

MACHAKOS COUNTY CHILDREN POLICY 2024



FOREWORD

This Policy demonstrates commitment by the Machakos County Government to spearhead multi- dimensional approaches and initiatives to address the challenges currently facing our children and optimize the numerous strengths and opportunities that children present. This Policy is therefore designed to scale up child protection and empowerment interventions. It is pleasing that among the many benchmark priorities set out in the new Policy are: alignment of the children programmes to Kenya Vision 2030 and its Medium Term Plans, the Constitution (2010) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2030); The identified policy objectives focus on children development, health and nutrition; education, creativity, patriotism and nation building, skills development and curbing drug use and substance abuse. The policy also provides the institutional coordination, communication, monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that identified policy objectives and measures are effectively implemented. It is important to emphasize that this Policy is envisioned for the children and children serving institutions and organizations, families and the community. This policy aims to ensure adequate protection, development and empowerment of children. Every stakeholder is encouraged by the Policy to take affirmative action for the children as a strategy of participation and empowerment while harnessing their potential.

Finally, success in the implementation of the Policy shall require a multi-faceted approach and support from all stakeholders in the children agenda. Machakos County government remains committed to all efforts directed at the realization of children protection, development and empowerment potential in line with the Constitution and all regional and international conventions and charters.

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I also wish to thank the staff from the public and private sectors for their contribution towards the development of this Policy.

Finally, I once again call upon all those who supported the policy formulation process, together with other new well-wishers, to commit more support in its implementation, monitoring, reviews and reporting of its impact.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AIDS	Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome
CPS	Child protection System
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
HIV	Human Immune-Deficiency Virus
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
KPHC	Kenya Population and Housing Census
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NCCS	National Council of Children Services
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

KEY POLICY DEFINITIONS

Child: Any person under the age of 18 years.

Child neglect: This is the failure to properly supervise, protect children from harm and provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers as much as feasible.

Child labour: Any economic exploitation or work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's development, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Child abuse: Involves acts of commission and omission, which result in harm to the child. The four types of abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Child protection: Is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect.

Child trafficking: A child is trafficked if moved within a country, or across borders, whether by force or not, with the purpose of exploiting the child.

Child friendly institutions: Requires that the environment and structures of institutions (children's court, waiting room for the courts, child protection units and desks in police stations etc.) be painted with bright colors, have cartoon drawings, and a room setting that has round table sitting arrangement, provision of a play area and other facilities that engage children in play and leisure. The facility should also provide privacy to enable children to give confidential information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Children Policy is an indicator of the Machakos County Government's continued commitment towards the promotion and protection of the rights of its children and also a roadmap of the steps the County Government intends to take towards making Machakos a child friendly county. This Machakos County Children Policy applies to all relevant stakeholders in Machakos county i.e. county departments, public sector, children serving organizations/institutions, private sector, NGOs, non-state actors, development partners and any other persons who deal with children matters.

This Policy categorizes the children aged below 18 years as stated below, while being cognizant of their unique diversity, expectations and opportunities: Male, female and intersex; educated, semi-educated, uneducated and children with special needs; rural, peri-urban and urban residents; in-school and out-of-school; children with disability; able-bodied and mentally challenged; orphans and vulnerable children.

The overall goal of this policy is to realize and safeguard the rights and welfare of the child in Machakos County. This Policy envisages a society where children are well protected and have an equal and responsible opportunity to realize their fullest potential in their aspirations, through hard work and honesty. This policy will guide the County Government of Machakos and all stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation of interventions and programmes targeting the children in Machakos County.

The objectives of this policy are:

- I. support child development, health, nutrition and wellbeing;
- II. support child education, enhance creativity, identify talent, support ICT and innovative development among children;
- III. mainstream children in social, economic and political initiatives, support transformative leadership, mentorship, participation and representation, support environment and sustainable development among children at all levels; and
- IV. Eradicate drugs and substance abuse, tackle crime, curb radicalization and violent extremism and support peace building among children.

In pursuing this policy goal, the following values will inform aspects of this policy and its implementation: patriotism; respect for diversity and ethical values.

The Machakos County department in charge of children in collaboration with other stakeholders will regularly monitor implementation of this policy. They will utilize annual reporting framework to report progress. An evaluation will also be conducted every 3 to 5 years to assess impact of the policy to children and wider society as per the county development plans.

Resources and support required for implementation of this policy will be financed by Machakos county government in partnership with NGOs, FBOs, children serving organizations, development partners, public and private sectors with the aim of building human and physical capabilities of children. Targeted steps will be undertaken to engage all relevant stakeholders with a view to strengthening their support and commitment to children especially in such areas as further education, advocacy, guidance and counselling and care. All funding sources and strategies will be required to balance between the short and long term goals.

The Machakos County Government will develop mechanisms using formal and informal channels, print and electronic media in communicating this policy to all relevant stakeholders. The policy will also be disseminated through awareness creation to children serving institutions and actors.

This policy will be reviewed when need arises to take into account emerging issues on children protection, empowerment, and sustainable development so as to remain relevant to the dynamics in political and socioeconomic environment and development priorities.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Many children in Machakos County face challenges in their homes, learning institutions and communities, the very settings that are supposed to offer a conducive environment for their growth and development. There are concerns on abortion vs right to life and safe deliveries including being born free of HIV. Many children have inadequate access to: food, shelter, health care and basic education. Other challenges include child labor, sexual violence, early marriages, orphans, child trafficking, exposure to and abuse through pornography, drugs and alcohol abuse, inadequate rehabilitation and correctional facilities.

According to Violence against Children in Kenya report among females, the larger proportion (54.9%) experienced their first incident between ages 16-17, 26.6% between ages 14-15 and 18.4% at age 13 or younger. Among females who experienced childhood sexual violence, more than three out of five (62.6%) experienced multiple incidents before age 18. Among males, the first incident occurred most commonly at age 12-17 (60.6%), followed by age 6-11 (32.3%), 2020.

According to a research done by NACADA and KIPPRA, 30% of school children are more likely to abuse drugs during school holidays, 22% on their way home from school, 21% during weekends and 20% during interschool competitions, 2020. According to UNICEF report in 2020 the number of children living with HIV in Kenya was 111,500. A KDHS research conducted by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) indicates that out of a total of 7 million, 1.82 million children (26 percent) are suffering from chronic malnutrition (stunting or low height-for-age), 2014.

Statista reports that in 2019, 10.1 million children attended primary school in Kenya. However, only 3.26 million children enrolled in secondary school the same year and only 509,000 Kenyan students attended college in 2019. More recent data is not available due to widespread school closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also the Kenya Comprehensive Poverty Analysis states that 1 million or 52% of children under 18 in Kenya are multidimensional poor, deprived of their fulfillment of between 3 and 7 basic needs and rights. 7 million or 42% of children under 18 live in monetarily poor households. Children comprise more

than half of the monetarily poor population (55%) and nearly half (48%) of the multidimensional poor population. Nearly 1 in 3 children live in households lacking the minimum of nationally agreed financial resources and are deprived of a minimum of 3 or more basic needs and services. 23% of children are multidimensionally poor even though they live in households that are not monetarily poor, indicating that there are issues with service accessibility, affordability and availability.

According to 2019 KPHC, there are 588,087 children in Machakos County (282,670 males and 275,417 females). Some of these children require special care and protection. Some are orphans who are cared for by family members but others are in charitable children institutions (CCIs), on the streets, or in child-headed households. Children are suffering from corporal punishment, child trafficking and sexual violence in schools, institutions, homes and on the streets.

Machakos County particularly faces the challenge of children facing sexual exploitation across the county and child labour being rampant in quarries and farms in the county. The problem of health related issues like HIV/AIDs, cancer, Covid-19 and other emerging issues like natural disasters has also led to an increase in child-headed households in the county as a result of the children having lost one or both parents to the pandemic.

According to Comprehensive Poverty Report 2020, Machakos County contributed to 36.4% to the total multidimensional child poverty under 18. Additionally the report shows that dimensions of deprivation for children under five years as follows: development (5%), health (4.0%), nutrition (24.9%), education (10.7%), water (21.1%), sanitation (19.6%) and housing (7.3%). The report also documents dimensions of deprivation for children aged 5 to 17 years as follows: nutrition (16.8%), education (5.0%), child protection (14.4%), information (14.3%), water (15.6%), sanitation (12.7%) and housing (21.3%).

There are 1885 reported cases of neglected children during the year 2020/2021 as recorded in Machakos Children's office. A survey conducted in 2020 by the Kenya Health Information System found that 3,964 girls under the age of 19 were pregnant in Machakos County which was linked to Covid 19 pandemic.

Children however are very resilient and tend to find ways to cope with hardships and given the proper care and protection they need, children overcome adversity to become active and productive members of the community.

Globally, children rights are enshrined in international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) to which the Republic of Kenya has assented.

The County Government of Machakos has to ensure a friendly environment for children, allocate resources and put in place systems and structures that offer preventive and responsive child services. The County government and stakeholders with the mandate to address children issues need to have a collaborative framework that seeks to enforce all the provisions of the existing laws and all the ambitions of the policies that relate to children rights; for example, a mapping and assessment of Machakos Children Protections System (CPS) and implementation of child related programs. This Children Policy is therefore an indicator of the Machakos County Government's continued commitment towards the promotion and protection of the rights of its children and also a roadmap of the steps the County Government intends to take towards making Machakos a child friendly county.

1.1 Rationale of Machakos County Children Policy

Although child protection is often associated with the department in charge of children affairs, an effective child protection system requires the coordinated efforts of various stakeholders. There are formal and non-formal child protection mechanisms. The formal mechanisms are driven by the County Government while the non-formal are more community-based where families, children and schools are often included. There are also inter-agency mechanisms driven by NGOs with intergovernmental or interstate agencies playing a major part.

The effectiveness of all these mechanisms is often hindered by the lack of a reference point to guide all actors. Poor linkages also cause problems during sector-specific budget allocations. Other county departments such as education, health among others find it difficult to allocate resources towards child protection, as their roles are not visible. Consequently, their collaboration is often based on goodwill. Therefore, well defined structural linkages which are supported by a policy are required.

Among non-state actors, initiatives are often weakened by unnecessary competition for scarce resources and visibility resulting into overlaps and duplication of efforts. These, in turn, lead to wastage of scarce resources and some initiatives may also not be consistent with county priorities. In this

environment, interstate agencies, the private sector and development partners are often not able to appropriately support child protection effort because their decisions may not be based on accurate information. These weaknesses and challenges are the rationale for establishing this policy. The purpose of the policy is to provide a foundation and shape for the child protection system for Machakos County government in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. This policy defines clearly the roles and responsibilities of Machakos county government and its partners as they jointly undertake activities to safeguard the rights and welfare of children, share understanding of each other's roles and facilitate the coordination and efficiency of actions taken by all actors.

It is this clarity of roles and responsibilities among the different County government departments that will ensure that each actor is held accountable for its mandate. Among non-state actors, the policy will help eliminate overlaps, wastage of resources and the unhealthy competition for visibility because each entrant will clearly see the gaps that need filling. Moreover, all stakeholders will complement each other's efforts and readily pool resources either to prevent violation of child rights or provide services to those whose rights have been violated.

Finally, the policy also helps enforce standards in child protection. It will guarantee the provision of immediate and effective protection services. It provides a holistic and integrated approach that enhances networking and collaboration among various stakeholders.

1.2 Scope of the Children Policy

The Machakos County Children Policy applies to all relevant stakeholders in Machakos county i.e. county departments, public sector, children serving organizations/institutions, private sector, NGOs, non-state actors, development partners and any other persons who deal with children matters.

1.3 Dimensions of Children Profile in Kenya

This Policy categorizes the children aged below 18 years as stated below, while being cognizant of their unique diversity, expectations and opportunities:

- (i) Male, female and intersex
- (ii) Educated, semi-educated, uneducated and children with special needs
- (iii) Rural, peri-urban and urban residents
- (iv) In-school and out-of-school
- (v) Children with disability, able-bodied and mentally challenged
- (vi) Orphans and vulnerable children

1.4 The Process of Formulating the Machakos County Children Policy

The preparation of this policy was done through a consultative and participatory approach. Extensive consultative activities took place with a wide range of stakeholders at the county which included the public sector, private sector, NGOs, CSOs, FBOs, CBOs and development partners.

Public participation forums were organized targeting children and persons, organizations and institutions dealing with children matters.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 An Overview of Children Issues

Children are the most important resource for future economic growth. The stock of human capital of the next generation is built through strategic investments in health, education and protection of children. In setting the development agenda, the County Government of Machakos should therefore include the children in planning and development processes.

According to 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census children form approximately 39.25 per cent of Machakos county population. There are more males (282,670) compared to females (275,417). Age categories of children are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Children statistics in Machakos County

MACHAKOS COUNTY CHILDREN STATISTICS			
AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
0-4	74,088	72,770	146,858
5-9	76,471	74,089	150,560
10-14	84,081	82,134	166,215
15	16,131	15,871	32,002
16	15,551	15,167	30,718
17	16,348	15,386	31,734
TOTAL	282,670	275,417	558,087

Source: 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

Although recognized as an important resource, the children are faced with various challenges which include but not limited to:

- Sexual abuse, exploitation and violence: Owing to their vulnerability, the children are exposed to sexual abuse, child labour and other forms of economic exploitation under the pretense of support in some cases. Children who suffer sexual abuse are more likely to be exposed to unplanned pregnancy, unsafe abortion, maternal mortality, permanent health complications, permanent disability and Sexually Transmitted Diseases including HIV and AIDS. They also suffer challenges of economic exploitation.
- Drugs and substance abuse remains one of the major problems confronting children in Machakos. Despite the need for services to address substance abuse, very few drug rehabilitation programs and

counselling centres are available and tend to be urban based. Drug use and substance abuse is associated with increased risk for early sexual debut, multiple sexual partners and early childbearing.

- Health related problems or challenges: These include malnourishment, HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), drug use and substance abuse; and related effects of mental health as well as poor access and uptake of health services.
- Increasing school drop-out rates: Many children drop out of school due to retrogressive cultural factors or practices such as early marriages, high cost of education and increase in overall poverty levels, and low uptake of school re-admission policy for teenage mothers, among other reasons.
- Teenage pregnancy: This exposes children to HIV & AIDS, STIs, early marriages, psychological trauma, stigma therefore disrupting their participation in education and other empowerment programmes.
- Harmful cultural practices and beliefs: Early marriages and other ways of life which are capable of causing death, fear, stigma, diseases, and other psychological and physical pain or damage to the children.
- Limited and poor housing: Many children, especially those in the urban areas, do not have access to decent housing in environments that favour healthy living e.g. sharing of single rooms in both urban and rural setups.
- Emerging issues that affect the children include negative use of ICT and social media. Other challenges include: cyber-crime, extremism, cultism, radicalization, cyber bullying and online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

2.2 Evolution of Related Legal, Institutional and Policy Framework

2.2.1 The Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into effect in January 2016 to replace the MDGs. The SDGs build on the MDGs, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. While all the SDGs are important for children, the following are key:

- SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all ages
- SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

2.2.2 Kenya Vision 2030

Kenya Vision 2030 is the country’s long-term development blueprint, which is intended to create a globally competitive and prosperous country with high quality of life for all its citizens in a clean and secure environment by the year 2030. The Vision’s social pillar is a “just and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a clean and secure environment”, while the other pillars (economic and political) also have links to the SDGs. Vision 2030 is being implemented through a series of Medium Term Plans (MTPs).

2.2.3 Existing International, Regional and National Instruments and Frameworks

This policy draws its context from the existing international, regional and national instruments and frameworks that support the realization of the rights and welfare of children. Key among these include; The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); The African Charter on the Rights and the Welfare of the Child (1990); The Children Act (2001); The Children Act 2022; National Early Childhood Development Policy framework; The Refugee Act (2006); The Hague Convention (1993); Employment Act (2007); ILO convention number 182; Minimum Age Convention number 138; Refugee Convention (1951); and the Disability Act (2003). Other relevant frameworks

include the Kenya Health Policy Framework (1999), the Kenya Health Sector Strategic Plan (2018-2023), The Water Act (2002), the National Early Childhood Development Service Standard Guidelines (2006), Sexual Offenses Act (2006), Food and Nutrition Policy (2007) and the National Hygiene and Sanitation Policy (2007), the National Children Policy 2021 and Kenya Health Policy 2014-2030.

2.3 SWOT Analysis of Recent Policy Interventions

Table 1: SWOT Analysis of the children

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Flexible and teachable (ii) Creative, talented and innovative (iii) Adaptable to positive peer influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Prone to negative peer influence (ii) Negative media influence (iii) Vulnerability to engage in radicalization (iv) Inadequate parenting skills and role modelling for children to emulate from
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Devolved governance structures (ii) ICT advancements (iii) Vibrant social media (iv) Operational ECDE centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Vulnerability to engage in radicalization (ii) Drug and substance abuse (iii) Insecurity (iv) Emerging cultural trends (Harmful cultural practices) (v) Low transition mechanisms from education to world of work (vi) Low transition from one level to another

Table 2: SWOT Analysis of the Children Interventions

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Policy Interventions ○ Constitution of Kenya (2010) ○ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); ○ The African Charter on the Rights and the Welfare of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Inadequate integrated implementation of children initiatives (ii) Inadequate integrated children data and information. (iii) Low uptake of affirmative Funds (iv) Weak support structures and

<p>Child (1990);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Children Act (2001); ○ National Early Childhood Development Policy framework; ○ The Refugee Act (2006); ○ The Hague Convention (1993); ○ Employment Act (2007); ○ ILO convention number 182; ○ Minimum Age Convention number 138; ○ Refugee Convention (1951); ○ Kenya Health Policy Framework (1999), ○ The Kenya Health Sector Strategic Plan (2018-2023), ○ The Water Act (2002), ○ The National Early Childhood Development Service Standard Guidelines (2006), ○ Sexual Offences Act (2006), ○ Food and Nutrition Policy (2007) and the National Hygiene and Sanitation Policy (2007) and ○ The National Children Policy 2010 ○ National Action Plan for Children in Kenya 2015-2022 ○ Kenya Vision 2030 ○ Basic Education Act 2013 <p>(ii) Institutional Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Directorate in charge of Children Affairs ○ Children Serving Organizations 	<p>systems from society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (v) Inadequate children mainstreaming strategies (vi) Inadequate communication strategies on children matters (vii) Weak monitoring and evaluation framework (viii) Inadequate collaborations between government, the private sector, development partners and other stakeholders in implementing children initiatives. (ix) Inadequate inclusion of children voices on matters affecting them.
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Devolved structures (ii) ICT advancement (iii) Vibrant social media (iv) Operationalization of Early Child Education centres (v) Sport and Arts (vi) Children talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Corruption ii) Limited budgetary allocation iii) Withdrawal by donors iv) Limited prioritization of children issues by all stakeholders

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 MACHAKOS COUNTY CHILDREN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.1 Goal

The overall goal of this policy is to realize and safeguard the rights and welfare of the child in Machakos County.

3.2 Vision

This Policy envisages a society where children are well protected and have an equal and responsible opportunity to realize their fullest potential in their aspirations, through hard work and honesty.

3.3 Mission

To guide the County Government of Machakos and all stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation of interventions and programmes targeting the children in Machakos County.

3.4 Objectives of the Machakos County Children Policy

This policy aims to ensure adequate children protection, development and empowerment while utilizing their potential for productive engagement at all spheres of life.

The objectives of this policy are to;

- i. Support child development, health, nutrition and wellbeing.
- ii. Support child education, enhance creativity, identify talent, support ICT and innovative development among children.
- iii. Mainstream children in social, economic and political initiatives; support transformative leadership, mentorship, participation and representation; support environment and sustainable development among children at all levels.
- iv. Eradicate drugs and substance abuse, tackle crime, curb radicalization and violent extremism and support peace building among children.

3.5 Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are fundamental building blocks that inform and shape the decisions made while designing and implementing a child protection system.

The principles are standards against which day-to-day practices are judged, and they are:

a) Best interests of the child

This is to ensure that all the work undertaken and decisions made are for the paramount importance of the child.

b) Meeting children's basic rights

This includes food and nutrition, health, shelter, education and other related rights as well as ensuring they are able to access these rights by empowering the children and all the actors who support them.

c) Child participation

The voices and opinions of children must be sought in all efforts aimed at addressing their needs. Deliberate effort must be made to involve children at all levels of the framework for child protection system.

d) Efforts to promote and protect children rights must be family and community based

An effective child protection system ensures that services are located close to the family and community. Through such arrangements, informal networks of extended family, neighbors and community members can be strengthened to care for and protect children from violence and exploitation.

e) Creating and building partnerships and effective relationships

Meaningful partnerships will be promoted among key players such as national/county government agencies, relevant NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, children, parents and guardians among others. This is to enhance effective and efficient collaboration.

f) Non-discrimination and inclusion of marginalized children

All children must be included in the initiatives aimed at ensuring child protection regardless of their status and that of their caregivers.

g) Accountability and transparency

Good laws and policies cannot protect children unless all duty bearers are held accountable to them. Actors in child protection must be open to scrutiny by different stakeholders and the general public. Where failure and weaknesses are identified, there shall be genuine efforts to address and improve them.

3.6 Values

In pursuing this policy goal, the following values will inform aspects of this policy and its implementation:

i. Patriotism

The Policy emphasizes the importance of patriotism among the children. They should demonstrate a spirit of love, respect and pride for the country and be ready and willing to invest their time, skills, energy and good character to make it thrive. Through patriotism, the children will endeavor to preserve and protect the country while eventually working together to make it better.

ii. Respect of diversity and ethical values

The Policy respects the cultural, religious, and social backgrounds of the different communities and conforms to universally recognized human rights, without discrimination based on sex, race, origin, age, ethnicity, creed, political affiliation or social status. Respect-for individual worth, dignity of all children regardless of their diversity, ethnicity, physical mental capabilities, social economic background, sex, for right to be informed, heard, for right to determine their own future, destiny and happiness. This also includes recognition of the individual diversity and shared experiences of different persons.

iii. Equity and accessibility and inclusion of all gender

The Policy subscribes to the principles of equal opportunities and equitable distribution of programmes, services, and resources. It also endeavours to promote access to socio-economic opportunities for the children.

iv. Inclusiveness

The Policy emphasizes the need to promote an inclusive approach to the development of the children. It seeks to promote equity and equality, including working to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence.

v. Good governance

The Policy seeks to promote the values of good governance, integrity, a just and tolerant society, transparency and accountability. In addition, the policy serves as a channel to promote values of industriousness, inclusiveness, selflessness, volunteerism and pursuit of good conduct.

vi. Mainstreaming children issues

The needs, aspirations, opportunities and challenges facing the children are concerns for the whole society. The Policy therefore aims at ensuring that children issues are reflected in development priorities on both the micro and macro levels, within the public, private sectors and society. It emphasizes affirmative action for the children as a strategy of protection, participation in decision making and empowerment.

vii. Accountability and Transparency

Accountability implies responsibility for one's activities and resources entrusted to them. The Policy therefore encourages accountability among the children through supportive environment that will enable children exploit their abilities and experiences for improved productivity.

viii. Honesty and Integrity

Honesty and integrity are essential for individual growth. The policy therefore inspires the children to do what is right regardless of the circumstances. The children shall also be supported in developing their physical, emotional and intellectual capabilities. Additionally, children skills, talents, strengths, abilities will be supported to enhance their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing so as to fulfil their potential and aspirations while meeting their needs. The children, families and communities shall ensure conducive environment for active participation, sense of responsibility, caring, capacity to build and attain quality life and relationship with their community at homes, schools and nation at large.

3.7 Rights, Responsibilities and Roles of Stakeholders including Children

3.7.1 Rights of Children

Every child has the right—

- (a) to life
- (b) to a name and nationality from birth;
- (c) to free and compulsory basic education;
- (d) to basic nutrition, shelter and health care;

- (e) to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour;
- (f) to parental care and protection, which includes equal responsibility of the mother and father to provide for the child, whether they are married to each other or not; and
- (g) not to be detained, except as a measure of last resort, and when detained, to be held—
 - i. for the shortest appropriate period of time; and
 - ii. Separate from adults and in conditions that take account of the child's sex and age.

3.7.2 Duties and Responsibilities of Children

In pursuant to Article 31 of the African Charter, clear guidelines on the duties and responsibilities of children in the application of the rights of a child should be availed. These shall incorporate:

- i. Work for the cohesion of the family;
- ii. Respect for parents, superiors and elders at all times;
- iii. Service to the community;
- iv. Preservation and strengthening of social and national solidarity including responsible citizenship; and
- v. Preservation and strengthening of the positive cultural values of the community.

3.7.3 Obligations of Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

This policy spells out roles for parents and guardians/caregivers. Parents shall:

- i) Provide protection and care.
- ii) Promote responsible parenting.
- iii) Provide positive role models for the children.
- iv) Provide access to equal opportunities for the children, regardless of their gender.
- v) Meet basic rights for the children.
- vi) Provide specialized care for children with special needs.
- vii) Provide guidance and counselling to the children.

- viii) Train and socialize the children into different skills.
- ix) Offer room for children participation at all levels of decision making on matters affecting their growth and development.
- x) Assist children to realize their goals and full potential.

3.7.4 Obligations of the County Government of Machakos

It is the role of the County Government of Machakos to ensure that all citizens are served to their expectations. They should carefully plan and be involved in developing the children to be responsible and available to contribute to the current and future nation-building efforts. Machakos county government shall:

- i. Provide protection and care for children
- ii. Provide safe spaces for children and establish recreational facilities.
- iii. Be the lead agent in supporting the implementation of this children policy. This support should cover all the envisaged initiatives and programmes.
- iv. Provide public pre-primary education, vocational training centres, home craft centres and childcare facilities.
- v. Provide the necessary framework for children to enjoy their rights.
- vi. Ensure conducive learning environment in all learning institutions.
- vii. Ensure access to quality education and skills development.
- viii. Create a mechanism and opportunities for participation of children in affairs that affect their growth and development.
- ix. Allocating budget and availing resources to cater for children welfare activities.
- x. Collaborate, partner and network with other stakeholders in provision of children disaggregated data for better planning.

3.7.5 Responsibility of the Private Sector and CSOs

The private sector may assist in:

- i. Ensuring safety of the children in their operations.
- ii. Providing resources and drive innovation to support children programs and affairs through corporate social responsibility.
- iii. Promote children rights through advocacy.
- iv. Complement the Machakos County government in provision of children basic services.

3.7.6 Responsibility of the Community

- i. Ensure children care and protection
- ii. Advocate for implementation of children rights
- iii. Prevent, respond to child abuses and report to the relevant authorities.
- iv. Create safe spaces and conducive environment for children upbringing and participation at all levels in their growth and development.
- v. Provide guidance and counselling

3.8 Target Children

This policy document is a basis for developing opportunities for all the children aged below 18 years in Machakos County. However, in addressing the needs of the children, special attention shall be paid to certain groups because of their specific needs. In each of the targeted children groups, the County Government of Machakos in collaboration with organizations working to promote the welfare of the children will be required to give special attention to affirmative action.

3.8.1 Children with special needs

For many children a disability leads to rejection, isolation and discrimination, hindering their psychological, emotional, social and economic development. Children with special needs require specific strategies to ensure they participate fully in society. Special measures will be put in place to ensure that their needs are adequately addressed. The policy adopts a developmental approach to children with special needs where their human rights, participation and inclusiveness are promoted. The policy advocates greater awareness of the issues faced by the children who have mental, physical, visual or hearing impairment.

3.8.2 Street Children

Breakdown of the social fabric has led to street boys and girls especially in urban areas. The street children are especially vulnerable since they lack protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults. The policy advocates enhanced rehabilitation, re-integration and protection of street children in the communities and strengthening of family systems.

3.8.3 Children infected with HIV & AIDS

Children are greatly affected by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. They are exposed to the HIV and AIDS due to biological, socio-cultural and economic factors. The high rate of teenage pregnancies, school drop-out, abortions, and sexually transmitted diseases confirm that children are engaging in premature sex, exposing themselves to HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. This policy advocates positive living, community-based care, provision of life skills and awareness creation on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR) for this target group.

3.8.4 Out of School Children

The out of school children have special needs in terms of access to socio-economic and other opportunities. Priorities to take them back to school should be enhanced.

3.8.5 Orphans and vulnerable children

Orphans and vulnerable children need special care in order to access basic needs and other socio-economic opportunities.

3.8.6 Teenage mothers

Early pregnancy can threaten the health and well-being of women and girls. SDG 5 is dedicated to empowering women and girls and ensuring global access to reproductive rights. There is need to mitigate on the escalating cases of teenage pregnancies.

3.8.7 Neglected children

Cases of neglected children in the county are escalating. There is need for mitigation measures to cushion children from further vulnerabilities.

3.8.8 Abandoned Children

Many children are abandoned by parents/guardians either at birth or later stages of life which affect their growth and development.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 CHILDREN POLICY OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

This section focuses on policy objectives, strategies, interventions and measures aimed at empowering and harnessing the potential of the children while contributing to the Country's sustainable development.

Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya provides for the rights of the children. The Constitution of Kenya obliges County governments to take measures, including affirmative action programs, to ensure that the children access education; have opportunities to associate, be represented and participate in social and other spheres of life; and are protected from exploitation. It also provides the broad legislative framework for development of this policy.

Programs aimed at supporting children initiatives are crucial for sustainable development. This Policy, therefore, prioritizes children interventions that are consistent with Machakos development priorities, constitution, international conventions and the global trends relating to children agenda.

The identified measures shall involve Machakos county government; public and private sectors; NGOs; FBOs and other children stakeholders. This policy will also involve formal and informal institutions dealing with children issues in both the rural and urban areas in line with key objectives identified for intervention.

4.1 Supporting children development, health, nutrition and wellbeing

Health has an important bearing on children's wellbeing and ability to participate in education, skills development, poverty eradication; economic, political and social processes. New challenges like malnutrition, non-communicable diseases, Covid 19 pandemic, reproductive health and drug abuse have become issues of major concern. Depression, anxiety, propensity to commit suicide and murder, eating disorders, psychosis, drug use and substance abuse contribute to children mental health problems. Mental health problems include emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how a child feels and acts. It also helps determine how a child can handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

Girls are particularly vulnerable to high-risk behavior, such as prostitution, rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. At present, there are limited programs aimed at addressing the needs of these groups of the children.

Accordingly, the County Government of Machakos in collaboration with stakeholders shall:

- a) Promote and encourage healthy lifestyles among children including healthy eating, nutrition, sports and recreational activities;
- b) Promote children participation in key decision making around policy, advocacy, budgeting, planning, and implementation process;
- c) Promote and support programs on personal hygiene, physical fitness, reproductive and mental health.
- d) Improve the technical and institutional capacity of organizations dealing with children affairs to enable them to effectively advocate and promote health programs for the children including those with special needs.
- e) Promote partnerships among Machakos County Government and all other relevant stakeholders to invest in children friendly health facilities;
- f) Engage children in prevention, protection and programming of sexual and gender-based violence;
- g) Create awareness and promote early screening for special needs, strengthen food security and nutrition management systems.
- h) Invest in children's psychomotor development during the first 1000 days of life;
- i) Develop programs on handling stigma resulting from mental health issues and illness;
- j) Promote and support campaigns aimed at encouraging a change in sexual behavior and discouraging teenage and early pregnancies, drug and substance abuse, and negative peer influence among children.
- k) Promote and establish community-based welfare programs to help orphans and vulnerable children.
- l) Establish and develop children friendly guidance and counselling units in institutions of learning, children homes and health facilities.
- m) Establish affordable rehabilitation for children addicted to drug and substance abuse and rescue centers to help children in need of support.

- n) Advocacy and campaigns targeting parents/guardians and the community.

4.2 Supporting children education, enhancing creativity, identifying talent, supporting ICT and innovative development among children;

There is a growing concern among children who drop out of school as they have no adult supervision and are from poor backgrounds. Additionally, children need to be capacity built to advance their skills in ICT. Machakos county government in collaboration with other stakeholders shall:

- a) Promote public education for the children, adopters/fosters and charitable institutions on age appropriate sexual and reproductive health.
- b) Promote and sensitize adherence of age appropriate content both in public and private as per existing government regulations within Machakos County.
- c) Encourage parents to take a lead role in teaching and counselling their children on age appropriate responsible sexual information.
- d) Sensitize and build the capacity of community, peer educators and trained caregivers on children seeking services.
- e) Promote research in children health related areas and make the findings accessible to inform actions and interventions.
- f) Build the capacity of children in ICT through education curriculum.
- g) Provide equipment and create Smart classrooms.
- h) Help children decisively confront anti-social online and physical behavior.

4.3 Mainstreaming children in social, economic and political initiatives; supporting transformative leadership, mentorship, participation and representation; supporting environment and sustainable development among children at all levels.

The Machakos County Government in partnership with key stakeholders have a role to provide a supportive environment where children leadership abilities can be nurtured, ideals of volunteerism and community service; uphold good

values entrenched among the children. This Policy also encourages establishment of a network of talent development institutions to support the emerging generation of highly creative children. Children participation in recreational activities also helps in reducing juvenile delinquency, boosts positive behaviors, reduces violence, enhances self-confidence, optimism, self-initiation and contributes to improved productivity. The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 provides for the right to clean and healthy environment and includes the protection of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations either through legislation or other measures.

The government with support from stakeholders shall therefore set up children friendly recreational activities to reduce negative behavior while promoting individual development and productivity. Machakos County government in partnership with relevant stakeholders will:

- a) Institutionalize children mentorship initiatives in the County.
- b) Institutionalize periodic forums to receive views and strategies on children matters.
- c) Recognize, support and encourage positive role played by families, FBOs, communities and learning institutions, information and knowledge on positive moral values among the children.
- d) Strengthen delivery of morals, ethics and values in the learning curriculum at all levels.
- e) Promote cultural and creativeness and innovative practices that help shape characters of children and their morals.
- f) Mainstream nation hood values and principles of governance among all children programs.
- g) Promote and support integrity of family unit while strengthening nuclear and extended family support structures.
- h) Develop and implement children talent identification and nurturing measures.
- i) Establish and rehabilitate creative talent hubs.
- j) Establish a comprehensive talent scouting system in all villages, wards and sub counties for continuous identification of talent and creative innovations.
- k) Liaise with community and other stakeholders in talent identification and development.
- l) Promote sport activities that foster social inclusion and community integration and inclusivity in the county.
- m) Encourage and support volunteering in sports and extra co-curriculum activities across all sub counties.

- n) Encourage private sector participation in the promotion of arts and sports for children.
- o) Provide inclusive access for children to sporting facilities and social halls.
- p) Provide sporting events and devices for children with disabilities.
- q) Encourage children to participate in management, protection and conservation of the environment;
- r) Empower children as environment and climate change ambassadors across the county;
- s) Enhance capacity building of the children on disaster management to participate in awareness creation, prevention, management and recovery.
- t) Establish, support and facilitate environmental clubs in learning institutions.

4.4 Eradicating drugs and substance abuse, tackling crime and economic exploitation, curbing radicalization and violent extremism and supporting peace building among children.

Drug and substance abuse is one of the major problems facing the county today. Alcohol, bhang and tobacco are increasingly being abused by people of all ages including children. Probable causes of this increase in children's involvement in criminal activities include: high poverty levels, peer pressure and use of drugs and substances abuse. Some parents/guardians abuse their children rights by using them for economic gain. The Machakos county government in collaboration with stakeholders shall:

- a) Strengthen guidance and counseling programs to curb drug and substance abuse;
- b) Mainstream drug and substance abuse control in the school curriculum to create awareness on the effects associated with abuse of drugs;
- c) Develop Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to sensitize, inform and educate the children on the dangers of drug and substance abuse;
- d) Set up children friendly rehabilitation centers and design and implement programs that address drugs and substance abuse among the children.
- e) Support investment in alternative or non-formal education programmes that reach out to school children, and that include peace building components.
- f) Educate the children on abiding by the law and good neighborliness;
- g) Involve children in peace building, conflict resolution and prevention and reconciliation initiatives;
- h) Design and implement livelihood skills programs for children;
- i) Design and implement programs to promote inter-generational dialogue and societal values.

- j) Engage FBOs to curb and deters children from being radicalized to misleading ideologies.
- k) Developing a diversion programme
- l) Collaborate with other relevant government agencies and stakeholders to mitigate against sale of liquor and drugs near learning institutions and residential areas.
- m) Collaborate with other relevant government agencies and stakeholders to rescue children and mitigate against children being used as agents of begging.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 POLICY COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

There is need for collaboration among stakeholders on children matters. This will ensure effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of services to children. The County Government will collaborate with other stakeholders in addressing children issues within the county.

5.1 Policy Coordination

5.1.1 Components of Machakos County Children Policy

The key components of this policy will include;

- **Laws and policies:** these will work towards the protection of Machakos children from violence and exploitation and further ensure responses in the best interest of the child when violations do occur.
- **A Central Coordination mechanism:** this will bring together the county departments and other key stakeholders at all levels in the county.
- **Research, data collection and management:** use of current data will ensure regular information on both prevalence and knowledge of children issues.
- **Regulation and standards:** children services and responses that are effectively regulated by relevant county departments in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** The County Government in collaboration with other stakeholders will focus on monitoring and evaluating the situation on the ground with a view to achieving the policy goal and objectives and establishing sustainable best practices.
- **Participation:** opportunities for children and the community to express their views, concerns and be involved.
- **Financial resources:** a fund specifically set aside for child protection within Machakos County to be overseen by the County department in charge of children affairs.
- **Human Resources:** a committed workforce with relevance competencies and mandates in the County.
- **Preventive and responsive services:** working to ensure that all stakeholders are aware and respectful of children rights. Further to

provide assistance in situations where a child has been exploited or harmed in a bid to restore their wellbeing and prevent further harm.

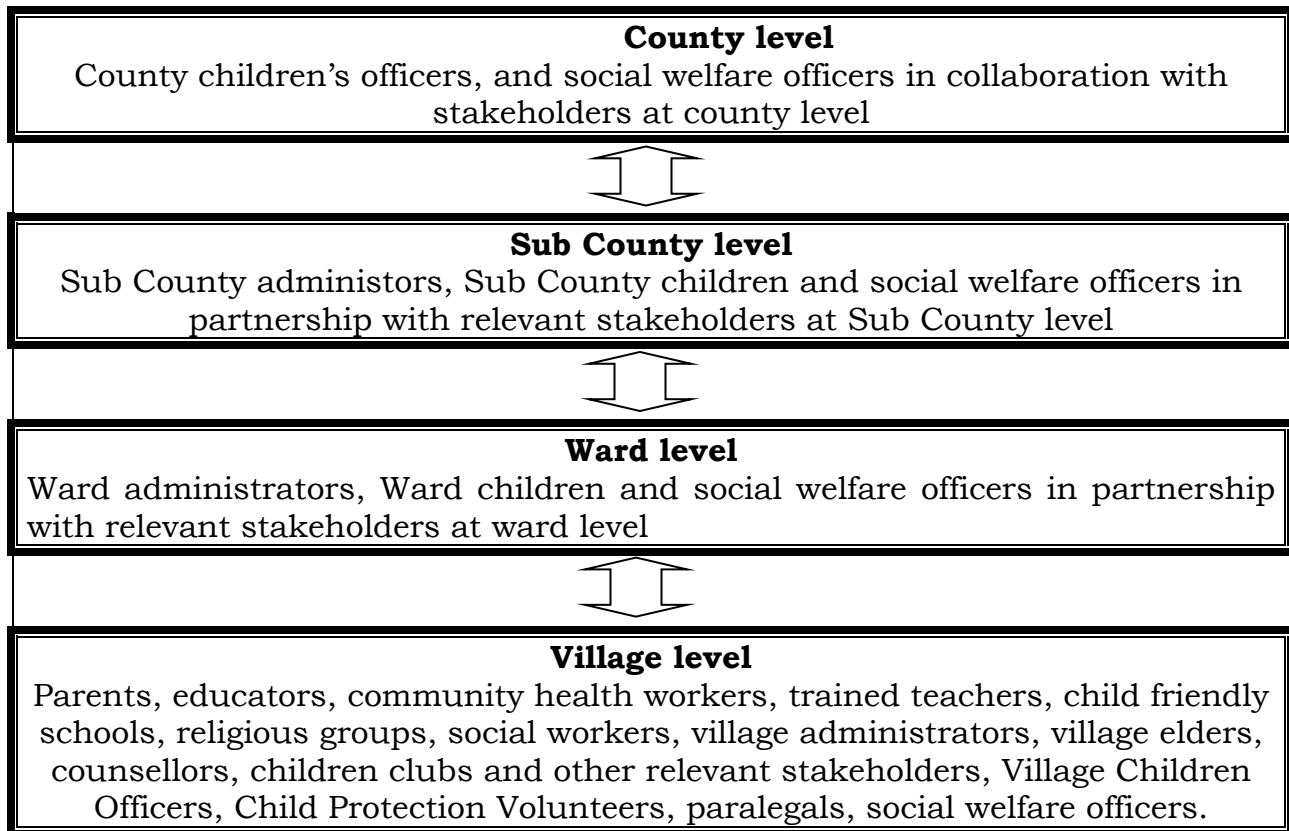


Figure 1: Coordination of children services in Machakos County

5.2 Implementation of the Coordination Framework

The County Government of Machakos will collaborate with other stakeholders in the county in implementation of this policy. As such, its roles will include:-

- a) Aligning children activities into county government plans and programmes.
- b) Allocate budget and mobilize resources to provide services to children;
- c) Facilitate training for Children's officers
- d) Support and monitor implementation of children's services;
- e) Build capacity of government officers, individuals and organization that advocate and support children services;
- f) Raise awareness on children rights;
- g) Form strategic partnerships and networks to support children programmes;

- h) Develop referral networks that increase access to essential services by children;
- i) Support functionality of child help desks and hotline.
- j) Advocate and lobby for protection, welfare and policy regulation on children matters;
- k) Discourage retrogressive cultural practices to protect children.
- l) Generate new information through research to enhance child protection.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Machakos County department in charge of children in collaboration with other stakeholders will regularly monitor implementation of this policy. They will utilize annual reporting framework to report progress. An evaluation will also be conducted every 3 to 5 years to assess impact of the policy to children and wider society as per the county development plans.

The Policy is underpinned on the principles of integration and cooperation. Hence monitoring, evaluation and assessment shall be undertaken through strong partnership between county departments, public and private sectors, Informal Sector, NGOs, CSOs, FBOs and children. Monitoring framework will include:

- Mechanisms to monitor and evaluate this policy shall be employed as critical instruments to track the effectiveness of the implementation of its goal and objectives;
- Timely and periodical monitoring and evaluation of initiatives and programs established for the purpose of children engagement in various sectors;
- Efficient monitoring and evaluation tools are in place. Guidelines, standards, methods of data and information collection, processing and analysis shall be developed to oversee the implementation of policy strategies;
- Participating institutions and organizations advancing the children agenda shall be encouraged through various incentives to develop in-house monitoring and evaluation mechanisms targeted to improve children participation in various initiatives and activities;
- Regular feedback and score cards, social audits and reports shall be collated from participating institutions as a way of informing the process of implementing this policy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND FINANCING FOR CHILDREN POLICY

Resources and support required for implementation of this policy will be financed by Machakos county government in partnership with NGOs, CSOs, FBOs, children serving organizations, development partners, public and private sectors and any other stakeholder with the aim of building human and physical capabilities of children. Targeted steps will be undertaken to engage all relevant stakeholders with a view to strengthening their support and commitment to children especially in such areas as further education, advocacy, guidance and counselling and care. All funding sources and strategies will be required to balance between the short and long term goals. Consequently:

- The achievement of the objectives of this policy framework is pegged on an effective mobilization of resources;
- The Machakos County government with support from all relevant stakeholders shall be responsible for mobilizing both human and material resources to ensure that the policy framework is adequately and sufficiently implemented;
- The Policy implementation mechanism will be operationalized through annual action plans detailing: policy priorities, key actions, indicators, timelines, responsibility, and estimated budgets.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.0 COMMUNICATION, PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION

The Machakos County Government will develop mechanisms using formal and informal channels, print and electronic media in communicating this policy to all relevant stakeholders. The policy will also be disseminated through awareness creation to children serving institutions and actors. This will also include capacity building of stakeholders dealing with children affairs on the policy and their roles in implementation, monitoring and evaluation and impact assessment.

CHAPTER NINE

9.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy was developed through a consultative process while giving cognizance to the dynamic nature of issues that affect children. Consequently, the policy shall be reviewed when need arises to take into account emerging issues on children protection, empowerment, and sustainable development so as to remain relevant to the dynamics in political and socioeconomic environment and development priorities.

Annexes.

Issues Affecting Children, Policy Objectives & Policy Strategies Matrix.

Issues Affecting Children	Policy Objectives	Policy Strategies/Solutions
<p>Poor Upbringing, Poor health, Malnutrition, Non-communicable diseases, Sexual abuse, Economic exploitation and Physical abuse, Reproductive health, Mental Health.</p>	<p>Supporting children development, health, nutrition and wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote and encourage healthy lifestyles among children including healthy eating, nutrition, sports and recreational activities; b) Promote and support programs on personal hygiene, physical fitness, reproductive and mental health. c) Improve the technical and institutional capacity of organizations dealing with children affairs to enable them to effectively advocate and promote health programs for the children including those with special needs. d) Promote partnerships among Machakos County Government and all other relevant stakeholders to invest in children friendly health facilities; e) Engage children in prevention, protection and programming of sexual and gender-based violence; f) Create awareness and promote early screening for special needs, strengthen food security and nutrition management systems. g) Invest in children’s psychomotor development during the first 1000 days of life; h) Develop programs on handling stigma resulting from mental health issues and illness;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Promote and support campaigns aimed at encouraging a change in sexual behavior and discouraging teenage and early pregnancies, drug and substance abuse, and negative peer influence among children. j) Promote and establish community-based welfare programs to help orphans and vulnerable children. k) Establish and develop children friendly guidance and counselling units in institutions of learning, children homes and health facilities. l) Establish affordable rehabilitation for children addicted to drug and substance abuse and rescue centers to help children in need of support. m) Advocacy and campaigns targeting parents/guardians and the community.
<p>Drugs and substance abuse, Involvement in crime, economic exploitation, high poverty levels, radicalization, violent extremism, unpatriotic & Negative Peer pressure</p>	<p>Eradicating drugs and substance abuse, tackling crime and economic exploitation, curbing radicalization and violent extremism and supporting peace building among children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strengthen guidance and counseling programs to curb drug and substance abuse; b) Mainstream drug and substance abuse control in the school curriculum to create awareness on the effects associated with abuse of drugs; c) Develop Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to sensitize, inform and educate the children on the dangers of drug and substance abuse; d) Set up children friendly rehabilitation centers and design and implement programs that address drugs and substance abuse among the children. e) Support investment in alternative or non-formal education programmes

		<p>that reach out to school children, and that include peace building components.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f) Educate the children on abiding by the law and good neighborliness; g) Involve children in peace building, conflict resolution and prevention and reconciliation initiatives; h) Design and implement livelihood skills programs for children; i) Design and implement programs to promote inter-generational dialogue and societal values. j) Engage FBOs to curb and deters children from being radicalized to misleading ideologies. k) Developing a diversion programme l) Collaborate with other relevant government agencies and stakeholders to rescue children and mitigate against children being used as agents of begging. m) Collaborate with other relevant government agencies and stakeholders to mitigate against sale of illicit brew and drugs near learning institutions and residential areas.
<p>Increasing school drop-out rates, Early marriages, High cost of education, Teenage mothers Low transition rate.</p>	<p>Supporting children education, enhancing creativity, identifying talent, supporting ICT and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote public education for the children, adopters/fosters and charitable institutions on age appropriate sexual and reproductive health. b) Promote and sensitize adherence of age appropriate content both in public and private as per existing government regulations within Machakos

<p>Negative use of ICT and social media, cyber-crime, cyber bullying, online child sexual exploitation, Explicit content on media.</p>	<p>innovative development among children</p>	<p>County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Encourage parents to take a lead role in teaching and counselling their children on age appropriate responsible sexual information. d) Sensitize and build the capacity of community, peer educators and trained caregivers on children seeking services. e) Promote research in children health related areas and make the findings accessible to inform actions and interventions. f) Build the capacity of children in ICT through education curriculum. g) Provide equipment and create Smart classrooms. h) Help children decisively confront anti-social online and physical behavior.
<p>Lack of participation and representation, Lack of safe spaces and recreational facilities.</p>	<p>Mainstreaming children in social, economic and political initiatives; supporting transformative leadership, mentorship, participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote children participation in key decision making around policy, advocacy, budgeting, planning, and implementation process; b) Institutionalize children mentorship initiatives in the County. c) Institutionalize periodic forums to receive views and strategies on children matters.

**and representation;
supporting environment and
sustainable development
among children at all levels.**

- d) Recognize, support and encourage positive role played by families, FBOs, communities and learning institutions, information and knowledge on positive moral values among the children.
- e) Strengthen delivery of morals, ethics and values in the learning curriculum at all levels.
- f) Promote cultural and creativeness and innovative practices that help shape characters of children and their morals.
- g) Mainstream nation hood values and principles of governance among all children programs.
- h) Promote and support integrity of family unit while strengthening nuclear and extended family support structures.
- i) Develop and implement children talent identification and nurturing measures.
- j) Establish and rehabilitate creative talent hubs.
- k) Establish a comprehensive talent scouting system in all villages, wards and sub counties for continuous identification of talent and creative innovations.
- l) Liaise with community and other stakeholders in talent identification and development.
- m) Promote sport activities that foster social inclusion and community integration and inclusivity in the county.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n) Encourage and support volunteering in sports and extra co-curriculum activities across all sub counties. o) Encourage private sector participation in the promotion of arts and sports for children. p) Provide inclusive access for children to sporting facilities and social halls. q) Provide sporting events and devices for children with disabilities. r) Encourage children to participate in management, protection and conservation of the environment; s) Empower children as environment and climate change ambassadors across the county; t) Enhance capacity building of the children on disaster management to participate in awareness creation, prevention, management and recovery. u) Establish, support and facilitate environmental clubs in learning institutions.
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Annex 1: Issues Affecting Children, Policy Objectives & Policy Strategies Matrix.