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Kenya

Day 1 National Multisectoral and Sector-Specific Policies for ECD

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Nurturing the Future
**Technical Meeting to Enhance Nurturing Care for Early Childhood
Development in the Health Sector**

25-28 February
Nairobi, Kenya





Introduction: Child population in Kenya (KNBS 2019)

Age in Years	Number in Millions
0-9	12.2
0-3	4.7
4-5	2.5





Rationale for the Kenya IECD Policy

1. A unified framework and response efforts for planning, prioritization, and implementation of IECD programs at National and County levels as stipulated by the Constitution, Children Act (2022) and other relevant laws.
2. The institutionalization and realization of the SDGs and alignment to Global and National policy frameworks guiding ECD.
3. Mainstreaming of positive parenting, social protection, child protection and inclusion across all ECD services.
4. The development of a multi-sectoral implementation/operational framework that addresses short and medium-term ECD priorities, strategies and targets as proposed by the Nurturing Care Framework for ECD.
5. An enabling environment for resource mobilization for ECD, domestically and internationally.
6. Realization of the UNCRC and ACRWC principles.
7. Good governance and accountability through the mainstreaming and strengthening monitoring, evaluation, research, learning, and data management across all relevant sectors.



Kenya integrated ECD policy (2024)

The policy development process:

- Comprised legal teams from all ministries/sectors; technical and leadership of various sectors; diverse stakeholders (COG, counties, MOE, MOH, NCCS, MOLSP, CSO, NGOs); regional consultations.
- Consultative and inclusive process at all stages
- Evidence-based: informed by latest science of ECD, NCF2018 and practice guides, SDG and national commitments
- Framed by existing policies and laws



The Vision, Mission and Goal

The Vision: Every child realizes their full potential.

The Mission: To create an enabling environment for provision of quality, developmentally age-appropriate and comprehensive Nurturing Care for ECD services for the holistic development of every child. from conception to eight years.

The Goal: To enable every child to have access to holistic, inclusive, quality, affordable and equitable ECD services from conception to eight years, with special focus on the First 1,000 days.

The Kenyan flag is partially visible on the left side of the slide, showing the top portion with its characteristic black, white, red, and green horizontal stripes and a traditional Maasai shield and spears in the center.


Guiding Principles for the Kenya IECD Policy

- i. Best interests of the child
- ii. Rights-based approach and responsibilities of a child
- iii. Multisectoral coordination and integrated approach
- iv. Family and community-centred approach
- v. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- vi. Play-based learning
- vii. Invest in the early years
- viii. Context-Specific
- ix. Good governance and accountability



IECD Policy Directions

- **POLICY DIRECTION ONE:** Promote The Provision of Inclusive Nurturing Care for ECD Services
- **POLICY DIRECTION TWO:** Provide a Framework For Strengthening Coordination and Collaboration among All ECD Stakeholders
- **POLICY DIRECTION THREE:** Promote Advocacy and Social Behaviour Change on ECD
- **POLICY DIRECTION FOUR:** Enhance Resource Mobilization for ECD Interventions
- **POLICY DIRECTION FIVE:** Enhance Capacity of Caregivers and Service Providers focused on ECD
- **POLICY DIRECTION SIX:** Establish an Integrated ECD Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Mechanism.



Kenya integrated ECD Policy (2024): Thematic areas for health & nutrition

Thematic area three:

- Ensure that every woman has a safe and healthy pregnancy and childbirth, and that the newborn and child survive, thrives, and realizes their full potential.

Policy Actions:

- Provide ECD services across the continuum of healthcare. Integrate interventions that promote and support parents' and caregivers' mental health and psychosocial support.
- Promote maternal, infant and young child nutrition.



Kenya integrated ECD Policy (2024): Role of health & Nutrition

Thematic area four:

- Every child has universal access to quality health services.

Policy Action:

- Ensure every sick child is safe and treated for childhood illnesses



Kenya integrated ECD Policy (2024): Role of health & Nutrition

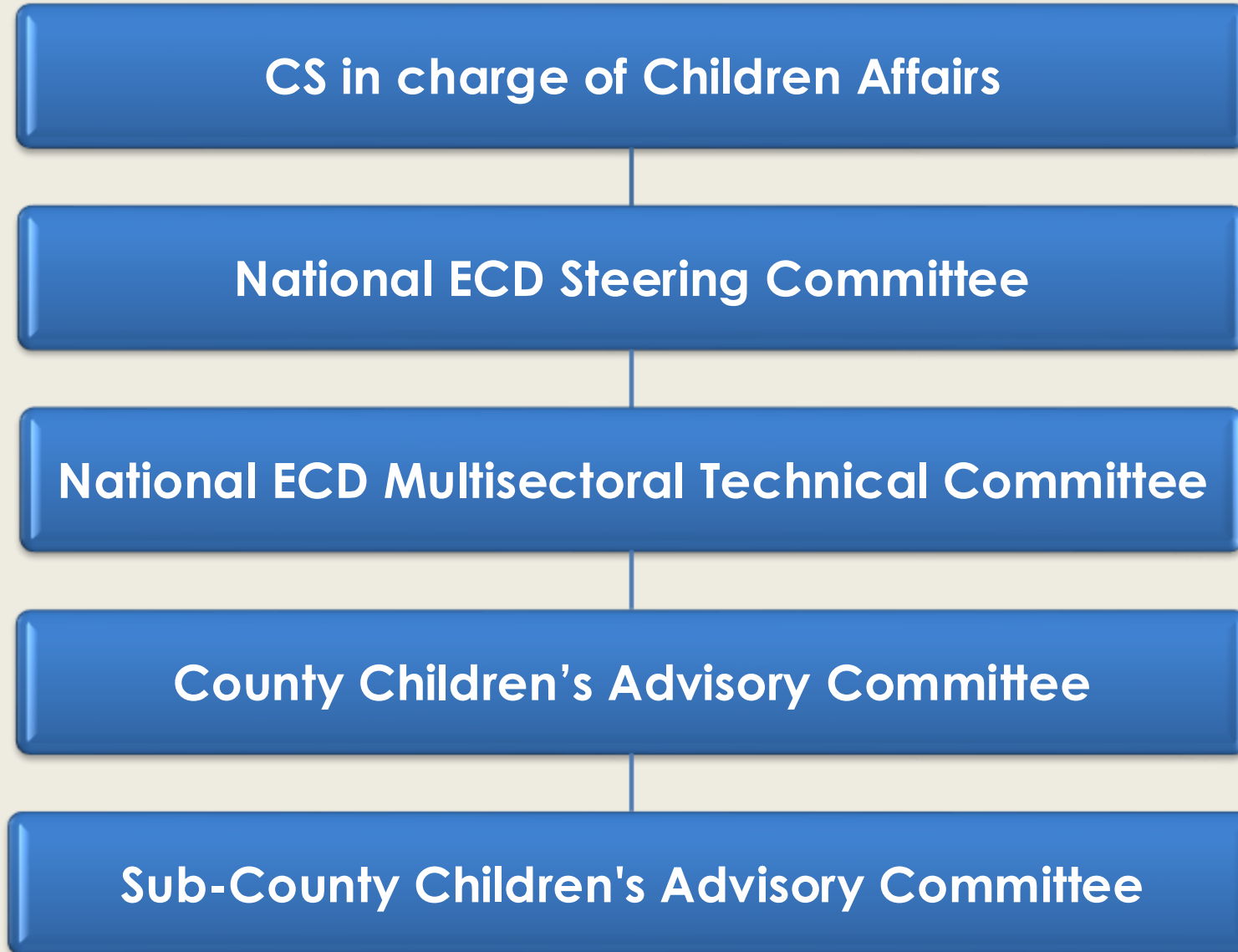
Thematic area five area five: Ensure every child is screened for congenital anomalies and disabilities and monitored for development milestones

Policy Actions:

- Empower families, communities and service providers on early screening for the identification and management of delayed milestones, congenital birth defects, and disabilities.
- Advocate for every child with developmental delays, disabilities and/or special needs to receive appropriate habilitative and rehabilitative services, free of charge.



Implementation Framework: National and County Coordination Structure





Representation of H&N in coordination/ implementation arrangements

National ECD Steering Committee (NSC)

- The ECD Sub-committee of the NCCS Board
- One representative from the Ministry responsible for Health/Child Health matters.
- One representative from the Ministry responsible for Education/Early Childhood Education matters.
- A representative of the Council of Governors

The National ECD Multisectoral Technical Committee (NMSTC)

- Chaired by NCCS; comprises relevant technical officers drawn from key line Ministries and County Governments

County Children's Advisory Committee

- Chaired by the County Commissioner and deputized by County Secretary.

Sub-county/ Ward children's advisory committees

- ✓ In each coordination level, health & nutrition are represented

KENYA IECD POLICY 2024: SOME M&E INDICATORS AND PROGRESS MONITORING

MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
Thematic Area	High level Indicators relevant to health & nutrition sector
Policy Direction 1: Promote the provision of inclusive nurturing care for ECD services	
Thematic Area 1: Responsive Caregiving	Proportion of children who are developmentally on track
Thematic Area 2: Child Safety and Protection	Percentage of children who are birth registered
	Incidence of Violence Against Children (VAC), by type
Thematic Area 3: Safe and Healthy Pregnancy, Delivery, and Newborn and Child Care	Proportion of pregnant women with eight or more antenatal care contacts
	Proportion of births attended by a skilled provider
	Neonatal Mortality Rate
	Under five (5) mortality rate
Thematic Area 4: Timely, appropriate prevention and treatment of childhood illnesses	Proportion of infants exclusively breastfed up to six (6) months
	Proportion of children who are stunted
	Proportion of children who are wasted
	Proportion of children who have received full immunization per national schedule
Thematic Area 5: early detection and management of congenital anomalies, disabilities and delayed development milestones	Number of children in vulnerable environments linked to health services
	Proportion of children screened for developmental delays and referred for timely and appropriate management



REFLECTIONS

Achievements

- Integrated ECD policy with costed implementation plan that outlines interventions at subnational level for inclusion in sectors budgets to deliver ECD outcomes.
- Strong buy in across sectors, particularly health and nutrition, up to county level (subnational level).
- A coordinated way of delivering ECD, breaking silos to ensure holistic child development.
- An M&E framework with indicators across sectors, country already looking forward to operationalisation of measurement and integrated monitoring.
- Multisectoral policy is anchored by national legislation (Children's Act 2022) that mandates NCCS to coordinate ECD across sectors and all levels.

Lessons learned, challenges, opportunities

- Challenge: Convening multiple sectors with predefined frameworks and policies.
- Lesson learned: Varied understanding of NCfECD holistically, needed much time to align.
- Opportunity: Prioritization of PHC as part of UHC is a great opportunity to deliver ECD in health systems (CHPs can do counselling at households, health worker capacity enhancement and PHC referral networks to address delayed milestones).
- Opportunity: Strong links with regional/global commitments like ACRWC, EAC, UNCRC, SDGs.



Priorities in 2025 & Beyond

(Areas of WHO-UNICEF-donor
collaboration)

- Launch and dissemination (national and county) of IECD Policy; roll out costed implementation plan
- Capacity building/skills enhancement of core county teams on ECD-specific packages e.g. CCD, CfC to advance ECD thru primary health care services
- Operationalising M&E framework through integrated dashboards and scorecards, building on global/regional experiences to promote sectoral actions and accountability for ECD outcomes
- Continue to strengthen coordination at all levels with strong participation of health and nutrition actors at national (ministries and COG) and subnational level



Thank you

For more information:
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