



MINISTRY OF GENDER, CULTURE AND CHILDREN SERVICES
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN SERVICES



CHILDREN SERVICES WEEKLY - ISSUE 12

Issue 12 highlights nationwide child protection efforts, from multi-agency CCI compliance monitoring in Kisii to strengthening transitions for care leavers through Supported Independent Living. We feature Kangundo's high-impact community forums, the launch of the Kenya Integrated ECD Policy stakeholder engagement meeting, collaboration with the DCI's Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, and the first Kenya Children Assembly sitting in Ikutha. These stories reflect our shared commitment to safeguarding children, building stronger families, and fostering inclusive, safe communities.

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Strengthening Partnerships to Protect Children and Combat Human Trafficking

The Principal Secretary for the State Department for Children Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o, hosted officers from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) for a high-level courtesy call. The DCI delegation was led by Madam Mueni Mutisya, Officer in Charge of the Anti-Human Trafficking and Child Protection Unit.



DCI's Anti-Human Trafficking and Child Protection Unit team, led by Madam Mueni Mutisya, in discussions on strengthening child protection and anti-human trafficking efforts.

The meeting focused on enhancing inter-agency collaboration to address two (2) critical priorities, strengthening child protection systems and combating human trafficking in all its forms. Both institutions committed to deepening their partnership through coordinated policy development, intelligence sharing, and nationwide public awareness campaigns. These combined efforts aim to prevent exploitation, support

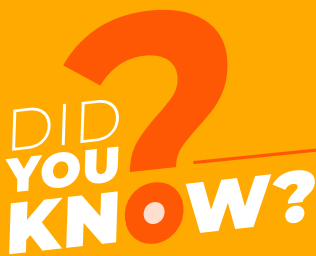
survivors, and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

Participants reaffirmed the need for survivor centered responses that link psychosocial support, legal aid, and safe shelter to investigative and prosecutorial processes. They also noted that community awareness and timely reporting are essential to early intervention.

The renewed collaboration underscores the shared responsibility of government agencies to safeguard the rights and dignity of children and other vulnerable groups. It also reflects the State Department's commitment to working closely with law enforcement to build a safer and more protective environment for all.



PS CPA Carren Ageng'o with the DCI team during a courtesy call to discuss joint strategies for protecting children and combating human trafficking.



There are over 400 children officers across Kenya working every day to safeguard the rights and welfare of children in their local communities.

Shaping Kenya's Future: Stakeholder Engagement on Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy

The State Department for Children Services, represented by Director Madam Mary Goretti Mogaka on behalf of Principal Secretary CPA Carren Ageng'o, officially opened a two (2) day stakeholder engagement meeting to deliberate on Cabinet feedback for the draft Kenya Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Policy 2024. The meeting was convened by the State Department for Children Services with the support of development partners, marking a significant step towards refining and finalizing a policy that will guarantee every child in Kenya access to quality and holistic early childhood development services.



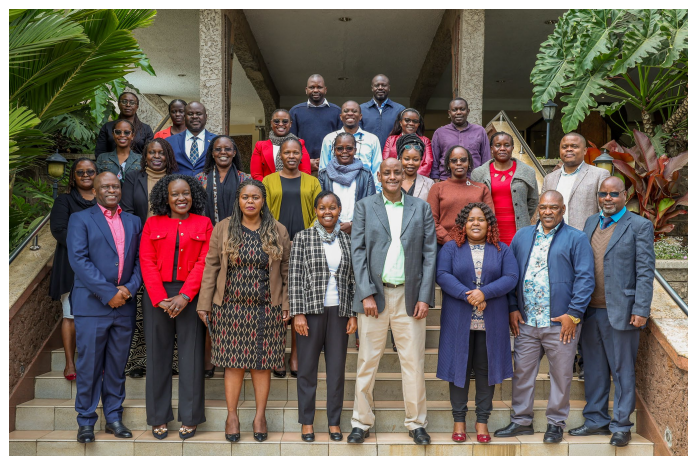
Director Mary Goretti Mogaka delivering remarks on behalf of PS CPA Carren Ageng'o during the Kenya Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy stakeholder engagement meeting.

The engagement brought together a broad coalition of stakeholders, including the ECD Network for Kenya, AMREF, UNICEF Kenya, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), and the National Council for Children Services. This diverse and multi-sectoral representation reflects the government's commitment to an inclusive approach

that addresses health, education, nutrition, and the overall well-being of children through a coordinated national framework.

By engaging experts from multiple sectors, the policy seeks to create an enabling environment where children can thrive from birth through their early years. Over the two (2) days, participants focused on integrating the Cabinet's recommendations, strengthening the policy's alignment with international best practices, and ensuring it meets Kenya's specific needs.

The ultimate goal was to present a robust, inclusive, and actionable policy that would serve as a foundation for lifelong learning, health, and development. Once finalized, the IECD Policy 2024 will guide the planning, financing, and delivery of early childhood development programmes across the country, ensuring that no child is left behind during the critical formative years of life.



Delegates pose for a group photo at the Kenya Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy stakeholder engagement meeting, marking a united step toward holistic child development in Kenya.

Kisii CCIs Under Spotlight: Compliance Monitoring and Chiefs Trained on Child Protection

Submitted by Abdinoor Sheikh Mohamed, CEO NCCS

Over the past three (3) weeks, a multi-sectoral compliance monitoring team led by the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS) carried out rigorous inspections of Charitable Children's Institutions (CCIs) across Kisii County. This coordinated effort, involving compliance officials and local administrators, resulted in the closure of at least twelve (12) institutions found to be non-compliant with established standards of child welfare.



Chiefs in Kisii County pose for a group photo after completing a child protection training session held alongside the multi-agency CCI compliance monitoring exercise.

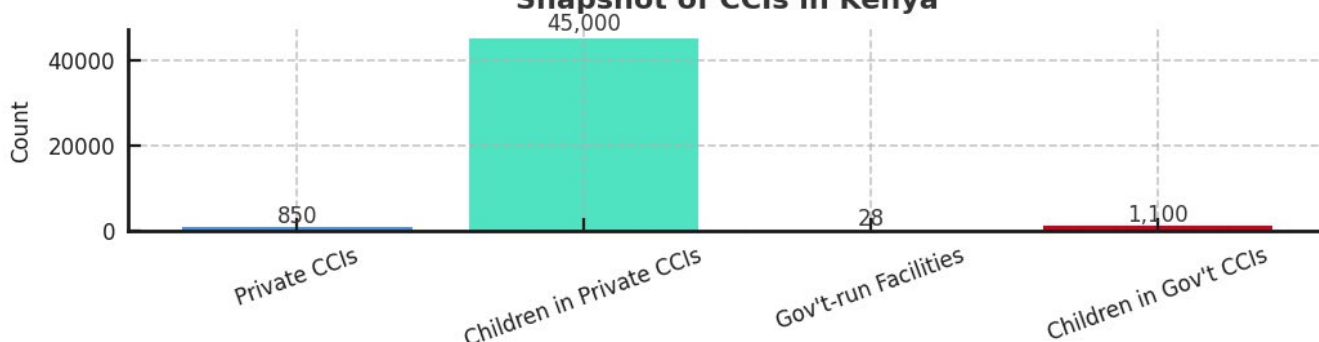
The operation underscored the NCCS's mandate to enforce the Children's Act by evaluating institutions based on their registration status, quality of record-keeping, presence of care plans, staffing qualifications, infrastructure adequacy, hygiene

levels, and adherence to child protection protocols. These assessments ensured that the welfare and safety of children remained the central measure of institutional performance.

In parallel with the compliance inspections, deputies from the NCCS facilitated a sensitization workshop for local chiefs. The training equipped these grassroots leaders with vital knowledge on child protection laws, conflict resolution, and mediation techniques. Given that chiefs often serve as first responders in matters involving children, this capacity-building initiative ensures they are well-prepared to safeguard children in their communities and to act promptly when rights are threatened.

These joint interventions combined regulatory enforcement with local leadership empowerment. They reflect a robust nationwide compliance strategy. The closures of non-compliant institutions and the targeted training of chiefs reaffirm the government's unwavering commitment to placing children's rights and protection at the forefront of institutional oversight and community governance practices.

Snapshot of CCIs in Kenya



There are an estimated 45,000 children living in over 845 charitable children's institutions (CCIs) – privately run residential institutions overseen by the State Department for Children Services (SDCS). In addition, there are an estimated 1,000–1,200 children living in 28 government-run institutions, including rehabilitation, remand, reception, and rescue centres

Strengthening Coordination and Team Spirit: Children Officers Meet for County Review in Machakos

Submitted by Machakos County Office, Directorate of Children's Services



Children Officers from nine sub-counties in Machakos County pose for a group photo during their quarterly review meeting at the Machakos Girls' Rescue Centre and Children's Remand Home on 7th August 2025.

On 7th August 2025, Machakos County Coordinator for Children's Services, Madam Rhoda Mwikya, convened the quarterly staff meeting for all Children Officers at the Machakos Girls' Rescue Centre and Children's Remand Home. Officers from nine sub-counties, Kalama, Kathiani, Mwala, Matungulu, Athi River, Kangundo, Masinga, Machakos, and Yatta, presented reports on key child protection cases, achievements, challenges, and 2025/2026 targets.

The Manager of the Machakos Girls' Rescue Centre and Children's Remand Home, Madam Damaris Kasyula, who oversees both institutions, shared updates on institutional population trends, recent successes, and solutions to ongoing challenges. In her keynote, Madam Mwikya urged officers to document their work and share impact stories through the State Department's weekly, noting this helps raise visibility and attract partnerships. Kangundo Sub-County Children's Officer, Mr. William Omondi Ochieng, reinforced the value of showcasing achievements to inspire trust and collaboration.

Madam Mwikya also stressed accurate record-keeping on the National Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS) and guided officers on the Presidential Secondary School Bursary Programme (PSSB). Plans for the new financial year were outlined, focusing on strengthening countywide child protection services.

The meeting fostered open dialogue, peer learning, and camaraderie, reinforcing a collective commitment to protect children. It concluded with a reminder that behind every statistic is a child's story, and behind every officer is a duty to serve with integrity, compassion, and unity.

Three Forums, One Mission: Kangundo Children's Office Mobilises Communities for Child Protection

Submitted by Kangundo Sub-County Office, Directorate of Children's Services

Between 24th July and 6th August 2025, the Kangundo Sub-County Children's Office, led by Sub-County Children's Officer Mr. William Omondi Ochieng, convened three (3) high-impact community sensitisation forums in Mulingana, Mbilini, and Isinga Sub-Locations. These engagements brought together youth, local leaders, and stakeholders to strengthen child safeguarding, community safety, and social responsibility.

The first session in Mulingana, co-facilitated by Children's Officer Mr. Neville Musima, targeted young people—both vulnerable to exploitation and vital to shaping safer communities. With support from Social Development Officer Mr. Mark Maritim, Youth Officer, local chiefs, county officials, and the National Police Service, discussions addressed neglect, defilement, and the balance between being protectors or perpetrators. Participants reviewed key provisions of the Children Act, No. 29 of 2022, including Sections 8 and 11, parental responsibilities under Part III, and the Sexual Offences Act, No. 3 of 2006.



Leaders follow discussions on child protection laws during the Mulingana community sensitisation forum led by the Kangundo Sub-County Children's Office.

The second forum in Isinga, with Social Development Officer Mr. Dennis Mwirigi, engaged

local leaders on security, administration, and self-help group registration. With school holidays approaching, emphasis was placed on preventing juvenile delinquency. Topics included parental obligations, child rights, and online child sexual exploitation, alongside a call to use national reporting channels like Child Helpline 116 and the Fichua kwa DCI hotline.



Local leaders engage in an interactive discussion on community safety and child safeguarding during the Mbilini sensitisation forum.

The third forum in Isinga reinforced these messages, adding the services of the National Legal Aid Service (NLAS) to empower citizens in seeking justice. Mr. Ochieng reminded participants that “child protection does not begin in the corridors of institutions, but in the homes, hearts, and hands of ordinary citizens.” The event closed with the commissioning of a security fence for the Assistant Chief's office, symbolising joint commitment to safe, functional community spaces.

Across all forums, strong youth participation reflected growing awareness and the promise of change, reaffirming the Kangundo Office's resolve to work hand-in-hand with communities to protect, hear, and value every child.

Ikutha Hosts First Sitting of the Kenya Children Assembly

Submitted by Ikutha Sub-County Office, Directorate of Children's Services

On 1st August 2025, Ikutha Sub-County in Kitui South Constituency, Kitui County, proudly hosted its first sitting of the Kenya Children Assembly (KCA). The session provided a vital platform for elected child delegates to discuss key issues affecting them and present their concerns to the KCA Secretariat for action.



KCA Kitui members arrive for their first sitting in Ikutha.

The event was graced by the Assistant County Commissioner for Ikutha Sub-County, the Director of Education for Ikutha Sub-County, the Sub-County Children's Officer, the Senior Chief of Ikutha Location, representatives from the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) who served as the main event supporter, the Kitui South Probation Officer, and the Children Officer for Kitui South, who also served as co-facilitator.

Children delegates were well guided through the deliberations, ensuring that discussions remained constructive and solutions oriented. Several issues were addressed on the spot by the Secretariat, while the remaining matters were noted for follow-up to ensure no concern was left unattended.



Children Officer guides discussions during the KCA Kitui session.

This inaugural sitting reflects a growing commitment to amplifying the voices of children in governance and empowering them to take an active role in shaping decisions that affect their lives and communities. The gathering marked not only a milestone for Ikutha Sub-County but also a strong statement of intent to ensure that every child's perspective counts in building a just and inclusive society.



KCA Kitui members actively engage on issues affecting children.

Strengthening Transitions for Care Leavers Through Supported Independent Living

Submitted by David Magogo - Alternative Family Care Department

On 18th July 2025, the Directorate of Children Services (DCS) held a stakeholder meeting at its Nairobi headquarters to engage childcare organisations on Supported Independent Living (SIL), a model designed to help young people transition from care to independent adulthood.

Defined in Kenya's Guidelines for Alternative Family Care of Children, SIL offers care arrangements where a young person lives in their own home, group home, hostel, or similar accommodation while receiving guidance from social workers and counsellors. The aim is to build life skills, confidence, and stability during the shift to independence.



Stakeholders discuss ways to strengthen Supported Independent Living for care leavers.

The meeting, led by Mr. David Magogo from the Alternative Family Care Department and supported by fellow DCS officials, brought together key partners including Child in Family Focus Kenya (CFFK), Kenya Society of Care Leavers (KESCA), Weza Care Solutions (WCS), and Stahili Foundation. Discussions explored Kenya's current SIL landscape, the structures guiding its implementation, and the challenges faced by care leavers.

Participants highlighted persistent gaps, particularly difficulties in accessing essential

identification documents, and inadequate financial and psychosocial support. Care leavers present at the meeting shared personal experiences, offering critical insights into the realities of post-care life.

Key resolutions included mapping all organisations offering SIL programmes to improve coordination and identify service gaps, as well as convening a joint session with the Registrar of Persons and the Department of Immigration to address documentation challenges. DCS also pledged to work with partners to prevent harmful practices experienced by some children in Charitable Children's Institutions from recurring in future care arrangements.

Looking ahead, DCS announced plans for a national stakeholder forum to consolidate strategies, share lessons, and strengthen policy frameworks for SIL. By working closely with partners, the government aims to ensure that no young person leaves care unprepared for life.

Supported Independent Living is not just a housing arrangement. It is a bridge to adulthood that upholds dignity, builds resilience, and protects the rights of care leavers as they step into their future.



Partners and DCS officials after a meeting on Supported Independent Living programmes.

A Conversation with Five (5) CCIs in Githunguri: Three (3) Years of Care Reform in Practice

Submitted by Githunguri Sub-County Office, Directorate of Children's Services

When the National Care Reform Strategy launched in 2022, many Charitable Children's Institutions (CCIs) feared closure. Three (3) years later, five (5) CCIs in Githunguri, namely Divine Mercy Hope, Hosanna, Gathaithi OVC Centre, Divine Intervention Missionary Ministries, and Mama Obed, are in Phase Three (3) of transition, moving from long-term residential care to strengthening families and communities.



Representatives from five CCIs in Githunguri share experiences and milestones from three years of care reform.

The first months involved listening, reading the strategy, and engaging in training by the Sub-County Children's Office, L4C partners, Weza Care Initiative, Child in Family Focus, and the NCCS. Gradually, skepticism gave way to understanding as stakeholders realised that children belong in families, not institutions.

"We didn't close, we shifted."

CCIs now run outreach programmes, education support, parenting workshops, skills training for caregivers and teen mothers, counselling, and foster care recruitment.

"The transition was emotional, but necessary."

Over ninety (90) children have been safely reintegrated into biological or extended families, foster care, adoption, or Supported Independent Living for those without family ties.

"We had to change how we think."

Staff moved from seeing themselves as caregivers in a building to becoming family and community-based child protection actors. Challenges included community resistance, complex reintegration cases, and funding shifts. These were addressed through partnerships, technical support from the Sub-County office, and peer learning forums.

"Peer learning has kept us going."

Regular meetings, exchange visits, and reflection sessions under the DCS Alternative Family Care Department helped maintain momentum.

"As Sub-County Children's Officer," said Madam June Wachira, "I have seen these CCIs grow into pillars of our local child protection system. Githunguri has hosted benchmarking visits from counties such as Embu and Kirinyaga, twenty-one (21) African Union member states, and delegates attending the Second (2nd) International Conference on Child Protection in Africa held in 2023. With the first three (3) years now complete, our priorities include expanding alternative family care, recruiting and training foster carers, strengthening parenting programmes, building partnerships for outreach, and enhancing Supported Independent Living. The journey continues, but we are no longer where we began."



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someone?

~ Caller

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confidential.

~ Responder

National Child Helpline Kenya

116

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Share Your Story

We're 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 Weekly, email us at sdews.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.

~ Children Services Weekly Editorial Team

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