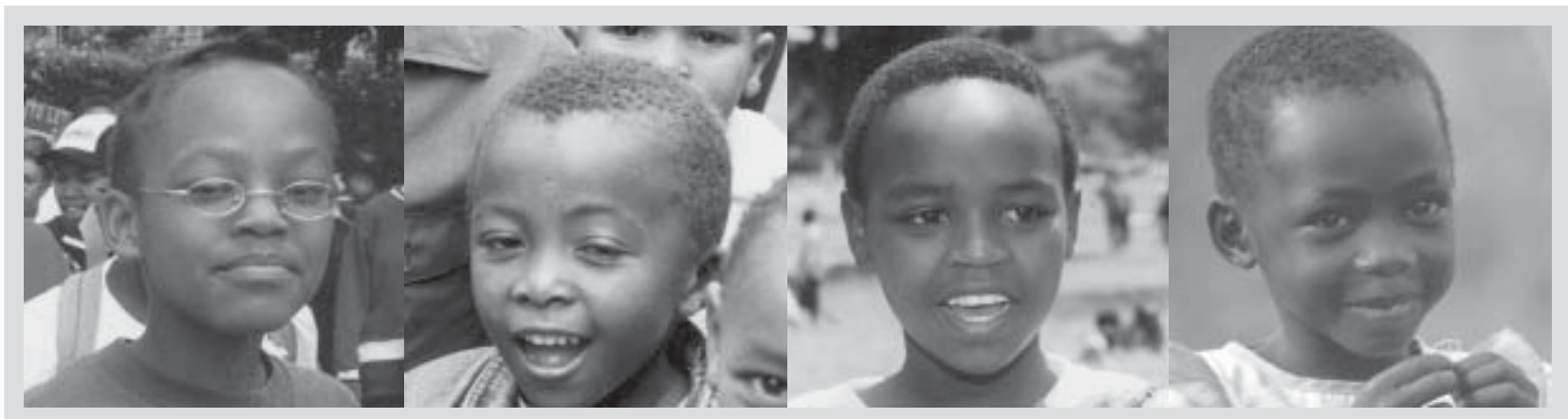


# Enhancing Community Participation in the Delivery of Children's Services in Kenya

Conference for Area Advisory Councils (AACs) and Community Leaders held at the Kenya College of Communications Technology, Mbagathi. September 13, 2002



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The images in this publication are not necessarily related to the text.

# Acknowledgements

## Acknowledgements

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# Abbreviations

## Abbreviations

<b>AACs</b>	Area Advisory Councils
<b>AIC</b>	Africa Inland Church
<b>AMREF</b>	African Medical Research Foundation
<b>ANPPCAN</b>	African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect
<b>CA 2001</b>	Children Act 2001
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CCF</b>	Christian Children's Fund
<b>CLAN</b>	Children's Legal Action Network
<b>CNSP</b>	Children in Need of Special Protection
<b>CO</b>	Children's Officers
<b>CWSK</b>	Child Welfare Society of Kenya
<b>DANIDA</b>	Danish International Development Agency
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>GoK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>IEC</b>	Information Education Communication
<b>IGAs</b>	Income-generating Activities
<b>ILO-IPEC</b>	International Labour Organisation – International Program for the Elimination of Child Labour
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>KBC</b>	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
<b>NCCK</b>	National Council of Churches of Kenya
<b>NCCS</b>	National Council for Children's Services
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>PCEA</b>	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
<b>SUPKEM</b>	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>VCOs</b>	Volunteer Children's Officers
<b>VCT</b>	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
<b>YMCA</b>	Young Men's Christian Association of Kenya
<b>YWCA</b>	Young Women's Christian Association of Kenya
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund

# Conference Opening

## Conference Opening

Ms Rose Odoyo of the Children's Department welcomed the delegates and emphasised the role played by ANPPCAN and the Coalition on Child Rights and Child Protection in training the Area Advisory Council (AAC) members and community leaders in the country. She added that this conference was the first time that members of AACs were coming together in one forum to reflect on their work in the field and to make recommendations on how to improve the deliver of children's services.

Mr. Hussein, the Deputy Director of Children's Services, affirmed the Children's Department support for the conference. He assured participants that the recommendations of the conference will be translated into concrete actions and that they will be beneficial to the children of this country. He said that he was happy that members of the Coalition have steered forward a process of enhancing services to children in need of special protection (CNSPs), but at the same time he recognised that there are many more children who need services. In view of the mandate of the newly formed National Council for Children's Services (NCCS), Mr Hussein said, the spectrum of services must become more comprehensive and multi-dimensional.

## Background and Objectives

The conference was organised by the Coalition on Child Rights and Child Protection in Kenya, an umbrella body of fifteen organisations (see members list on page ii) that was formed in 1996 to address children's issues in Kenya in a collaborative and coordinated manner. Among the key objectives of the Coalition are to help prevent child abuse and neglect, minimise the effects of abuse, provide child protection services, and to produce IEC and advocacy materials that promote public awareness on child abuse and neglect. The Coalition also lobbies policy makers to create and implement child friendly

laws and policies. The Coalition is hosted by the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) Regional Office.

Since 1996, the Coalition has been implementing a national project, the Child Rights and Child Protection in Kenya Project. The project, now in its second phase of implementation, has three major components: 1. Advocacy and IEC materials, 2. Training and capacity building and 3. Child help desks. In the second phase, the project has focused on building the capacities of members of District Children Advisory Committees (now known as Area Advisory Councils) in various parts of the country. This involves training workshops on child rights and child protection and facilitating other forums that assist members to gain knowledge and skills to protect children in their local areas.

The rationale of holding this conference was to bring together members of AACs who the project has trained at the district level. Twenty-six districts were represented by about sixty participants. The participants were expected to exchange experiences and to share ideas so that they design strategies together and then go back to their workstations and implement them. As such, the format of the conference was participatory, with members of the AACs providing the bulk of the content. The conference organisers did not come with a preset programme of papers and presentations. Rather, the participants worked in groups to address a set of questions that guided them to define priority areas, strategies and actions that they must implement in their provinces to enhance child protection and in the spirit of team work and collaboration with the community.

The theme of the conference was “**enhancing community participation in the delivery of children’s services.**” This underscores the project’s strategy of promoting community-led child protection initiatives that are based on locally managed systems and utilise local resources and capacity. The key objectives of the conference were to:

1. review the state of children in the eight provinces with a focus on emerging networks for strengthening the delivery of services
2. deliberate and determine appropriate ways of involving the communities in the delivery of children's services at the local level.

## Questions and Feedback

During conference opening, participants were given opportunities to ask questions and to make clarifications. This was in line with the interactive approach whose aim was to allow the participants to contribute their own ideas and experiences as much as possible. The main concerns are summarised below.

One of the key questions was: what is the difference between the Coalition and the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS)? It was explained that whereas the Council is a statutory organ of the government (created by the Children Act 2001), the Coalition is a voluntary umbrella body of organisations, government departments, ministries, private sector organisations, institutions and NGOs that provide child protection services. The Coalition has been in existence since 1996 and attempts to provide more coordinated services while avoiding duplication. The NCCS is in the process of being established and would become the main government organ charged with implementing the official policies and laws on children in Kenya.

Another question was about the lack of representation from the judiciary in the Coalition. This was also related to another concern that key ministries like that of water development were not members of the Coalition. It was explained that one of the challenges of coalition building is that members have to feel the need to participate voluntarily. Therefore, while the Coalition does work with various arms of the judicial system, there is no direct membership from there, perhaps because membership is entirely voluntary. At the same time, the

Ministry of Water Development, though a key organ in the provision of a basic need that affects millions of children, does not really fit the category of those organisations or departments that provide direct services to children. The common feature of all Coalition members is organisations whose officers come into direct contact with children in their professional capacities. It was also explained that the Coalition needed to remain focused and could therefore not include every organisation possible. The bottomline is to have a functional umbrella body that is not bogged down by the sheer number of members and therefore lacks focus.

In another feedback session, one participant felt that the Coalition should adopt the rights-based approach that is commonly used by many international NGOs in child protection. This participant also wanted to be reassured that children are actually being involved in the Coalition's activities and that they own the projects being initiated.

Coalition members responded that while it is important to ensure that the basic rights of children as outlined in the UNCRC are protected, a one-size-fits-all approach is inappropriate. Each Area Advisory Council needs to come up with an approach that best fits the local conditions and no one should impose approaches designed by overseas-based donors. Every approach needs to be adapted to local conditions and that is one of the reasons of organising this conference -- to give participants an opportunity to refine their methods and strategies.

On the issue of involving children, it was argued that the Coalition is currently guided by the policy of child participation. For example, it participates in the national drama and music festivals, and in the last two years, it has organised a successful children's art competition. However, a lot can still be done, it was acknowledged. The Coalition is committed to involving children in advocating for their rights and is constantly looking for new methods of bringing children to the forefront its campaigns against child abuse and neglect.

It was further explained that participation should not simply be seen in terms of whether one is included or excluded. For example, one of the key goals of the Coalition, after conducting child abuse and neglect surveys in 1996 and in 2000, is to provide services to CNSPs. The real challenge is to do this efficiently and effectively and that means bringing together the key players, rather than even those who are remotely only interested in CNSPs. Even if at the moment many of the members of the Coalition are Nairobi based, there are efforts to focus on the districts through training AACs members and through replication of the help desks approach in the rural Children's Department and the Police Department's offices. Therefore, a lot of progress has been achieved and one of the greatest challenges now is to consolidate these achievements and create a functional national children's protection system.

In addition, it should be recognised that one of the key strategies of achieving better protection for children is to create a child friendly environment for all children. Therefore, everyone working with children,



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particularly the AACs should work hard towards this goal. Achieving a child friendly culture is the most sustainable way of protecting children, one Coalition member asserted. This means that in addition to the Coalition, people working with children need to create other networks at the local levels -- teams from various organisations dedicated to child protection.

A participant recommended that as various networks are created, they should share their strategies and plans with all stakeholders, especially the Children's Department. Currently different networks and programmes seem to operate in isolation and it was suggested that plans be harmonised so that there is no duplication or conflict. This was accepted as a great contribution to the process of network building. Indeed one of the goals of this conference is exactly that of sharing information from different AACs and learning from the experiences of different districts.

# Keynote Address

## Keynote Address

The conference was officially opened by Mr Ali Korane, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Heritage and Sports, through a representative. In his keynote address, the PS emphasised the appropriate timing of the conference in view of stakeholders' renewed interest in children's issues, especially after the Children Act 2001 and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children in mid-2002. There needs to be concerted effort to sustain the momentum and ensure that all Kenyan children benefit, he noted.

The PS reminded participants that in 1990, the Kenya government committed itself to promoting children's welfare by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This conference should be seen as part of the ongoing process of fulfilling the convention's principles. In

addition to the UNCRC, the government's enactment of the Children Act 2001 has produced one of the most comprehensive human rights instruments in the country, the PS asserted. Apart from incorporating the provisions of the UNCRC, the Act takes cognizance of other major international human rights instruments that affect children.

The PS then focused on "the state of children and how this relates to the emerging networks in the delivery of children's services." When the Children Act came into force in March 2002, he said, there were about 15.4 million children in Kenya or 54 percent of the population. About 56 percent of the population, or 17 million people, live below the poverty line, which translates to 8.6 million children and 5.9 million young adults. The enjoyment of children's rights has therefore been hampered by increasing poverty and related factors such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, slow economic growth and environmental degradation.

The PS called for intensified efforts to solve the root problems that affect children. He identified the main one as poverty, which is a multidimensional phenomenon that requires the participation of all stakeholders including all the participants at this conference. He pointed out that there are over 17 categories of children in need of care and protection in Kenya. Some of these categories are HIV/AIDS-infected and affected, child labourers, neglected and abandoned children, etc. About 700 Kenyans die each day from AIDS-related illnesses. Over 1.2 million children have been orphaned by the loss of their parents to AIDS.

In the meantime, socio-cultural transformations have undermined the community's ability to take care of orphaned children, the PS noted. The vacuum in family structures brought about by the deaths of biological parents leads to sibling parenting, early pregnancies, family and community violence, mental or physical illness, parental neglect and child abuse. All these factors define the state of children in Kenya today.

In addition, street children have become a critical category of children in need of care and protection. The PS estimated that there are over 300,000 street children in Kenya. These children are exposed to situations that adversely affect their development including physical, economic, sexual exploitation and abuse, violence, deprivation of family environment, care and other development opportunities. The PS reminded participants that in an effort to alleviate these problems, the government in 1990 announced the formation of the District Children's Advisory Committees to serve as focal points bringing together government officers, NGOs and local authorities to implement programmes for the benefit of children.

The Children Act 2001, the PS noted, now provides for the National Council for Children's Services. Under this legal structure, the Area Advisory Councils will provide an instrument for communities to plan and implement children's rights activities at the local level. The new structure calls for dedicated collaboration to maximise the use of local resources for sustainable children's projects. The PS said that he was aware that there are 64 Area Advisory Councils in Kenya established under Section 34 of the Children Act. He said that the councils are specifically expected to:

- identify and mobilise local resources for child protection
- identify the root causes of CNSP, the magnitude of the problem and recommend interventions
- determine the priority childrens' issues in the local areas
- take responsibilities to the grassroots level in order to encourage local initiatives
- provide technical support to agencies participating in child welfare programmes
- keep an inventory of all local agencies, approve requests to establish charitable children's institutions
- supervise all children's projects to ensure that they adhere to the Children Act and recognised international instruments.

To fulfil this mandate, the PS encouraged the formation of partnerships with NGOs, UN agencies and other stakeholders in order to complement the government's efforts in service delivery. The fact that conference participants have been drawn from diverse communities showed that attempts are being made to address the plight of children nationally, the PS appreciated. It will be important, he urged, to utilise this unique forum to discuss the gaps and challenges that hinder the delivery of children's services.

The PS also acknowledged the efforts by the Children's Department to introduce Volunteer Children's Officers (VCOs) to assist in monitoring children's welfare within communities. However, a lot still needs to be done to equip those recruited with professional skills and extend the programme into other areas. The PS ended his address by paying tribute to ANPPCAN Regional Office and the Coalition on Child Rights and Child Protection in Kenya for supporting the conference. He said that the government was grateful for the work done by the Coalition including training professionals such as the police, probation officers, labour officers, children's officers, medical personnel, early childhood development trainers and caregivers, magistrates and lawyers and social workers in addition to the members of AACs in the districts. He applauded this as an example of what can be accomplished when organisations that share common goals pool resources rather than work in isolation.



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# Emerging Issues and Strategies

## Emerging Issues and Strategies

Participants discussed and answered the questions on different issues affecting children in their provinces. The topics addressed included priority issues affecting children, initiatives being undertaken, collaborators for the initiatives, available resources, gaps and challenges, strategies and activities to be carried out in the respective provinces. In general, similar issues emerged from the provinces but with certain key regional variations. To provide a comparative reference for the various stakeholders, the emerging issues are summarised below according to the provinces.

### Priority Issues Affecting Children in the Provinces

The different provinces highlighted several priority issues affecting children. Most provinces listed child neglect, child labour, sexual abuse and exploitation, harmful social-cultural practices (early marriages and FGM), and the HIV/AIDS scourge. Issues mentioned by at least three provinces were drug abuse, high school dropout rates, family breakdowns, physical battery, and discriminatory social-cultural practices. There were also issues unique to certain provinces. Corruption, industrialisation and urbanisation were unique to Nairobi. Religious fanaticism and the emerging Mungiki activities, cattle rustling and internal conflicts were unique to Rift Valley, while drought and the nomadic lifestyle were unique to North Eastern. The detailed lists of priority issues affecting children in the provinces are shown below:

#### **NORTH EASTERN**

Poverty \* Perennial drought \*  
Early marriage \* Large family  
units \* High divorce rates \*  
Parental neglect \* Child labour \*  
Children working as livestock  
herders, maids, hawkers \* FGM \*  
Gender biases in school  
enrolment \* Nomadic lifestyle

#### **NAIROBI PROVINCE**

Poverty  
Industrialisation  
Unemployment  
Urbanisation  
HIV/AIDS Scourge  
Family breakdown  
Corruption

## NYANZA

Early marriages \* HIV/AIDS infected and affected \* Orphans \* FGM in Nyamira, Kisii, Gucha and Kuria \* Child labour e.g. agricultural, sand harvesting, herding livestock, hawking, fetching water, domestic workers \* Children on the streets \* Sexual exploitation and abuse

Child neglect: due to parental irresponsibility and poverty \* High school dropout rates due to some cultural practices, tribal clashes, poverty \* Poor school management \* Drug abuse \* Children with disabilities

## CENTRAL PROVINCE

Child neglect

HIV/AIDS Scourge: orphans

Child labour – School Drop out

Tea/coffee plantations

Destitution due to landlessness, single parentage, unemployment, poor performance of the coffee industry

Sexual exploitation: defilement, child prostitution

Drugs and substance abuse

## RIFT VALLEY

Child neglect; failure by parents/guardians to provide basic needs, e.g. medical care, education, food shelter and clothing

HIV/AIDS and related effects, has led to many children being orphans and being disinherited

Children and families living on the streets because of poverty, peer influence, irresponsible parenthood

Harmful social cultural practices, e.g. FGM, child marriages

Cattle Rustling and internal conflicts displacing children, increasing orphans and amputated children

## *Rift Valley... cont.*

Child labourers as domestics, in tea plantations, in ranches, fishing, mining, hawking, working on sisal farms etc

Drug and substance abuse/trafficking glue, bhang, cigarettes, changaa

Low enrolment and high school drop out rates

Sexual abuse including prostitution among street children, defilement, sodomy

Physical abuse, excessive punishment by family members and teachers

Religious fanaticism and the emerging Mungiki activities

### **EASTERN**

Neglect and abandonment due to parental irresponsibility

Education/inadequate provision of basic needs particularly from the father

HIV/AIDS affected and infected

School dropouts

Destitution: poverty levels high

Child sexual abuse

Children in the streets

Low level of awareness about child rights

FGM

Child prostitution

Child labour

Child brides/child mothers

### **COAST PROVINCE**

Child neglect and abandonment \* High rates of divorce and separation \* Child labour \* Child prostitution \* Children on the streets \* Drug abuse and trafficking \* High school drop outs rates \* Sodomy \* Early child marriage \* Sexual abuse \* HIV/AIDS orphans \* Physical abuse

### **WESTERN PROVINCE**

Child Neglect, where parents or guardians fail to provide basic needs for children, food, shelter medical care clothing, due to poverty or irresponsible parenthood

Social Cultural practices that discriminate against children, e.g. taboo children (out of incestuous relationship) epileptic, illegitimate children, HIV/AIDS infected and affected, physically and mentally handicapped

Child Labour, e.g. pottery, fishing, cross-border trade, hawking, domestics, working in sugarcane farms, eg. Busia Navakholo, Kabras, Mumias,

Drug abuse, E.g. bhang, Glue, Kuber

Drug trafficking by children, used because of their unsuspecting nature

Sexual Abuse, e.g. incest, defilement, sodomy, rape, child prostitution

Children living on the streets due to poverty, irresponsible parenthood, peer pressure and influence, HIV/AIDS

Orphans as a result of HIV/AIDS

Child battering, family level, corporal punishment

## Initiatives Being Undertaken to Address the Issues Identified

Numerous initiatives are being undertaken by the various provinces to deal with the priority issues affecting their children. Most of the initiatives are, apparently, directed toward curbing child neglect. Among these are legal action, counselling, treatment and rehabilitation. Sexual abuse seems to be next in line in receiving attention, followed by child labour. Among ways through which the former is being addressed are legal action and establishment of children's desks at police stations. Child labour is being reduced largely through the establishment of income-generating projects.

The issues of school dropouts, child rights, harmful social-cultural practices, and the HIV/AIDS scourge are receiving about the same amount of attention. Initiatives, though few, are being undertaken to deal with physical battery, cattle rustling and internal conflicts, family breakdowns and discriminatory social-cultural practices. Following are the details of the initiatives being undertaken the provinces to deal with the priority issues affecting their children.

### WESTERN PROVINCE

Active AACs

Active child protection team at the district and provincial levels

Collaboration with the police, MoH, NGOs, religious organizations, provincial administration

Recruitment of volunteer children officers

### CENTRAL PROVINCE

#### **Neglected Children/Orphans:**

awareness creation, provision of counselling, fostering and adoption, treatment and rehabilitation, legal redress, networking with relevant stakeholders, rescuing.

#### **Child labour and School Drop-**

**outs:** introduction of income generating projects making it possible to return and retain children in schools, waiver of levies for orphans by the education ministry

### **NORTH EASTERN**

Awareness creation through public barazas, seminars and religious gatherings to discourage forced marriage, campaign against gender discrimination, family planning, effects of FGM

Creation of child rights clubs in schools

Provision of guidance and counselling services to children and families

Initiation of income generation activities: NGOs funding women and youth groups to come up with self-sustaining projects

Using courts to handle parental neglect and other ills committed against children

### **EASTERN PROVINCE**

Prosecuting the offenders

Provision of counselling services

HIV/AIDS: Institutionalisation of the affected and infected children, fostering services

School drop outs: feeding programmes in some schools

Creation of awareness so that cases can be reported

Promotion of income-generation activities

Child mothers: Diversion of children



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## RIFT VALLEY

Creation of Awareness on children's rights as provided for in the CA of 2001, the ACRWC, CRC

Institutionalisation of neglected, abused and abandoned, children on the streets

Providing guidance and counselling services to the families

Reintegration

Implementation of the CA by the judiciary, police, Children's department, NGOs, in collaboration with AACs

Capacity-building for service providers on child rights, e.g. gazettelement and training of magistrates to hear children's cases,

Funding of HIV/AIDS programs by NASCOP who conduct training and provide support for families

Child protection team in place to protect children

Establishment of information desks at police stations

Extending activities of AACs to the local level, to create awareness, risk missions, introduction of VCC systems to enhance community-based approaches

NGOs in collaboration with Provincial administration, churches, communities are addressing the issues of cattle rustling and internal conflict

## NYANZA PROVINCE

Awareness creation on the effects of early marriages

Placing orphans with relatives

Awareness creation on the effects of FGM/ alternative rights of passage for girls in Kisii, Gucha, Nyamira, in August 2002: 300 girls graduated

Removing children from working places by law enforcement officers, e.g. Kuria, Gucha and Kisii

Creating awareness on the dangers of child labour

Assisting children from poor families and providing them uniform and text books

Prosecuting parents who abuse their children

Income generating activities for families involved in child labour, e.g. in Kisii & Siaya

Children on the streets: reuniting them with the parents through bonding

Proposal writing on a revolving fund for parents with children in the streets

Legal action on sexual abusers

Liaison with medical officers of health in dealing with clinics conducting abortions

Providing guidance and counselling services *(cont...next page)*

*... from page 15*

Establishment of rescue centres to provide safe nests and rehabilitation services for children on the streets. eg. in Uasin Gishu, Nakuru, Laikipia

#### **NAIROBI**

- Non-formal schools within the community
- Charitable institutions
- Feeding programmes within some schools
- Providing guidance and counselling services
- Sponsorship programmes for some children
- Educational bursaries for needy cases
- Merry go round
- Advocacy on health issues
- Youth and women programmes
- Diversion strategies of reintegrating and repatriating children
- Child help desks
- Community learning resource centers
- Referral for free legal services

#### **COAST PROVINCE**

Community sensitisation

Provision of guidance and counselling services to children and families

Strengthening of AACs and creation of divisional structures

Recruitment and training of volunteer children's officers

Creation of networks

Rehabilitation services

Foster care arrangements

Micro-credit programmes

Child sponsorship

Child rights clubs

Prosecution/law enforcement

Introduction of Children Courts' Committee

Children's desks at police stations



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## Who are the Collaborators in the Above Initiatives?

Those collaborating in the initiatives being undertaken to deal with the priority issues affecting children include churches, religious organisations, NGOs, CBOs, media houses, charitable institutions, professionals, youth groups and the business community. Following are details on the collaborators in the initiatives.

### NAIROBI PROVINCE

Catholic Church, SUPKEM, YMCA, Redeemed Gospel Church, Hindu Council, Methodist Church CLAN, World Vision, Undugu Society of Kenya, Don Bosco, Compassion International, AMREF, ANPPCAN  
Adult Education, MoH, Provincial administration, police and local government

### CENTRAL PROVINCE

Government Departments  
Media houses (Nation EA Standard, Kenya Times, KBC)  
NGOs (ANPPCAN, World Vision, Plan Kenya, Care Kenya, JICA, CLAN, DANIDA, UNICEF)  
Religious Groups  
Business community  
CBOs

### EASTERN

Catholic Church  
PCEA  
Methodist Church  
CBOs

### COAST PROVINCE

Provincial administration  
NGOs: Child Welfare Society of Kenya, Plan International  
ANPPCAN, UNICEF, Aga Khan Foundation, Islamic Foundation, NCKK, Catholic Secretariat

CBOs: Tiko Bao, MAWA, Mulika Theatre, Teen Watch, St Joseph's Shelter of Hope.:

Charitable Institutions: Sheik Zayed Centre, Wema Centre, G's Sons of Abraham, Mji wa Salama, Vugha CNSP Centre, Diani Children's Home, AIC Makombe Orphans, Children of the Rising Sun, St Joseph's Bura, Taru Children's Home

### NORTH EASTERN

Provincial Administration  
Ministries of Health, Education, Labour, the Police Department, Social Services  
Arid Lands Resource Management Programme  
The Judiciary  
Department of Adult Education  
NGOs: Young Muslims Association, Muslim Welfare Society, Oxfam, Womankind, UNICEF, World Vision, African Muslim Agency Action Aid, Care International in Kenya, the Red Cross Society

### **WESTERN**

Provincial administration  
The Judiciary  
The Police  
Child friendly advocates  
ANPPCAN, KAARC  
ministries of labour and  
environment

### **NYANZA**

ministries of education, health,  
the Judiciary, Churches  
CCF  
ILO-IPEC  
ANPPCAN  
Maendeleo ya Wanawake  
YWCA  
Care Kenya  
Provincial administration  
Employers in soapstone industry  
Charitable children's institutions

### **RIFT VALLEY**

LSK  
Youth groups  
Business community  
Communities  
CBOs  
NGOs  
Judiciary  
Police  
Local authorities



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## **What Resources are Available?**

A close analysis of the list of resources provided by the provinces appears to indicate that personnel, that is trained children's officers, VCOs, AAC members, counsellors and child protection teams, is the most readily available. Also readily available are professionals, among them, child friendly lawyers, gazetted child magistrates, teachers and doctors. Other resources mentioned by several provinces are the provincial administration, academic institutions, transport facilities, leaders (club patrons, managers of charitable organisations, community, religious), members of the community (children, parents, guardians, potential foster parents), funds, training materials, charitable organisations and health facilities.

Office equipment, recreational facilities and field officers (social workers, community health workers, CBO workers, and NGO workers) are

among the scarce resources. Other very scarce resources include clothing, building materials and beddings. Only Nairobi Province mentioned churches and mosques.

Below are the resources highlighted by the provinces.

#### NAIROBI

- Children's Departments officers
- Teachers, Police, Chiefs, Doctors, lawyers
- Social workers,
- Social halls, Schools, Health centers
- Children's Court
- Recreation facilities
- Churches, Mosques
- Special education centers
- Donations, e.g. medicines, books clothes, finance

#### COAST

- Government funding for children officers
- Members of the community
- Private sector business support
- Teachers
- Offices, Vehicle, stationery, clothing, money
- Building materials
- Nursery schools
- Mayor's Christmas tree fund

#### NYANZA PROVINCE

- Trained AAC members
- Provincial Administration
- Children's Officers
- Police
- Health personnel
- Magistrates
- Theatre groups
- VCOs
- Managers of Charitable institutions
- Community leaders
- Religious leaders
- Children
- Parents and guardians
- IEC Materials from partners
- Children's courts
- Charitable children's institutions
- Community & Religious leaders
- Children

#### NORTH EASTERN

- Children's Officers
- Magistrates
- Community health workers
- VCOs
- Religious leaders
- Police
- Children
- CBO & NGO workers
- IEC Materials
- Vehicles/Camels



#### **WESTERN**

- Trained Children's officers and VCOs
- Active AAC members
- Child friendly lawyers
- Trained personnel in guidance and counselling
- Government funds
- NGOs supporting capacity building
- Education and health to children
- CCIs providing rescue and accommodation
- Existing structures: police stations, health facilities, Children's Department offices
- Rehabilitation centres and schools
- Roads and telephones

#### **EASTERN**

- AACs members, VCOs
- Child protection teams
- Children's Officer
- Potential foster parents
- Stationery, Vehicles,
- Police stations

#### **RIFT VALLEY**

- Trained children's officers, social workers, VCOs
- Gazzetted child magistrates
- Lawyers
- Police officers
- Club patrons and AAC members
- Existence of statutory and charitable institutions
- Availability of transport facilities
- Offices in 14 districts
- Children's courts
- Rescue centres , Schools
- Health facilities
- Funds from GoK and NGOs

#### **CENTRAL**

- Personnel: VCOs, AAC members
- Finance, institutions, Offices
- IEC materials
- Transport needs, vehicles
- Typewriters, Duplicating machines, Beddings
- Skills

## **Gaps and Challenges Experienced**

While it may have emerged that personnel is the perhaps the most readily available resource, a close look at the gaps and challenges highlighted by the provinces reveals that most have had to do with, and continue to be with, personnel. Here, we are mainly talking of the personnel being inadequately trained. Other problems include their frequent transfers, their not being facilitated to perform their work, the little interest by AAC members to implement programmes, the limited role of COs in prosecution and the lack of child help desks.

The other common gaps and challenges can be attributed to the Government. Provinces highlighted poverty, insecurity, corruption, flaws in the Children's Act, lack of policy on orphan's welfare, political interference and the many informal settlements that are highly congested while lacking amenities. Also frequently raised are challenges that can be hinged on cultural practices. They include adherence to harmful traditional practices, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the disintegration of families and the upsurge in children requiring support. The lack of funds, and the dependence on donors for the little available, is also a common challenge.

There is also the problem of uninformed masses. Provinces noted high illiteracy levels and low awareness levels with regard to the Children's Act. Rehabilitation centres are inadequate. There are challenges, apparently, born of the communities themselves. It was reported that communities do not participate enough. Not only is there poor data on CNPs, but also lack of charitable children institutions and inadequate centres for orphans, destitutes and family counselling. In some provinces, the problem of vast distances is heightened by the lack of roads, vehicles and telephones. Insufficient coordination among the parties involved in the initiatives was also pointed out.

Following are the gaps and challenges listed by each province.

#### **EASTERN PROVINCE**

- Inadequate personnel
- Inadequate community participation
- Ineffective networking with other stakeholders
- VCOs not facilitated to perform their work
- No child help desks
- Poor communication network, eg. telephones
- No Charitable Children's Institutions

#### **NAIROBI**

- Informal settlements account to 60% of the city's population, they lack healthcare, education, social services
- Inadequate funds
- Congestion in existing physical structures

#### **NORTH EASTERN**

- Inadequately trained personnel
- No vehicles
- The limited role of COs in prosecution
- High illiteracy levels
- Vast distances causing delays in provision of services
- Poor infrastructure: roads, and phones
- Insecurity
- Rigid adherence to harmful tradition practices
- Insufficient coordination between government and NGOs

#### **WESTERN**

- Poverty
- HIV/AIDS scourge
- Corruption
- Vulnerability of the marriage institution
- Poor networking among stakeholders in child service delivery
- Inadequate personnel in the children's department
- Low awareness levels within the community
- Inadequate means of transport to reach CNSPs
- Inadequate funds to address children's issues
- Poor data on CNSPs

#### **NYANZA**

- Inadequate alternative placements measures for orphans and destitutes
- Inadequate rescue centres
- Inadequate family life counselling centres
- Ignorance of the Children's Act
- Inadequate funding
- Unchanging attitudes and cultural practices
- HIV-AIDS pandemic
- Insecurity
- Dependence on donor funds
- Upsurge in children requiring support compared to existing children's programmes
- Ineffective networking and coordination of Children's services



#### COAST

- Unskilled personnel in children's homes
- No financial incentives for VCOs and AAC members
- Inadequate personnel
- Frequent transfers of personnel
- No charitable institution admits HIV infected
- Ineffective process of identifying beneficiaries
- Children's programmes are not well distributed in the province
- Money Money Money

#### CENTRAL

- Poverty
- Acute shortage of personnel in the CD
- Inadequate finances
- Non-formalisation of the VCO programmes
- Cultural and selfish attitude
- No rescue centres
- AACs weak in finances
- No policy on orphans welfare
- Flaws in the Children Act
- No professional counsellors

#### RIFT VALLEY

- Inadequate trained personnel
- Inadequate funds to meet the needs of children
- Inadequate facilities to shelter battered early marriage and FGM
- Little commitment by AAC members to implement area programmes
- Inadequate awareness on the rights of the child
- Disintegration of families
- Poverty and HIV/AIDS
- Political interference
- Resistance to change harmful cultural practices

### How are you Planning to Address these Gaps?

The gaps and challenges will be addressed in various ways. Most popular of these are by creating awareness (child rights, abuse, protection, harmful social-cultural practices), training of child welfare personnel, fundraising and increasing facilities and human resources, among them rescue centres, crisis desks, homes for HIV kids and field officers.

In addition to the above, some provinces plan on enhancing and facilitating the work of those dealing with children through strengthening child protection teams, gazettement of as well as lobbying

support for VCOs and providing vehicles. Others plan on increased involvement of the community as well as enhancing collaboration and networking among parties involved. The former will be achieved by creating child rights clubs in schools, community-based care services and encouraging fostering within, which will minimise children’s problems. Other measures mentioned, though by few provinces, include those aimed at eradicating the existing poverty, such as creating income-generating activities and extending micro-credit facilities to families and those calling for advocacy with regard to policies and the Children Act.

Below are the different provinces’ plans to do to address the gaps.

#### WESTERN PROVINCE

- Intensive awareness campaigns up to village level on child rights and protection by AACs, and Divisional Area Advisory Councils
- Capacity building on child protection for all relevant persons dealing with children, e.g. court officers, police, teachers, COs, parents, etc
- Recruitment of Volunteer Children officers
- Creation of child crisis desk at the headquarters
- Street work to rescue street children

#### RIFT VALLEY

- Enhanced collaboration and networking
- Awareness creation on child rights, abuse and protection through public meetings in schools and colleges, religious services and other social gathering
- Formation of child rights clubs in schools
- Continue training and disseminating of the provisions of the Children Act
- Effective use of print and electronic media
- To recruit and train volunteer COs, supervise and facilitate them to provide services
- Strengthening child protection teams
- Solicit for funds directly from donors



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#### **NYANZA PROVINCE**

- Source for funds to create awareness in communities against negative cultural practices e.g. early marriage, FGM
- Encourage income-generating activities among small groups
- Empower families through micro-credit facilities
- Networking and collaboration to disseminate the CA up to the village level
- Training and Counselling
- Encourage establishment of rescue centres in all districts using locally available resources
- Encourage home-based care for HIV infected and affected Children and lobby for bursaries

#### **COAST**

- Training for Child welfare personnel
- Fundraising through AACs
- Establishment of home for AIDS positive children
- Recruiting and training VCOs
- Strengthening AACs capacity building, providing vehicles
- Sensitisation on the unique problem of the boy child in Lamu and Malindi
- Expanding resource base

#### **NAIROBI**

- Provision of funds for AAC by the government
- Sensitise the community thro existing structures, e.g CBOs
- Recruit and train VCOs
- Lobby for support for Volunteer Children's Officers
- Enhance the role of AACs in the community
- Enhance collaboration and networking
- Involve the community in identifying and mobilising resources in their areas
- Replicate the Help Desks at the Province level
- Increase the number of Children's desks in police stations
- Sensitise the community on VCT centres
- Encourage community based care services
- Sensitise the community on gender issues

#### **NORTH EASTERN**

- Training AAC members and other stakeholders on the CA
- Recruitment and training of VCOs
- Intensive awareness creation on the rights of the child
- Solicit political goodwill from elected leaders
- Encourage fostering within the community to minimise children problems that lead to child labour, physical abuse and neglect

### CENTRAL PROVINCE

- Refer to other agencies, e.g. micro-finance enterprises
- Recruit more VCOs and train them
- Request the department to deploy more officers to the field
- Enhance networking
- Mobilise local resources through fundraising
- Appeal for donations
- Request for more funds through work plans
- Request for gazettelement of VCOs
- Continue creating awareness on child rights in communities
- AAC to put up rescue centres in partnership with stakeholders, e.g. local authorities
- Advocate for conducive policies through AACs
- Recommend amendment to the Children Act
- Request for training in counselling

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## Strategies to Address the Priority Issues

The strategies to address priority issues affecting children include, starting with what appears to be most popular, enhancing community participation, creating awareness, increasing and equipping personnel, enhancing networking among collaborators, implementation and evaluation of programmes, research and training and identification and mobilisation of local resources.

The specific strategies presented by each of the provinces follow.

### **RIFT VALLEY**

- Intensify public awareness and advocacy
- Involving communities in decision making
- Identifying problems affecting children
- Implementation of programmes and evaluation
- Involve opinion leaders, church leaders and the children themselves
- Intensify the identification and recruitment of VCOs
- Enhance child participation
- Encourage transparency and accountability on children related programmes
- Enhancing networking
- Awareness creation on the need of fostering at the community level
- Enhancing reintegration programmes

### **NYANZA**

- Awareness creation and sensitisation on child rights
- Building the capacity of community leaders on child rights and protection through workshops, public meetings, school PTA meetings, church meetings
- Involve the community in problem identification, planning and implementation
- Encourage the communities to start income generating activities in small groups

### **EASTERN PROVINCE**

- Enhance community participation
- Involving communities in decision making, e.g decision on orphans
- Sensitise community members on the rights of children
- Incorporate children's issues in the already existing community development projects
- Enhancing child participation
- Mobilise communities to form child protection teams at the village level
- Strengthening family structures

### **CENTRAL**

- Recruitment of VCOs
- Encouraging fostering and adoption
- Formation of AACs at the community level
- Networking with relevant stakeholders
- Involving the communities in resource mobilisation, e.g fundraising for children in need of special protection
- Creation of awareness on child rights and child protection
- Encouraging home based care for HIV/AIDS positive

## **WESTERN**

- Formation of division area advisory councils. LAACs., and village support groups to address children's issues within the local areas.
- Capacity building for the above on children's issues
- Identification and mobilisation of local resources under the guidance of the AAC
- Creation of data collection mechanism through the various support groups for analysis and documentation for development of relevant community projects to support CNSP

## **COAST**

- Awareness creation on child rights
- Involve the PA since they structure to grassroots
- Recruit, train and motivate VCOs, e.g awards, remunerate
- Develop community programmes by children to serve the community
- Involve communities in the management of children facilities and programmes
- Ensure community participation in the AACs
- Encourage communities to foster children instead of institutionalising them
- Encourage community rehab of child offenders
- Revive traditional social control mechanism in child care and protection

## **NAIROBI**

- Create awareness on CA & CP
- Recruit and train VCOs
- Capacity building of AACs
- Mobilise existing resources in the community to support children's programmes
- Involve the community in cost sharing, e.g funds and services
- Involve the community in leadership roles in children's programmes and activities

## **NORTH EASTERN**

- Capacity building for AAC at the district, division and location level
- Popularise celebrations marking important days, e.g. Day of the African Child, International Children Broadcasting Day
- Promote community based provision of services, e.g through the VCO system and foster care
- Working with CBOs
- Involving the print and electronic media in highlighting the plight of the child, possibly in vernacular
- Production of IEC materials in local languages
- Lobby opinion leaders to mobilise resources
- Utilise opportunities like public meetings, religion gatherings to sensitise the community on the need to be involved in delivery of children's services
- Involve CBOs and community leaders in data gathering for the purpose of proper understanding of the problem and planning at the community level

## Activities to be Carried out at Community Level

Most of the activities to be carried out at community level have to do with creating awareness. The awareness will be on CNSP, child abuse and protection, transparency and accountability and community ownership of programmes, child rights, harmful social-cultural practices and the importance of children partners in development. Other commonly mentioned activities have to do with facilitating the work of those working with children. These include recruitment and training of VCOs, establishing community rescue centres for care of CNSP, utilising existing structures to cater for CNSP, establishing community help desks and AACs and information dissemination.

There will also be activities to involve the community. Communities will participate in programme management, AACs, and support groups. They will be encouraged to contribute resources to children's projects and to revive traditional social control mechanisms in childcare and protection. Some provinces plan on initiating children's programmes to assist communities, to improve and establish counselling programmes, and to improve monitoring systems of existing programmes. Other activities are tailored to reduce the poverty levels by empowering breadwinners and while others will be geared towards raising funds. Below are the details.

### **RIFT VALLEY**

- Conduct more training on the Children Act
- Train VCOs
- Direct support to community based programmes and children themselves
- Initiate income-generating activities
- Formation of child rights clubs at the community level
- Formation of Child Protection teams
- Establish and enhance AACs up to the village level
- Celebrate universal children's day
- Establish an inventory on all children's service providers
- Organise frequent exchange programme to review and evaluate various programmes up to the community level
- Enhance monitoring

## COAST

- Awareness creation in barazas, rural press, churches, mosques, temples, drama, music and art competition
- Recruit volunteer children officers
- Set up community help desks
- Initiate children's programmes to assist communities, e.g commemorate children's calendar days in the village, organise clean ups
- Involve communities in the management of community programmes, appoint community leaders in programme management boards
- Involve community in planning, implementation and monitoring of programme
- Ensure Community Participation in the AACs, Devolve the AAC to the village level
- Encourage community fostering, create awareness on the potential of community foster care
- Revive traditional social control, child support mechanism, meet with opinion leaders in the community

## NAIROBI

- Initiate income-generating activities
- Campaign on children's rights through chief's barazas, churches mosques and youth groups
- Formation of more child rights clubs
- Disseminate the information in the CA to the community
- Involve children in drama and music
- Conduct workshops and seminars on the rights of the child
- Establishment of the locational CAC and Village support groups
- Fundraising
- Home to home visits
- Improve and establish counselling programmes within communities

## EASTERN

- Formation of protection teams at village level
- Establishment of community support groups
- Sensitise communities against retrogressive cultural practices
- Identify and establish the financial stability of the provider of basic need and enhance it
- Form child rights clubs in schools
- Create awareness on the community to understand that children are partners in development

### **WESTERN PROVINCE**

- Intensify awareness creation campaigns on CNSP during funerals, barazas, religious functions and public holidays
- Creation of child crisis desks at the divisions
- Resource mobilisation to address the identified issues through women's groups, youth groups, merry-go-round, harambees
- Starting micro-enterprises, writing proposals to donors, mobilise the private sector to finance child welfare projects and provide materials, e.g. books, drugs, foods and clothes
- Establish community rescue centres at the divisional levels for the care of CNSP
- Establish a regional referral system for placement of CNSPs according to needs

### **CENTRAL PROVINCE**

- Recruitment and training of VCOs
- Train community members on child abuse and protection
- Fundraise to support IGA for those willing to undertake home-based care
- Use barazas and meetings to market the social benefits of fostering and adoption
- Utilise the existing structures, churches, mosques to temporarily cater for CNSP

### **NORTH EASTERN**

- Train VCOs and community resource persons on child rights with the view of making them participate in the delivery of children's services
- Set up locational and community committee to address local concerns and encourage continuity
- Establish monitoring systems through reports and regular visits
- Encourage drama, poetry songs on children's rights in formal and non-formal institutions
- Open up initiatives in charitable institution in community awareness and participation to promote transparency, accountability and community ownership of programmes

### **NYANZA**

- Create schools child rights clubs
- Conduct barazas to advocate the rights of the child
- Provide IEC materials on AAC services
- Community to contribute resources at their disposal to children's institutions/ projects
- Establish a kitty at the community to help needy cases of children at the location, e.g. Siaya is being spearheaded through the PA
- Create divisional crisis desks

# Conclusions and Recommendations

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. More volunteer children's officers need to be recruited, inducted and trained. They need to be trained so that they understand the operations of the Children's Department. In addition, there needs to be a financial provision to cater for costs such as transportation and out of pocket expenses for the VCOs. Some participants felt that both the Coalition and the NCCS have a duty to pay for some of the logistical costs to facilitate the smooth operation of the volunteer children's officers model.
2. A standard curriculum for VCO training should be developed. There is already a guiding format in the Manual for Children's Officers which now needs to be converted into a detailed curriculum. It was agreed that this recommendation would be followed up at the Children's Department headquarters and that by December 2002, a standard training curriculum for Volunteer Children's Officers will have been developed.
3. There needs to be more training on the Children Act 2001 at all levels including among children's officers. As a new law, the officers implementing it on the ground need thorough understanding and although there is a summarised version available, it is still too complex for the average readers. While the Coalition is preparing to produce a booklet on the Children Act and a number of NGOs have also summarised the main issues, there needs to be a large-scale awareness effort on the Act. In addition, some participants recommended that the Children's Department and other users start documenting any weaknesses in the Act so that they can lobby for amendments.
4. An inventory of child protection services should be developed to assist in referral of cases and networking. The Coalition has produced a Directory of Children's Service in Kenya and it is now the challenge of

the Children's Department and AACs to provide information to update and keep the directory current.

5. It was recommended that the Coalition undertakes a national survey of children in especially difficult circumstances to be used in the conception of new projects and in assessing success or failure of existing ones.
6. Children's Officers around the country need to be provided with basic office and logistical equipment. Similarly, AAC secretariats should be created in every district and provided with basic facilities such as computers, telephones and basic office furniture. It was also felt that in view of the current state of the government's budget, officers need to maximise the local resources and not perpetuate a dependency syndrome. Each AAC should work on a funding strategy that appreciates the potential to raise funds locally. However, at the national level, the issue of allocations for AAC activities from the Exchequer needs to be addressed.
7. It was also recommended that the system of registering and recognising NGO projects be streamlined and implemented to the letter. Currently there are problems where District Development Committees (DDCs) approve projects without consulting with children's officers. It was suggested that when a voluntary organisation wants to start a project, it should consult the local children's office. The CO should then inform the AAC so that the DDC acts on advice of the AAC. This will help avoid duplication and increase coordination.
8. As outlined in the Children Act, NGOs and voluntary organisation were asked to genuinely involve communities. The Children Act provides for local regulatory committees and this should be implemented to the letter.

# Conference Closing

## Conference Closing

Mrs Odoyo of the Children's Department said that this was one of the first conferences for AACs to be held in the country since the implementation of the Children Act began in March 2002. She urged the participants to form effective child protection teams when they go back to their stations. They should look for new partners while maximising the utility of existing ones. In addition Children's Officers need to recognise the potential of the new concepts, both the AAC and VCOs, and make maximum use of them.

She thanked the Coalition and ANPPCAN Regional Office for organising the conference and assured that all recommendations that touch on the operations at the Children's Department will be followed to their conclusion. She hoped that once every year, members of AACs from around the country can hold a conference like this one so as to share experiences and create a forum for promoting growth in child protection practices.

Mr Eliud Barasa, of the Ministry of Education, asked the AACs to formulate strategic plans in order to have a focused way of operating. A strategic plan will have targets and indicators of success and is therefore the best tool for analysing progress. The strategic plan approach should be extended down to the grassroots collaborators and also to communities.

In addition, Mr. Barasa said, the AACs need to enhance the value of cost sharing whether monetary or in kind. For example, there is a project in the Ministry of Education where for every shilling that the Government of Kenya gives, the British Government gives the equivalent. He also reminded participants that they ought to show initiative first before asking for help.

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63. M Elizabeth (F)	Children's Officer	Children's Department	P.O. Box 115 Kwale. 0127-4150/0722-858304.

64. Maiyo.N. (M)	Welfare Officer	Kapsabet Municipal Council, AAC.	P.O. Box 311 Kapsabet 0326-2289.
65. Mboza Ngoli. (F).	Volunteer Children's Officer.	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 115 Kwale.
66. Njagih Ikuyu. (M)	Volunteer Children's Officer.	Kirira Child Welfare Association.	P.O. Box 672 Mwingi.
67. K'onyango Jemin (M)	Children's Officer	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 3721 Maragoli 0722-265929.
68. Mulili Eliab.M. (M)	Children's Officer	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 620 Nanyuki 0176-31972.
69. Mugumya Topher.	Social Work & Social Administration.	ANPPCAN	ANPPCAN. Tel 573990.
70. Njeru Salim.K. (M)	Children's Officer.	Children's Services	P.O. Box 680 Meru. 20706/ 0722-465592.
71. Kawira Christine. (F)	Children's Officer	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 58016 Nairobi. 333551 Ext 20680
72. Mogaka Mary Gorret. (F)	Children's Officer.	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 837 Siaya 21531 (0334)
73. Mwitwa C Monanka (M)	Counsellor	Children's Department Kuria.	P.O. Box 82 Kehancha.
74. Kanaiza Ruth. (F)	Children's Officer	Children's Department.	P.O. Box 580116 Nairobi 333551 Ext 21020.
75. Imbaya Maurice (M)	A.ED. Officer.	Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development (DAE)	P.O. Box 54827 Nairobi. 333551 Ext 20122/20218.