



MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

NATIONAL POLICY ON THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR

November 2025

FOREWORD

The review of the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour is not merely a policy milestone; it is a profound declaration of our collective will to protect the most vulnerable members of our society—our children. It is a testament to Kenya's unwavering commitment to securing a future where every child can flourish, unburdened by the exploitation that robs them of their childhood, health, and dignity.

This policy is meticulously anchored in the foundational principles of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. Article 53 of our Constitution unequivocally enshrines the rights of every child, including the right to free and compulsory basic education and protection from abuse, neglect, and hazardous or exploitative labour. These constitutional provisions are not just legal statutes; they are the moral compass guiding our nation's development, mandating us to create a safe and nurturing environment for all children. This policy serves as a critical instrument to actualize these constitutional guarantees, ensuring that the promise of a dignified childhood is a reality for every Kenyan child.

Furthermore, this policy is a direct and actionable response to the Durban Call to Action, a landmark global commitment adopted at the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour in 2022. The Durban Call to Action, the first of its kind to be held in Africa and to include the voices of children, underscores the urgent need to accelerate multi-stakeholder efforts to end child labour, especially its worst forms. It highlights the importance of universal access to quality education, social protection, and a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach. This National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour domesticates these global aspirations, transforming them into concrete, context-specific strategies tailored to Kenya's unique socio-economic landscape. By aligning our national efforts with this global framework, we are not only fulfilling our international obligations but also positioning Kenya as a leader in the global fight against child labour.

The journey towards a child labour-free society is a shared responsibility. It requires the concerted effort of all stakeholders: government agencies, law enforcement, civil society

organizations, the private sector, and communities. This policy provides a comprehensive roadmap for this collaboration, outlining clear strategies for prevention, identification, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children from child labour. It also emphasizes the critical role of social protection, education, and livelihood support for families, addressing the root causes that drive children into exploitative work.

Let us reaffirm our collective resolve to protect our children and invest in their future. The work ahead demands our dedication, resources, and unwavering vigilance. Together, we can build a nation where every child can grow, learn, and thrive in an environment free from child labour.

Dr. Alfred. N. Mutua, EGH

Cabinet Secretary

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

PREFACE

The National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour is a strategic framework designed to consolidate and amplify Kenya's efforts to eradicate child labour in all its forms. The fundamental purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and cohesive national roadmap for all stakeholders—including government ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector, and communities—to protect children from child labour and ensure they have a safe and nurturing environment to thrive. It recognizes that a fragmented approach to this complex issue is ineffective and that a unified, multi-sectoral strategy is essential to achieving sustainable change.

This policy establishes the overarching principles, objectives, and priorities for preventing and eliminating child labour, grounded in the belief that every child has the right to a childhood free from exploitation. Its key objectives are to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks, improve data collection and reporting, enhance the delivery of social protection services to vulnerable families, and promote a culture of awareness and accountability across the country.

The scope of this policy is comprehensive, addressing all forms of child labour across both the formal and informal sectors of the Kenyan economy. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour in agriculture, domestic work, mining, and illicit activities. It also has a special focus on the worst forms of child labour, such as child trafficking, hazardous work, and forced labour, which demand immediate and urgent intervention. By defining a clear scope, this policy ensures a targeted and effective response, while also providing a framework for collaboration that spans national, county, and community levels. Ultimately, it serves as a powerful instrument to turn our constitutional guarantees and international commitments into tangible action for every child.

Mr. Shadrack Mwandime, E.B.S.

Principal Secretary

State Department for Labour and Skills Development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The development of the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour stands as a testament to the collective determination of a nation committed to safeguarding the rights and future of its children. This policy, far more than a legal document, is a moral declaration, and its creation would not have been possible without the unwavering support, expertise, and dedication of countless individuals and organizations. It is with profound gratitude that we acknowledge their invaluable contributions.

We extend our deepest appreciation to our Social Partners and various ministries for demonstrating the will and providing the foundational support necessary to embark on this critical journey. Our sincere gratitude goes to the Federation of Kenya Employers and Central Organisation of Trade unions Kenya for their support of this process. In addition, I wish to thank officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services among others for their collaborative spirit and for spearheading the development of this policy. The leadership and commitment of the Cabinet secretary of Labour and Social Protection in championing this cause has been instrumental, ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable children were at the forefront of policy dialogue. We also acknowledge the crucial role of parliamentarians and policymakers who provided the legislative and regulatory framework to translate this vision into a tangible policy.

The global community has been an indispensable partner in this endeavour. We are especially grateful for the technical and financial support provided by our international partners, in particular the International Labour Organization (ILO). Their expertise in global best practices, data collection, and research has enriched this policy, ensuring it is not only contextually relevant but also aligned with international standards. The countless consultations and workshops facilitated by ILO have been vital in shaping a robust and comprehensive policy framework.

The creation of this policy was also a grassroots effort, driven by the tireless work of civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based groups. Their on-the-ground experience in advocating for children's rights, rescuing child labourers, and providing and reintegration services offered an authentic and powerful perspective. We are grateful to every advocacy group and activist who raised their voices, ensuring that the severity and complexity of child labour were never ignored. Their unwavering commitment to the cause of child protection provided the moral compass for this policy.

To the researchers, social scientists, academics, and legal experts who dedicated their time and intellectual resources, we offer our sincere thanks. The empirical data, legal analyses, and theoretical frameworks they provided were essential in crafting an evidence-based policy. Their meticulous work helped us to understand the multifaceted nature of child labour, its root causes, and its profound impact on a child's development and well-being. This policy is built on the foundation of their scholarly rigour and expertise.

Most importantly, we dedicate this acknowledgement to the children and their families. To the children who have endured the hardships of child labour, your resilience and courage are a source of inspiration. Your stories, shared with immense bravery, have been the most compelling reason to act. We acknowledge the families and communities who, often facing extreme economic hardship, have shared their experiences and insights, thereby guiding us towards solutions that are compassionate and sustainable.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge every member of the National Steering Committee and the Technical Working Groups. The countless hours spent in meetings, the extensive reviews, and the constructive debates were all driven by a shared vision. Your professionalism, dedication, and collaborative spirit were the engine that drove this process from its initial conception to its final publication. It is through your collective efforts that we now have a powerful tool to protect our children and build a more just and equitable society for all.

Ms. Hellen Apiyo,

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
AU	African Union
CBC	Competence-Based Curriculum
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CAPSA	Strengthening the Capacity of Governments to Address Child Labour, Forced Labour, and Violations of Acceptable Conditions of Work in Sub-Saharan Africa (Project)
CCLCs	County Child Labour Committees
COTU-K	Central Organization of Trade Unions-Kenya
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOK	Government of Kenya
INFFs	Integrated National Financing Frameworks
IPCCLA	International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture
IPEC	International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour

IT	Information Technology
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
NGAOs	National Government Administration Officers
MOL&SP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
NAP	National Action Plan
NCCS	National Council for Children’s Services
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLB	National Labour Board
NSC	National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour
NTWC	National Technical Working Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USDOL LMRA	United States Department of Labour Labour Market Research and Analysis

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Caregiver: A family member or paid helper who regularly looks after a child or a sick, elderly, or disabled person.

Child: An individual who has not attained the age of eighteen years.

Young Person: A child who has attained the age of sixteen years but has not attained the age of eighteen years.

Child Labour: Work done by a child which is exploitative, hazardous, or otherwise inappropriate for a person of that age, and places at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health, or spiritual, moral, emotional, or social development.

Child Work: Refers to a minor's salutary employment within the family. It refers to experiential training for future involvement in the world of work.

Decent Work: Productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Hazardous Work: Work which, by its nature or circumstances, is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of children and includes: -

- (i) work which exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse.
- (ii) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces.
- (iii) work with dangerous machinery, equipment, and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads.
- (iv) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents, or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health.
- (v) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

Light work: Permissible work for children between the ages of 13 and 16 and which is not harmful to children's health or development, and does not prejudice their attendance at school,

their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority, or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.

Forced or compulsory labour: Work or service which is extracted from any person under the threat of any penalty, including the threat of a loss of rights or privileges, which is not offered voluntarily by the person doing the work or performing the service.

Modern slavery: Situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, deception, abuse of power or coercion.

Worst Forms of Child Labour: The employment, engagement, or usage of children in any activity comprising:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices such as 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.
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, to produce pornography or for pornographic performances.
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of the child.

Trafficking in Persons: The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Vulnerable child: A child whose safety, wellbeing or development is threatened, infringed or violated, and includes a child who is emotionally deprived or traumatized

Vulnerable Group: A demographic that has specific characteristics that make it more susceptible than other segments of the population to experiencing harm, discrimination, exclusion from financial or social services, or another disadvantage.

Youth: The collectively of all individuals in the Republic who have attained the age of 18 years but have not attained the age of 35 years.

Vulnerable Households: Someone who belongs to a group within society that is either oppressed or more susceptible to harassment

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The chapter describes the background and status of child labour in Kenya and illustrates the effort of the government to combat child labour using the existing policy and legal frameworks and the extent or level of achievement. It also examines the rationale for developing this policy initiative and states its vision, mission, the goal and objectives, the scope of the policy and the underpinning principles. It concludes by describing the structural arrangements of the policy.

1.1 Background

The Children Act 2022 define child labour" as work done by a child which is exploitative, hazardous or otherwise inappropriate for a person of that age; and places at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health, or spiritual, moral, emotional or social development.

Child labour affects the physical, emotional, social, and mental development of children. It inherently involves significant risk, frequently escalating to extreme human rights abuses such as enslavement, sexual exploitation, and severe economic exploitation. Often, it affects the attendance of school, health care, and wellbeing of children. Widespread child labour affects prospects for economic growth through its negative impact on child development and depresses current growth by reducing unskilled wages and discouraging the adoption of skill-intensive technologies. It restricts their fundamental rights of children.

Ending child labour is integral to achieving greater, inclusive economic growth through enabling better educational outcomes for children, building human capital, increasing the potential for young people to access job opportunities, and supporting decent work standards. Prioritizing the elimination of child labour will catalyse momentum on a range of Sustainable Development Goals, including those on economic development, education, and gender equality.

The Government of Kenya (GoK) is committed to addressing the challenge of child labour to transform Kenya into a globally competitive country offering a high quality of life to all her citizens by the year 2030. The Government recognizes that promoting conducive working conditions for Kenyans is core to achieving these aspirations, more so in regard to Kenya's commitments towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 on decent work and

economic growth in Kenya – especially, SDG Target 8.7 which calls for an end to child labour in all its forms by 2025 and the eradication of forced labour by 2030.

Kenya has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the ILO Minimum Age Convention of 1973 (Convention No.138) and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999 (Convention No. 182) which provide substantive protections against child labour and economic exploitation of children. Convention 138 provides guidance to States on the age of admission of children into work and into employment. The Convention 182 provides for protection of children from the worst forms of child labour. It describes situations and actions which amount to the worst forms of child labour.

To domesticate key provisions of these legal instruments, Kenya has developed an elaborate policy and legal framework to address child labour, forced labour, and trafficking in persons. Articles 43(f) and 53(1)(b) of the Constitution provide for the right to education and the right to free and compulsory basic education, respectively. Article 53(1)(d) protects children from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment, punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour. Article 30 prohibits slavery, servitude and forced labour. The Children Act (2022) specifically prohibit child labour while the Employment Act (2007) and the Industrial Training Act (2007) prohibit economic exploitation of children. Section 53 of the Employment Act prohibits deployment of children in the worst forms of child labour. Several other legislation and regulations are in place to address different dimensions of child labour. Further, the policy direction on the elimination of child labour has been guided by the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour (Sessional Paper No.1 of 2015).

However, child labour persists in the country despite the existing legislative framework and related programmes which aim to address it. Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019 KNBS¹) report states that a total of 1,369,600 children aged 5-17 years were working in Kenya comprising 969,868 children aged 5-13 years and 399,732 children aged 14-17. Another 127,428 children were actively seeking work. The main challenges to effective and sustainable

¹ KNBS (2019) – Kenya Population and Housing Census Report Vol IV: Distribution of population by social Economic Characteristics

reduction of child labour in Kenya include high levels of household poverty, high rates of unemployment, challenges in accessing basic education, the high incidence of orphaned and vulnerable children, and child-headed homes, harmful cultural practices by Kenyan communities, and inadequate substantive protection of children from child labour by national and sub-national level laws, regulations, and policies. Among the pull factors are: advanced technology and digitization of the workplace; emergence of new and unregulated forms of work (such as in the urban informal sector) and increased regional integration which has increased migration into Kenya from the region. Push factors include: inadequate social protection coverage in the country; the continued spread and effects of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and the COVID-19 pandemic; adverse socio-economic effects of climate change on the society.

Despite the progressive legal framework on child labour, the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labour remains weak. Financing of the administration of child protection – and by extension, child labour - is severely limited, while programmes aimed at addressing child labour are, in some cases, implemented without effective coordination to ensure efficiency in resource utilization. Many programmes aimed at eradicating child labour are funded by development partners and other non-state actors, thereby leading to challenges in sustainability. While the technical capacity of key state and non-state service providers has been strengthened, there are still significant technical capacity gaps by key stakeholders, in addition to weak coordination among the actors in addressing child labour.

This policy seeks to promote strategies and programmes to eliminate child labour through a multi-layered framework. It promotes a holistic approach to interventions to ensure comprehensive treatment of key issues and coverage in terms of scale and scope while also focusing on addressing challenges faced by the most vulnerable children and impacting areas and sectors with the largest magnitude and incidence of child labour. The policy adopts strategies that are aimed at prevention as well as mitigation of child labour. It also spells out interventions for identification, rescue, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children involved in child labour. A key component of this policy is to strengthen institutional capacities for addressing child labour through enhancing labour governance frameworks, strengthening partnerships across state and non-state actors for integrated implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

1.2 Rationale for the Review of the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2015 on the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour

The Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2015 on National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour aimed to contribute to the realization of, “A Child Labour Free Society.” Notable successes attributable to the previous policy include the revival of child labour committees at county level, as frameworks for enforcing policy at subnational level. It also contributed to the re-institution of the National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour (NSC), the strengthening of the National Technical Working Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour (TWC). The policy further contributed to the improved coordination and collaboration among service providers and stakeholders to address child labour at national and subnational levels.

The review of Sessional Paper No.1 of 2015 was necessitated by the imperative to align the national policy framework with emerging labour-market dynamics, evolving socio-economic realities, and contemporary global standards on child labour governance. Over the past decade, shifts in demographic trends, technological advancements, and expanding informal employment have introduced new vulnerabilities requiring a recalibrated policy response. In addition, the review seeks to harmonize the national position with recent membership to Alliance 8.7, strengthen coherence with complementary national strategies, and embed a results-driven implementation architecture anchored in multi-sectoral accountability. This exercise is therefore positioned to enhance policy relevance, elevate operational efficiency, and reinforce Kenya’s

strategic commitment to eliminating all forms of child labour in line with global decent-work aspirations.

The review provides a strategic opportunity to recalibrate the policy framework, close the identified structural and operational gaps, and align national efforts with contemporary realities shaping child labour risks. By enhancing coordination mechanisms, strengthening evidence systems, integrating emerging priorities, and reinforcing sustainable financing pathways, the reviewed policy will position the country to deliver a more coherent, high-impact, and future-proof response that accelerates the elimination of child labour nationwide.

The ILO Convention 138 and ILO Convention 182, exhort States Parties to take concrete action to address child labour, including through policy elaborations and development of frameworks anchored in policy and law to address child labour. This policy provides Kenya's blueprint towards accelerating action to eradicate child labour. It quantifies the problem of child labour, identifies key challenges in eradicating child labour and defines key objectives, strategies, and actions by State and non-state actors to address child labour.

1.3 Vision, Mission, and Goals of the Policy

1.3.1 Policy Vision:

A child labour free society.

1.3.2 Mission

To provide for comprehensive multi-stakeholder action for the effective elimination of child labour.

1.3.3 Policy Goal

To end child labour by 2030 through strengthened enforcement of laws, improved access to education and social protection, and increased capacity of communities to address child labour.

1.3.4 Policy Objectives

The six policy objectives are:

- 1) To promote decent work for adults and young persons.
- 2) To end child labour in all sectors.

- 3) To accelerate the realization of universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable, and inclusive education, and training for children.
- 4) To scale up universal access to social protection for vulnerable children.
- 5) To strengthen child labour knowledge and data management for evidence-informed policy and programmatic responses.
- 6) To leverage strategic partnerships capacity sharing and resource mobilization for eradication of child labour.

1.4 Scope of the Policy

This policy protects all children in Kenya from child labour and should be administered in coordination with state and non-state stakeholders. It applies nationwide and covers all environments where children may be exposed to exploitation, encompassing all forms of child labour and focusing on prevention, protection, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

1.5 Beneficiaries of the Policy

Children in Kenya are the main beneficiaries of this policy. The main categories of children who are specifically targeted include:

1. Children at risk of dropping out of school and enrolling in child labour.
2. Children and young persons engaged in hazardous or at risk of engaging in hazardous work.
3. Children who are victims of trafficking, forced labour, or sale of children or who are at risk of trafficking, forced labour, or sale of children.
4. Children who are victims of sexual exploitation.
5. Children who are engaged in illicit activities.

Besides children, other actors in society stand to benefit from a policy that provides for coordinated and structured whole-of-society approach to interventions and actions against child labour. These stakeholders include, policy makers, development partners, researchers, private sector enterprises, workers' and employers' associations, and the civil society.

1.6 Guiding Principles

To achieve sustainable eradication of child labour in Kenya, this policy will be implemented based on the following principles:

- i. Best Interest of the Child: The best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration in all actions relating to the rights, welfare, and development of children.
- ii. Equality and Non-Discrimination: All children shall be treated equally without suffering direct or indirect discrimination. They shall have equal access to opportunities and services devoid of discrimination on grounds of their language, religion, gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, wealth, heritage, and location, among others.
- iii. Partnership and Participation: This policy will be implemented in a manner that enlists diverse stakeholders and promotes coordination of stakeholder action for the effective elimination of all forms of child labour. Participation of the public, generally as well as key individual constituencies and groups - especially vulnerable children – will be promoted.
- vi. Sustainability: The quest to eliminate child labour will be integrated into broader national and sub national development plans and efforts for sustained impacts.
- vii. Evidence-informed interventions and action: The implementation of this policy will be informed by accurate and up to date data and information on child labour.

1.7 Development Process of the National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour

This policy was developed under the stewardship of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection through an extensive technical and consultative process with stakeholders. Technical and convening support was mainly provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO) through the Strengthening Capacity of Governments to Address Child Labour, Forced Labour, and Violations of Acceptable Conditions of Work in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPSA) Project. These stakeholders included relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies; employers' and workers' organizations; county governments; development partners; private sector; civil society organizations, implementing partners as well as children.

1.8 Structure of the Policy

The National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour in Kenya is structured into five core chapters: an introduction covering background and legal frameworks; a situation analysis assessing current trends and drivers; policy directions outlining strategic goals and multi-sectoral interventions, an implementation framework detailing stakeholder roles and responsibilities, and a monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning chapter establishing progress tracking mechanisms.

CHAPTER 2: SITUATION ANALYSIS

This chapter examines the current state of child labour within the global, regional, and national context, with a focus on Kenya's labour market and the socio-economic conditions that sustain child labour. It analyses prevailing trends, key drivers, and structural challenges while reviewing the legal, policy, and institutional frameworks guiding child labour prevention and response.

2.1 Overview of Child Labour

2.1.1 Global and Regional Context

The global incidence of child labour remains unacceptably high, although progress has been recorded in recent years. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF's *Child Labour: Global Estimates, Trends and the Road Forward (2024)*, nearly 138 million children globally—59 million girls and 78 million boys—remain engaged in child labour, representing almost 8 per cent of the world's children. Of these, 54 million children are involved in hazardous work that threatens their health, safety, and moral development.

Sub-Saharan Africa bears the greatest burden of child labour globally, accounting for approximately 87 million children, nearly two-thirds of the global total. Persistent poverty, conflict, climate shocks, and weak social protection systems have reversed progress in the region, with 16.6 million additional children entering child labour between 2020 and 2024. As a result, the region now has more children in child labour than the rest of the world combined. Achieving global elimination targets will be impossible without accelerated action in Africa.

In recognition of this crisis, the Fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, held in Durban, South Africa in 2022, generated renewed global commitment through the Durban Call to Action. This framework prioritizes six strategic areas:

- a) Promotion of decent work for adults and youth above the minimum age.
- b) Elimination of child labour in agriculture.
- c) Elimination of forced labour, trafficking, and modern slavery.
- d) Realization of children's right to education and ensure universal access to free, compulsory, quality, equitable and inclusive education and training.

- e) Achieve universal access to social protection.
- f) Increase financing and international cooperation for the elimination of child labour and forced labour.

2.1.2 Overview of Child Labour in Kenya

Child labour remains a significant social and developmental challenge in Kenya. It is estimated that 26 per cent of children aged 14 years and under were engaged in child labour (KNBS 2008). An estimated 90 per cent of working children live in rural areas, where livelihoods are predominantly informal and agriculture-based. Children are commonly engaged in family farming activities, particularly on tea, coffee, sugarcane, sisal, tobacco and rice plantations, as well as in fishing and the production of miraa (Khat). Thus, child labour is normalized and economically rationalized at the household level.

Recent data underline the persistent scale of the problem. The 2019 national census estimated that 1,369,600 children aged 5-17 years were engaged in employment, comprising 969,868 children aged 5-13 years and 399,732 children aged 14-17 years. In addition, 127,428 children were actively seeking work. Most working children are concentrated in self-employment roles within the informal sector (31.8 per cent), small scale agriculture (22.1 per cent) or pastoralist activities (13.5 per cent). The other significant group are employed in small-scale agriculture (16.9 per cent) and pastoralist activities (11.7 per cent).

The types of work vary significantly by gender. Boys are predominantly engaged in hazardous activities like mining and quarrying (76.8 per cent of all children in that sector), construction (90.2 per cent) and transportation (91.6 per cent). Girls are more frequently employed as household employees (64.9 per cent of all children in that sector), accommodation and food service (65.7 per cent), real estate activities, and social work (61.1 per cent). Both were equally likely to work in agriculture and wholesale and retail trade. Consequently, effective interventions to curb child labour must strategically target these specific, high-prevalence sectors within the informal economy and agriculture/pastoralism.

The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified child labour risks. School closures, income shocks and rising household poverty forced many children into work and disrupted education pathways,

particularly among already vulnerable families. Geographically, child labour is most prevalent in arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) counties, where rates exceed 30 percent. Chronic poverty, food insecurity, climate shocks, and limited access to services in these regions heighten household dependence on child labour. In parallel, rapid migration to urban areas such as Nairobi from other areas in Kenya and the region has increased the incidence of urban child labour. Many urban children engage in street vending, waste picking, and service sector activities. In addition, evidence shows a growing concern over child domestic workers, many of whom work long hours for little or no pay and face abuse and exploitation (UNICEF, 2018). Child labour under these circumstances is a survival strategy for vulnerable families.

2.2 Socio-Economic Parameters and Child Labour

2.2.1 Overview of the domestic economy

Kenya's is a market-driven economy with several state enterprises. Established economic activities include those relating to agricultural production, forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, energy, tourism, and financial services, among others. As at 2024, Kenya was the fourth largest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, after South African, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. Kenya's macroeconomic parameters have largely been stable in the last decade, owing to progressive policies and a stable political environment.

Kenya's economic growth slowed down in 2022, with Real GDP expanding by 4.8 percent, a deceleration compared with the strong rebound from the COVID-19 crisis at 7.5 percent annual growth in 2021. The adverse weather shock of the last two years has been a major drawback on economic growth, with growth in real GDP excluding agriculture standing at 6.3 percent in 2022. This growth was driven largely by expansion in the telecommunications, transport, and construction sectors, a recovery in agriculture, and the rise of small businesses. Kenya intends to create an internationally viable and adaptive human resource base under the Vision 2030 pillar relating to development of the labour sector. This policy initiative has a social agenda that aims to reduce illiteracy by increasing access to education, improving transition rate from primary to secondary schools, and raising the quality and relevance of education and training.

2.2.2 Labour Market and Economic Factors

Kenya's labour market structure significantly contributes to the persistence of child labour. The economy remains heavily dependent on low-productivity, rain-fed agriculture, where household incomes are highly vulnerable to climate shocks, seasonal unemployment, and price volatility. These unstable conditions often compel families to utilize child labour during peak agricultural seasons, contributing to school absenteeism and early dropout.

Furthermore, limited formal employment opportunities have driven the expansion of the informal economy, which employed nearly 84 percent of total recorded employment between 2020 and 2024 (KNBS, *Economic Survey* 2025). The insecure, poorly paid, and unregulated nature of jobs within the sector means child labour becomes a primary household coping mechanism for survival. Insufficient adult wages and high underemployment are central drivers. When household earnings are inadequate to cover basic needs, a reality for over 7.8 million rural Kenyans and 1.2 million urban dwellers living on less than USD 1.90 per day, families are far more likely to send their children to work.

These labour-market failures also contribute to the worst forms of child labour. The 2017 *Situation Analysis of Children and Women (SitAn)* estimates that about 350,000 children, mainly girls aged 6–17 years, are engaged in domestic work, often in exploitative conditions. Furthermore, urbanization and tourism have intensified commercial sexual exploitation in urban centres, border towns, and coastal regions. An assessment by IOM estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 girls in selected coastal towns are engaged in commercial sex work, reflecting how economic vulnerability and weak labour regulation converge to facilitate abuse of children. Therefore, strengthening access to decent employment, improving adult wages, and expanding social protection coverage are essential structural solutions for protecting children's rights and breaking this cycle of dependence on child labour.

2.2.3 Poverty and Inequality

Poverty and inequality remain significant development challenges in Kenya, undermining efforts toward inclusive and sustainable growth - and with implications on child labour. Evidence from the Kenya Poverty Report (KNBS, 2022) shows that 39.8 percent of the population lives in monetary poverty, with rural areas (42.9 percent) bearing a much heavier burden than urban

areas (33.2 percent). Crucially, child monetary poverty affects 42.4 percent of all children aged 0-17. The situation is even more severe in rural areas, where 44.3 percent of children live in poverty compared to 37.9 percent in urban areas. The Brighter Futures report (KNBS, 2025) indicates that 55 percent of children are multidimensionally poor and on average are deprived in 3.7 dimensions out of the 8 dimensions (that include: development/stunting, health, nutrition, education, health-related knowledge, information, water, sanitation, and housing). These high levels of deprivation expose children to greater vulnerability, increasing the likelihood that households' resort to child labour as a coping mechanism to supplement income and meet basic survival needs.

2.2.4 Education and Training

Despite the guarantee of free and compulsory basic education under the Constitution and the Basic Education Act, 2013, Kenya continues to face challenges in equitable access, quality, and retention in education. Although enrolment has improved, learning outcomes and retention remain weak, particularly among children from poor and marginalized households. Universal access has not been achieved, with primary net enrolment declining from 79.3 percent in 2020 to 74.3 percent in 2024, and secondary net enrolment rising modestly from 54.1 percent in 2020 to 62.8 percent in 2023. Transition to secondary school also fell from 91.0 percent in 2019 to 84.8 percent in 2022, indicating persistent barriers to progression. While gender parity has nearly been achieved, structural inequalities continue to limit completion and learning for the most vulnerable children.

Several interrelated challenges continue to limit universal access to education. These include: inadequate human resource and funding; inadequate supply of education infrastructure; poor school infrastructure; and weak child protection mechanisms. Others include the high poverty rates; social cultural practices and norms - such as child marriage; and negative perceptions of education. Collectively, these and other challenges reduce school completion rates and push vulnerable children out of the education system, increasing their exposure to child labour and other forms of exploitation.

2.2.5 Social Protection

Kenya's social protection framework recognizes child labour as both a cause and consequence of household poverty and vulnerability. In practice, however, social protection coverage remains

limited and uneven, leaving many vulnerable children and households without support. Although interventions such as the Presidential Secondary School Bursary Scheme, child protection rescue centres, and cash transfer programmes under the National Safety Net Programme have improved access to schooling and basic needs for some at-risk families, the scale is insufficient relative to need. The World Social Protection Report 2024-26 shows that only 9.0 percent of the total population was covered by at least one social protection benefit (excluding health), and just 2.7 percent of children (0-18) received any support - which are relatively low coverage levels given national poverty rates exceeding 30 percent. Where assistance is absent or irregular, poor households continue to rely on child labour. Gaps in: coverage, adequacy of benefits, targeting, and linkages between social protection, education and child protection systems therefore weaken prevention and expose children to hazardous and exploitative work. Expanding and better integrating social protection remains essential to reducing child labour, improving school retention, and breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

2.2.6 Family and Household Dynamics

Family and household conditions play a central role in shaping children's vulnerability to child labour in Kenya. Important dynamics include: the growing number of dysfunctional and disintegrated families; the increasing number of child-headed families and orphan hood; and harmful cultural practices and traditions that deny children of their fundamental rights.

The growing incidence of household instability, characterised by dysfunctional family relationships, parental absence, neglect, and domestic violence, has reduced adult supervision, increased children's responsibilities, and in many cases forced children into income-generating activities to support household survival. The rise in child-headed households and orphan hood, particularly in communities affected by poverty, disease and displacement, has placed an excessive economic burden on children, compelling many to assume adult roles prematurely. In such households, children often drop out of school to engage in labour to meet basic family needs, increasing their vulnerability to exploitative work.

Harmful cultural practices and social norms further exacerbate this risk. Practices such as child marriage, child fostering without safeguards, and the social acceptance of child labour normalize exploitation and undermine children's rights to education, protection and development.

Overall, fragile household structures and limited parental capacity remain powerful drivers of child labour. Interventions must therefore go beyond the child to strengthen family stability, economic resilience, parenting support, and community protection mechanisms in order to effectively reduce child labour.

2.2.7 Trafficking, Forced Labour and Commercial Sexual Exploitation

The U.S. Department of State *Trafficking in Persons Report 2020* (USDOL 2020) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) both document that Kenya continues to be a significant source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking, a crime often driven by poverty and unemployment. While the situation remains a serious concern, the government has increased efforts to combat it, leading to a Tier 2 ranking in recent U.S. Department of State reports. Trafficking involves both internal and cross-border dimensions. Victims, including men, women, and a particularly high number of children, are exploited for forced labour (the predominant form in recent years), domestic servitude, and commercial sexual exploitation.

Children are especially vulnerable and are often trafficked for domestic labour, farming, fishing, and street begging. Due to its stability and infrastructure, Kenya serves as a transit point for migrants from neighbouring countries like Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda who are vulnerable to trafficking to other destinations. The lack of a comprehensive national database and official data on forced labour makes it difficult to ascertain the full magnitude of the issue, and underreporting is common.

2.2.8 Emerging Shocks and Vulnerability to Child Labour

Emerging shocks significantly increase household vulnerability in Kenya, pushing children into exploitative labour as families struggle to cope with the economic and social fallout. These shocks erode resilience, disrupt livelihoods, and force desperate measures, including withdrawing children from school to work or marry. The shocks include climate change and environmental shocks, conflict and displacement, pandemics and disease outbreaks, and economic instability.

Kenya is highly vulnerable to climate change, experiencing frequent and intense droughts and floods that decimate climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture and pastoralism. These events lead

to loss of crops, livestock, and income, pushing families into poverty and food insecurity. Children, especially in arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), are particularly affected, with millions exposed to drought risks. In response to this vulnerability, families may force children into early marriages or send them to work in hazardous conditions in search of food or income to support their families. Resource scarcity, often exacerbated by climate change, can intermingle with historical land conflicts, leading to displacement and increased vulnerability. Displacement disrupts social systems, education, and access to basic services, leaving children highly exposed to risks.

Disease outbreaks, such as cholera and the COVID-19 pandemic trigger economic disruptions. The COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, led to widespread job losses and business closures, severely damaging many people's incomes and eroding long-term resilience. Increased household poverty and food insecurity resulting from pandemics mean that families may no longer be able to afford school fees or even daily necessities, leading to children dropping out of school and entering the labour market to help their families survive.

Kenya faces persistent challenges related to economic instability. Natural disasters like floods cause immediate damage to homes, infrastructure, and agricultural land, leading to significant financial losses. The combined effects of these disasters and underlying economic fragilities can trap households in cycles of poverty. When families lose their sources of income and savings, they adopt negative coping mechanisms, with children often bearing the brunt, including entering exploitative labour to ensure the family's survival.

2.2.9 Child Labour Data Systems, Monitoring and Evidence Gaps

Accurate and current data on child labour in Kenya is a persistent challenge, hindering effective policy implementation and targeted interventions. Kenya's last comprehensive survey on the subject was conducted in 1999, followed by the last *Child Labour Analytical Report* in June 2008, which used data from the 2005/06 Kenya Integrated Household Survey (KIHBS). The primary challenge remains the lack of contemporary data to inform evidence-based policy implementation and initiatives. However, progress is being made to address this gap. There are efforts to mainstream child labour modules into the KNBS regular surveys, such as the 2025/26 Labour Force Survey and 2024 Kenya Housing Survey. It is hoped that the data issue will be

resolved going forward based on the progress made to mainstream the child labour modules into the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics regular surveys such as the Labour Force Survey, Household based surveys and other sector-based surveys.

2.3 Overall Performance in Country Commitments

The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) provides a detailed account of the extent to which each ILO Member State's legislation and practice are in conformity with ratified ILO Conventions. The latest Report for Kenya was released in February 2023. Pertaining to Kenya, the report indicates that:

- (i) Child labour remains a developmental challenge in Kenya that is linked to issues such as access to education, skills training and related services, social protection and the fight against poverty.
- (ii) The Government had established several social support programmes, including the Cash Transfer Programmes to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC); Urban Food Subsidy; and several bursaries for Orphans and Vulnerable Children.
- (iii) The Government had taken measures to eliminate child labour such as improving the functioning of the educational system, including measures aimed at improving school enrolment and attendance rates and reduce drop-out rates.
- (iv) The National Assembly of Kenya adopted the Sessional Paper No. 1 of National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour (NPCL) which aims at building synergies and mainstreaming child labour interventions in national, county, and sectoral policies. A National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children (2015-2022) has been developed.
- (v) The Street Family Rehabilitation Trust Fund has developed a National Policy on Rehabilitation of Street Families 2023.
- (vi) Kenya has made tremendous efforts to enhance care and protection of children, ratifying global and regional legal frameworks and legislating national laws and regulations. In the global context, Kenya has ratified conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989).

2.4 Legal, Policy and Institutional Frameworks

Kenya has not only ratified international conventions and treaties on child protection, but also made notable progress in the development of a legal and policy frameworks with a bearing on child protection and child labour.

2.4.1. International and Regional Instruments related to child labour

Kenya has ratified several international instruments - in the form of agreements, conventions, protocols and/or treaties aimed at protection of children. These include:

- (i) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC)
- (ii) African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the child (ACRWC)
- (iii) ILO Convention 138 (Minimum Wage)
- (iv) ILO Convention 182 (Worst Forms of child Labour)
- (v) UNCRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict;
- (vi) UNCRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography
- (vii) Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.

National Legal Frameworks

1. Constitution of Kenya, 2010

Article 53 guarantees every child the right to free and compulsory basic education, protection from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, exploitation, and hazardous work. The Constitution further obligates the State to adopt legislative, policy, and administrative measures that ensure the promotion of children's rights, while national values under Article 10 such as human dignity, equity, social justice, and protection of the vulnerable guide all state organs in formulating and implementing child protection interventions.

2. The Children Act, CAP 141

The Children Act, CAP 141 gives effect to Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya. Part II of the Act provides safeguards for the rights and best interests of the child. Section 18. (1) outlaw's child labour, domestic servitude, economic exploitation or any work or employment which is

hazardous, interferes with the child's education or is likely to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, moral, or social development.

3. Employment Act, Cap 226

The objective of the Act is to declare and define the fundamental rights of employees, provide basic conditions of employment of employees, regulate employment of children, and provide for connected matters. The Act spells out conditions under which children should not work before attaining the age of 18 years. It specifically sets out the minimum age for admission to light work to be between 13 and 16 years, while admissions into employment is allowable from 16 years, subject to stringent safeguards as spelt out in the Act. It also sets situations and conditions where children can engage in light work. Part IV provides for protection of children against child labour. Section 53 of the Act is devoted to prohibition of the worst forms of child labour and mandates the cabinet Secretary, in consultation with the National Labour Board, to make regulations declaring any work, activity or contract of service harmful to the health, safety or morals of a child.

4. Basic Education Act, Cap 211

The Basic Education Act (2013) gives effect to Article 53 of the Constitution and other enabling provisions; to promote and regulate free and compulsory basic education; to provide for accreditation, registration, governance, and management of institutions of basic education; to provide for the establishment of the National Education Board, the Education Standards and Quality Assurance Commission, and the County Education Board and for connected purposes. Part IV, Section 28 (1) requires that "the Cabinet Secretary (in charge of education matters) shall implement the right of every child to free and compulsory basic education. The Act also aligns other rights accorded to children, such as, the right to protection from exploitation and abuse.

5. Early Childhood Education Act Cap 211b

The Early Childhood Education Act (2021) aims to regulate and support early childhood education in Kenya, ensuring high standards in education provision for young children and upholding their rights to a safe and conducive learning environment. By mandating county governments to implement early childhood programs, the Act addresses root causes of child labour by promoting early access to education, which is crucial for keeping children in school and reducing their vulnerability to child labour.

6. Counter-Trafficking in Persons Act, Cap 61

This is an Act of Parliament to implement Kenya's obligations under the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime particularly its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; to provide for the offences relating to trafficking in persons and for connected purposes.

7. Occupational Safety and Health Act Cap 231

The Act aims to secure the safety, health and welfare of persons at work and protect persons other than persons at work against risks to safety and health arising in connection with the activities of persons at work.

8. Work Injury Benefits Act CAP. 236

This Act provides for compensation to employees for injuries and diseases contracted in the course of their employment and relating to work.

9. Labour Institutions Act Cap .234

The Labour Institutions Act establishes labour institutions including the National Labour Board and labour inspectorates. It strengthens labour governance, inspection, and enforcement—critical pillars in detecting and curbing illegal child labour practices. It also supports compliance with international labour standards.

10. Employment and Labour Relations Court Act, Cap. 234B

The Act establishes the Employment and Labour Relations Court to hear and determine disputes relating to employment and labour relations and for connected purposes. This includes issues related to child labour.

11. Industrial Training Act Cap. 237

The Industrial Training Act Cap. 237 establishes the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), which oversees industrial training programs in Kenya. By emphasizing skill development for youth, the Act prepares older children (above the legal working age) for safe and lawful entry into the workforce. This approach aligns with protections under the Employment Act (2007) and Children Act (2022), helping to reduce premature workforce entry and ensuring children are equipped with relevant skills as they reach the minimum age of employment.

12. Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act Cap. 62B

The Act outlaws the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Kenya and establishes penalties for those who engage in or promote it. By protecting girls from harmful practices, the Act reinforces child protection frameworks that seek to prevent exploitative practices linked to child labour. Protecting girls from FGM also supports their right to education, helping them avoid risks that often lead to labour exploitation.

13. Sexual Offences Act Cap. 63A

The Act establishes legal protections against sexual exploitation, including for minors, by enforcing strict penalties for offenders. This Act strengthens the framework of child protection by safeguarding children from abuse, promoting their safety and well-being, and supporting their right to a secure environment. These protections contribute to enabling children to focus on their education and personal development, helping reduce their vulnerability to exploitative practices.

14. Social Protection Act No. 12 of 2025

Provides a framework for the administration of non-contributory social protection interventions to establish the National Board for Social Protection and for connected purposes. These Act provide cash transfers to vulnerable households, reducing reliance on child labour for survival.

15. Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 4 of 2025

The Act provides for the advancement of the rights, dignity, and full inclusion of persons with disabilities. It mandates inclusive and quality education for children with disabilities, prohibits exploitation and abuse, strengthens social protection, and obligates both national and county governments to remove environmental and systemic barriers that hinder full participation. By requiring reasonable accommodation in schools and public services, enforcing a 5% employment quota for persons with disabilities, and establishing stronger enforcement mechanisms, the Act reduces the economic and social vulnerabilities that make children with disabilities disproportionately susceptible to child labour including domestic servitude, street work, and other hidden forms of exploitation.

16. National Gender and Equality Commission Act Cap. 2011

The National Gender and Equality Commission Act establishes NGENC as an independent constitutional body mandated to promote gender equality, inclusion, and protection from

discrimination for all special interest groups, including children. The Act empowers the Commission to monitor compliance with equality principles, advise government on policy and legislative reforms, and investigate rights violations. In relation to child labour, NGECC plays a key oversight role by ensuring children's rights are upheld, addressing inequalities and vulnerabilities that expose them to exploitation, and supporting national efforts to prevent and eliminate child labour across all sectors.

17. Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Cap. 79c

The Act provides for offences relating to computer systems; to enable timely and effective detection, prohibition, prevention, response, investigation and prosecution of computer and cybercrimes; to facilitate international co-operation in dealing with computer and cybercrime matters; and for connected purposes.

2.4.3. Policies, Strategies and Action Plans

There are various policies, strategies, and action plans that have been put in place to progress the fight against child labour. An interesting observation is that some of the highlighted action plans have since elapsed and are yet to be replaced. These include:

(i) National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour (Sessional Paper No 1 of 2015)

The *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2015 on National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour* is designed to eradicate child labour by focusing on prevention, identification, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children, ultimately aiming for a child labour-free society. It emphasizes a multi-sectoral, collaborative approach involving government, non-state actors, and communities, supported by strong institutional frameworks and international conventions like the ILO's Minimum Age and Worst Forms of Child Labour conventions.

(ii) National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya (2015-2022)

The National Plan of Action for Children in Kenya (2015-2022) provided an operational framework for coordinating, planning, implementing, and monitoring programs for children's welfare. It outlines programs, awareness-raising activities, and research with the goal of reducing child labour and other child exploitation cases by fifty percent by 2022. Other areas of interest include sexual exploitation of children, child trafficking, street work, online safety, and protecting children with disabilities. The Plan's implementation saw significant progress in updating the legal framework for child rights, culminating in the enactment of the comprehensive

Children Act, 2022. The plan also led to: the development and use of key guidelines such as the Guidelines for Child Protection Case Management and Referral in Kenya Standard Operating Procedures for alternative care; care reform and deinstitutionalization leading to a National Care Reform Strategy (2022-2032); and enhancing coordination of multi sectoral efforts. While progress was made, lack of comprehensive and consistent outcome data makes it challenging to monitor progress.

(iii) National Plan of Action to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Kenya (2022-2026) (OCSEA)

The National Plan of Action provides a comprehensive framework aimed at preventing and responding to instances of sexual exploitation and abuse of children. By focusing on awareness, prevention strategies, and multi-sectoral collaboration, this policy strengthens child protection efforts across the country. It emphasizes the importance of safe environments for children, enabling them to thrive without the risk of exploitation. This alignment with broader child protection initiatives underscores the commitment to safeguarding children from all forms of abuse, including those that may lead to child labour.

(iii) National Prevention and Response Plan on Violence Against Children in Kenya (2019–2023)

The plan identifies goals and multi-sectoral actions to address violence against children, including commercial sexual exploitation, child trafficking, and other worst forms of child labour, through laws and policies, family support, education and life skills, community awareness, response and support, and coordination. The plan was directly informed by the comprehensive 2019 Violence Against Children Survey (VACS), which provided crucial data on the scope and types of violence. It was successful in raising awareness and strengthening systemic responses and legal frameworks. The plan also promoted a "whole-of-society" approach to child protection. There are challenges that affected its implementation including: a lack of awareness of available resources, fear, or a preference for traditional justice mechanisms; inadequate funding, limited inter-agency coordination, and cultural resistance to change.

(iv) National Education Sector Strategic Plan (2023 – 2027)

The National Education Sector Strategic Plan (2023 - 2027) aims to realize the constitutional imperatives of access to free and compulsory basic education, quality services, and access to education institutions and facilities. It provides for access to relevant education and training,

employment, participation and representation by youths, including minorities and marginalized groups in all spheres of life, special opportunities in educational and economic fields, and special opportunities for access to employment.

(v) National Plan of Action Against Sexual Exploitation of Children in Kenya (2018 – 2022)

The National Plan of Action Against Sexual Exploitation of Children (2018–2022) aimed to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation through identification, protection, rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children. Since sexual exploitation is classified as one of the worst forms of child labour, the Plan also contributes to child labour elimination by reducing children’s vulnerability to exploitation, strengthening child protection systems, and supporting their recovery and reintegration into safe environments through the identification, prevention, protection, rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of children.

2.3 Review of National Policy on Elimination of Child Labour (Sessional Paper number 1 of 2015)

The National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour (Sessional Paper number 1 of 2015) focused mainly on strategies that were aimed at prevention, identification, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children involved in all forms of child labour. The ultimate vision was to have a “child labour free society”. A key component of the policy was the strong institutional frameworks for labour administration and integrated implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanism across Government. Policy guidance was anchored on the National Steering Committee on Child Labour, the National Labour Board (NLB), and the National Council for Children Services (NCCS). Implementation was be coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in strict consultation with the network of state and non-state actors engaged in activities towards elimination of child labour in Kenya. The strategies contained in the policy were expected to lead to effective and sustainable reduction in child labour.

4.1.5 Existing implementation and enforcement structures

Institutions and coordinating structures have been established and activated to implement and enforce child labour interventions. These include: The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP), departments and agencies; The National Labour Board (NLB), the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH); The National Council for Children’s Services (NCCS); the National Police Service, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP),

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior and National Administration.

There are a number of coordination structures including the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Child Labour; Technical working committee on child labour, County Children Advisory Committees, and County Child Labour Committees (CCLCs).

Social partners including workers' and employers' organizations have also taken keen interest in the elimination of child labour. Further, there are a good number of current and potential partners at the international and non-governmental levels.

2.5 Emerging issues & Gaps

2.5.1 Emerging Issues

Child labour remains a daunting challenge in Kenya in spite of the previous efforts in combating it. Several issues that have emerged since adoption of the current policy necessitating a review are as follows:

- i. **Online and Cyberspace Exploitation.** There are new challenges that have complicated and even reversed the gains made from previous efforts to eliminate child labour such as online exploitation of children e.g. the rising cases of online sexual exploitation, trafficking and forced online labour facilitated by digital spaces. Children are increasingly becoming economic actors online (e.g., content creation, social media influencing), often without adequate legal safeguards, which blurs the lines between acceptable online activity and exploitation. The current legal framework is seen as insufficient in shielding children from this new type of labour. Recruiters leverage social media platforms to lure children with fake opportunities and cash rewards, leading to offline exploitation, including online sexual exploitation (OCSEA), trafficking, and forced online labour. While a National Plan of Action to Tackle OCSEA (2022–2026) exists, a comprehensive, integrated approach within the general child labour policy is needed to ensure cohesive enforcement across various digital platforms and regulatory bodies like the Communications Authority (CA) and the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB).
- ii. **Climate Change Impacts.** Severe and frequent natural disasters such as droughts, floods, locust invasions are linked to climate change. Families in crisis are relying more on child

labour for income following these systemic shocks. Over 9 million children in Kenya are exposed to droughts and water scarcity, and over 1.3 million to flood risks, making them the most vulnerable group. The current policy needs to integrate child-sensitive climate action and ensure that climate financing addresses these specific child protection needs.

- iii. Migration and Displacement. Internal and cross-border migration, often driven by climate change, conflict, and economic hardship, create transient populations where children are highly vulnerable to exploitation. Displaced children often lack stable support systems, education access, and are easily drawn into hazardous work. Migrant and displaced children often fall outside the purview of traditional community-based protection mechanisms, making them harder to monitor and protect under existing policy frameworks.
- iv. Rapid growth of the urban informal economy has created new spaces for hidden forms of child labour, including street vending, waste picking, transport assistance, and domestic servitude, all of which remain poorly regulated.
- v. New opportunities have also emerged that could bolster the fight against child labour. These include the coming of age of the devolved governance structures, expansion and deepening of the social protection coverage, use of technology, vertical and horizontal partnerships, amongst others.
- vi. Enhanced Partnerships and Collaboration. There has been positive development in the institutional arrangements. Institutions and agencies responsible for sectors susceptible to child labour are increasingly getting involved. Though the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection remains the principal partner in the fight against child labour, other sectors such as agriculture, education, foreign affairs, justice and law enforcement, and immigration are increasingly being involved. Similarly, civil society organizations as well as workers' and employers' organizations are increasingly playing a complimentary role.
- vii. There has been a paradigm shift in the approach in the fight against child labour at the global level away from direct actions to policy interventions. The AU Action plan on elimination of child labour and the Durban Call to Action on Elimination of Child Labour

and other policy documents commits the global community to scale up action against child labour through various strategies.

viii. The system for collecting, analysing, documenting and disseminating data and information on child labour remains inadequate.

2.5.2 Gaps

The following gaps that have hindered the implementation of policies, strategies and action plans intended to guide the fight against child labour were identified in a mapping exercise. They include

- i. Inadequate data on child labour as some forms of child labour like domestic work and online exploitation are hidden.
- ii. Weak enforcement of laws.
- iii. Inadequate budget and human resources - Not enough children officers, labour inspectors, or funding to enforce laws.
- iv. Weak enforcement and coordination mechanism - Cross-sector collaboration remains inconsistent
- v. Inadequate social protection coverage - Not all vulnerable households are supported.
- vi. Persistent poverty and inequality - Economic stress continues to push children into labour.
- vii. Lack of an integrated data management system on child labour - Limited information makes planning and monitoring difficult.
- viii. Limited access to inclusive and quality education

CHAPTER 3: POLICY STATEMENT

This chapter outlines the policy priority actions of the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour. The policy commitments are anchored on the objectives and situation analysis outlined in Chapter two. The policy statements developed for each objective are intended to guide the strategies necessary for eliminating child labour in Kenya. The government commits to the following policy statements:

3.2.1 Policy statement 1:

To implement measures to promote and ensure access to **decent work** for all adults and young persons of working age.

The government will:

- i. Ratify and domesticate outstanding treaties and conventions that promote decent work.
- ii. Enforce legislation pertaining to terms and conditions of employment
- iii. Promote access to jobs that offer fair wages, job security, safe and healthy working conditions.
- iv. Equip young people and adults with the skills necessary for current and future labour market needs, facilitating their transition into decent work.
- v. Promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
- vi. Promote social dialogue.

3.2.2 Policy statement 2:

To ending child labour in all sectors by implementing comprehensive measures.

The government will:

- i. Strengthen frameworks and improve services for detection of child labour, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of cases of child labour.
- ii. Strengthen the provision of quality protection services to survivors and victims of child labour.
- iii. Promote smart agricultural practices including extension and policies for crop diversification, introduction of labour-saving technologies; introduction of more

- resilient crop and livestock breeds, disaster risk reduction and insurance schemes, and enhance climate resilience mitigation measures.
- iv. Strengthen mechanisms for addressing child labour in emergency and disaster situations.
 - v. Take legislative and policy action to protect young workers in domestic work, sexual exploitation - including on-line child sexual exploitation and abuse, - illicit trade and other worst forms of child labour.
 - vi. Promote and support transparency, due diligence and remediation in private and public supply chains and procurement policies.
 - vii. Strengthen and support producer and social economy (cooperatives and associations) organizations to enhance livelihoods of members in the fight against child labour.

3.2.3 Policy statement 3:

To accelerate the realization of universal access for all children to free, compulsory, quality, equitable, and inclusive education and training, ensuring that no child is left behind.

The government will:

- i. Ensure that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, gender, disability, or geographical location, have access to free, compulsory basic education.
- ii. Ensure equitable distribution of educational resources to address disparities in access equity and outcomes based on income, gender, and geographical location.
- iii. Promote an inclusive education system where all children, including those with disabilities or from minority backgrounds, are integrated into mainstream education settings and receive tailored support.
- iv. Expand access to quality early childhood education programs to ensure that children enter primary school ready to learn, with foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and social development.
- v. Provide adequate funding for the education sector to ensure that resources are available to implement and sustain policies promoting universal access, quality, and equity.
- vi. Expand programmes for enhancing retention of pupils in schools and transition to secondary schools.

3.2.4 Policy statement 4:

To scale up efforts to achieve universal access to comprehensive social protection for all individuals.

The government will:

- i. Ensure that all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic status, gender, age, or geographical location, are included in social protection schemes.
- ii. Ensure that social protection programs offer sufficient financial support to meet the basic needs of beneficiaries.
- iii. Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection systems to provide timely and accurate support to those in need.
- iv. Extend social protection to those working in the informal economy, which often lacks access to benefits.
- v. Increase awareness and understanding of available social protection programs to ensure widespread participation and access.
- vi. Strengthen the role of social protection systems in protecting citizens during economic downturns, pandemics, or natural disasters.

3.2.5 Policy statement 5:

To prevent and eliminate child labour through evidence-informed policy and programmatic intervention.

The government will:

- i. Strengthen institutional frameworks and integrated implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- ii. Develop comprehensive, evidence-based systems for tracking child labour prevalence, including regular surveys and data collection at national, and county levels and modular frameworks for analysing existing data on child labour.
- iii. Enhance sensitization of child labour by all stakeholders.
- iv. Strengthen Government capacity to prioritize, collect, analyse disseminate and preserve data on child labour.
- v. Harness knowledge, experiences and good practices in addressing child labour amongst countries to accelerate transformative change.

3.2.6 Policy statement 6:

To foster partnerships and alliances for resource mobilization and enhance capacity sharing.

The government will:

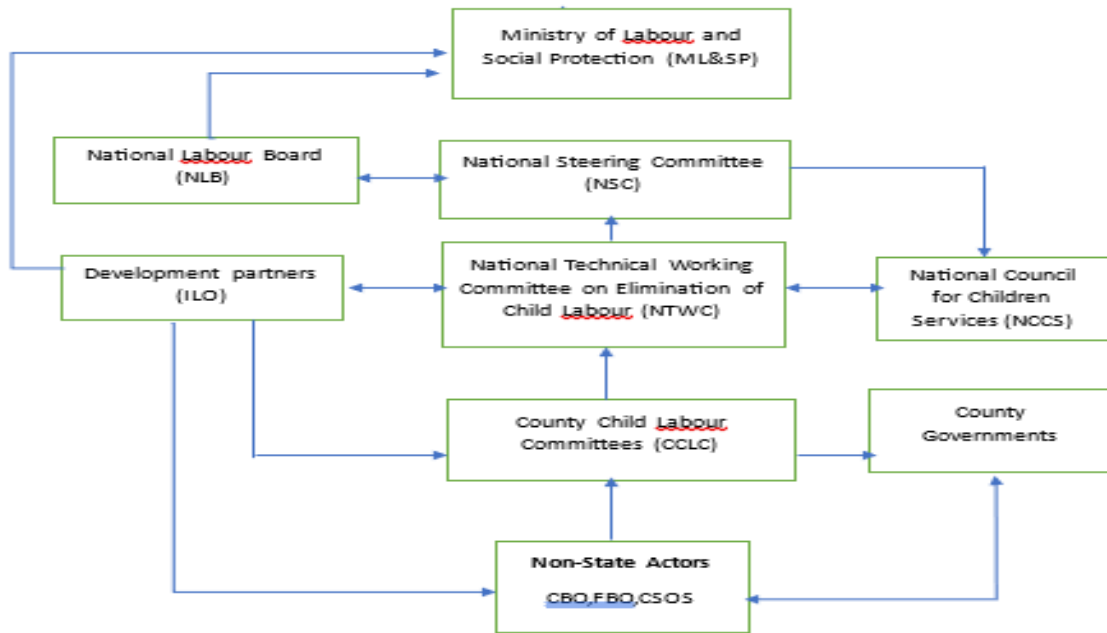
- i. Promote partnerships that are inclusive and promote equity in policy making and implementation, resource distribution, and innovation.
- ii. Enhance collaborative resource mobilization to build and strengthen partnerships that facilitate the mobilization of financial, human, and material resources for programmes against child labour.
- iii. Promote the exchange of knowledge, skills, and best practices among partners to build capacity across sectors and regions.
- iv. Promote transparency, accountability, and effective governance structures in partnerships and alliances.
- v. Leverage digital tools and platforms to facilitate the sharing of resources and capacity across partners.
- vi. Increase budgetary allocation by national and county governments towards initiatives for elimination of child labour.

CHAPTER 4: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the implementation and coordination framework for the policy. It gives a breakdown of organizational and institutional arrangements, their respective roles and a proposal for financial resources for funding policy implementation.

4.1 Institutional Framework

The successful implementation of this policy hinges on effective collaboration and the creation of synergies among all stakeholders through a robust institutional framework and management system. The oversight and coordination of child labour laws and the execution of policies and action plans fall under the purview of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MOL&SP). The primary coordinating body will be the National Steering Committee (NSC) on the Elimination of Child Labour at the national level, supported by the National Technical Working Committee on Elimination of Child Labour (NTWC) and its various sub-committees. The NSC will collaborate closely with the National Labour Board (NLB) and the National Council for Children Services (NCCS), comprising members from Government, employees' organizations, employers' organizations, and representatives from relevant civil society organizations (CSOs). At the county level, child labour policy implementation, coordination, and monitoring will be overseen by the County Child Labour Committees specifically addressing child labour issues.



4.2 Role of Stakeholders

The policy implementation process will adopt a multi-stakeholder approach involving different stakeholders state actors (MDAs) at national, Counties; workers' and employers' organizations, non-state actors (civil society organizations [CSOs, FBOs/nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], the private sector); target groups (Children, households, communities); and development partners. The following are the key actors and their respective roles in implementing this policy:

4.2.1 Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and other Government Ministries, Agencies and Departments

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MOL&SP) will establish and facilitate an institutional and management structure to coordinate and manage implementation of this policy. Since child labour is a multi-sectoral phenomenon, the Ministry will coordinate with other MDAs whose mandate contribute to the fight against the vice. The MOL&SP and other ministries, departments and agencies will be responsible for the following functions:

- i. Develop national policy implementation guidelines and legislation, set standard operating procedures, national reporting, coordination, and resource mobilization.

- ii. Provide technical support, with emphasis on planning, development, and monitoring of child labour programmes throughout the country.
- iii. Create awareness on child labour throughout the country targeting different groups including policy makers, communities, and children.
- iv. Mainstream child labour in policies and programmes dealing with education, agriculture, social protection, employment, safety, and health.
- v. Lobby the political class to secure the highest-level support for the fight against child labour; and
- vi. Capacity and strengthening of staff of different Government ministries.

4.2.2 National Steering Committee (NSC)

The National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour (NSC-CL) serves as the apex multi-sectoral governance mechanism providing strategic direction, policy oversight, and cross-government alignment in driving Kenya’s child labour elimination agenda.

The National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Child Labour will comprise senior leadership and mandated institutions drawn from across government, social partners, and key stakeholder groups. It will be chaired by the Principal Secretary State Department for Labour and Skills Development. Other members will include the Labour Commissioner who will be the secretary to the Committee planning (Labour), Finance Unit (Labour) Occupational Safety and Health, representatives from State Departments responsible for Social Protection, Basic Education, directorate of Children’s services, ministry of interior, attorney general and office of director of public prosecution. . The Committee also includes the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and social partners represented through the Federation of Kenya Employers, the Central Organization of Trade Unions, and the Council of Governors providing county-level linkage. Civil society organizations engaged in child labour elimination, representatives from development partners such as ILO, UNICEF and IOM (as observers), private sector actors from high-risk value chains, and academic or research institutions may be co-opted to provide technical expertise and sector-specific insights, ensuring the Committee retains a fully integrated, multi-sectoral composition.

Its core roles include:

1. Provide strategic leadership for national child labour elimination initiatives.

2. Oversee implementation of the National Policy and National Action Plan on the elimination of child labour.
3. Align national efforts with regional and global commitments, such as SDG 8.7 and ILO standards.
4. Coordinate multi-sectoral action on elimination of child labour across ministries, social partners, CSOs, county governments, and development partners.
5. Ensure integration of child labour priorities into sectoral plans, programmes, and budget frameworks.
6. Drive resource mobilization efforts to support national and county-level interventions.
7. Strengthen partnerships with development partners, private sector, and civil society for programme scalability.
8. Provide oversight on monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of child labour interventions.
9. Review progress reports submitted by the National Technical Working Committee and implementing agencies.
10. Promote evidence-based decision-making through validation of national data, research, and assessments.
11. Advocate for prioritization of child labour issues within Cabinet, Parliament, and national development agendas.
12. Enhance national visibility and public awareness on child labour prevention and response.
13. Identify emerging risks and recommend policy adjustments or corrective measures.
14. Validate national reports, implementation plans, and legal/policy proposals linked to child labour elimination.
15. Endorse national positions for presentation in regional and international forums.
16. Provide oversight and strategic direction to the National Technical Working Committee (NTWC).
17. Approve NTWC work plans and ensure timely escalation of technical recommendations to senior policy levels.

4.2.3 National Technical Working Committee on Elimination of Child Labour (NTWC)

The National Technical Working Committee (NTWC) on the Elimination of Child Labour functions as the central technical coordination platform steering Kenya's national response to child labour, providing strategic guidance, strengthening policy coherence, and driving evidence-based implementation across sectors. Its membership comprises technical representatives from

key MDAs—including Labour (Planning, LMRA, DOL, DOSHS), Education, Interior, Agriculture, NCCS, KNBS, NPS, ODPP, AG—alongside employers’ and workers’ organizations. The committee may co-opt leadership of civil society actors that deals with child labour. The Committee is further empowered to co-opt development partners, UN agencies, and other specialized entities as needed to enhance technical depth, resource alignment, and strategic collaboration.

Key roles include:

- Provide technical advisory support to the National Steering Committee and the Ministry on policy, legislative, and programmatic priorities.
- Coordinate multi-sectoral implementation across government agencies, social partners, and civil society organizations.
- Review and recommend improvements to policy, legal, and regulatory frameworks to enhance alignment with international labour standards.
- Drive evidence-based planning through analysis of national surveys, research outputs, and administrative data.
- Monitor and track progress of national action plans, projects, and interventions to ensure delivery on agreed milestones.
- Strengthen institutional and partner capacity through the development of training materials, guidelines, and standard operating procedures.
- Mobilize and align resources—financial, technical, and human—to support national child labour elimination initiatives.
- Facilitate knowledge management, documentation of best practices, and dissemination of lessons learned.
- Ensure effective translation of national policies and strategies into operational implementation frameworks.
- Identify and mitigate risks, bottlenecks, and emerging child labour trends in high-risk sectors and countries.
- Enhance stakeholder engagement with employers’ and workers’ organizations, CSOs, development partners, and community structures to deepen ownership and accountability.

4.2.4 County Governments

County governments are responsible for executing devolved functions assigned to them by the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Acts of Parliament, and other legal instruments, to prevent and redress child labour in Kenya. These functions are to be executed in close coordination between the National and County Governments. County governments will:

- i. Develop and implement county legislations, policies, and regulations to facilitate early childhood education and the provision of childcare facilities.
- ii. Collaborate with the national government to support the enforcement of national labour laws, including those related to child labour, under the Employment Act, 2007. They work alongside national authorities to ensure that children are not employed in hazardous or exploitative work.
- iii. Collaborate with national agencies to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Child Protection Policy and the Kenya National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour.
- iv. Promote awareness campaigns to educate people about the negative impacts of child labour on children's health, education, and prospects.
- v. Enhance the collection, analysis, and dissemination of reliable, aggregated, and up-to-date local data on child labour.
- vi. Promote programmes and collaborations aimed at reintegrating children who have been involved in child labour back into the education system and offer them psychological and social support.
- vii. Establish and enforce social protection programs that identify and target vulnerable families to reduce the economic pressures that drive families to engage children in work, by providing food security, cash transfers, or education subsidies.
- viii. Support the establishment and effective functioning of schools, including by improving infrastructure and offering scholarships to ensure that children have access to educational opportunities.
- ix. Set up vocational training programs for children of legal working age who may be at risk of entering the workforce to equip them with the skills needed for decent jobs.
- x. Allocate adequate budgets for child protection initiatives, including programs aimed at addressing child labour.

- xi. Support establishment and strengthen local County Children’s Advisory Committees (CCACs) and County Child Labour Committees (CCLCs) to address child protection and labour issues at the county level.
- xii. Establish and support the operation of local hotlines and reporting systems where children, families, and community members can report instances of child labour or exploitation, and foster efficient referral to service providers.
- xiii. Establish official channels and platforms for coordinating with the national government for complementarity in addressing child labour in countries.

4.2.5 County Child Labour Committees

County Child Labour Committees (CCLCs) serve as the primary subnational governance structures mandated to coordinate, oversee, and accelerate the implementation of child labour prevention and response interventions at the county level. They provide a structured platform for multi-stakeholder engagement, enabling county governments, social partners, civil society actors, and community-based mechanisms to align their efforts toward reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening protective systems.

The County Child Labour Committee comprises a balanced mix of state and non-state actors to ensure coordinated, community-anchored action against child labour. State representation includes the County Commissioner (Chair), County Labour Officer (Secretary), County Children Officer, Occupational Safety and Health Officer, County Education Officer, County Police Commander, and three County Government officers from agriculture, livestock, and gender. These are complemented by employer organizations, trade union branches, civil society groups, faith-based organizations, the media, private individuals, and implementing partners working on child-labour issues. Together, they provide an integrated platform for joint planning, information sharing, and effective response.

Their key roles are:

1. Provide strategic leadership in the implementation of national child labour policies, legislation, and action plans within the county context.
2. Coordinate multi-sectoral actors across labour, education, social services, interior, justice, agriculture, health, civil society, and the private sector to ensure unified interventions.

3. Oversee county-level mapping, surveillance, and reporting of child labour cases, and maintain accurate data flows to national structures.
4. Strengthen and supervise Sub-County and Ward Child Labour Committees to ensure effective grassroots implementation.
5. Drive county-level advocacy, awareness creation, and community mobilization to influence behaviour change and promote compliance with child labour norms.
6. Monitor, evaluate, and provide quality assurance for child labour prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration programmes.
7. Mobilize resources from county budgets, development partners, CSOs, and private sector partners to support child labour interventions.
8. Facilitate capacity building for frontline personnel, enforcement entities, and community-based child protection actors.
9. Coordinate case management, referrals, and linkages to education, health, psychosocial support, and social protection services.
10. Support enforcement of child labour laws, including collaboration on labour inspections, compliance promotion, and escalation of violations.
11. Identify emerging risks and activate early-warning mechanisms to prevent child labour during shocks, crises, or other vulnerabilities.

4.2.6 Employers and Workers Organizations

Employers' and workers' organizations occupy an indispensable position in the national child labour elimination architecture, serving as frontline stakeholders that operationalize decent work principles within the labour market. Their institutional leverage, sectoral reach, and convening power enable them to drive compliance, influence industry norms, and anchor behavioural change across value chains. As social partners, they provide a critical interface between policy formulation and workplace-level execution, ensuring that regulatory commitments translate into measurable results.

Role of Employers/Organisations

1. Promote full compliance with labour laws and international child labour standards across sectors.
2. Embed corporate due diligence, supply-chain monitoring, and corrective action protocols.
3. Build enterprise capacity on ethical recruitment and child-labour-free workplace practices.
4. Coordinate private-sector engagement in multi-stakeholder child labour interventions.
5. Lead advocacy and communication campaigns on zero tolerance to child labour.
6. Support remediation efforts, including withdrawal, rehabilitation, and education reintegration of affected children.

Role of Workers/Organisations

1. Use collective bargaining and social dialogue platforms to entrench child labour prohibitions.

2. Promote safety and health at the workplace through joint safety and health committees and collective bargaining agreements
3. To initiate programs to eliminate child labour
4. Strengthen workplace surveillance through shop stewards and worker representatives.
5. Conduct worker sensitization and awareness programmes on child labour risks.
6. Advocate for decent wages and secure employment to reduce household vulnerability.
7. Participate actively in national and county policy-making and monitoring structures.
8. Mobilize community networks to identify, report, and reintegrate children removed from labour.

4.2.7 Non-State Actors

These are implementing partners that play a role in the fight against child labour. They include the private sector, NGOs, FBOs, and CSOs. This policy recognizes the strengths of these actors in mobilizing resources, designing, and implementing development programmes, and organizing and interacting with community groups. The implementing partners have also been a critical source of human and monetary resources that would be critical in the implementation of this policy. In addition, this policy acknowledges the range of interventions implemented by these partners in addressing risk factors to child labour in the areas of education, agriculture, food security, and water sectors, among others. The private sector has specified obligations to combat child labour in their enterprises in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

4.2.8 Development partners

Combating child labour requires significant financial and technical investment in a context of limited domestic resources. Development Partners and international nongovernmental organizations have traditionally played a key role in providing resources for the child protection/child labour. This role has been structured around principles of aid effectiveness, which place emphasis on government ownership, alignment, and harmonization. The implementation of this policy will require the continued support of development partners.

4.3: FINANCING THE POLICY

Funding Arrangements

The effective implementation of the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour depends on sustained, predictable, and adequate financing. This section outlines the key funding sources and mechanisms necessary to ensure that programmes targeting the prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children involved in or at risk of child labour are well-resourced.

Government Budget Allocations

The National Government and County Governments will serve as the primary financiers of this Policy.

The National Treasury will be required to allocate adequate resources through the annual budget cycle to support child labour elimination programmes, including enforcement, social protection, education access, and labour inspections.

The Cabinet Secretary responsible for labour and the Cabinet Secretary responsible for children's matters, together with County Governments, will ensure integration of child labour interventions into sectoral plans, Medium-Term Plans, and County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).

Donor and Development Partner Support

Development partners including UN agencies, international labour organizations, and bilateral donors will provide financial, material, and technical support. Contributions will prioritise interventions such as withdrawal and rehabilitation programmes, advocacy and awareness campaigns, strengthening inspection systems, and support to vulnerable households to reduce reliance on child labour.

Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The Policy encourages strong collaboration with the private sector, especially industries with high child labour risks.

Private companies, employers' organisations, and business associations will be engaged to support resource mobilization through:

- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives
- Investments in safe school infrastructure and vocational skills centres
- Funding of community-based prevention programmes
- Support for supply chain due-diligence measures aimed at eliminating child labour

Financial Monitoring, Accountability, and Reporting

A strong financial management and accountability framework will be instituted to ensure transparency in the planning, allocation, and utilization of resources earmarked for child labour elimination.

The National Treasury, Ministry responsible for children matters, Ministry responsible for labour, and County Governments will:

- Establish tracking systems for expenditures related to child labour
- Require periodic financial reporting and independent audits
- Publish annual budget execution reports to promote public accountability
- Ensure that resources reach intended programmes and beneficiaries efficiently

A comprehensive resource mobilization strategy to finance the policy will be developed together with the National Action Plan. A consolidated resource-mobilization blueprint will be crafted alongside the National Action Plan to secure sustainable financing for policy delivery. It will articulate a diversified funding architecture—leveraging exchequer commitments, county-level budget integration, development-partner alignment, private-sector co-investment, and strategic philanthropy—to ensure predictable, scalable, and impact-driven resourcing throughout the implementation cycle.

CHAPTER 5: MONITORING AND EVALUATION, REPORTING AND LEARNING

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation framework

A robust Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&E) framework will be developed to ensure that the interventions outlined in this policy are not only implemented in a timely and efficient manner but also the expected policy objectives are achieved. The key components of the M&E framework are the following:

5.1.1 Development of National Action Plan

Enactment of the National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour will be followed by development of the National Action Plan. This will be a time-bound Medium-Term Plan that will elaborate the comprehensive medium-term strategic actions and investment approaches necessary for the achievement of the intended policy outcomes.

5.1.2 M&E Responsibility assignment

Responsibility for M&E will be diversified in tandem with the emerging multi-sector approach to combating child labour. Though the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection remains the main tripartite partner on matters relating to child labour, oversight responsibility for Policy implementation will be vested on the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Child Labour. The NSC will be holding bi-annual meetings to consider the status of Policy implementation as well as the overall progress in the fight against the vice. The NSC will learn from the experience gained in the period under review and adjust the policy based on the experience. At the end of each meeting, a detailed output and outcome-based report will be prepared and issued by the committee. During the inaugural bi-annual meeting, baseline measures for each indicator included in the Policy will be submitted and subsequently utilized to track progress. The Committee will be expected to make periodic visits to verify the reports it receives from implementing agencies. The National Technical Working Committee on Elimination of Child Labour (NTWC) will be responsible for reviewing progress of implementation on a quarterly basis and conduct an annual progress review. A detailed M&E framework will be developed to guide implementation.

5.2 Communication Strategy, outreach and feedback

The Ministry responsible for the implementation of this policy will ensure that the policy is disseminated to all stakeholders and a feedback mechanism is established.

5.3 Policy Reporting, Review and Learning

5.3.1 Policy Reporting

This policy will be subject to periodic reporting to assess compliance and implementation progress to inform the Government and international partners on the status of progress toward the achievement of the goal of elimination of child labour.

5.4 Policy Review, Revision Cycle and Learning

The policy will be reviewed after every ten years, with a mid-term review at the five-year mark to address any emerging issues and assess progress towards the policy's objectives. Reviews will involve extensive consultations with Stakeholders and lessons learned from the implementation process or from other countries and regions as well as emerging global practices will be incorporated.