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## MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN  
WELFARE SERVICES



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State Department for  
Children Welfare Services

## WELFARE WEEKLY - VOL. 2

In this week's issue, we shine a spotlight on the Department's continued efforts to safeguard and promote the rights and well-being of children across the country. From high-level engagements to inter-agency collaboration, we highlight key activities and milestones aimed at strengthening child protection systems and ensuring no child is left behind.

Stay informed, stay engaged—because every child matters.

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## Children's Participation in the Government of Kenya's FY 2025/2026 Budget Process

By Community Child Support Department

Every year, the Government of Kenya prepares a national budget to allocate resources for programs that support citizens' well-being. In May 2025, Members of Parliament (MPs) visited 11 counties to collect public views for the upcoming 2025/2026 Financial Year. For the first time, children were formally engaged in this exercise—recognizing them as both rights holders and valued members of the public.

To support their participation, a child-friendly budget template was developed. Children could tick up to ten priority areas they believed should be funded in their communities, and add any other essential concerns.

This initiative is part of the lead-up to the **Day of the African Child (DAC)**, celebrated under the 2025 theme: **"Planning and Budgeting for Children's Rights."** It reflects Section 28(3) of the Children Act (Cap 141), which guarantees children the right to express their views in all matters affecting them.

The forums were facilitated by Sub-County Children Officers and coordinated at the county level, following a structured process:

- Selection of schools and random sampling of children,
- Independent data collection,
- Centralized analysis to ensure integrity.



Child delegates from Wajir pose outside the forum venue after their budget presentations.

## Children Presenting to Parliament

On 15th and 16th May 2025, child delegates from each county presented their recommendations to MPs. Each county was represented by six children—two each from primary, junior secondary, and secondary levels (one boy and one girl per level). County Coordinators held prep sessions to review and refine the children's reports.

Inclusive participation was prioritized, with children with disabilities and those from marginalized backgrounds actively involved. The process aimed to reflect authentic children's voices, free from adult influence.

Children's input will now be compiled into a National Children's Budget Report, which will be presented to policymakers.

### Next Steps:

1. Consolidation of county reports into a national report.
2. Presentation to the Principal Secretary.
3. Submission to the National Assembly.
4. Advocacy with the Budget and Appropriations Committee.
5. Ongoing media engagement on child-responsive budgeting.
6. Post-budget feedback to child participants.

This initiative sets a strong precedent for child-inclusive governance and brings Kenya closer to realizing a truly responsive national budget—one that reflects the voices and needs of its youngest citizens.



Children from Uasin Gishu proudly stand outside the venue post-presentation.



## Inaugural Social Work Conference Held Ahead of International Missing Children's Day

By Mugure Esther, Assistant Director

The State Department for Children Welfare Services, in partnership with the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), held the Inaugural Social Work Conference as a lead-up to International Missing Children's Day (IMCD), marked annually on 25th May.

Themed **“Preventing Child Disappearance Through Social Work Practice and Research,”** the event spotlighted the critical role of social work and academic collaboration in addressing child disappearances.

CPA Carren Ageng'o, Principal Secretary in the State Department, officially opened the conference. In her remarks, she stressed the urgency of:

- Strengthening child case tracking systems,
- Promoting innovation and technology,
- Deepening academic engagement.

Rev. Prof. Stephen Mbugua Ngari, CUEA Vice Chancellor, welcomed participants and reiterated the university's commitment to child protection research and training.

Ms. Athena from the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) opened the sessions with a presentation on the causes and responses to missing children cases. Keynote speakers Enricah Ndulo and Jeniffer Kaberi explored:

- Community-led approaches to prevention,
  - Leveraging AI and tech in tracing efforts.
- These talks were followed by two panel discussions—one on technology's role in tracing and reunification, and the other on academia's contribution to prevention and policy.

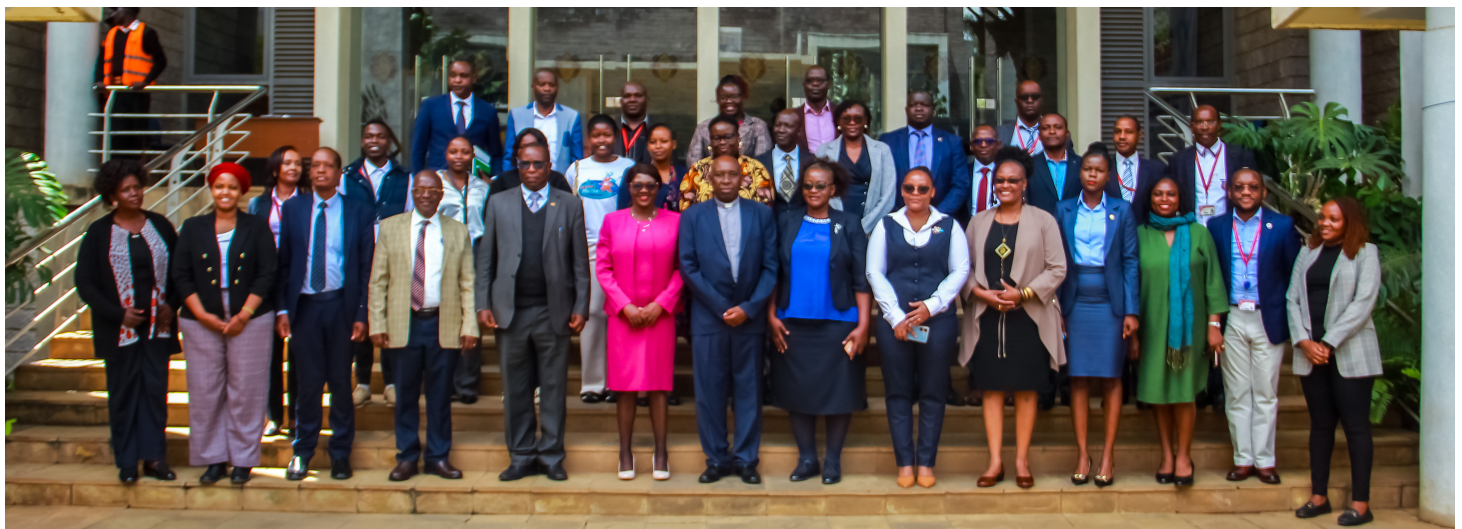
### Key Resolutions:

1. Centralized Data: A unified, government-managed case tracking system—possibly via eCitizen—was recommended.
2. Guideline Implementation: National guidelines need wider dissemination and consistent application.
3. Academic Collaboration: Universities should engage more in research, curriculum design, and training.
4. Community Participation: Improved reporting systems and inclusion of children's voices were emphasized.
5. Ethical Social Media Use: Ensure child protection when using social media to trace cases.
6. Annual Conference: Institutionalize the event as a national platform for research and policy dialogue.

### Conclusion

The event concluded with a strong message: solutions exist, but they must be connected, consistent, and grounded in children's realities.

**“When a child goes missing, we lose more than a name—we lose safety, trust, and hope. That is a loss too great to ignore. Because even one missing child is one too many.”**



## A visit from the NCAJ Standing Committee

The National Council on the Administration of Justice (NCAJ) Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice for Children in Kenya paid a landmark courtesy call to the Principal Secretary for Children Welfare Services, CPA Carren Ageng'o.

At the heart of this engagement was a shared understanding that the child must no longer be a casualty of systemic gaps or institutional indifference. PS Ageng'o, with unwavering commitment, laid bare a blueprint of transformation, one that sought not only to widen access to justice for children but to dignify the process through systemic reform.

The Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice for Children in Kenya has become a model of impact and coordination. Its policy outputs including Throughcare and Aftercare Procedures, SOPs for Child Protection Units, Practice Directions for Children Courts, and the Strategy on Justice for Children are reshaping how child justice is understood and delivered in Kenya. These were ceremonially handed over to PS Ageng'o, symbolizing the transition from policy to implementation.

The committee's requests were clear and timely: amplify the role of the Counter Trafficking in Persons Secretariat, formalize Child Protection Volunteers in law, engage Civil Society through the Children Agenda Forum, resource CBOs through the Child Welfare Fund, and above all, implement the Child Justice Strategy as a national priority.



## International Day of the Boy Child – May 16th, 2025

Theme: **“Passion and Drive: Igniting the Fire Within the Boy Child”**

The International Day of the Boy Child is a timely reminder of the unique yet often overlooked challenges boys face. This year's theme, “Passion and Drive: Igniting the Fire Within the Boy Child,” calls on all of us—families, educators, leaders, and communities—to support boys in unlocking their full potential.

While much progress has been made in addressing gender disparities, the boy child is increasingly becoming the forgotten child. Many boys struggle silently under the weight of harmful gender norms that discourage emotional expression, vulnerability, and open communication. If unaddressed, these pressures may lead to emotional disconnect, harmful behaviors, and isolation.



## **A Call to Action**

Creating nurturing spaces for boys requires:

- Emotional intelligence education in the school curriculum
- Positive male role models to mentor and guide boys
- Open conversations about mental health, respectful relationships, and empathy
- Challenging outdated stereotypes that discourage boys from expressing themselves

## **Raising Boys to Be Responsible Men**

Empowering boys does not mean neglecting the girl child. It's about building equity—giving every child the tools to thrive. A supported boy becomes a responsible man: one who leads with empathy, treats others with respect, and contributes positively to society.

## **Let's Ignite the Fire Within**

As we mark this special day, let's commit to seeing, hearing, and supporting the boy child. Together, we can ignite their inner drive and passion—lighting the way to a future where they grow into balanced, resilient, and compassionate individuals.



fig: Illustrative image generated using AI. This image is for visual representation only and does not depict real individuals.

### **BACKGROUND**

- The state department of Children Welfare Services is domiciled in the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. The Ministry of Labour has three State Departments, that is, Labour and Skills Development, Social Protection & Senior Citizen Affairs & Children Welfare Services.
- The Directorate draws its mandate from Articles 27, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 and 53 of the Constitution of Kenya, the Children Act 2022, the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act, 2010 and the Executive Order No. 2 of 2023 that establishes the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.
- In 2021, Child Protection Service was gazetted as a Critical and Essential Services Provider. (Kenya Gazette Notice No. 59 of 12th April 2021).

### **VISION**

A society where children enjoy their rights responsibly

### **MISSION**

To safeguard the rights of all children in Kenya through effective implementation of relevant policies, coordination and partnerships for delivery of quality services.