



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



CHILDREN SERVICES WEEKLY VOL. 7

In this issue, Kenya shines on the global stage, from continental talks on childcare to international forums on child helplines. We highlight justice reforms, multi-agency efforts, and inspiring personal journeys in Tigania Central and beyond.

Every story is a step forward for children.

A publication of the
State Department for
Children Services

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KENYA AT THE FOREFRONT OF CONTINENTAL DIALOGUE ON CHILDCARE SYSTEMS

Kenya proudly joined fellow African nations at the Africa Conference on ChildCare, held from June 18–20, 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Co-hosted by the African Union Commission and the African Early Childhood Network (AfECN), the conference brought together policymakers, experts, and partners committed to building robust, inclusive, and equitable childcare systems across the continent.

With the theme “Building Partnerships for Accelerating Action Towards Quality and Inclusive Childcare,” the conference served as a timely platform to reflect on systemic gaps and identify actionable solutions that place children and families at the center of development.

A Message from the Principal Secretary

Speaking during the opening sessions, Principal Secretary CPA Carren Ageng'o, who led the Kenyan delegation, reaffirmed Kenya's unwavering commitment to strengthening childcare systems, especially in the early years of a child's life.

“As conversations shift from commitment to action, I am proud to reaffirm Kenya's determination to build a future where every child receives quality care, protection, and the opportunity to thrive starting from the earliest years,” said the PS.

She emphasized that childcare is not only a family matter, but a continental priority that directly

impacts education, gender equality, workforce participation, and national development.

“When we invest in childcare, we invest in the future of our continent,” she added.

Key Issues and Strategic Focus

Over the three days, delegates explored critical themes including early learning, childcare financing, workforce development, and multi-sector partnerships. Discussions highlighted the need for holistic policies that empower caregivers, protect children, and create opportunities for social and economic inclusion.

For Kenya, the conference offered a unique space to showcase progress made, share lessons learned, and identify partnership opportunities that can scale up childcare access, quality, and accountability.

Kenya's Commitment to Child-First Development

Kenya continues to champion child-centered planning and budgeting, ensuring that childcare is prioritized in public policy and service delivery. The delegation expressed gratitude to the African Union, AfECN, and all partners for facilitating a meaningful dialogue that centers children in Africa's future.

“We stand for children, plan for children, and act for children,” the PS concluded.



KENYA JOINS GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON CHILD HELPLINE RESPONSE AT INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION IN ZAMBIA

From June 24–26, 2025, Kenya proudly participated in the 11th International Consultation of Child Helplines held in Livingstone, Zambia. The event brought together child protection stakeholders from across the globe under the theme of strengthening accessibility to child reporting mechanisms during emergencies.

Leading the Kenyan delegation, PS CPA Carren Ageng'o joined representatives from various countries to engage in meaningful dialogue on improving helpline services for children. The forum was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Zambia in partnership with UN Zambia, Child Helpline International, Lifeline Childline, Childline Kenya, Plan International, and other development partners.

Focus Areas and Emerging Priorities

Discussions focused on key thematic areas affecting children today, including mental health response, violence prevention, and digital safety. Delegates acknowledged the growing urgency to scale up helpline services as frontline tools in addressing emerging and ongoing threats to children's wellbeing.

One of the most striking takeaways from the event was the shared understanding that helplines are not just reporting channels, they are lifelines for children in distress, and must be supported with the

right tools, training, and partnerships.

Collective Commitments and The Way Forward

In a unified show of commitment, participating countries agreed on several strategic action points to guide the future of child helpline systems across regions. These included:

- Enhancing the accessibility and reach of toll-free child helplines, supported by innovative technology;
- Utilizing real-time helpline data to inform local and national child protection policy;
- Fostering cross-sector partnerships to expand awareness, capacity, and response coordination;
- Addressing online child abuse through safe digital platforms, cross-border collaboration, and multi-agency frameworks.

Kenya's Position and Next Steps

Kenya reaffirmed its dedication to implementing these resolutions by strengthening its own helpline ecosystem. The State Department for Children Services remains committed to multi-sectoral coordination and collaborative partnerships that ensure every child's voice is heard and every call is met with timely, effective support.

As global threats to children evolve, platforms like this consultation play a crucial role in building resilience, accelerating innovation, and ensuring no child is left behind.



STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION: KANGUNDO SC-CAC HOLDS SECOND MULTI-SECTORAL MEETING

By William Omondi Ochieng – Kangundo



In a continued effort to bolster coordinated child protection efforts, the Kangundo Sub-County Children Advisory Committee (SC-CAC) convened its second official meeting of the year on 27th June 2025. The meeting followed the formal establishment of the committee on 21st March 2025, pursuant to Section 55 of the Children Act, No. 29 of 2022.

Chaired by the Deputy County Commissioner (currently represented by Assistant County Commissioner Reginah Wairimu Wanyahoro) and co-chaired by the Chief Magistrate of Kangundo Law Courts, the SC-CAC serves as a statutory, multi-sectoral platform designed to deliberate on issues concerning the welfare and rights of children at the sub-county level.

A Multi-Agency Approach to Safeguarding Children

The meeting brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders including representatives from the Judiciary, NGAOs, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Teachers Service Commission, Ministry of Education, National Police Service, Probation and Aftercare Service, Ministry of Health, Directorate of Social Development, and the Directorate of Children's Services under the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services. Faith-based leaders and other child-focused organizations were also in attendance.

Key discussions centered on identifying priority issues affecting children in Kangundo Sub-County, enhancing cross-agency collaboration, and review-

ing the effectiveness of current interventions. The session concluded with the adoption of actionable resolutions aimed at improving service delivery and strengthening the collective impact of child protection actors.

Reaffirming Commitment to Child Rights

Committee members emphasized their unified resolve to uphold the best interests of the child, both in practice and in policy. Speaking during the meeting, Secretary of the SC-CAC, William Omondi Ochieng, noted:

"Behind every case discussed, there is a child whose life depends on our resolve, our coordination, and our compassion. As duty bearers, we are bound not only by law but by conscience to act in their best interests."

Echoing this sentiment, Chairperson Reginah Wairimu Wanyahoro reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring that no child is left behind.

"Child protection is a shared responsibility that requires deliberate coordination between government agencies and the community. All interventions must be guided by law, dignity, and the principle of the best interests of the child," she stated.

Looking Ahead

The SC-CAC continues to evolve as a pivotal platform for collaboration, accountability, and action. With each session, Kangundo Sub-County strengthens its systems of care and protection, ensuring that children are not just safeguarded, but truly supported to thrive.

FROM ANXIETY TO ACHIEVEMENT: THE TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES IN TIGANIA CENTRAL

By Ruth Waitherero Kamau – Children's Officer, Tigania Central Sub-County

Title = a parent child talk on missing kids
description

I know

I know my mom's name

I know my dad's contact

I know my home address

I know my teacher's name

I know a stranger when I see him

I know how to be safe

Establishing a children's office for the first time in Tigania Central Sub-County was not just a professional milestone, it was a deeply personal journey of fear, resilience, and transformation. As the newly posted children's officer, I stepped into a community full of expectations and uncertainties. The role demanded more than just service delivery; it required courage to speak up in courtrooms and barazas, diplomacy to manage external influences, and above all, vision to center children in every local development conversation.

At the heart of the challenge was a single question: how do you build a child protection system from the ground up, one that is trusted, effective, and truly reflective of the needs of the children it serves?

A Breakthrough Moment: Engaging Children through Creativity

A turning point came in April 2025. Ahead of International Missing Children's Day, commemorated globally on May 25th, we mobilized assistant chiefs to help us engage children across the sub-county through creative expression. Children were invited to participate in drawing and poetry competitions, offering them a platform to reflect on safety, loss, and hope.

The response was overwhelming. Hundreds of children took part, pouring their emotions and

insights into their artwork and verses. The selection process was difficult but rewarding. The best submissions were compiled and submitted to national organizers in time for the competition.

Then came the proudest moment yet: a young boy from Mikinduri in Tigania Central won national recognition for his poem.

A Community Inspired

That win was more than a competition victory, it was a validation of Tigania Central's potential. It proved that with even limited resources, children's voices could be amplified, celebrated, and heard. The boy's family expressed deep gratitude. Community members rallied in support, and for the children's office, it was a pivotal affirmation that the work mattered.

It restored hope and strengthened resolve.

Looking Forward

From anxious beginnings to meaningful achievements, the journey of establishing children's services in Tigania Central continues, grounded in empathy, fueled by purpose, and uplifted by every child's success. What started as cautious steps is now a confident stride toward a future where every child is protected, celebrated, and empowered to thrive.



BREAKING BARRIERS AND LIFTING NATIONS: CHARLES WAITHERERO ELECTED TO KENYA SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND COUNCIL



Charles Waitherero, a dedicated Children's Officer in the Strategic Intervention for Child Protection in Emergencies Unit, continues to make strides not only in the field of child protection but also as a passionate advocate for disability inclusion in Kenya.

On 1st July 2025, Waitherero was elected as a Council Member of the Kenya Society for the Blind (KSB), a State Corporation established by an Act of Parliament to promote the welfare, education, training, and employment of the blind, and to support the prevention and alleviation of blindness. His election reflects his relentless commitment to improving the lives of persons with visual impairments across the country.

Championing Inclusion Through Sports

In addition to his work in child protection, Waitherero is the current President of the Kenya Sports Association for the Visually Impaired (KESAVI), the national body responsible for developing, promoting, and governing sports activities for blind and visually impaired persons in Kenya. Under his leadership, KESAVI has seen remarkable progress and empowerment of athletes with disabilities.

His recent accomplishments include:

- October 2024 – As Head of Delegation for the Kenya Blind Powerlifters team at the IBSA Powerlifting and Bench Press World Championship in Astana, Kazakhstan, Waitherero led Team Kenya to its first-ever international appearance, returning home with 12 medals (5 silver, 7 bronze).
- February 2025 – Serving as Team Manager and Head of Delegation, he guided the Kenya Para Athletics Team during the 16th Fazza Dubai World Para Athletics Grand Prix, where the team won 16 medals (9 gold, 1 silver, 6 bronze).
- May 2025 – Once again leading Team Kenya Blind Powerlifters at the IBSA Powerlifting and Bench Press World Cup in Almaty, Kazakhstan, his delegation made history, collecting an impressive 35 medals (5 gold, 17 silver, 13 bronze).

A Legacy of Empowerment

Waitherero's work exemplifies the power of inclusive leadership. His dual role in advancing child protection and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities makes him a trailblazer in public service. Through sports and policy engagement, he is not only lifting weights but lifting lives demonstrating what true empowerment looks like.

As he steps into his new role at the Kenya Society for the Blind, there is no doubt that his influence will continue to grow, strengthening systems, inspiring youth, and opening doors for the next generation of leaders with disabilities.

BUILDING JUSTICE WITH CARE: CUCs TRAINED ON CHILD JUSTICE AND SGBV RESPONSE

By Anne Thiongo, Deputy Director, Headquarters

In a concerted effort to strengthen access to justice for children and survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), the National Council on the Administration of Justice (NCAJ) held a one-day training and sensitization session for Court Users Committees (CUCs) on 20th June 2025 at Silver Springs Hotel, Nairobi.

The session, supported by Cradle and Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO), brought together members of four Nairobi-based CUCs — Dagoretti, Embakasi, Milimani, and Kibera — for intensive training on handling child justice and SGBV matters through a rights-based, survivor-centered approach.

Understanding the Legal Framework and Shared Responsibility

As one of the facilitators, I led a session on access to justice in SGBV cases, guiding participants through the existing normative legal framework and emphasizing the crucial role of each justice sector actor in both prevention and response. We explored victim-centered interventions, justice pathways, and policy innovations that Kenya has adopted in collaboration with partners.

One of the highlights of the session was a detailed discussion on the Sexual Offences Amendment Bill, currently under review to incorporate critical emerging issues including femicide, stalking, intimate partner violence, and voyeurism. This was linked to the national Sexual Offenders Register and the broader legal consequences for offenders.

Multi-Agency Contributions: Police and Forensic Perspectives

The National Police Service provided critical insight into the processes of investigation, arrest, and pre-trial procedures for both child justice and SGBV cases, with a strong emphasis on protecting the rights of survivors and minimizing retraumatization. Adding a scientific dimension to the discussions, a forensic expert facilitated a session on how forensic methods can enhance justice for children and survivors. This included best practices in evidence handling, documentation, and collaboration between institutions.

Child-Friendly Justice: Making Systems Work for Survivors




The day concluded with a powerful session on how courts can and should create friendly, responsive environments for children and SGBV survivors. This covered courtroom procedures, infrastructure considerations, and trauma-informed practices aimed at preserving dignity and trust in the justice system.

This sensitization was more than a training, it was a reaffirmation of Kenya's commitment to building a justice system that listens, protects, and responds to the needs of the most vulnerable. Through multi-agency collaboration, legal reform, and community engagement, we move closer to ensuring that justice is not just delivered, but delivered with care.

Got a story to share?

We're always looking for inspiring stories, reports, or reflections! Send your contributions to sdcws.newsletter@gmail.com and be part of the next issue of Children Services Weekly.

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