



# WOMEN IN CHILDCARE *Forum*


FORUM REPORT

# AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF WOMEN CHILDCARE WORKERS

5th - 6th March 2023,  
Absa Sports Ground, Nairobi



QUALITY. AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE FOR ALL

 (+254) 714-262626

 [wic2023.uthabiti africa.org](http://wic2023.uthabiti africa.org)

 [info@uthabiti africa.org](mailto:info@uthabiti africa.org)

# Table of Contents

<b>xx</b>	Acknowledgements
<b>xx</b>	Preface
<b>xx</b>	Introduction
<b>xx</b>	Summary
<b>xx</b>	The Role of Women in the Childcare Economy and Women's Economic Empowerment
<b>xx</b>	Early Childhood Development and its Relation to Childcare
<b>xx</b>	Suggestion and Addition

Nature of Childcare Workforce in Kenya

# Acknowledgements

We wish to extend our appreciation to several individuals and organizations for their invaluable support. This includes the Women in Childcare Technical Working Group, ABSA Bank Kenya PLC, Oxfam Kenya, the Kenyan Government, ECDAN, Action Foundation, COVAW, Tiny Totos, AfECN, ChildFund, PATH, Kidogo, Nyarai Homecare Services, civil society organizations, Early Childhood Development (ECD) institutions, women-led childcare micro-enterprises, and all the participants who registered for the meeting.

Special recognition goes to the Office of the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya, Her Excellency Rachael Ruto, and the key ministries that committed to supporting the dissemination of the 2022 Report on the Status of Female Childcare Workers in Kenya, prepared by Uthabiti Africa, within their respective areas of responsibility and regions.

Lastly, we would like to convey our deepest gratitude to the Uthabiti team, whose tireless dedication to organizing events has had a profound impact on amplifying the voices of childcare workers. Equally, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the childcare workers themselves, who are the driving force behind our mission to enhance the quality and affordability of childcare for every child in Africa.

When Uthabiti Africa was established in 2019, it was obvious to me that rightfully or wrongfully, the childcare profession is highly feminized. However, some feminist organizations looked at childcare as an outcome of the patriarchy that continued to marginalize women. This made it difficult to engage with the feminist movement in Kenya, as it, on the surface, appeared as if we, in our work, were affirming the dominance of the patriarchy. We realized that, perhaps, our framing of the childcare crisis was problematic. We had the intrinsic knowledge of what the crisis was but we had no data to back our knowledge. We therefore, systematically collected data to confirm that far from affirming the patriarchy, the focus of our work was on elevating the voice of paid childcare workers who were marginalized and who had been left behind during years of successful women's economic empowerment initiatives. We scraped the bottom of our available funding to do this.

The outcomes were astonishing, surprising, illuminating, and comforting; they validated our initial suppositions made four years ago. Back in 2019, during Uthabiti's efforts to determine the feasibility of a childcare market facilitator in Kenya, reports were circulating within the sector that there existed around 3,600 childcare micro-enterprises in Nairobi. When I inquired with various stakeholders about the source of this figure, the response I received was that 'someone had mentioned it during a workshop in 2016'. As expected, this lack of concrete data hindered policy-makers from taking our proposition seriously. Consequently, we initiated a community-driven process to count childcare micro-enterprises in both Nairobi and Kisumu counties as a starting point.

Initially, we thought of enumerating and just getting the data on the number of childcare micro-enterprises. As we progressed with enumeration, we asked ourselves, how about if we organized the women into a large network that would exist for many years to come? That is when the idea of establishing the Women in Childcare Network came up. By the time we held the Forum, the membership of this nascent network was at 7000.

The intention behind the Women in Childcare Forum 2023 was to mark a significant shift in Kenyan society's nonchalant approach to paid childcare work. The forum aimed to develop a roadmap for initiating change, amplify the perspectives of women engaged in childcare, and bring together a collaborative effort involving the national government, civil society organizations, educational establishments, and service providers to generate substantial backing for childcare workers.

Considering our experience advocating for investments in women in childcare over the last four years, sharing the research findings was a critical step toward amplifying the needs of childcare workers in Kenya. The idea was to bring a wide range of stakeholders.

**Asayya Imaya**

**Convener, Collaborative Action for Childcare**

**Founder and CEO, Uthabiti Africa**

# Introduction

Enhancing shared prosperity, fostering inclusive economic growth, expanding equitable opportunities, and eradicating extreme poverty are all attainable through substantial investments in early childhood care, education, and development. Regrettably, many African governments are falling behind in the creation and implementation of robust policies and programs focused on childcare. Remarkably, it is the childcare workers who bear the brunt of this inaction or inadequacy. The Sustainable Development Goals have readily embraced Early Childhood Development (ECD), recognizing its pivotal role in achieving global transformation by 2030. At the core of this vision lies responsive caregiving and the significant contribution of caregivers—parents, families, and other individuals entrusted with the care of children.

In Kenya, where childcare predominantly remains within the domain of women, the invaluable contribution of female childcare workers within the childcare ecosystem is undeniable. In various capacities (such as domestic workers, home-based care centres, and centre-based care centres), women immersed in the childcare ecosystem create an intimate setting that nurtures and safeguards children below the age of four, as they develop their individualities, and lays the foundations for their overall growth. Furthermore, these women carers play a role in enhancing women's economic empowerment by facilitating their participation in paid employment and enabling girls and young women to resume their education after giving birth. This approach also ensures that siblings can exercise their rights by attending school instead of assuming childcare responsibilities.

Despite providing an indispensable social service, female childcare workers grapple with pervasive challenges including dire poverty (particularly in urban informal settlements), insecurity, gender disparities, harassment, solicitation, under-compensation, rights violations, and compromised mental well-being. These adversities limit their ability to effectively shield, support, and facilitate the optimal early childhood development of young children. Moreover, disparities in access to quality and affordable care and utilization persist, particularly for marginalized children in informal settlements, those with special needs, and children whose mothers are incarcerated. Adding to these complexities, childcare services remain prohibitively expensive for numerous working parents, while being provided by a severely underfunded, underpaid, under-recognized, and undervalued workforce.

Until recently, society has commonly regarded childcare as a responsibility within the family, with women disproportionately shouldering this burden. However, the rise in female employment has considerably shifted childcare from being a maternal function to being an essential social outsourced service. Moreover, many parents struggle to balance their responsibilities for childcare and paid employment. Thus, families have increasingly had to rely on childcare because spending more time at work has become an economic necessity for many. The inability to meet childcare needs within the family has consequently led to a change in how, where, and by whom childcare is delivered and has necessitated the proliferation of extra-familial care options for working parents, such as domestic workers and daycare centres.

Despite the aforementioned factors, a persistent trend continues to predominantly feature women in these roles. This is attributable to existing gender stereotypes that portray women as natural caregivers. These stereotypes endure within childcare services, where a majority of childcare centres are female-owned and staffed primarily by women.



Furthermore, women dominate daycare environments, pre-schools, and elementary schools so naturally that they seem to be more preferred than men when it comes to childcare services. Albeit men slowly coming into the childcare scene, women remain the major caregivers in the childcare ecosystem in Kenya. Again, the childcare service in Kenya is largely informal and unregulated. The majority of the women providing childcare services are small-scale providers who provide the service in their own homes or run childcare centres from converted homes. However, childcare work is anticipated to grow into a formalized and highly dignified workforce in the coming decade and many will choose it as a career of choice. According to recent estimates by the World Bank, more than 40 percent of children below primary school age need organised childcare but do not have access to it; a situation that has been described as a 'global childcare crisis'.<sup>[1]</sup>

This lack of childcare disproportionately affects children and families in low and middle-income countries. There exist concerns about the soaring costs for parents, a highly untrained childcare workforce, insufficient funding for childcare centres, and the exclusion of children with special needs and children of incarcerated mothers from childcare services. Additionally, the policy and regulatory environment remains patchy. Moreover, the exclusion of female caregivers in the community policy dialogues and other decision-making fora, as well as the often small and unprofitable nature of the services themselves scar the childcare ecosystem.

The Women in Childcare Forum, held in Nairobi in March 2023 sought to amplify the voice of female childcare workers in Kenya as a way of drawing attention to this category of women whose needs appeared to be ignored by not only the government of Kenya, funders, and civil society at large. By amplifying their needs, Uthabiti sought to create a paradigm shift that would see improvements in policy and practice - including funding - that would be directed at female childcare workers not just in Kenya but in other countries in Africa.

[1] 'Early Childhood Development' (The World Bank, May 2023)  
Accessed 6th October 2023

# SUMMARY

Uthabiti Africa, under the Collaborative Action for Childcare platform, convened the Women in Childcare (WiC) Forum at ABSA Sports Club in Nairobi on the 6th and 7th March 2023. This first event brought more than 222 participants including childcare entrepreneurs, civil society, policymakers and private sector agencies together to reflect on findings from a yearlong study on the status of female childcare workers and childcare micro-enterprises in Kenya.

The following objectives guided the two-day event.



To create an experience-sharing and learning platform for women in childcare entrepreneurs.



To create an opportunity for women in childcare to learn from local and global actors.



To set the foundation for catalytic policy and regulatory reforms that affect women working in the childcare ecosystem.



To set the foundation for accelerated collaborative action in addressing the needs of the childcare micro-enterprises in Kenya.



To foster networking and collaboration amongst childcare entrepreneurs.



To identify knowledge gaps in the childcare sector that researchers and implementers could explore.



To increase the visibility and participation of women in childcare in policy conversations.



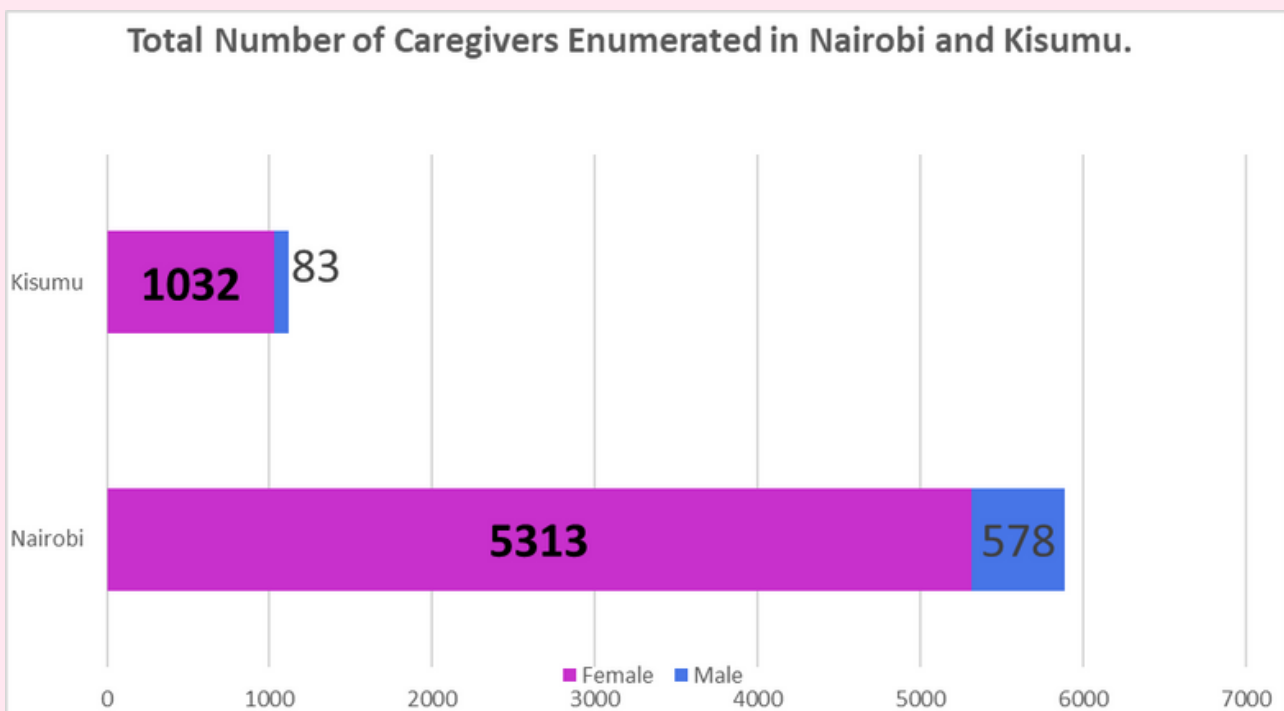
The event was officially opened by the The First Lady of the Republic of Kenya, Her Excellency Rachael Ruto, represented by Madam Stella Chepng'eno, Director of Women Economic Empowerment (at the Office of the First Lady of Kenya), On the first day, they were taken through "the walk and learn" experience characterized by learning across six thematic areas namely: basic first aid; entrepreneurship; nutrition; responsive caregiving; play; and caring for children with disabilities. The second day of the Forum was an opportunity for participants to share lessons learned on day one and reflect on research findings and learning considering how best to support childcare entrepreneurs.

Ms. Stella Chepngeno also launched Uthabiti's Status of Female Childcare Workers in Kenya Report 2023. This report revealed that, as of February 2023, there were more than 7,006 childcare micro-enterprises in Nairobi and Kisumu combined, and women dominated.

See analyzed data representation in the following table:

## Nature of Childcare Workforce in Kenya.

**Chart 1: Total Number of caregivers enumerated in Nairobi and Kisumu**

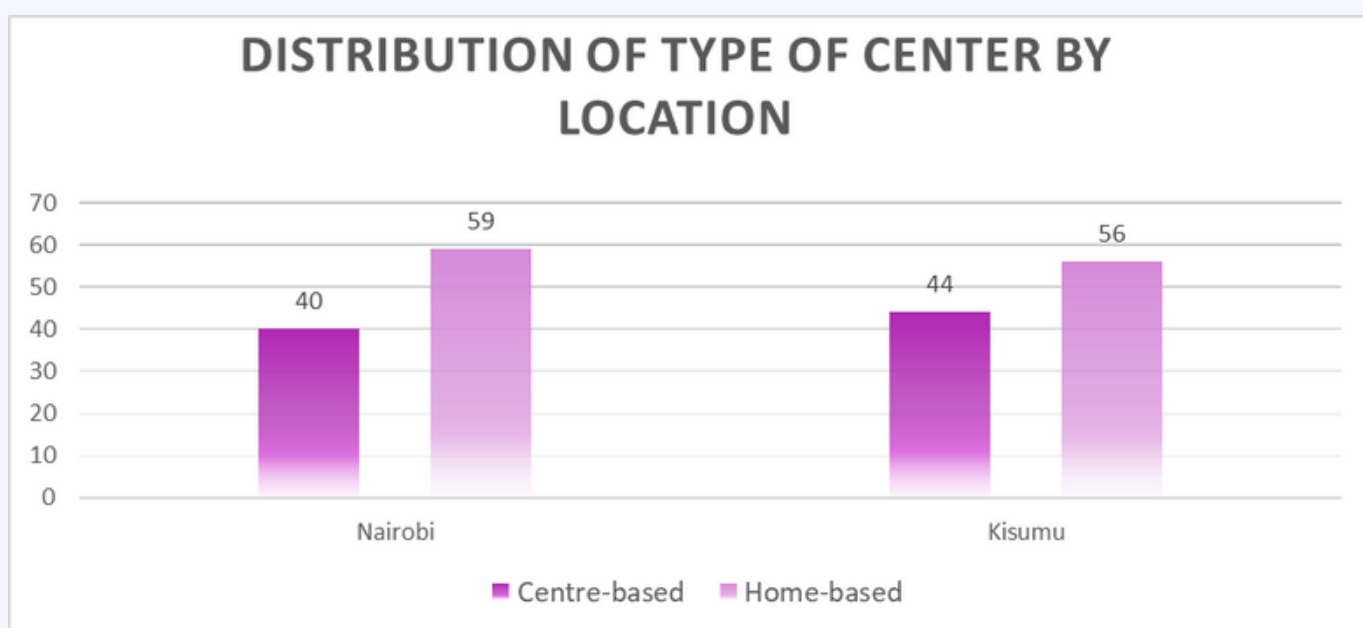




The findings indicated that the type of childcare centres varied across counties with Kisumu having more centre-based facilities, and Nairobi having more home-based facilities. The type of centre was significantly associated with the location. The graph below provides a visual representation of these findings.

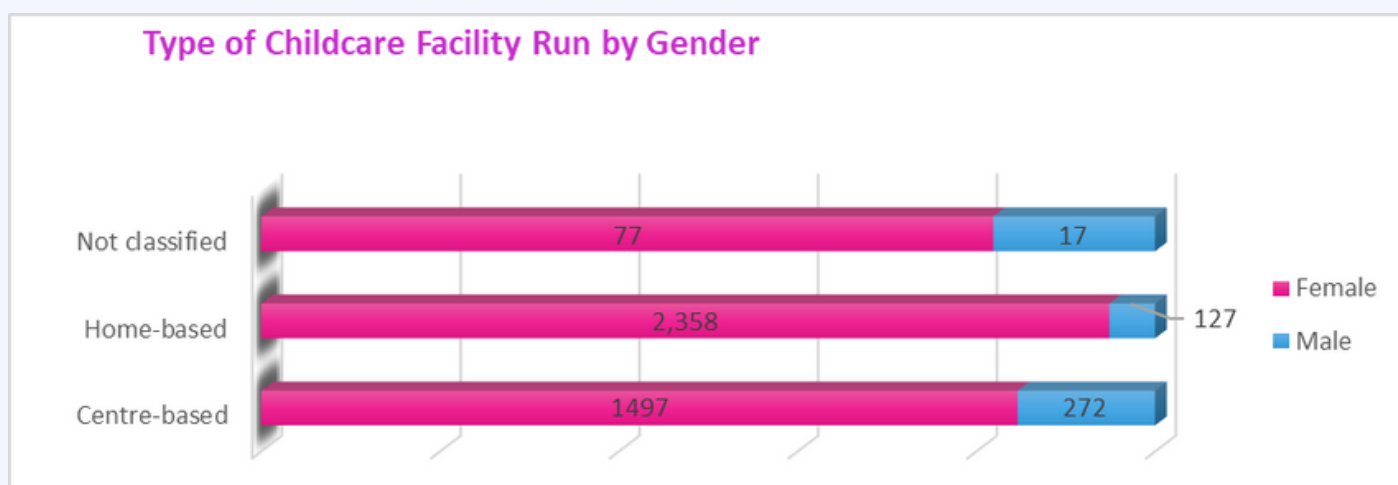
### **Chart 2: Distribution of Childcare Centres by Location**

Overall, the findings show that a significant 92% of the respondents were female. Hence, the profession is highly feminized. Conversely, men were in charge of a meagre 8% of these enterprises. This data illuminated the potential for increasing male involvement in childcare, which in turn could help redistribute caregiving responsibilities, and challenge the societal, gender norms, and stereotypes that have traditionally relegated childcare to women's roles, often receiving insufficient attention in both policy and practice. Of the two types of childcare facilities, the women prefer to operate Home-based childcare facilities. The chart below gives a visual representation of the data collected.



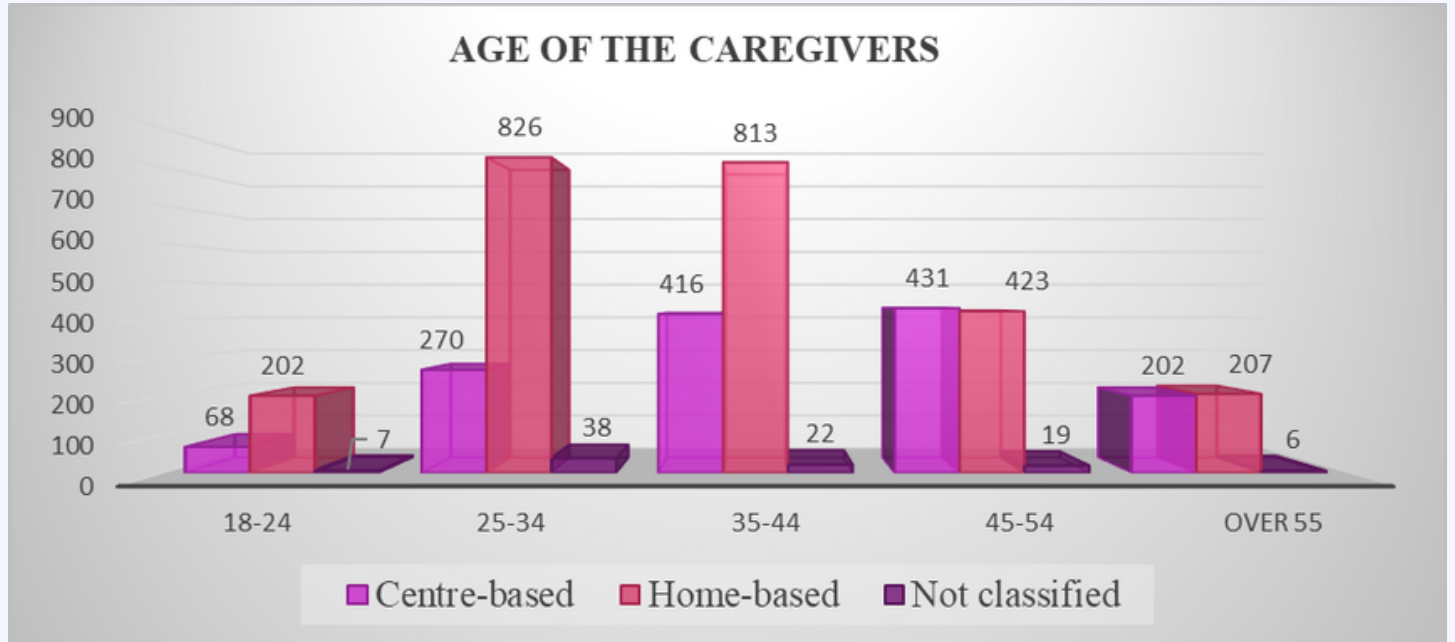
### **Chart 3: Type of Childcare Facilities Run by Gender**

About one-third of the respondents (34.3%) were aged between 35 and 44 years and one in ten (9.6 %) were aged over 55. Notably, young women (aged 18-49), who are in their reproductive years, run a significant number of childcare facilities, as clearly depicted in the chart below.

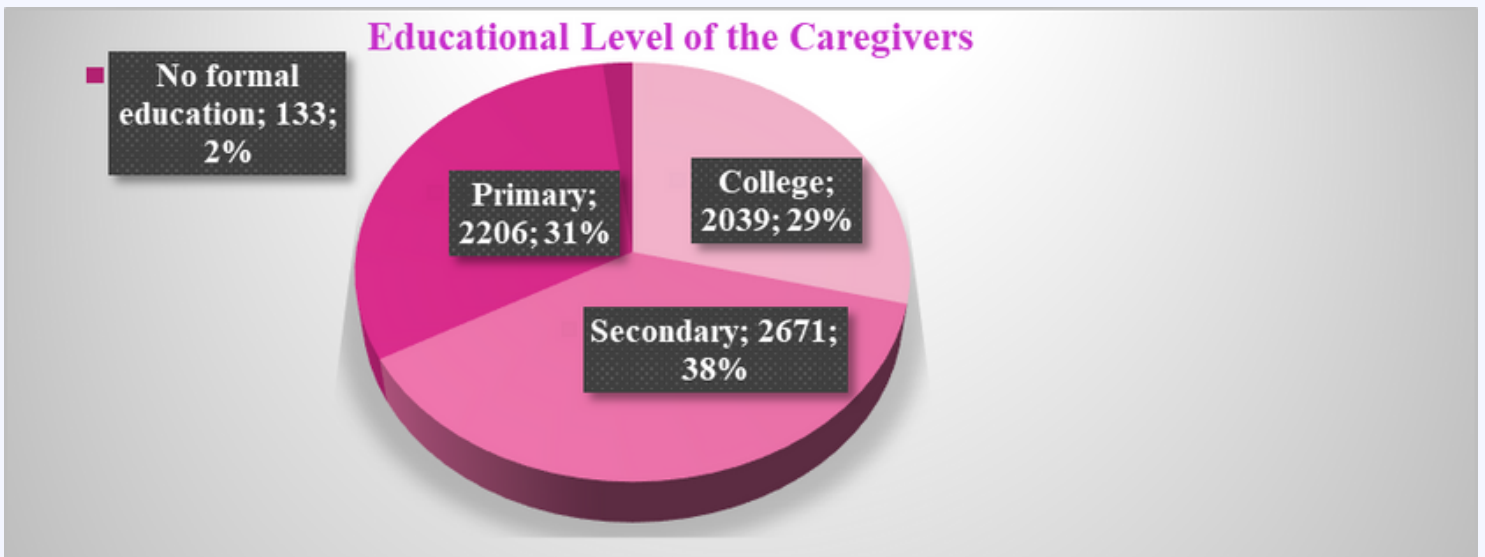


**Chart 4: Caregivers' Ages**

Findings indicated that 73.5% of the childcare workers had received some form of training after leaving secondary school but unrelated to childcare. The average number of experience in childcare work was 4 years, with a significant difference between centre-based (6 years) and home-based centres (3 years). A visual representation below provides further information.



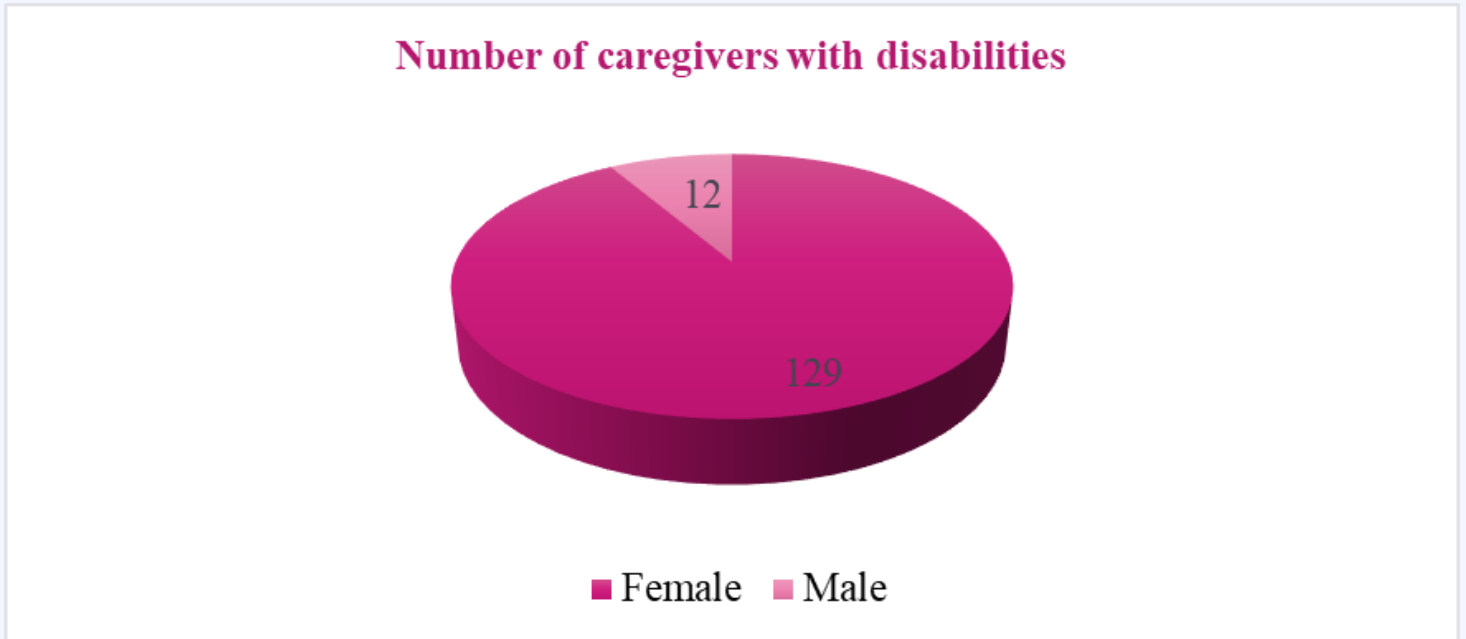
**Chart 5: Educational Level of the Caregivers**



Findings indicated that 73.5% of the childcare workers had received some form of training after leaving secondary school but unrelated to childcare. The average number of experience in childcare work was 4 years, with a significant difference between centre-based (6 years) and home-based centres (3 years). A visual representation below provides further information.

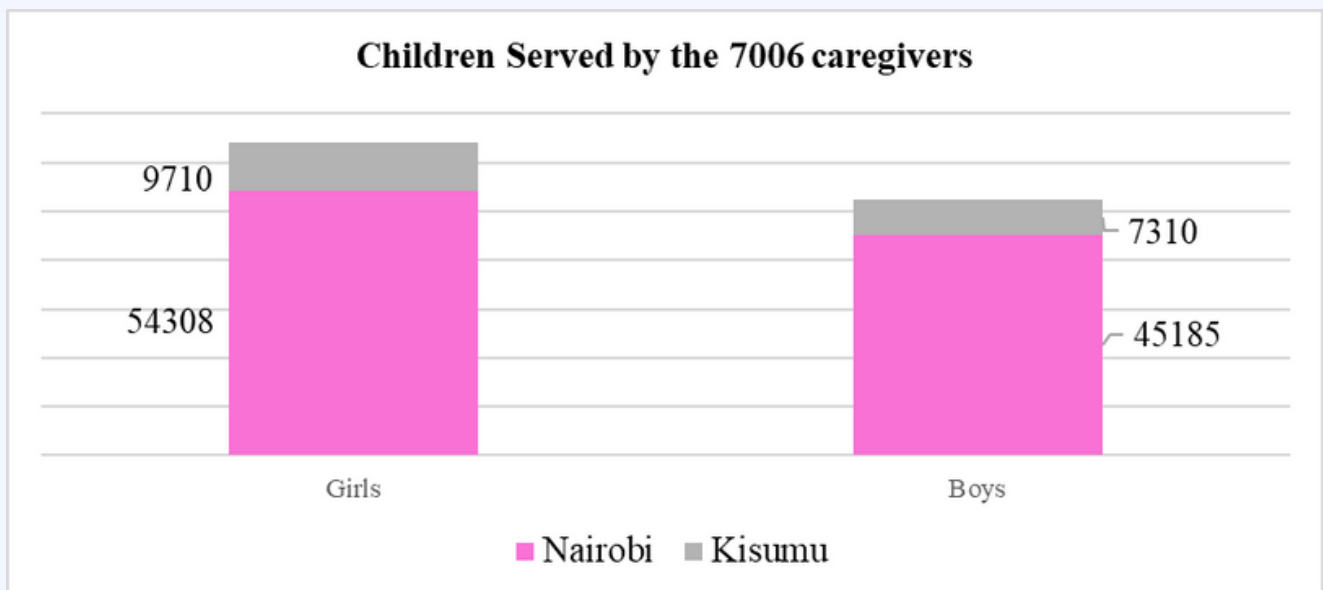
### **Chart 6: A pie chart for the Number of Caregivers with Disabilities**

In the study conducted, some childcare facilities had caregivers with disabilities. Three in a hundred caregivers (2.7%) had some form of disability with the most common type being mobility and physical impairments (58% of those with disability). The data is charted below.

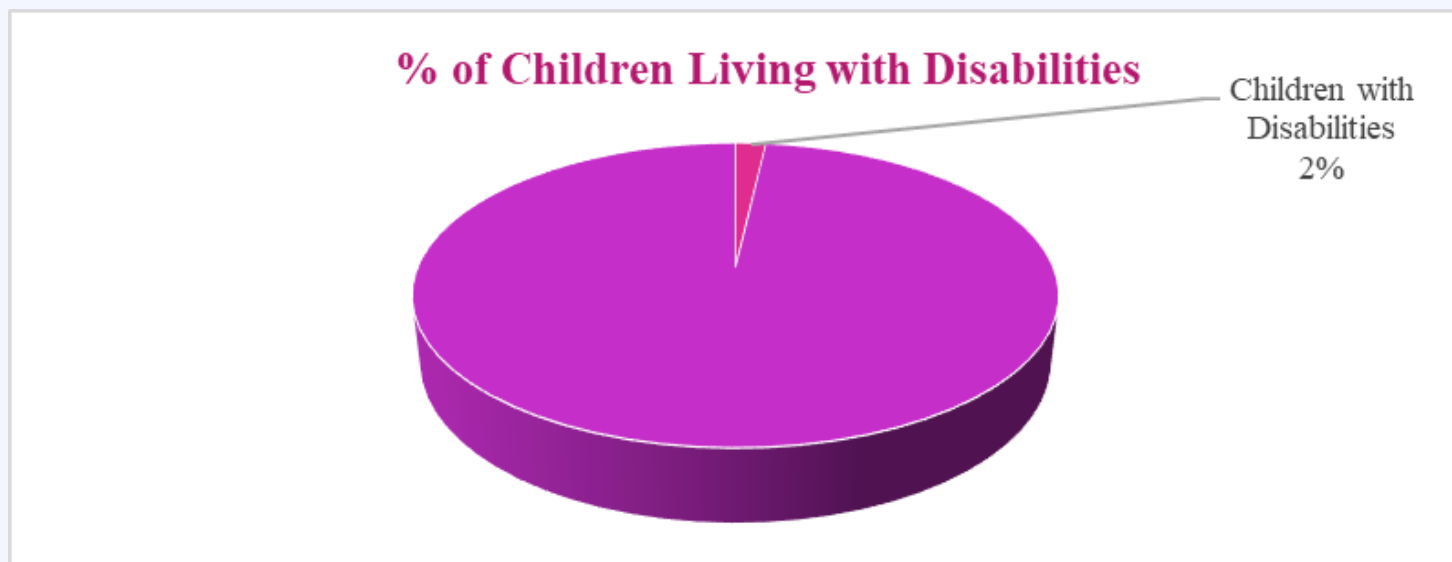


### **Chart 7: Children Served by 7006 Caregivers**

Despite the prevailing belief that children between birth and 3 years of age are primarily cared for at home until they reach the age of four and start school, these children are entrusted to paid caregivers as indicated by Uthabiti's data. The over 7,000 childcare micro enterprises take care of 116,513 children whose ages range from birth to three years. The graph below highlights this situation.



**Chart 8: A graph on Children with Disabilities**



---

Uthabiti Africa launched a Report on the Status of Female Childcare Workers in Kenya. The said Status Report presents data findings from a long-year research study conducted by Uthabiti, in 2022, in three counties namely Nairobi, Kajiado, and Kisumu, on the issues faced by women in childcare. [See the full Status Report here.](#)

The forum culminated with a dinner to celebrate the invisible work of female domestic workers in early childhood development where participants acknowledged the work done in households by female domestic workers.

This Executive Summary Report summarizes the proceedings and key highlights of the inaugural WiC Forum, stakeholder commitments on how best to support female caregivers and childcare entrepreneurs, as well as the way forward in achieving the transformation required in the childcare ecosystem.

The WiC forum addressed the critical role that female childcare workers play in the nurturing care of children under 5 in Kenya. It also highlighted the unique position that childcare providers occupy as both small business operators and providers of an essential social service that is under-recognised and not sufficiently valued by society. It further provided an opportunity for participants to understand the characteristics of this important sector and laid the groundwork for policies that target reforms affecting women childcare workers in the childcare ecosystem.

In essence, the event sought to amplify the voices of female childcare providers to enhance their participation in decision-making platforms for improved childcare service provision. It was an opportunity for actors and policymakers in the childcare ecosystem to engage with findings of childcare work in Kenya and for the childcare workforce to learn much-needed critical skills that will enable them to improve services delivered to children.

At the end of the Forum, a Call to Action was endorsed that called for the constitutional rights of childcare workers to be respected in labour laws and policies, and government programs at the highest levels of County and National governments. Further, there was a call to the National Government to urgently train and certify the childcare workforce in Kenya.



Moreover, it urged the government to foster collaborative efforts across various sectors, and substantially boost both domestic and international funding dedicated to childcare. These actions would greatly improve the provision of quality and affordable childcare services for all children, including those with special needs and children of incarcerated mothers.

Lastly, there was a call for the elimination of cumbersome and ambiguous licensing procedures, as well as undue pressures and requests for bribes from regulatory officers. This step is crucial in creating a supportive environment where both children and childcare entrepreneurs can prosper.

## The Role of Women in the Childcare Economy and Women's Economic Empowerment

In her welcoming address, Caroline Linda Awuor, the Senior Programme Manager for Uthabiti Africa and Chair of the Women in Childcare Technical Working Group introduced the participants to the purpose of the forum. She recognized that Kenya had made commendable efforts in promoting the participation of women in nation-building, which led to the empowerment of women and the improvement of their social, health, and economic status. She observed that women's participation in the labour force and economic empowerment is impeded by a disproportionate burden of care work placed on them, a situation that is shifting due to working families being able to outsource care work. However, she expressed concern that



available data overlooked the women carers who are enabling women to participate in the labour market.

As such, she indicated the importance of realizing the contributions of women childcare workers and women childcare entrepreneurs in the care economy through;

- Establishing strong foundations and skills for young children by delivering Nurturing Care components.
- Enabling fellow women to participate in paid work, thereby increasing the number of women in paid employment and contributing to their economic empowerment. By extension, this increases the country's GDP and advances the global 2030 agenda in the 17 SDGs. but most specifically, SDGs 5 and 8.
- Enabling young girls to go to school rather than being engaged in care work.

She stressed that full participation of women in nation-building is achievable if Kenya invests in rewarding, recognizing, reducing, redistributing, and representing women caregivers in key decision-making forums. She also expressed optimism that the forum would be a catalyst for progressive conversations that will build on existing programs, policies, and regulations and support the expansion the childcare. Equally, it would support best practices that will ease the growth of quality and affordable childcare services and enhance women's economic empowerment.

## Early Childhood Development and its Relation to Childcare

The WiC forum highlighted that early childhood care is critical in children's early childhood development. It is a critical period characterized by rapid brain development for children, and, when it is affordable, quality and regulated, it lays the foundation for good health, learning and educational success, social-emotional development, and economic productivity throughout life; thus enabling children to thrive and realize their full potential.

Data from several research studies presented by ECD institutions like the Early Childhood Network for Kenya, Kidogo, and the Aga Khan Foundation provided a snapshot of the disparity in the accessibility of childcare services between high-income countries and low-income countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the evidence for these social, human, and economic developmental gains, early childhood care is not prioritized in education policy and investment, and, where it does exist, it significantly excludes vulnerable groups such as children with special needs and children accompanying their incarcerated mothers.

One of the key findings in the forum was that childcare has the potential to reduce inequalities. Therefore, there is a dire need to ensure that childcare services are accessible to disadvantaged families, including single-parent families, those with low education, and low-income groups. The presentations in the forum also highlighted the importance of supporting informal carers who shoulder the majority of care work during the early years of children's development.



# Who are Childcare Workers and Why Do They Matter?



In addition, data from Kidogo's case studies showed that daycares in Kenya mostly take in children between the ages of three months to four years with average daily attendance coming to around seven to ten babies a day.

People in the forum unanimously agreed that the care that children receive has powerful effects on their survival, growth, and development. Care therein is the ability to provide food, health care, stimulation, and emotional support necessary for children's healthy survival, growth, and development. Importantly, relationships between children and caregivers and responsive caregiving are critical to a child's survival, growth, development, and specifically development of brain architecture.

The term "childcare worker" was used to mean individuals responsible for tending to infants and young children between the ages of six weeks to eight years. The majority of the caregivers as demonstrated in the forum discussions are predominantly women. Childcare necessitates a profound emotional dedication and engagement in nurturing and guiding young children regardless of whether mothers, family members, domestic helpers, or women who own them take this role or run child day-care centres. It is worth highlighting that the terms "childcare worker", "caregiver" or "childcare provider" were used interchangeably.

Data from research presented by various ECD institutions in the forum showed that childcare ranges from feeding, engaging in games, the serve and return engagement, and cleaning to putting children to sleep. The aforementioned activities are unique to different developmental stages: infants, toddlers, and older children. Notably, for toddlers and older children, playtime forms a considerable part of their lives, and this contributes to their physical, emotional, social, and mental development.



The forum identified three main categories of childcare workers in Kenya:

### **i. Home-Based Child Care Workers (HBCCW)**



These women turn their homes into childcare facilities offering both day and night care services and doing other chores alongside caring for children.

### **ii. Domestic Workers**

These are family childcare providers who care for children in the parents' homes. They include house help and nannies. Their responsibilities often include looking after children, feeding them, playing with them, and cleaning.

However, for the majority, this work is a last resort as the pay offers little motivation for anyone with better options to consider being a domestic worker.



### **iii. Centre-Based Child Care Workers**



These work in formal or informal spaces set up to specifically offer childcare services. These women rent separate spaces or build their own to deliver childcare services. Such services are also offered in religious areas, market facilities, preschools, and offices and are generally referred to as daycares, playgroups, nurseries, or crèches.



Overall, it was agreed childcare provides paid work opportunities for childcare workers. Most childcare micro-enterprises charge an average of \$0.3 per child per day, which leaves them barely able to meet their daily needs. The need to dignify childcare work and ensure childcare work is valued was a rallying point for many speakers. Most importantly, a need to ensure childcare workers have access to decent incomes and opportunities to access jobs.

Taking into cognizance that early childcare providers have an important role in a child's growth and development, Ms. Damaris Wambua, an ECD Specialist working at ChildFund Kenya, explained that the foundations of a child's lifetime - their cognitive, linguistic, emotional, and social development form from birth through the age of four. This allows early childhood professionals to nurture these important steps for growth and development. Thus, early childcare providers, including parents, need to understand how children grow and develop, for them to set up learning environments, observe and assess children over time, support children with different learning styles, and even develop curriculum activities.



In what she termed the “child development ecosystem”, Ms. Wambua further explained that the environments children grow in must be stimulating

enough, for them to realize their full potential. Several environmental factors (nurture component) such as poverty, divorce, and abuse among others, affect a child's development. In particular, she noted that the well-being of a caregiver is an environmental factor that can affect child development because positive relationships with caregivers are vital for promoting a young child's brain development, well-being, self-confidence, and mental health.

She noted that for these reasons, childcare workers matter. Their experiences and well-being shape their ability to provide quality and responsive caregiving to children. Ms. Wambua emphasized that parenting interventions and ECD programs must focus on the holistic development of both children and caregivers themselves. She espoused data from research indicating that ECD interventions that include an element directed at caregivers - by providing information on positive caregiving practices or by otherwise supporting parental well-being (caring for the caregiver) have been successful in improving children's outcomes.



Dr. Amakove Wala from Nyarai Homecare (a domestic worker placement agency), supplemented the above observations by stating that childcare providers need to be trained and skilled in understanding basic child development, and how children develop and apply that information to how

they monitor children over time. Moreover, they must also be trained to identify the factors that can influence a child's ability for growth and development and facilitate it by providing a variety of learning experiences and encouraging play.

Whilst recognizing the importance of childcare, there was unanimity in the Forum that in Kenya and many other African countries, the role played by female childcare givers is understated, under-valued, and under-recognized. Childcare workers, whether domestic or micro-entrepreneurs have a long way to go before they enjoy decent pay or dignified jobs.

## Official Opening Ceremony and Launch of the Status of Female Childcare Workers in Kenya Report 2023

**(The launch of the report was an important highlight for the Conference as it marked a key moment when new data highlighting the difficulties faced by childcare workers was shared.)**



In his welcoming remarks on the second day of the Forum, Mr. Asayya Imaya, the CEO of Uthabiti Africa and Convener of the Collaborative Action for Childcare noted that the research studies conducted by Uthabiti between 2021 and 2023 on the status of female workers in Kenya indicated that the burden of childcare falls squarely on the shoulders of women. He stated that time spent by women exclusively on childcare is equivalent to a full-time job.[2] He also identified several contributions that women make in childcare such as providing nurturing care, love, and emotional support, as well as helping children learn vital skills such as communication, problem-solving, and socialization, which are essential to the physical, social, and emotional development of a child.

Furthermore, women's contributions to the childcare ecosystem extend beyond their homes to providing childcare services in the community such as running daycares, preschools, and after-school programs.

He expressed concern about the array of difficulties experienced by women in the childcare ecosystem. These challenges encompass a poor policy and regulatory environment; inadequate compensation diminished appreciation, absence of acknowledgement, a dearth of certification, and insufficient funding. The lack of recognition plays a role in shaping the societal standing of women, their prospects in the public sphere, and the oversight of gender-related considerations in development strategies.

He affirmed the value of women's contributions to childcare must be recognized and valued. For this to happen, it calls for reforms in Kenyan employment, labour laws to regulate the pay and working conditions of female childcare workers, and equally promote the benefits and protection of childcare workers.

[1] Chabeli Carrazana 'Moms spent the equivalent of a full-time job on child care last year - while working at the same time' August 3, 2021 (The19th News) [1] 'Early Childhood Development' (The World Bank, May 2023)

Accessed 6th October 2023 Accessed 6th October 2023.



He also emphasized the importance of investing in women's skilling and training to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to provide quality childcare, supporting childcare providers by providing adequate resources and facilities and regulating the industry to ensure safety and accountability. Moreover, he expressed the need to develop and implement policies that will ensure that the quality of childcare provided is of the highest standard.

Mr. Imaya also spoke about the **Collaborative Action for Childcare (CAC)** - a platform that brings multiple state and non-state actors together to respond to the biggest challenges facing the childcare ecosystem in Africa. Notably, CAC has conducted research studies to determine the status of women childcare workers systematically. He elaborated that in a world where data drives action, data demonstrating the issues faced by women in childcare is critical in catalyzing, influencing, and achieving policy and regulatory reforms.

In her keynote speech, Madam Stella Chepng'eno, Director of Women Economic Empowerment at the Office of the First Lady of Kenya, acknowledged that the Office of the First Lady is keen on empowering women economically through its delivery vehicle - **"Mama Doing Good"**. She also highlighted that for the last 15 years, First Lady Rachel Ruto has used the table-banking model to impact over 150,000 women through the **"Joyful Women Organization" (JOYWO)**. These women belong to over 11,000 women groups in 39 counties, who collectively save 2 billion Kenya Shillings monthly. Through their savings, the women have been able to start and scale up businesses, start industries, and create employment for others.

Madam Chepng'eno encouraged women caregivers to also engage in a savings culture and support and grow one another financially. She also indicated that the Office of the First Lady is deliberating on how to collaborate with the women childcare workers to be able to access affordable credit so that they can start and scale up their businesses.

Madam Chepng'eno went ahead to launch the Status of Female Childcare Workers Report 2023 amidst, hundreds of excited and optimistic childcare workers and other participants engaging in festivities.



Ms. Maureen Otieno, the Gender Justice and Women's Rights Strategist at OXFAM noted that many women spend their lives delicately balancing between responsibilities at home and work as full-time caregivers. Consequently, unpaid care work hinders women from working or returning to the workforce altogether. This inequitable distribution of care work, she highlighted, is one of the most significant obstacles to achieving gender equality. She disclosed that OXFAM believes that empowering female childcare workers is key to achieving key economic justice, promoting gender equality, and empowering women's rights. Part of OXFAM's work is focused on measuring, recognizing, and promoting unpaid care work.



## Skill Development in the Workforce as Explained by Various Contributors

### Gertrude's Children's Hospital



The representatives conducted an informative training session that revolved around Nutrition and Immunization. The discussions focused on the importance of nutrition in child growth and development most especially in the first thousand (1,000) days. They also stressed immunization as an important aspect of childcare in terms of the growth, development, and well-being of a child. Additionally, they trained the participants on the main factors of nutrition such as an adequate nutritious diet and the feeding guidelines as well as growth monitoring in different age groups.

Of importance was the highlight of the two categories of immunization in Kenya; a government schedule named Kenya Expanded Programme Immunization and an additional by private institutions.

### St. John's Ambulance

The representatives conducted an interactive training on Basic Pediatric First Aid where participants learned how to give basic first aid to infants, toddlers, and older children and necessary life support skills for the care of children who are prone to injuries such as bone fractures and choking.





PATH Kenya conducted a comprehensive training on nurturing care focused on equipping the participants with knowledge and skills to better understand the ECD needs of children, including children with special needs, and effectively attend to them. At the onset of the training, the participants were taken through a

booklet on child development care for children between zero to three years. Some of the key takeaways were that men needed to provide a safe and healthy environment for expectant women, and equally involve themselves in the early stages of child development.

Further training was on the different stages of cognitive development of babies from birth and complementary feeds suitable for babies according to their ages. Lastly, the participants were capacitated on how to design play toys for children from available materials.

## **The Importance of Home-Based Childcare Services in Informal Settlements**

Several speakers addressed the delegates on the importance of home-based childcare services. For instance, Ms. Lucy Minayo, the Director of the Home-Based Childcare Initiative at the Early Childhood Development Action Networks (ECDAN), asserted that cities present important challenges for the extension of quality childcare services to informal workers, who make up most of the urban poor. For women, who are disproportionately responsible for childcare in their households, access to childcare services allows more time to earn an income and seek new employment. However, most families with young children, especially those living in informal settlements preferred the services of home-based childcare.



Drawing a difference between centre-based care centres and home-based care centres, she explained that the latter involves the provision of childcare within a home setup, rather than commercial care spaces. Home-based childcare (HBCC) is provided by a range of providers, from licensed providers operating small businesses in their homes to care provided by family, friends, and neighbours. Further, in HBCCs, the services were typically small, both in the size of the premises and the number of children they cared for. She argued that the HBCC option is popular because many providers offer flexible schedules and are more affordable and familiar to families than childcare centres. In addition, many families can find home-based providers with cultural and/or linguistic backgrounds similar to their own.

Ms. Minayo highlighted that besides the issues concerning compensation, fairness, and recognition within the ecosystem, women engaged in home-based childcare encounter further entrenched obstacles and prejudices as they strive to be included in important discussions and speak up for their own rights and those of fellow home-based providers. Despite being responsible for the care of all children,

they find their efforts to secure funding and gain access to extra resources met with skepticism and a lack of seriousness. Furthermore, they are often viewed as being less educated. For these reasons, she reiterated that the key challenge faced by HBCCs is being under-supported, under-regulated, and underfinanced.

Ms. Minayo also provided insights into ECDAN's significant contributions toward strengthening the HBCCs. Notably, with other key partners such as Echidna Giving, ECDAN is hosting a new multi-donor HBCC collaborative intending to mobilize action towards creating enabling environments for the success of HBCC systems. The collaborative seeks to test and scale support programs for HBCC providers in three different locations, namely Nairobi in Kenya, Kigali in Rwanda, and New Delhi in India. She elaborated that these support programs will allow providers to increase the quality of, and expand access to, childcare services, as well as establish a global learning community to share knowledge and resources.

She proposed that the approach to family childcare ought to be multi-faceted and systemic and one that includes state leaders and other ECD stakeholders identifying strategies that will increase supply. This would also include designing quality supports explicitly for family childcare with the appropriate depth and longevity to facilitate change. To this end, she recommended several reforms, the key being that donors and policymakers should increase financing for systems and support funding to HBCC providers. Policymakers should embed HBCC support programs into the public sector for greater scale and sustainability, ECD and education sectors should establish a global learning community of existing support programs for HBCCs, and guiding quality indicators developed to address standards, competencies, and tools to define and measure quality for HBCC providers globally.

Using case studies from the Nairobi Early Childcare in Slums Project conducted by the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC), Dr. Patricia Kitsao-Wekulo, a Research Scientist, stated that home-based childcare centres are bridging the gap in childcare services in Nairobi slums by providing a necessary service in informal urban areas with limited kinship support for childcare needs. She explained that case studies from the Nairobi Early Childcare and Communities of Practice projects showed a growing demand for childcare in urban-poor settings due to an increase in the number of women seeking paid work and diminishing kinship support. To meet this demand, several unregulated daycare centres, most home-based, continue to mushroom in these settlements.



However, she expressed concern that compared to other categories of centres, such as those that are school-based, home-based care centres are run by providers lacking in relevant skills and knowledge and have limited resources to facilitate an enabling environment that promotes proper growth, health, and stimulation of young children. For these reasons, it is difficult for these centres to meet the required regulatory and licensing standards.

In her presentation, Dr. Amakove Wala reflected on the challenges she went through to find childcare services for her children. She disclosed that this inspired her to establish Nyarai Homecare Services to provide accessible caregiving services for other women in Kenya. She described Nyarai Homecare Services as a domestic workers bureau where women can source domestic workers.

However, she expressed concern that compared to other categories of centres, such as those that are school-based, home-based care centres are run by providers lacking in relevant skills and knowledge and have limited resources to facilitate an enabling environment that promotes proper growth, health, and stimulation of young children. For these reasons, it is difficult for these centres to meet the required regulatory and licensing standards.

In her presentation, Dr. Amakove Wala reflected on the challenges she went through to find childcare services for her children. She disclosed that this inspired her to establish Nyarai Homecare Services to provide accessible caregiving services for other women in Kenya. She described Nyarai Homecare Services as a domestic workers bureau where women can source domestic workers.



She also pointed out that the homecare started as an informal/unregistered arrangement in her building, where she would source house-helpers on behalf of her friends and family. Later, the bureau grew to become a registered agency where women interested in housework and caregiving register, train and are placed with families. Nyarai offers safety and security to both parents and caregivers by ensuring that the househelpers are well-trained and registered and that outsourced househelpers are well-paid and placed under good working conditions.

She also indicated that there is little to no recognition and respect for the caregiving profession in Kenya. Consequently, caregivers are underpaid and perform in dehumanizing working environments

replete with sexual abuse and physical violence. Furthermore, in contrast to continents like Europe, where caregiving is a respected and well-compensated profession akin to any other, many individuals perceive it as a last resort career, where they earn meager wages.

## Inclusion in Early Childhood Care Services

Contributions from the panel discussions examined some of the barriers to and facilitators of inclusion for children with disabilities and their families in early childhood education. Ms. Eva Nyoike, a Co-Founder of Africa Special Needs Education Network (ASNEN), applauded the efforts that the Kenyan government has made towards developing legislation and early childhood policy to support equity, social justice and democratic participation for children with disabilities and their families. She elaborated that the legal framework in Kenya requires early childhood education to meet the needs of children with disabilities. Furthermore, these laws and policies are in place to facilitate the realization of the following:

- Recognition, promotion, and protection of fundamental human rights of children with disabilities.
- The ability of parents or caregivers to enrol disabled children in centres that provide tailored early childhood services.
- Identification of the inequalities faced by children with disabilities and solutions to ensure they have access to quality childcare services that will enable them to thrive.
- To ensure that children with disabilities have their learning needs met through quality teaching practices within regular early childhood settings.
- Promotion of equal participation and inclusion of parents and caregivers in key decision-making efforts.



However, she noted that despite this commendable non-discriminatory and inclusive policy and legislative environment, some children with disabilities and their families experience exclusionary and discriminatory early childhood settings and struggle to access readily, affordable and quality childcare and education.

Other panellists made comments that aligned with her aforesaid observation. For example, Ms. June Omune, the Learning and Impact Director (The Action Foundation Kenya) added that early childhood providers regard disability and teaching children with disabilities as significantly different and exceptional.

They view them as having such special curriculum and teaching needs, that they would be better off having their education and care needs met by outside agencies and experts (for example, special education and health professionals), who have the qualifications, skills, and techniques to treat, manage or address their problems.

Mr. David Mbau, a parent of a child living with Downs Syndrome also reported that all of his daughter's education and care needs have not been met in their child's local early childhood centre as he would have liked because the normal system doesn't cater for currently and they opted for an alternative. He recounted how staff at daycare centres stigmatized his daughter and viewed her disability as an extra burden hence shied away from enrolling her in their childcare services. He noted the dominance of discrimination against children with disabilities in society and the fact that many people believe such children are 'special' children, who have 'special educational needs' and therefore need 'special' education. The inclusion and teaching of children with disabilities in childcare services and mainstream education can elicit significant stigmatization from childcare workers, teachers, management, other professionals, and other parents. Finally, he observed that attitudes towards children with disabilities varied according to;

- the type of disability,
- the caregivers' views of their responsibilities for meeting the child's learning and developmental needs,
- the concern for other children's education, and
- the extent of resourcing and environmental changes deemed critical in supporting the child in the regular early childhood centre.





For example, Mr. Mbau's situation underscores the importance of inclusive and equitable education and childcare policies that ensure that children with disabilities are provided with the opportunity to learn and participate in society. The United Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates rights to protect the rights of such children and promote inclusion in education and other aspects of life.

In response to the observations made, Ms. Teresa Aganyo, a caregiver for children with special needs, highlighted that while all children have unique needs in emergencies, care for children with special healthcare needs is often more complex because of their various health conditions and extra care requirements. Their care goes beyond the support typically provided during daily routines for reasons such as mobility challenges, urgent or constant medical needs, difficulty communicating, or trouble with transitioning to different situations.

She also pinpointed that children with special needs have five critical needs namely, special healthcare; medical expenses for instance, a child with Down syndrome would need speech, physical, and/or occupational therapy; psychosocial support such as dramatization or theatrical performances which may help in fostering or repairing a child's self-identity; and adequate and inclusive nutrition.

Further, she expressed great concern about the exclusion of children and adults with disabilities from outreach efforts based on the incorrect belief that preserving the life of a child or adult with a disability is of lower priority than preserving the life of someone who is not disabled. On this note, she emphasized that people with disabilities are equally entitled to all resources needed to preserve health and life.



On the other hand, Ms. Mumbi Muguongo, the Founder and Executive Director at Thriving Child, discussed the plight of children living in Kenyan prisons with their incarcerated mothers. She informed the participants that every year scores of children walk into Kenya's correctional facilities with their incarcerated mothers while another significant percentage are born in the said

correctional facilities, where their mothers are imprisoned. This is because the Prisons Act CAP 90 Laws of Kenya allows children to live with their incarcerated mothers up to the age of four. She revealed that children of imprisoned mothers face myriad challenges including a lack of a nurturing environment, and insufficient funds to provide basic needs. Children are exposed to risk factors that affect their mental well-being such as police in uniform and guns, and verbal and physical abuse on their mothers. These experiences have detrimental effects on said children.

The recognition of the policy as the first of its kind in Africa indicates that Kenya is leading the way in acknowledging the unique needs of children who accompany their incarcerated mothers. By providing a framework to enhance the care of these children, the policy could potentially contribute to better outcomes for both the children and their mothers. However, it is important to note the concerns raised about the need for more nurturing care and early childhood development interventions in female penal institutions. The emotional and developmental needs of young children require special attention, and ensuring that they have access to safe and nurturing spaces is crucial for their well-being. The suggestion to reduce the legal age at which children can be released from incarceration is rooted in the recognition that the early stages of childhood represent a pivotal period for personal growth and development. A viable alternative to placing these children in environments that are more suitable for their age could positively influence their overall development and prospects. To this end, therefore, there is room for improvement to provide optimal care and support for children of incarcerated mothers. Balancing the needs of these children with the realities of the penal system is a complex challenge, but it is heartening to see efforts towards addressing these issues.

# Building a High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce

It was evident from the forum that the work of early childhood care workers is the major driver of the quality of the ECCED system. Accordingly, there are strong benefits to investing in effective policies that attract, maintain, and retain a highly skilled workforce in the sector. The forum offered an opportunity to look at the makeup of the early childhood education and care workforce in Kenya across counties and assessed what types of in-service training and informal learning activities help childcare workers upgrade their skills. Additionally, an opportunity to look at what the targeted workers had to say about their working conditions, as well as identify policies that can provide psychosocial support and increase the well-being of childcare workers at work.

During the Skilling and Certification of Childcare Workforce session, experts from Uthabiti Africa, AfECN, NITA, KUDHEIHA, Nyarai, and KICD discussed widely on responsibilities and tasks of childcare workers in supporting and caring for the children. These included first aid, feeding, bathing, positive relationships, play, serve and return, and protection from accidents and abuse. These elements are critical as they affect the holistic development of a child.

Caroline Linda and Dr. Hellen Kimathi a curriculum consultant also took the participants through the training interventions and advocacy for early childhood, which Uthabiti Africa and other organizations, under the Collaborative Action for Childcare, are implementing. They also emphasized the diverse projects, research studies, policy lobbying/advocacy, and networking events they collaborate on to help identify new developments and best practices on childcare by organizations and other actors in the childcare sector.

## The Challenges Faced by Female Childcare Workers and Childcare Micro-Enterprises

The input from micro-entrepreneurs in childcare highlighted the under-appreciation of their essential role, revealing that despite its significance, child caregiving remains undervalued within the current economic landscape. These entrepreneurs pointed out childcare workers occupy one of the lowest rungs in terms of compensation, often lacking essential job-related benefits like healthcare coverage and retirement plans. Furthermore, childcare providers often face neglect and exclusion from significant decision-making procedures and political participation, particularly those residing in informal settlements. Additionally, it was pointed out that some parents do not meet their responsibility to pay user fees. In addition, childcare centres face a myriad of challenges such as lack of funding, insufficient age-tailored play and educational materials, burdensome licensing regulations, and harassment and extortion by inspectorate officers, among others.

Microentrepreneurs highlighted case studies that provided some context on paid childcare in informal settlements. They pointed out that there is a growing burden of early childhood adversity in informal settlements which has in turn led to the emerging use of paid childcare, much of which is still of poor quality, and that there is limited evidence based on how and where to promote nurturing care in these facilities.

Other underlying issues included the regulation of the quality of childcare services because while childcare centres seem to be a complex service to do away with in urban centres, regulation is key to enabling children to thrive. She emphasized that the difficulty in acquiring licenses is one of the key policy concerns that necessitated the basis of the deliberations during the forum. Dr. Patricia Kitsao also noted that childcare is a devolved function of the county governments, yet none have designated a specific docket where this critical service should be placed. She challenged representatives from the county governments to deliberate on docketing HBCCs such as in the health docket, education docket, or the pre-primary education sector under the county governments. Additionally, she noted that although there is a Childcare Facilities Act in place, breaking it down into actionable guidelines for implementation is needed. She also called for the National Government to initiate further engagements to work towards streamlining the regulation and registration of childcare centres in urban informal settlements. Further, such regulatory procedures must consider providing equitable opportunities for home-based centres for recognition alongside mainstream childcare centres.

Notably, she revealed that APHRC was conducting a project labelled “Community of Practice” which seeks to improve the quality of childcare centres through supportive assessment in informal settlements in Nairobi. Several findings from the said project showed that home-based providers have little support and are untrained, and centre providers are concerned about a lack of resources, play materials, communication with parents, and staying afloat. Parents are also concerned about child safety, hygiene, nutrition, and attitudes of centre providers, and that intervention content and delivery were feasible and acceptable. All these findings expressed that there is a need to support informal childcare to improve quality through measures such as integrating the communities of practice agenda into the health system.

## Government Commitments towards Policy Making and Implementation

Concerning policymaking and implementation in childcare, Ms. Janet Mwema, the Principal Officer of Advocacy and Policy Section, at the National Council for Children Services (NCCS), addressed the mandate and contributions of the NCCS in regulating childcare services. Giving a brief background to the establishment of the NCCS, she described its mandate as regulating, coordinating, and providing oversight of children's services in Kenya and advising the government on all matters relating to children. Further, the NCCS and the Children Advisory Committees (CACs) collaborate with diverse stakeholders both local and international, as well as local communities and children to monitor, evaluate, and safeguard the rights and welfare of children in Kenya.



Ms. Mwema also underlined that the Council has been instrumental in developing policies, and codes of conduct regulating good practices relating to child protection and child welfare. According to the provisions of Section 42 of the Children's Act No. 29 of 2022, the Council has implemented programs that aim to satisfy Kenya's international and regional obligations relating to children. It has also implemented policies to regulate family empowerment and social security designed to evaluate the hardships, which impair the social

welfare of children. Further, the Council has rolled out programs that alleviate the plight of children with special needs.

Ms. Mwema highlighted the Council's multiple ongoing projects and areas of collaboration that seek to improve the legal framework and policy environment affecting the childcare sector. For instance, the NCCS aims to develop child welfare regulations to operationalize the Children Act of 2022, which will aid in regulating community support services to children where childcare facilities fall.

Further, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Council of Governors, Civil Society Organizations, and development partners, the NCCS was developing the National Children Policy and Early Childhood Development Policy Framework to address the emerging systemic challenges, including those faced by childcare facilities. Particularly, she noted that the Early Childhood Development Policy advocates for appropriate public investments commensurate to the needs of early childhood development. The National Government, through the State Department of Gender and Social Services, expressed its commitment to public investment in female childcare workers through developing the Unpaid Work and Domestic Care policy, which is geared towards;

- Promoting gender equality at home through sharing and redistribution of unpaid care work.
- Rewarding unpaid care and domestic work;
- Promoting the representation of female caregivers in key decision-making.

In addition, Ms. Mwema affirmed that the State Department of Gender and Social Services is also keen on creating effective partnerships and coordination with organizations including OXFAM and the UN Women and other organizations to support early childhood private sector actions across the country.

## The 5Rs on Strategy on Un/paid Care Work

There was a consensus that un/paid care must be valued in five major ways:

- **Recognize** care work by measuring and recognizing the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work done by women;
- **Reduce** Unpaid care work by ensuring legal and policy frameworks are in place
- **Redistribute** care work by promoting policies that will lead to equitable sharing of domestic care work such as care leave and paternal leave;
- **Reward** care work by advocating for access to decent work, including pay equity and social protection;
- **Represent** female carers in decision-making by supporting substantive engagement by decision-makers with workers in the care sector and unpaid care economy in community and policy dialogues and other decision-making fora for reducing unpaid care work.

An agreement that these 5Rs on strategy for un/paid care work must be prioritized, addressed, and integrated into employment and labour laws, policies, and government programs at the highest levels of the National and County Governments.

# Way Forward in Advancing the Needs of Female Childcare Workers

## a) Using Research to Influence Childcare Policies

Several presenters identified the need for supporting policy and program planning and decision-making with rigorous, research-based information. They argued that policymakers and practitioners understand the importance of instituting policies and practices informed by evidence. Further, legislation is mandating and attaching incentives to using research. They observed that it is critical to incorporate priority areas into research and these areas include;

- Regulation of the early education workforce.
- Considerations to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Increased use of evidence (data).
- Multi-sectoral collaboration to respond to emerging issues in early childhood development, care, and education.
- Lastly, they indicated that researchers need a stronger understanding of policymakers' and practitioners' needs; practitioners need greater capacity to acquire, interpret, and use research; and policymakers need to know how to create conditions that allow both to occur.

## b) Using Innovative Solutions to Scale ECD in Kenya:

Forum contributions showed that a single solution is not enough to enhance ECD outcomes. Investing seed funding in a variety of potential solutions can efficiently reshape ECD approaches. Scaling promising tested ideas strategically is vital for impactful innovation, particularly through government collaboration for systemic change.

For example, Martin Kiyeng illustrated how Kidogo uses an innovative social franchising approach to identify, train, and support female entrepreneurs (Mamapreneurs) to start or grow their early childhood education micro-businesses. Their project has empowered female childcare workers owning or running childcare enterprises to provide quality childcare and early childhood services in their local communities for an affordable fee. This has in turn enabled children to receive quality early childhood education during their essential first five years of life. Further, Kidogo's holistic approach, which includes nutrition interventions, has led to a 32% reduction in wasting and a 23% reduction in stunting in one year.



Speaking on behalf of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Amina Mwititu discussed the importance of interventions that embrace a holistic understanding of early childhood development. Importantly also, she discussed the incorporation of effective approaches to ECD that address multiple risk factors such as poor health, malnutrition, lack of protection, unresponsive caregiving, and limited learning opportunities, because children growing up in adverse conditions are typically exposed to multiple risks as opposed to singular, risk factors. She also noted that AKF's multi-faceted approach aligns with the World Health Organization's nurturing care framework.

Dr. Patricia Kitsao emphasized investing in interventions similar to APHRC's "Communities of Practice" project, which develops a strong learning community and is dedicated to accelerating progress in ECD through identifying and sharing best practices, challenges, and successes.

There were two common factors among the innovative solutions recommended above. One was that they all focus on scale and sustainability and the different ECD actors invest in projects and programs with the potential to have sustainable impact at scale. Two was that they capitalize on engaging in multi-sectoral partnerships and coordination.

### **c) Making fiscal space for public investment in childcare.**

The consensus was that there is limited capacity in the Kenyan public sector and excess demand for childcare services. The National and County Governments were urged to increase resources for universal childcare in Kenya by significantly increasing domestic finance and international aid directed towards childcare plans or assistance for all children including children with special needs and children living with their incarcerated mothers.

Moreover, a resolute summon was directed towards the National government, requesting the formulation of a robust financial framework that would delineate the allocation and utilization of funds for decentralized tasks about early childhood care and education. This includes the allocation of specific percentages for essential components like teaching and learning materials, as well as infrastructure, among other crucial factors.

### **d) Early identification of special needs and interventions**

Contributions from the panel discussions informed on how discrimination of children with special needs marginalizes them and renders them vulnerable to risks that negatively impact their childhood development. They agreed that opportunities for early identification and intervention of vulnerable children, especially those with special needs, would ensure that these children maximize their potential and thrive. In particular, Ms. Mumbi Muguongo indicated that there is a need for early interventions to address the myriad challenges faced by children living in prisons with their incarcerated mothers such as insufficient funds to provide clothing, medication, food, and bedding, and psychosocial support for children's and caregivers' mental health and wellbeing. She also emphasized the need for creating more nurturing care for early childhood development interventions in female penal institutions to create safe nurturing spaces for children and for lowering the statutory age when the children can leave the prisons.

### **e) Implementing a comprehensive policy framework**

Collectively, it was acknowledged that a comprehensive policy framework is important for several reasons;

- It will regulate the provision of childcare services such as registration and licensing of informal home-based childcare centres.
- It will provide broad guidelines for coordinating and harmonising quality services across sectors.
- Assigning a specific docket e.g. health docket, education docket, or the pre-primary education sector under the county governments) to oversee the regulation of childcare services will streamline the regulation and registration of childcare centers in urban informal settlements.
- To provide equitable opportunities for home-based centers to be recognized alongside mainstream childcare centers.
- To guide the National Government in its commitment of resources to programs for young children.

# Appendix

## Call to Action

### WOMEN IN CHILDCARE FORUM 6th & 7th MARCH 2023 CALL TO ACTION

We, the delegates of the Women in Childcare Forum are making a Call to Action as follows:

- Prioritize, address and integrate the needs and constitutional rights of women childcare workers in employment and labour laws, policies, and Government programs at Highest levels both at National and County.
- The National Government urgently focus on skilling and certifying the childcare workforce in Kenya. Including skilling us on caring for children with disabilities and those living in diverse circumstances including prisons with their incarcerated mothers.
- Enact the existing policies on childcare to strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration for delivery of quality childcare to the children of Kenya.
- The National Government to significantly increase domestic finance and international aid directed towards childcare plans/assistance for all children, including children with disabilities and children of incarcerated mothers.
- The National and County Governments especially 'kanjo' commit to end the difficult and unclear licensing processes, harassment and solicitations from and give a clear straight forward registration process thereby providing an enabling environment for children to thrive and the Women in Childcare businesses to thrive too.
- All childcare stakeholders to collaborate and support and compliment government efforts in the aforementioned Call to Action.

***Endorsed by:***

The Collaborative Action for Childcare  
The Women in Childcare in Kenya



# Thank you.

## Contact us



(+254) 714-262626



info@uthabiti africa.org



www.reallygreatsite.com