

ACCEL AFRICA- Kenya County Stakeholders Forums Report

21Jan -07Feb 2024



Kirinyaga, Kericho, Kisii and Meru

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Background

The 2020 Global Estimates of Child Labour revealed a troubling trend: the absolute number of children engaged in child labour increased for the first time in 20 years. This rise, from 152 million in 2016 to 160 million in 2020, can be solely attributed to sub-Saharan Africa, where the number of children involved in child labour surged from 72.1 million (22.4% of children) to 92.2 million (23.9% of children). Consequently, sub-Saharan Africa now has more children engaged in child labour than the rest of the world combined. It's important to note that these figures do not account for the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which likely exacerbated the child labour situation in many countries across the region. This situation underscores the significant challenge of achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7, with progress in Africa being a pivotal factor in the global efforts to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025.

Child labour deprives children of their fundamental human rights, including the right to education and the opportunity to develop their full potential. It often involves dangerous and exploitative working conditions, leading to severe physical and mental health impacts. Additionally, it poses significant human rights and reputational risks for businesses and remains a major concern for governments and consumers worldwide. There is a growing recognition that addressing child labour necessitates going beyond workplace monitoring and remediation, focusing on the root causes at the lower tiers of the supply chain. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has shown that eliminating child labour at the national level requires well-funded and effectively implemented public policies targeting these root causes.



TARGET 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

Child Labour in Kenya

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), 8.5 percent of children in Kenya (1.3 million) are engaged in child labour. The highest rates of child labour in Kenya are reported in arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) counties (above 30 percent). Child labour in Kenya primarily occurs in informal production, specifically in the agricultural sector. However, with steady rural-urban migration, urban child labour has emerged as an issue in towns and cities.

Kenya is the world's leading exporter of tea and the third largest producer, after China and India. The tea industry makes an important contribution to the Kenyan economy, with an export value of USD 1.2 billion in 2019, and supports about 5 million people directly and indirectly.[1] An estimated 650,000 small-scale farmers depend on tea, making the industry one of the leading sources of livelihood in the country. Coffee is also a major agricultural export for Kenya and is primarily grown by smallholder farmers. Tea and coffee from Kenya are included on USDOL's List of Goods Produced with Child Labour, thus, there is a need to focus on innovative interventions towards addressing child labour in agriculture value chains.

In 2020, the Kenyan government reaffirmed its commitment to eradicating child labour by taking various measures. These efforts included revitalizing the National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL) by establishing a Technical Working Committee (TWC) and reinstating county-level child labour committees. Additionally, the government enacted the National Prevention and Response Plan on Violence Against Children, aimed at coordinating multisectoral efforts to combat various forms of child labour, including commercial sexual exploitation.

National, Legal and Policy Framework on Child Labour

The government of Kenya has established a range of multi-sectoral institutions to tackle the pervasive issue of child labour at different administrative levels. These include the National Steering Committee (NSC), which oversees coordination efforts across sectors and agencies, and the dedicated Child Labour Division, which is responsible for policy formulation and intervention coordination. At the county and sub-county levels, committees have been formed to address child labour within specific regions, known as County Child Labour Committees and Local Child Labour Committees. These institutions play pivotal roles in orchestrating collaborative efforts, crafting policies, and implementing interventions, emphasizing localized action to combat child labour effectively.

Meanwhile, the Directorate of Labour is spearheading the development of a new National Action Plan (NAP) from 2023 to 2028. This comprehensive plan aims to delineate strategic programs and interventions to eradicate child labour, focusing on prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and protection measures. It outlines the responsibilities of diverse stakeholders, including governmental bodies, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society entities, development partners, and local communities. Moreover, the NAP is poised to serve as a guiding framework for implementing the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour, offering a structured approach to address this pressing societal challenge across various sectors and geographic domains. During her presentation Christine Otieno, Deputy Labour Commissioner and Head of Child Labour Unit, unit pointed out the following:

International Standards on Child Labour.

- ILO Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour: Ratified by all member states of the International Labour Organization (ILO), this convention addresses the most egregious forms of child labour, including slavery, trafficking, forced labour, and hazardous work.
- Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age of Employment: This convention sets the minimum age for employment, with Kenya adhering to a minimum age of 16 years for hazardous work and 13 years for light work.
- ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers: This convention includes provisions concerning child domestic workers, aiming to protect their rights and ensure safe working conditions.
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: This international treaty outlines the civil, political, economic, social, health, and cultural rights of children, emphasizing protection from exploitation and abuse.
- Africa Charter on the Rights of the Child: This regional instrument reinforces the rights outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, tailored to the African context.



Christine Otieno, Assistant Labour Commissioner and Head of the Child Labour Unit, delivering a presentation at the county stakeholders' forums.

Legal Framework on Child Labour in Kenya

- Kenya Constitution 2010[1]: The constitution of Kenya includes provisions safeguarding the rights of children and prohibiting child labour.
- Employment Act No. 11 of 2007[2]: This national legislation addresses various aspects of employment, including provisions related to child labour.
- Children's Act 2022: This act specifically focuses on the protection and welfare of children in Kenya, including measures to prevent and address child labour.
- Counter Trafficking in Persons Act (2010): This legislation aims to combat human trafficking, including trafficking of children for labour exploitation.
- Sexual Offences Act, 2006[3]: This act addresses various forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, including those involving children.
- Basic Education Act 2013: This legislation ensures access to quality education for all children, aiming to prevent child labour by promoting educational opportunities.
- National Children's Policy, 2010: This policy framework outlines the government's commitment to protecting and promoting the rights and welfare of children.
- National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2015: This policy paper provides a strategic framework for addressing child labour in Kenya, outlining interventions and strategies for elimination.

[1] Article 53 (1)(d) "Every child has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, in human treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour.

[2] Prohibits slavery or practices like slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

[3] Sexual exploitation of children in labour constitutes the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Worker Organizations' Role in Eradicating Child Labor

Ms Teresa Wabuku- Programme Officer at Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) highlighted that trade unions are crucial in advocating for and maintaining labour standards in the workforce. They ensure the implementation of international labour standards, including ILO Convention 182 for eliminating the worst forms of child labour, Convention 138 for minimum age requirements, and Convention 190 to eradicate workplace violence and harassment. Child labour signifies a failure to uphold these standards and hampers their advancement. Additionally, it weakens the bargaining power of adult workers, who may be replaced by child labourers accepting lower wages. Unions combat child labour by:

- Collecting information on workplace child labour cases and sharing it with the Ministry of Labor.
- Supporting the application of ILO Conventions and National Laws, endorsing initiatives like Education for All against child labour.
- Negotiating with employers to prevent child labour in workplaces and supply chains.
- Engaging in discussions on pay, workplace conditions, and potential impacts on workers due to significant changes.
- Addressing various workplace issues related to children's involvement, young worker protection, social benefits, and occupational safety.
- Offering legal support and representation in disciplinary meetings to ensure fairness.
- Conducting educational campaigns to raise awareness and eliminate child labour.
- Advocating for policies at national and local levels to tackle the root causes of child labour and enforce international standards for its eradication.

Role of Employers in Elimination of Child labour

FKE serves a dual role as both an advocacy and service organization. In its advocacy capacity, FKE actively influences labour market policies and legal frameworks to foster a business-friendly environment. Simultaneously, FKE offers direct business development services to its members, aiding them in their growth and enhancement endeavours. Mr Duncan Omondi, Program Officer at FKE pointed out the following responsibilities undertaken by FKE to curb child labour.

- Organizational Capacity Building: Strengthening the Federation's ability to combat child labour effectively.
- Advocacy: Shaping legal and policy frameworks and promoting best practices for adoption by sectors and businesses.
- Representation: Standing up for employers on various platforms regarding child labour matters.
- Capacity Enhancement: Raising awareness among employers about child labour issues and their effects on products and services. Providing guidelines for addressing child labour problems and delivering leadership/administration training.
- Compliance Monitoring: Ensuring the enforcement of labour standards at internal, national, regional, and international levels, including adherence to ILO Conventions 182, 138, and 190.
- Education Support: Backing child education through initiatives like the "Adopt-a-School" program, which aims to improve access, equality, and transition rates from primary to secondary and tertiary education levels.



Child Work

Participating in household chores or learning trades within the family, like assisting parents with light tasks or gaining skills on farms or in businesses, can benefit children's future as contributing members of society. These experiences help children cultivate essential skills and attitudes needed for their roles in the workforce and community. When supervised properly, such tasks aid in children's socialization and growth, teaching them responsibility and fostering a sense of pride in their achievements. It is essential to monitor these activities closely to minimize any associated risks. While these activities do not fall under child labour, it is crucial to differentiate them from tasks that could harm children's well-being.



Child Labour

Refers to work that goes beyond what is considered suitable for the development and well-being of children. This may involve overly strenuous tasks, pose health risks, or hinder their education and progress. Children engaged in such labour may endure long hours in unsafe environments, be separated from their families, or miss out on educational opportunities. This type of child labour presents significant dangers to children's physical, mental, and emotional health and is unacceptable under international laws and often in national regulations. It is crucial to address and eradicate these exploitative labour practices to protect the rights and welfare of children worldwide.

The Role of National Administration System in Eradicating Child Labor at the County Level



Collaboration and Coordination:

- The National Administration collaborates closely with both governmental and non-governmental departments and organizations to address child labour effectively.



Dissemination of Information:

- Utilizing barazas, community gatherings, to disseminate information to grassroots communities about the importance of education and the harmful effects of child labour.
- Conducting awareness campaigns to raise awareness about children's rights and the consequences of child labour.
- Leveraging officers who speak the local dialect to effectively communicate with all members of society, including the elderly, ensuring that information reaches everyone.



First Report and Contact Persons:

- Utilizing village elders, chiefs, and their assistants who are well-represented in the grassroots as accessible contact points for reporting child labour incidents.
- Operating as a 24-hour office, ensuring immediate response to incidents through phone calls, walk-ins, or alarms raised by the community.

Strategies to Reduce Child Labour

- Initiating arrests of perpetrators involved in child labour.
- Holding both employers and parents accountable for their roles in child exploitation and referring affected children to relevant support services, including psychosocial specialists.
- Conducting empowerment and sensitization campaigns to raise awareness about the detrimental impact of child labour on future generations.
- Implementing school outreach programs to encourage children's enrolment in formal education.
- Implementing school feeding programs to support children's attendance and participation in education.



Muthoni Nkubiria, Assistant County Commissioner, Kericho County, giving a presentation at the county stakeholders' forum.

Law Enforcement and Reporting Mechanism

Employment Act (Revised 2012) - Part VII – Protection of Children:

- Section 54, Subsection (1): Any person may file a complaint with a labour officer or a police officer of the rank of inspector or above if they believe that a child is engaged in activities constituting the worst forms of child labour.
- Subsection (2): Upon receiving such a complaint, the labour officer, or police officer, as appropriate, must investigate within seven (7) days and submit their findings to the complainant and the Minister.
- Subsection (3): If the officer determines it impractical to investigate, they must provide written notice to the complainant and the Minister, stating the reasons.
- Subsection (4): The employment of a child in any work constituting the worst forms of child labour is a cognizable offense punishable under Section 64 or other relevant laws. No individual shall be punished twice for the same offense.

Penalty for unlawful employment of a child

Employment Act (Revised 2012), Section 64

1. Any person who employs, engages, or uses a child in an industrial undertaking in violation of this part commits an offense.
2. Using a child in any activity constituting the worst forms of child labour is an offense punishable by a fine not exceeding Ksh. 200,000 or imprisonment for up to 12 months, or both.
3. It is a defence if the accused can prove they genuinely believed the child was above the age limit specified by the court.

Challenges to reporting

- Normalization of violations within social and cultural norms, which may condone or justify violence.
- Absence of formal reporting systems in place.
- Lack of awareness and understanding of the law.
- Language barriers hindering effective reporting.
- Lack of trust in reporting mechanisms due to fear of victimization, stigma, or punishment.



Inspector Lydia Mutegi Kirinyaga County, giving a presentation at the county stakeholders' forum.

The Role of the Labor Inspectorate in Eradicating Child Labor within the County.

During their presentations, the 4 labour officers from Kirinyaga (Morris Mpuria), Kericho (Charles Muniko), Kericho (Wilson Luvavo) and Meru (Catherine Kubai) highlighted the following:

1. Enforcement of Labour Laws: Labour inspectors ensure compliance with labour laws related to child labour, such as minimum age requirements and working conditions, by conducting regular inspections and taking enforcement actions against violators.
2. Inspection and Monitoring: They conduct regular workplace inspections, particularly in establishments where young workers are employed, to monitor compliance with child labour laws.
3. Record Inspection: Inspectors review employment records to identify any instances of child labour within workplaces.
4. Education and Awareness: Labour inspectors educate employers and workers about child labour laws and the consequences of non-compliance, aiming to raise awareness and foster a culture of adherence to labour standards.
5. Monitoring Supply Chains: They monitor factories and supply chains to prevent child labour use at any production stage.
6. Inspection Reporting: Inspectors issue detailed inspection reports outlining the work environment of children in the workplace if any instances are found.
7. Legal Action: In serious violations, the labour inspectorate may initiate legal action against offenders, involving law enforcement agencies to arrest and prosecute culprits.
8. Identification and Rehabilitation: Inspectors identify cases of child labour and collaborate with children's services and NGOs to rescue and rehabilitate affected children, ensuring their well-being and access to education.
9. Ground-Level Interviews: Inspectors interview workers, such as tea and coffee pluckers, or use informants to gather information on child labour.
10. Documentation: Labour inspection activities are documented on an LD 101 form to maintain records and track enforcement actions

County Child Labour Committees (CCLC)

This is a committee comprising representatives or stakeholders who have a role to play or contribute towards the elimination of child labour in the county. The CCLC has an organizational structure stipulating responsibilities and work plans.

Role of CCLC committee

- Facilitate and implement the elimination of child labour at the county level.
- Plan and coordinate meetings with stakeholders quarterly.
- Conduct field visits to workplaces where child labour occurs.
- Raise awareness and sensitize stakeholders on child labour issues.
- Mobilize resources from partners and stakeholders.
- Conduct mapping to identify areas with the highest incidence of child labour.
- Appoint focal persons at the location, sub-county, and county levels.
- Establish communication channels with stakeholders, such as hotline numbers and WhatsApp groups.
- Identify constraints, particularly regarding funding for child labour activities and transportation.
- Monitor and evaluate the program's effectiveness.
- Prepare quarterly and annual reports on child labour activities.

County Occupational Safety and Health Officer

The crucial role of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) officers in combating child labour continues with their responsibility to monitor and inspect workplaces, ensuring adherence to safety standards and regulations that safeguard children from hazardous conditions, such as exposure to dangerous substances and machinery. OSH officers conduct risk assessments to proactively identify potential workplace hazards and take preventive measures to mitigate risks and ensure safe working environments for children. Additionally, they advocate for more robust legal frameworks and participate in campaigns against child labour, emphasizing the importance of safe working conditions. Collaborating with various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and employers' and workers' organizations, OSH officers work collectively to develop effective policies and programs to eradicate hazardous child labour. In the collective effort to eliminate hazardous child labour, OSH officers play a pivotal role in protecting children and advocating for their right to a safe and nurturing environment where they can thrive. Let us unite in raising awareness and taking action to ensure every child's well-being and safety.



Kennedy Aroko, the Occupational Safety and Health Officer for Kisii County, making a presentation at the county stakeholders' forum.



Grace Ouma, the Deputy County Commissioner of Kisii, delivering the opening remarks at the stakeholders' forum in the county.



Dr John Gachara CEM-Agric & Livestock Kirinyaga County, giving remarks at the county stakeholders' forum.



Robert Nyangachi, Director Cooperative, Kisii County, giving a presentation at the county stakeholders' forum.

Role of education stakeholders in elimination of child Labour

Protecting Kenyan children against exploitative labour practices is ensured through a comprehensive set of policy and legal frameworks established by the Ministry of Education and the Kenyan Government. These include:

- a) The Constitution of Kenya, 2010
- b) The Basic Education Act, 2013 (highlighting Article 28(1) ensuring the right to free and compulsory primary education)
- c) The Teachers Service Commission Act, 2012
- d) The Children's Act
- e) The Employment Act
- f) The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) Act
- g) The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) Act, among others.

Despite these robust legal and policy structures, their effectiveness in addressing child labour at the County level has been hampered by disjointed implementation, weak enforcement, lack of awareness, and inadequate resource allocation.

Child labour inflicts catastrophic consequences on children, hindering their access to education, equity, and successful completion of educational cycles, thereby compromising the quality of education provided and resulting in wasted investments by the Government, stakeholders, and parents. Moreover, it inflicts lifelong physical and mental harm on its victims. It serves as a significant contributor to various societal issues, including defilement, early exposure to sexual activities, exploitation, child and teenage pregnancies, and exposure to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, child abuse, and slavery. Eliminating child labour is essential for promoting justice and safeguarding the health and well-being of our children and nation.

School Feeding Program: The School Feeding Program promotes equity and inclusion in education by addressing hunger and improving attendance rates. Research indicates that schools offering meals experience higher enrolment and consistent learner attendance, reducing the likelihood of children engaging in labour activities. Schools enhance learner retention, transition, and completion rates by providing meals. Moreover, the economic value of a daily school meal, equivalent to approximately 10% of a low-income household's income, can lead to significant savings for families with multiple children in school. Thus, providing free school meals substantially alleviates the financial burden on low-income families, ultimately deterring incidences of child labour by reducing their budgetary needs.

Detection: Enhancing detection involves fostering more vital collaboration among the government, schools, and the community to identify and prevent child labour practices at an early stage. This entails convening county-wide multi-stakeholder forums aimed at collectively assessing the status, progress, gaps, achievements, inherent challenges, and potential remedial measures for advancing the elimination of child labour in the selected counties.

Awareness (Children clubs, Parents Days, etc): Raising awareness about child labour and child rights involves several strategies, including convening annual parents' days at each school to address these critical issues. Through these events, barriers to the full implementation of child labour policies are identified and prevention and intervention strategies are developed to guide assessment, monitoring, and evaluation efforts toward eliminating child labour.



Catherine M. Kubai, the County Labour Officer of Meru County, giving a presentation at the stakeholders' forum in the county.



Dancan Omondi - Program Manager -Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) making a presentation at the county stakeholders' forums.

The County Social Protection and Support Programs:

Protecting households from adverse shocks involves supporting individuals to manage these shocks and cushioning workers from the consequences of income-threatening risks such as sickness or poor health. It also entails promoting critical investments in human capital and physical assets by households to ensure resilience in the medium term and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Chapter 4 of the Bill of Rights, as outlined in Article 43, Sub-article 3, mandates the state to provide appropriate social security to individuals unable to support themselves and their dependents. Moreover, Economic and social rights are enshrined in Kenya's Constitution of 2010, emphasizing the following:

Every person has the right:

- a. To the highest attainable health standard, including access to health care services, including reproductive health care.
- b. To accessible and adequate housing and reasonable standards of sanitation.
- c. To be free from hunger and to have adequate food of acceptable quality.
- d. To clean and safe water in adequate quantities.
- e. To social security.
- f. To education.

In Kirinyaga County, the County Social Protection and Support Programs implement social protection schemes for vulnerable families. These programs include the Inua Jamii and Presidential Secondary School Bursary programs. The Inua Jamii Program, initiated in 2015, aims to alleviate poverty among underprivileged individuals through three main programs: Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer (OVC-CT), Older Persons Cash Transfer (OPCT), and Persons with Severe Disability Cash Transfer (PWSD-CT). Eligible households under the OVC-CT program receive a monthly stipend of Kes 2,000.

In Kisii County, Cash transfers, including those under the OVCs (Orphans and Vulnerable Children), OPCT (Older Persons Cash Transfer), and PWSD (Persons with Severe Disability) programs, benefit 35 households in the county. Additionally, scholarships, food subsidies, and safe motherhood vouchers are provided. Food distribution grants and emergency distributions are facilitated alongside school feeding programs such as the Expanded School Feeding Program and "Me Njaa Marufuko." Furthermore, public works initiatives like "Kazi Kwa Vijana" are implemented to bolster employment opportunities.

The Presidential Secondary School Bursary Program, formerly known as the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) school fees support initiative, was established in the 2006/2007 financial year. Renamed the PSSB in 2013/2014, it aligns with Vision 2030's goal of enhancing literacy rates by improving access to education and transition rates from primary to secondary schools. Beneficiaries under the PSSB receive Kes 30,000 annually, totaling Kes 1.35 million per financial year. Oversight of the program is provided by the Constituency Social Assistance Committee (CSAC), chaired by the Deputy County Commissioner (DC). It includes representation from the area Member of Parliament (MP), the Women's Representative, and the Children's Officer. Eligibility criteria encompass being an orphan, a vulnerable child from a poor household, or a child with parents/guardians facing severe disability or chronic illness. Presently, there are 25 qualified students from the previous financial year, with an additional 25 students on the waiting list, underscoring the ongoing need for support in children's services.



Group photo for Kirinyaga Stakeholders

Role of Stakeholders in the elimination of Child labour in the agriculture sector

Stakeholders are essential in addressing child labour, bringing valuable experiences, ideas, perspectives, and contributions to the table. Their pivotal roles cannot be overstated. They encompass various entities such as the church, educational institutions, farmers, government bodies, civil society organizations, and local communities.

Government agencies

- Strengthening legal protections for children from child labour.
- Mandating and publishing the light work framework.
- Providing adequate social protection benefits.
- Promoting decent work for adults so families don't resort to child labour.
- Working closely with all stakeholders to help tackle child abuse.
- Ensure the adherence to all policies laid out to help fight child labour.
- Provide/ ensure adequate finances to propel the fight against child labour.
- Provide access to education for all children.

Businesses Community

- Ensure responsible business conduct.
- Have business principles that will help eliminate child labour in the supply chain.
- Ensure the community/farmers know the harm child labour brings to marketing their commodities.
- Comply with national laws.
- Respect the human rights of every individual.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

- Collaborate with industry trade groups to educate the market on the risk of child labour.
- Working closely with the community to address child labour and abuse.
- Strengthen anti-child labour laws by providing compelling evidence as the foundation for legislation.
- Monitoring and reporting cases of child labour.
- Local community
- Monitoring and reporting cases of child labour.
- Raising awareness amongst each other on the ways to fight child labour.
- Generating ideas that lead to decision-making.



The Head of County Public Service in Meru County inaugurating the County Stakeholders Forum.

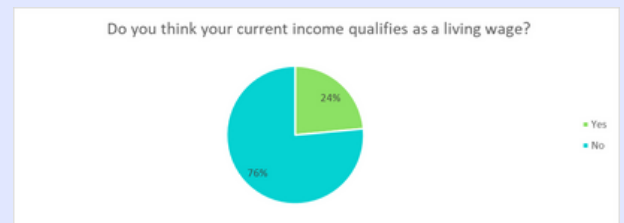
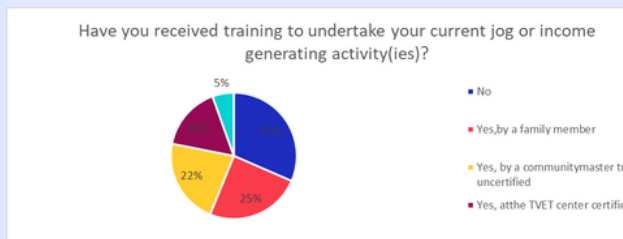
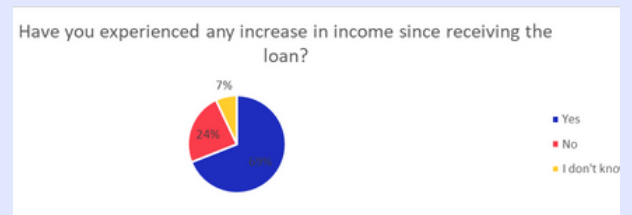
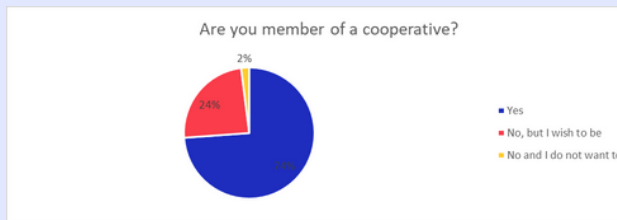


Chief of Staff of Kericho County, inaugurating the County Stakeholders Forum.

ACCEL Project County Baseline results

A survey was conducted among community members in targeted areas to gather insights. The survey involved 73 participants, with a gender distribution of 59% male and 41% female, spread across various counties. Meru, Kirinyaga, and Kericho counties each contributed equal proportions, while Kisii County had the highest representation at 20.5%, followed by Nyamira and Kisii Counties. The survey revealed that 94.2% of respondents were aware of social protection schemes in Kenya, indicating widespread familiarity with these programs, although a small minority (5.8%) lacked awareness, suggesting gaps in outreach.

Regarding occupational safety and health (OSH) rights, 60% of respondents acknowledged awareness, while 40% showed limited understanding. Insights into banking knowledge and loan usage indicated that 89% understood how banks could assist them, highlighting financial literacy gaps for a minority (11%). Additionally, 74% of respondents were cooperative members, while 31.5% had never received formal or informal training, with familial learning playing a significant role for 25% of participants.



Overview of the County Agricultural Sector (Tea and Coffee):

Kirinyaga

Coffee Value Chain Production:

In the coffee value chain, production is primarily carried out by smallholders and estates. The sector comprises 15 smallholder cooperatives and 416 estates, covering an area of 10,089 hectares. According to the 2019 census, there are a total of 47,835 growers involved in coffee production. Harvesting is predominantly manual, and after harvest, the coffee cherries undergo processing at pulping factories before being transferred to milling facilities for further processing.

Tea Value Chain Production:

Tea production is concentrated in three sub-counties of Kirinyaga: East, Central, and West. Like coffee, production in the tea sector is mainly managed by smallholders, with a few farms exceeding 5 acres in size. The tea industry comprises five smallholder tea factories, and the total area under tea cultivation is 7,812 hectares. As of the 2019 census, there are approximately 53,846 tea growers. After processing at the five factories, the tea is sold to the export market or distributed locally.

Labour in the tea and coffee sectors

Labour in the coffee and tea sectors involves harvesting and weeding, typically performed by women. The workforce engaged in these activities consists of adults aged 18 and above. Approximately 57% of the labour force is employed in agriculture, with tea and coffee being significant crops. However, labour scarcity in these sectors can lead to the involvement of children in the workforce. To address this issue, education policies and laws protect children from exploitation.

Additionally, both value chains undergo audits and certifications by reputable bodies, eliminating child labor as a crucial parameter for accreditation. Mechanization plays a role in reducing the demand for manual labour. Efforts are underway to enhance livelihoods in these sectors.

Kisii

Agriculture plays a pivotal role in the County's socio-economic development, contributing 45% to the County's gross product, as reported in the Gross County Report (GCP) 2021. The country's agriculture sector focuses on cultivating cash crops such as tea, coffee, and sugarcane and food crops like maize, finger millet, beans, bananas, avocados, vegetables, and sweet potatoes. The County is also a Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) member.

Tea sector: Child labour is evident in various tasks such as weeding, fertilizer application, tea leaf plucking (often done in the morning before school or the evening after school), and delivery to buying centres, both formal and informal.

Coffee sector: Child labour is observed in several tasks within the coffee sector, including weeding and fertilizer application, coffee picking, delivery to pulping centres for cherry processing, coffee hawking, as well as functions like Mbuni, which involves spreading and retrieving during drying, and washing moldy coffee beans before drying.

Kericho

Status of child labour in the local tea and coffee industry: Child labour is a concern within the local tea and coffee industry, representing the primary household income sources in the county's agricultural sector. Farm labour is primarily sourced from farming households and hired casual workers. However, the department lacks verifiable information on the extent of child labour in the coffee and tea industry within the county. Therefore, conducting a baseline survey is necessary to accurately quantify the involvement of child labour in both the production and processing of coffee and tea. It is crucial to implement county policies and legal frameworks to combat child labour supply in agricultural activities. (see Table 1)

Tea Cultivation and Production:

Meru County has gained recognition for its cultivation and production. The favourable climatic conditions, including well-distributed rainfall and fertile soils, contribute to the high-quality tea grown in the region. Large tea estates and smallholder farmers collectively contribute to the County's tea production.

According to Kenya National Farmer Registration (2023), the County has 24,910 farmers and 23,974 acres under tea production.

Coffee Farming and Processing: Coffee farming is another integral component of Meru County's agricultural sector. The County is known for producing Arabica coffee beans, favoured for their unique flavour profile.

According to Kenya National Farmer Registration (2023), the County has 16,494 farmers and a total of 10 680 acres under coffee production.

Child labour in the Tea and Coffee industry in Meru County can be associated with various value chain nodes. It's important to note that efforts have been made to address child labour in the agricultural sector, but challenges may still exist. Here are possible value chain nodes where child labour may be observed (see Table 2)

Meru

Challenges in addressing Child Labour at the County Level

1. Poverty and the increasing cost of living exacerbate the vulnerability of families.
2. Family disintegration further exposes children to risks and exploitation.
3. Children with disabilities are particularly susceptible to exploitation and neglect.
4. Insufficient rescue centers and child protection units limit the capacity to safeguard vulnerable children.
5. Ignorance and apathy within local communities hinder efforts to address child labour.
6. Harmful cultural practices perpetuate the cycle of child exploitation.
7. Poor coordination among stakeholders undermines effective interventions.
8. Conflicting laws and policies hamper enforcement efforts and create loopholes for exploitation.
9. Corruption undermines efforts to combat child labour and protect children's rights.
10. Hostility from communities towards law enforcement agencies complicates intervention efforts.
11. Gender discrimination exacerbates vulnerabilities, particularly for girls.
12. Low wages contribute to the prevalence of child labour as families struggle to make ends meet.
13. Inadequate enforcement of laws and regulations fails to deter exploitative practices.
14. The high cost of living further pushes families towards desperate measures, including child labour.
15. Lack of political will hampers efforts to effectively implement and enforce child labour laws.

Expectations from stakeholders during the county forums

1. Develop data-driven interventions by conducting comprehensive research and analysis to understand the prevalence and underlying causes of child labor.
2. Create linkages and networks between stakeholders to facilitate collaboration and information sharing.
3. Assess the extent of child labour and ongoing efforts to address the issue, enabling informed decision-making and targeted interventions.
4. Identify and implement effective methods for eliminating child labour, considering each context's specific dynamics and challenges.
5. Investigate the role of the labour inspectorate in combating child labour and explore avenues for strengthening enforcement mechanisms.
6. Establish or revive county child labour committees to coordinate local efforts and initiatives.
7. Gain insight into international and local labour laws about child labour and develop an implementation framework for adherence and enforcement.
8. Understand the agricultural sector's role in perpetuating and addressing child labour, devising strategies to mitigate risks, and promoting responsible practices.
9. To guide policy development and intervention strategies, clarify the distinction between child labour and acceptable forms of child work.
10. Explore the root causes of child labour, including poverty, lack of education, and cultural factors, to develop holistic approaches to prevention and elimination.

Key Action Plans to Address Child Labour at the County Level

1. Conducting train-the-trainer sessions to disseminate information to a broader range of community members.
2. Operationalizing the County Child Labour Committees to address child labour issues at the local level effectively.
3. Sensitizing stakeholders on policies related to child labour and ensuring their understanding and compliance.
4. Adapting national policies and laws to suit the specific context of the county.
5. Enhancing the welfare of vulnerable groups, particularly in the agricultural sector, through targeted interventions.
6. Enforcing protective measures for individuals working in tea and coffee farms to safeguard their well-being.
7. Providing training to key stakeholders such as teachers, police officers, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) officers, local chiefs, NGOs, and police on identifying and addressing child labour cases.
8. Establish special care units for persons with disabilities to ensure their inclusion and support.
9. Conducting awareness campaigns in public forums to educate the community about the dangers and consequences of child labour.
10. Challenging cultural norms that perpetuate child labour practices and promote alternative values.
11. Collaborating with the media to advocate for and raise awareness about child labour issues through campaigns and outreach efforts.



Group work session for Kirinyaga stakeholders

Table 1: Overview of leading crop value chains in Kericho

Predominant Agricultural value chains	Production systems	Area under production (HA)	Annual production (tones)	Gross earning (PA) Ksh billions	Where grown predominantly	co-operative societies	% contribution of Family to farm labor
Tea	Small holder farms	15,000	125,461	7.8	Ainamoi, Bureti, Belgut	4	60
	Tea estates	6,500	98,000		Belgut, Ainamoi	0	0
Sugar cane	Small holder farms	10,524	631,440	3.5	Soin Sigowet	20	20
Coffee	Small holder farms	5,000	7,000	3.4	Kipkelion West	130	70
Pyrethrum	Small holder farms	300	121	0.031	Kipkelion East	1	60

Table 2: Possible Value Chains nodes that Child labour may be prevalent.

SN	Value Chain Node	Form of Child Labour
1	Planting stage	Children are involved in planting and weeding.
2	Harvesting and Collection	Children might be engaged in picking tea leaves or harvesting coffee beans. This is a physically demanding task that may involve long hours of working.
3	Transportation	Children may be involved in transporting the harvested produce from farms to processing units or between different stages of the supply chain.
4	Processing and Sorting	Children could be involved in sorting, cleaning, and processing the harvested tea leaves or coffee beans.

TIME BOUND ACTION PLAN ON IMPLEMENTING THE ACCELERATING ACTION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN SUPPLY CHAINS IN MERU COUNTY					
Rank	ACTION AGREED	BY WHEN/ TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY BY WHO	PARTNERS	TARGET GROUP
1	Child Labour Committee (CCCL)	30th March 2024	County Labour Officer/County Government	ILO-ACCEL	County Commissioner or his/her representative – Chairperson,County Labour Officer- Secretary, County Children Officer,County Social Development Officer, County Probation Officer,County Officer in charge of Youth affairs. County Education Officer, County PoliceCommander, Representative from County Government
2	Capacity Building/ Enhancement	July 2024 - Dec 2024	CLO and County Government.	ILO-ACCEL	NGAOs, ODPP, Police, Children Officers Labour Inspectorate, MOE (headteachers), County Government (Administrators, Cooperatives officers, Agriculture officers)
3	Advocacy and Awareness	Ongoing/ Continuous	County Government/ NGAOs	Religious leaders, Local Media, Employers/Worker Organizations	Farmer Organizations, Cooperative Societies, Children (County Children Assembly)
4	County Policy on Child Labour and Welfare	Initiate by June 2024	County Government/CCLC	ILO-ACCEL	County and residents
5	Social Assistance Policy -School feeding, cash transfer, sanitary pads	Mid Term	County Government	ILO-ACCEL	Vulnerable families, children,

S/NO	ACTION AGREED	BY WHEN/ TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY (BY WHO)	PARTNERS	COMMENTS
1.	Formation of County Child Labour Committee	By March 2024	County Labour Officer		Consultation between National and County Government on membership of the Committee The committee to be established under County Children Advisory Committee (CCAC) Induction and training of members
2.	Advocacy and Awareness-Tabaka Ward,	Ongoing	County Labour Officer	County Government, NGAOs, CCCS, FKE/COTU	South Mugirango (Tabaka ward)-quarries, Sugarcane Growing locations. North Mugirango (tea estates, Brick Making Daraja Mbili(Hawking)
3.	Capacity Building/Enhancement	July 2024			Committee Members. NGAOs, Police Officers manning children and gender help desk, religious leaders, Headteachers, Children Officers, Labour Inspectorate
4.	Development of policies: i. Review of draft Child Protection Policy ii. Formulation of Social Protection Policy	By December 2024			Incorporate child labour issues in the policy. The technical committee engage a consultant on children and labour issues. Sensitisation of county assembly members Validation of the policy Launch of the policy
5	Social Assistance Policy -School feeding, cash transfer, sanitary pads	Mid Term	County Government	ILO-ACCEL	Vulnerable families, children,

TIME BOUND ACTION PLAN ON IMPLEMENTING THE ACCELERATING ACTION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN SUPPLY CHAINS IN KERICHO COUNTY

S/NO	ACTION AGREED	BY WHEN/ TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY (BY WHO)	PARTNERS	COMMENTS
1.	Development of Policies-Child Protection Policy	By March 2024	County Government/MOLSP	ILO	The team will identify more partners
2.	Capacity building/Enhancement	July 2024	County Government/MOLSP	ILO, KTGA	County Government Administrators, NGAOs, Children Officers, Labour Inspectorate, Police, Agriculture and Cooperatives, MOE/TSC, Trade Unions, Farmers Cooperative Societies, KTDA, CSOs, Religious Leaders
3.	Formation of Child Labour Committee	March 2024	MOLSP/CC/County Government		Circular to be released by LC
4.	Advocacy and raising awareness	Ongoing	ALL		Farmers, parents, teachers, Children, workers, County Government staff, Church leaders, Sport tournaments
5.	Baseline Survey	July 2024	County Government/MOLSP	ILO	
6.	IEC materials and activities				Posters in local language, Stickers, Brochures, Banners, Boda Boda reflectors, Murals, Signages

TIME BOUND ACTION PLAN ON IMPLEMENTING THE ACCELERATING ACTION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN SUPPLY CHAINS IN KIRINYAGA COUNTY

S/NO	ACTION AGREED	BY WHEN/ TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY (BY WHO)	COMMENTS
1.	Formation of County Child Labour Committee	By March 2024	County Labour Officer/CCCS/County Government of Kirinyaga	Work closely with County Commissioner and County government to establish and operationalise the committee. All stakeholders to be included in the committee.
2.	Capacity Building/ Enhancement	By September 2024	CDE/County Director of TSC/CLO/FKE/ COTU-County Government	Train the following on Child Labour (ToTs): Officers in charge of Police Posts, NGAOs and County Government Administrators, Head Teachers, Directors of County Departments, Leadership of Farmers Organisations, Labour Officers, DOSHS Officers, Children Officers
3.	Sensitization/Advocacy	Ongoing	County Labour Officer/CCCS/County Government of Kirinyaga	OSH/Social Protection, Social Finance, Cooperatives, Child Labour/Innovative Income Generating Activities
4.	Mainstreaming child labour issues		County Labour Officer/CCCS/County Government of Kirinyaga	All stakeholders