



It takes us all
to end violence against children

World Vision
KENYA



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#ItTakesUsAll to plan and budget for Children issues

The National and County Government's Financial Year 2017/2018 began on 1st July 2017. This implies that every government department has an approved annual plan and budget to be implemented. World Vision Kenya's efforts to check with various government departments at the county and national levels, established that most of the departmental plans and budgets are not yet publicly available despite government officials confirming the existence of the documents.

At the National Treasury, the Program Based Budget of the National Government of Kenya for the FY 2017/2018 is publicly available. The Budget provides information on the amount of resources that each of the ministries, departments and agencies have been allocated for the financial year. Additional information has been provided on the programmes, sub-programmes, delivery units, key outputs, performance indicators and targets. Therefore, it follows that each of the government departments have clarity of what their budget details are. Recognising that issues affecting children in Kenya are to be addressed by different government entities, it is important that each department provides adequate information to the public on the number of children to be reached and outline what they will benefit from.

Every government department should publicly avail monthly or quarterly targets to be achieved; the specific result areas to be measured and person accountable. This will go a long way in building public confidence that children issues are indeed prioritized for action by the national and county governments.

Civil society organisations should endeavour to acquire sectoral plans and budgets for both national and county government entities and disseminate to communities.

This will enable communities to isolate priority needs planned and budgeted for by the national and county governments.

Appreciating that most government documents are not in "child friendly" formats, it is important that respective government departments in collaboration with other stakeholders develop "child friendly" versions of government plans and budgets for the FY 2017/2018. Thereafter, a dissemination strategy should be explored to ensure that as many children as possible access such documents.

#ItTakesUsAllKE to take forward the Day of African Child Agenda

Every year, during the Day of the African Child, children often raise issues affecting them with an expectation that they would get timely feedback from duty bearers. However, seldom do we have children receiving feedback on the actions taken to address their issues.

As part of the activities to commemorate this year's Day of the African Child and in view of the fact that many children in Kenya have been confronted with numerous effects of drought, and various forms of violence, World Vision Kenya convened a round table for stakeholders to explore ways of improving the well-being of children and generate recommendations that would inform decision making by government and stakeholders.

The round table brought together representatives from the National Drought Management Authority, National Gender and Equality Commission, Kenya National Commission for Human Rights, Government's Department of Children Services, Health, Basic Education and child protection actors from civil society organisations.



Government representatives during the round table. Photo / World Vision

Summary of the roundtable discussions

On the effects of drought on Children, whose discussions were guided by a presentation from the National Drought Management Authority, the following was noted:

- There is a contingency plan in all counties, on which funding for the response is therefore based.
- A number of children have been reached through provision of water to their families and schools meals in schools, supplementary feeding programme for malnourished children and vaccination against opportunistic diseases.
- Social safety-net to families with higher levels of vulnerability provided largely through cash transfer or food distribution with continuous ensuring all households requiring help are reached. Scarcity of water, food insecurity and malnutrition were identified as the most critical issues that needed to be addressed.
- Resources based violence is partly contributed to the effects of drought and most of the times children are victims of such kind of violence.
- Whereas early warning systems exists, the awareness levels of communities on the purpose and functions of such systems seems to be low in various parts of the country.
- Despite the existence of many child focused civil society organisations in Kenya, very few are engaging effectively with government authorities in ensuring quality response to the effects of drought on children in Kenya.

On Violence against Children in Kenya, discussions were guided by key highlights from the Government's Department of Children Services, Health and Basic Education; the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and the National Gender and Equality Commission. The following key issues were noted:

- Despite good legal and policy framework in Kenya that provides for mechanisms for the prevention of various forms of violence against children enforcement is a challenge.
- Harmful cultural practices, citizens' attitudes and weak household economic status contribute to vulnerabilities that expose children to different forms of violence such as Female Genital Mutilation, Child Marriage, Child Prostitution and Child Labour among others. These forms of violence are a contributor to children dropping out of school.
- Child pregnancy is evident across many communities and there are cases of mortality being reported as a result.
- Some schools and households still subject children to corporal punishment despite its ban.
- Whereas violence is continually reported at different levels in the country, there is inconsistency of data on prevalence of different forms of violence. The government has however rolled out the Child Protection Information Management Systems as one way of addressing the challenges associated with child protection data.
- There are on-going efforts by stakeholders towards ensuring that community members are at the core of preventing and reporting violence against children. There are emerging concerns on the violation of children rights during the elections campaign period with cases of children being "used" to advance political agenda that they may not be well informed about.

Proposed action points for consideration

By the end of the round table discussion, the following key action points were proposed for consideration:

- Child protection indicators to be included in all emergency response related assessments.
- Convene a multi-sectoral forum bringing together agencies that have been directly involved in the drought emergency response and those that have been advancing the protection of children in Kenya, with the purpose of reflecting further on the effects of drought on children, resources utilized in the response, the number of children reached and exploring new strategies/innovations.
- Conduct awareness sessions among government departments and stakeholders on the functionality of the Child Protection Information Management System in order to ensure that decisions made by other state departments/institutions are informed by the data generated from such a system.
- Review the implementation of the Government's National Plan for Action for Children in Kenya and generate recommendations to inform the roll out of the Sustainable Development Goals, finalization of the 3rd Medium Term Plan and the development of the 2nd County Integrated Development Plans.
- Guided by the provision of Article 53 of the constitution, develop a Child Friendly Budget Guide and Tools; and immediately conduct an analysis of the Government Budget for the FY 2017/2018 with a view to establish financial investments for the advancement of specific rights of the child.

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