reflected a broader commitment to partnerships that advance both environmental conservation and the rights and wellbeing of children.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to develop a structured framework for collaboration, including the necessary partnership instruments and a coordination mechanism to guide implementation.

The proposed partnership points to a simple but important idea: protecting the environment is also about protecting the future in which today's children will grow, learn and thrive.



"Protecting the environment is also about protecting the future in which today's children will grow, learn and thrive."

FREEDOM FUND PARTNERSHIP MOVES FROM DISCUSSION TO ACTION

| Reflections from the National Desk |

Following an earlier courtesy call by the Freedom Fund to the Principal Secretary for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, the State Department for Children Services held a follow-up technical meeting to advance discussions on the proposed partnership.

The engagement brought together Maureen Karanja and Job Manani from the Freedom Fund and a State Department team led by the Head of Advocacy, Partnerships and Compliance, Mr. Samuel Ochieng. Discussions focused on key technical areas of the proposed collaboration and culminated in agreed action points to guide the partnership forward.

The engagement reaffirmed the importance of strategic partnerships in strengthening child protection systems and advancing collective efforts to ensure that every child is safe and protected.



“The engagement reaffirmed the importance of strategic partnerships in strengthening child protection systems.”

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ADVANCES REVIEW OF CHILDCARE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

| *Reflections from the National Desk* |



The National Council for Children's Services convened a Technical Working Group on 12th and 13th August 2026 to undertake a comprehensive review of the legal and policy framework governing childcare for children aged 0 - 47 months.

Stakeholders examined existing provisions and identified gaps relating to the definition, registration and licensing of childcare facilities, quality standards, financing, and the respective roles of national and county governments.

Discussions further considered the regulation of different childcare models, including home-based care, as well as the need for

stronger coordination, monitoring, oversight and sustainable financing mechanisms.

Findings from the review will inform proposals for a more coherent and enforceable national and county childcare regulatory framework, building on existing county initiatives and guided by the National Care Policy (2022 - 2032) and Kenya Children Policy.

Ultimately, the process seeks to strengthen the quality, safety and accessibility of childcare services and ensure that young children receive appropriate care and support during their critical early years.

"Ultimately, the process seeks to strengthen the quality, safety and accessibility of childcare services and ensure that young children receive appropriate care and support during their critical early years."

STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

| A Field Reflection from Nairobi County |

| Contributed by the Njiru Sub-County Children's Office |

A new Child Protection Unit has been launched at Obama Police Station in Njiru Sub-County, strengthening the local response to child protection concerns and safeguarding children who come into contact with the law.

The milestone was made possible through the support of MX4, whose contribution reflects the importance of partnerships in strengthening child protection services at the community level.



MACHAKOS CHILDREN'S OFFICERS STRENGTHEN TEAMWORK THROUGH STAFF WELLNESS ACTIVITY

| A Field Reflection from Machakos County, Eastern Region |

| Contributed by the Machakos County Children's Office |

Machakos County Children's Officers and staff undertook a team building and staff welfare activity in Mombasa and its environs from 11th to 14th August 2026, supported through the Machakos County Staff Welfare Kitty.

The activity provided an opportunity for officers to strengthen teamwork, build interpersonal relationships and unwind away from the usual work environment. During their stay at Sunset Paradise Villas in Shanzu, the team visited Serena Beach, Wild Waters, Mamburi Sand Dunes and Mombasa Town, while taking part in recreational activities including swimming and quad biking.

The activity contributed to stronger staff interaction, cohesion and morale, highlighting the value of staff welfare initiatives in fostering a motivated and collaborative team.





CPA Carren Ageng'o
Principal Secretary
State Department for Children Services

Share your story

We are always looking for inspiring stories, reflections, and field reports from across the country. If you have a contribution for the next issue of Children Services Monthly, email us at sdcs.newsletter@gmail.com and be part of the conversation advancing child protection in Kenya.

A heartfelt thank you to all our contributors whose time, insights, and on the ground experiences made this edition possible.

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