



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KIAMBU

**THE KIAMBU COUNTY
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
AND EDUCATION (ECDE) Policy, 2025.**



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County Government of Kiambu



FOREWORD

Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) forms the cornerstone of a nation's human capital and social transformation. It is during these formative years that children acquire the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social foundations that shape their lifelong learning, productivity, and citizenship. In recognition of this, the Constitution of Kenya (2010) mandates County Governments to oversee the provision of pre-primary education under the Fourth Schedule. In response, Kiambu County has embraced this constitutional obligation with firm commitment and visionary leadership.

This ECDE Policy reflects Kiambu County's unwavering resolve to nurture every child's potential through equitable, inclusive, and quality early learning opportunities. It is the product of extensive consultations, data-driven analysis, and alignment with both national and global education frameworks including Kenya Vision 2030, the Basic Education Act (2013), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 on inclusive and quality education for all.

Over the past three years, the County Government has made significant investments in ECDE infrastructure, caregiver recruitment, instructional resources, and school feeding programmes. These gains, however, coexist with persistent challenges ranging from resource inequities and inadequate facilities to staffing gaps and limited inclusion for children with special needs. This Policy framework provides clear, actionable strategies to address these challenges while strengthening governance, monitoring, and community participation.

By mainstreaming child protection, nutrition, teacher development, and digital innovation, the Policy offers a holistic roadmap for transforming ECDE service delivery across all wards in the County. It prioritizes the rights and well-being of every child, recognizing that early investment yields high returns not only in educational outcomes but in health, equity, and economic prosperity.

This Policy is a testament to the County Government of Kiambu's dedication to building a society where no child is left behind. We call upon all stakeholders' parents, teachers, civil society, development partners, and the private sector—to embrace their roles as co-architects in this noble endeavor. Together, we can ensure that every child in Kiambu County enters school ready to learn, thrive, and contribute meaningfully to our collective future.

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER
EDUCATION, GENDER, CULTURE & SOCIAL SERVICES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The formulation of this Policy document was as a result of intensive consultative process between the County Government of Kiambu and relevant stakeholders from the National Government, private sector, civil society organization, community and development partners all of whom need to be acknowledged for their invaluable contribution to the development of this Policy.

We wish to acknowledge the tremendous support from the office of the Governor, the County Executive Committee Members and Chief Officers in granting the officers an opportunity to serve in the taskforce. In particular, we thank H.E. the Governor and the CECM and Chief Officer Education, gender and social services for the full support accorded during the preparation of the Policy.

Much gratitude to the Sector working groups who were involved in the undertaking of situational analysis of how the County's ECDE's are run.

I am equally, on behalf of the department, indebted to His Excellency, the Governor Dr. WAMATANGI for the political leadership and support accorded to the department.

The department of EDUCATION, GENDER, CULTURE & SOCIAL SERVICES shall take a lead role in ensuring that the Policy measures enshrined in this document will be mainstreamed in all the county sector. In that regard, I call upon all the stakeholders to partner with the County in the implementation of this Policy document.

ACCOUNTING OFFICER

DEFINITION OF TERMS

“Act” means the Kiambu County Early Childhood Development and Education Act, 2025

“Chief Officer” means the Chief Officer for the time being responsible for Early Childhood Development and Education;

“Child” means any child who has not attained the age of 6 years

“The Board” means the Kiambu County Government Early Childhood Development and Education Board

“Board of management” means the board of Management established under section 15 of this Act;

“County” means the Kiambu County;

“County Government” means the County Government of Kiambu;

“County Revenue Fund” means the County Revenue Fund established under the Public Finance Management Act;

“Director’ means the Director responsible for early childhood development and education appointed in accordance with section 9 of this Act;

“Executive Member” means the County Executive Member for the time being responsible for early childhood development and education;

“Early childhood development Centre” means any institution offering early childhood development and education and includes home-based schooling

facilities, day care Centres and childcare Centres

“Early childhood development and education” means the care and education given to a child;

“Early childhood development and education institution” means a place where early childhood development and education services are offered and it includes early childhood development Centres;

“Head teacher” means the lead educator or administrator in an education Centre who is responsible for the implementation of Policy guidelines and professional practice in the Early childhood education Centre.

“institution” means an early childhood development and education institution;

“Private institution” means an early childhood education and development institution which is not funded from the County Revenue Fund;

“Municipality ECDE Director” means the Municipal Director for early childhood development and education appointed in accordance with section 10 of this Act;

“Municipal education office” means the office of the Municipality ECDE Director

“Public institution” means an early childhood education institution which is fully or partially funded from the County Revenue Fund;

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Executive Summary

This Policy provides a structured roadmap for the implementation, management, regulation, and development of Early Childhood Development Education in Kiambu County. It affirms the County Government's commitment to providing free, inclusive, equitable, and quality ECDE services. The Kiambu County Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Policy Framework is a comprehensive strategic document that sets the direction for delivering quality, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable early childhood education services. Aligned with Kenya's Constitution (2010), national education policies, and global development agendas, the Policy reflects Kiambu County's strong commitment to nurturing its youngest citizens during their most critical years of development birth to eight years.

Policy Context and Rationale

The Constitution of Kenya (2010), under the Fourth Schedule, devolves the function of pre-primary education to county governments. In recognition of this mandate, Kiambu County has developed this ECDE Policy to bridge gaps in access, quality, equity, and governance across its 12 sub-counties. The Policy is rooted in the understanding that the early years of a child's life are foundational to lifelong learning, health, and socio-economic success.

Despite remarkable efforts including the construction of over 312 classrooms and implementation of a fortified porridge feeding programme serving approximately 40,000 children—Kiambu County still faces systemic challenges in its ECDE subsector. These include inadequate infrastructure, insufficient teacher numbers, low inclusion of children with special needs, fragmented health and nutrition services, and limited community participation.

Policy Objectives and Scope

Goal: To establish a resilient, inclusive, and quality ECDE system that guarantees universal access to early learning opportunities throughout Kiambu County.

Specific Objectives:

- Expand access to ECDE centres in underserved areas
- Improve teacher recruitment, training, and motivation
- Institutionalize inclusive education for children with special needs
- Integrate health, nutrition, and safety interventions
- Digitize monitoring and evaluation systems
- Foster partnerships across sectors

- Regularize school fees, uniforms, and feeding programmes
- Strengthen governance and community involvement

The Policy applies to all public and private ECDE stakeholders within the County, including government departments, agencies, NGOs, FBOs, communities, and private service providers.

Situational Analysis

The Policy is informed by a detailed situational analysis that reveals significant gaps in infrastructure, governance, funding, and service delivery. Notably:

- Some ECDE centres still operate in semi-permanent or dilapidated structures.
- There are stark disparities in resource distribution, especially in rural wards.
- The caregiver-to-child ratio is alarmingly low due to underemployment of trained personnel.
- Most centres lack reliable school feeding programmes, affecting nutrition and attendance.
- Children with disabilities face exclusion due to social stigma, lack of support, and infrastructure barriers.

Despite these challenges, the County has demonstrated consistent progress, including the expansion of ECDE infrastructure and deployment of education officers across all sub-counties.

Legal and Institutional Framework

The Policy is anchored in a robust legal framework encompassing:

- The Constitution of Kenya (2010)
- The Basic Education Act (2013)
- The Children's Act
- Kenya Vision 2030
- National and global declarations, including SDG 4

Institutionally, the Policy establishes a multi-tiered governance structure:

- County Executive Committee Member (CECM): Provides leadership & Policy oversight.
- Chief Officer & County Director of ECDE: Manage operations, budgeting, and stakeholder engagement.
- Municipality/municipality ECDE Officers: Oversee local implementation, data collection, and quality assurance.
- Boards of Management and Headteachers: Ensure centre-level compliance, transparency, and inclusive practices.

Policy Framework

The Policy identifies the following critical issues and proposes targeted interventions:

1. Inadequate Infrastructure

- o Construct standardized ECDE centres per ward
- o Equip centres with child-friendly furniture, safe toilets, and outdoor play areas

2. Human Resource Gaps

- o Recruit and fairly deploy qualified ECDE teachers
- o Establish a Scheme of Service with clear progression and CPD opportunities

3. Curriculum and Instructional Deficits

- o Fully implement CBE with local adaptations
- o Provide appropriate teaching and learning resources

4. Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

- o Create inclusive education resource centres
- o Provide assistive devices and hire special needs educators

5. Health and Nutrition Gaps

- o Implement a school meals programme prioritizing vulnerable wards
- o Ensure food safety, hygiene training, and parental involvement

6. Weak Governance and Data Systems

- o Establish CEMIS for real-time monitoring
- o Promote evidence-based decision-making and community scorecards

7. Low Awareness and Parental Engagement

- o Mobilize communities to support ECDE
- o Integrate ECDE issues into ward-level public participation forums

Implementation Strategy

The implementation of this Policy will be led by the County Department of Education under a phased, multi-sectoral framework:

Conclusion

This ECDE Policy Framework for Kiambu County represents a bold, structured, and inclusive approach to transforming the early childhood landscape. It aligns with constitutional mandates, national development goals, and global education standards. Through strategic investment, community engagement, and robust governance, the County Government of Kiambu aims to build a future where every child—regardless of ability, background, or geography—has access to nurturing, safe, and empowering early learning experiences.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, devolved pre-primary education to County Governments under the Fourth Schedule. Kiambu County recognizes that ECDE is foundational to the holistic development and long-term success of its children. The County also acknowledges the disparities in access, infrastructure, teacher staffing and educational outcomes among its sub-counties.

The proposed Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Policy focuses on improving the quality of education and child welfare within the County. This Policy includes a comprehensive school feeding programme, teacher employment and other initiatives aimed at enhancing access to quality education and promoting holistic child development.

Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) is universally acknowledged as the foundation of human development and lifelong learning. Anchored in the rights-based approach to education, ECDE promotes the holistic development of children—cognitively, physically, emotionally, socially, and morally—during the most critical developmental period (0–6 years). The Policy Framework has several goals including and not limited to enhance access, equity and quality services for all children from conception to 6 years.

It is anticipated that with very clear Policy guidelines, quality ECDE programmes would be established to lay a solid foundation for the child's education life. Effective implementation of the Policy would be evidenced by presence of a standard physical environment with adequate physical facilities, hiring of qualified and competent teachers who utilize appropriate pedagogical practices as well as ensuring suitable nutritional and healthy social environment.

The situation in Kiambu County indicates existence of a gap between National Policy guidelines and practice. This is despite the fact that Early Childhood services are now devolved to Counties. However, observations and reports from the County Director of Education in Kiambu indicate that the status quo has improved over the last few years. Therefore, the formulation of this Policy seeks to fill the gap by assessing what is needed and to ensure growth as expected.

Kiambu County Government has ensured that there is expansion of the ECDE programmes by making sure that there is infrastructure throughout the County to ensure growth of the programme. It is evident by the many ECDEs projects built over the last 3 years in each municipality.

This Policy provides a robust, evidence-informed and context-responsive framework for the development, management and sustainability of ECDE systems in Kiambu County.

The Directorate of ECDE is mandated to supervise the ECDE centres in the County. Through provision of quality early childhood education, it fulfils the following requirements:

- i. Meet constitutional rights. The Constitution of Kenya envisages child access to free and compulsory basic education as a right as enshrined in Article 53.
- ii. Realize Kenya Vision 2030 objectives and other national development goals.
- iii. Achieve the requirements outlined in the Basic Education Act 2013
- iv. Attain goal number four of the Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to the provision of quality education,
- v. Realize the CIDP priorities on provision of quality early childhood education.

In the last 3 years, the County Government of Kiambu has constructed 312 new classrooms, and renovated 3 classrooms for the ECDE learners across the County. It also provides 10 o'clock fortified porridge, eggs and milk to all the ECDE centres, feeding approximately 40,000 learners. All the ECDE centres are supplied with teaching and learning materials as well as play items by the County Government of Kiambu. However, more materials are required for adequacy. Despite these developments the ECDE programme in Kiambu County is still facing some challenges. which have affected the effective implementation of the ECDE programme. These challenges include:

a. Inadequate teaching / learning Materials and Facilities

Some ECDE centres have inadequate teaching/learning materials and child-friendly inclusive facilities like proper classrooms, child-sized furniture, clean water, safe playgrounds and toilets

b) Financial Challenges

Early childhood education receives insufficient funding which leads to inadequate resources

c) Low Teacher- learner ratio

There are low teacher- learner ratio in ECDE classes.

d) Low teacher motivation

The teachers are not well remunerated and they stagnate in one job group for long negatively impacting on their morale

e) Discrimination Against Children with Special Needs

Some children with disabilities or developmental delays are excluded due to cultural beliefs, stigma and lack of awareness.

f) Limited Access to ECDE

Many children miss out on ECDE due to low awareness, poor infrastructure, long distances travelled and limited government funding.

g) Poor Management and Accountability

There is a lack of a clear and structured system to manage ECDE centres. In many cases, communities remain unaware of their vital role in supporting and improving early childhood education. This gap results in weak oversight, minimal community involvement, and inconsistent service delivery across ECDE centres.

h) Weak Legal and Policy Support

The ECDE sector operates without a comprehensive and enforceable legal framework. Existing national policies are often fragmented, poorly disseminated, and rarely enforced. This results in inconsistency in implementation, limited government oversight, and an overall lack of protection and standardization in service delivery.

j) Poor Coordination Among ECDE Providers

Multiple stakeholders—including government agencies, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and private entities—are involved in delivering ECDE services. However, the absence of effective coordination leads to duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources and varying standards of quality across programmes.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION AND RATIONALE

The ECDE Policy formulation is guided by the recognition that early years' education is a foundation for life of an individual. During the early years, fundamentals of children emotional, intellectual, social and physical development are well established through provision of care, good health, nutrition and stimulation to all young children to realize their potential. It is during this period when the brain develops rapidly. Investing in the first six years of a child therefore, has far reaching benefits not only to the individual child but also to the society. These accrued benefits include increased enrolment, progress and performance in school, early identification and intervention for special needs children and cost saving for parents and the county. This is later linked to increased economic productivity. A child's early learning experiences provide a window of opportunity to improve the quality of life.

Despite notable progress in expanding access to ECDE, several challenges remain:

- a) Unequal distribution of ECDE infrastructure across wards
- b) Inadequate recruitment, training, and support of ECDE teachers
- c) Limited inclusion and support for children with disabilities
- d) Disjointed approaches to nutrition and health services
- e) Weak systems for monitoring, evaluation, and accountability

The Policy will provide guidelines for a coordinated approach emphasizing the importance of partnership in safeguarding the Rights and important services to meet the holistic needs of young Children. This Will Be Done In Line With;

- a) The Constitution of Kenya (2010)
- b) Kenya's Vision 2030.
- c) The Basic Education Act, 2013
- d) Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 on Reforming Education
- e) The Training and Research Sector in Kenya and the requirements
Sustainable Development Goal Number 4, Target 2
- f) The County Government Act, 2012 g) The Children Act 2022
- h) The Early Childhood Education Act, 2021.

1.3 VISION, MISSION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.3.1 Vision

A County where every child enjoys equitable access to high-quality, inclusive and holistic early childhood education.

1.3.2 Mission

To provide a comprehensive and sustainable ECDE system that nurtures the full potential of every child through quality pedagogy, competent teachers, inclusive learning environment and strategic partnerships.

1.3.3 Guiding Principles

- a. Right to education -Article 53 of the Constitution
- b. Respect to the rights and welfare of the children
- c. Equity and non-discrimination
- d. Equity and Inclusion: No child should be left behind regardless of disability, socio-economic status, or location.
- e. Child-Centeredness: Learning experiences anchored in the interests and developmental needs of the child.
- f. Stakeholder participation and transparency
- g. Professionalism: High standards of practice and ethics among all ECDE personnel.

- h. Community Participation: Families and communities as co-educators.
- i. Accountability, evidence -based interventions and results-based management leading to evidence-driven planning and resource use.
- i. Creativity and innovation
- j. Quality ECDE services.
- k. Child friendliness.
- l. Public-private partnerships

1.4 POLICY, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Goal

To establish a resilient and inclusive ECDE system that ensures universal access to quality early childhood learning opportunities across Kiambu County.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- a. Increase access to safe, learner-friendly ECDE centres across all wards.
- b. Enhance quality of ECDE instruction through teacher recruitment, training & motivation
- c. Institutionalize inclusion of children with special needs
- d. Integrate health, nutrition and safety programmes in all ECDE centres
- e. Develop a digital M&E system for real-time data collection and decision-making
- f. Foster public-private-community partnerships in ECDE development
- g. Ensure subsidized and compulsory ECDE in public centres while progressively moving towards free ECDE.
- h. Enhance quality assurance and teacher development
- i. Strengthen governance, partnerships, and parental involvement
- j. Ensure there is a transparent feeding programme
- k. Ensure pupils have decent uniforms
- l. Regularize and standardize the ECDE centres fees
- m. Ensure that the Assessment tools are set based on what the teachers have taught
- n. To ensure the sub county directors meet the standards

1.5 THE SCOPE OF THE Policy

The Policy applies to all persons within the County, County departments, agencies and independent bodies dealing with issues related to the ECDE sector . The principles, strategies and approaches in the Policy shall also apply to all ECDE within the County. The programme targets all public ECDE centres and shall operate under the principles of universality, sustainability and community involvement. It will prioritize areas with high levels of vulnerability and malnutrition.

CHAPTER TWO: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Overview of the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Sector in Kenya and in Kiambu County

Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) plays a foundational role in the lifelong learning journey of a child. In Kenya, the recognition of ECDE as a critical component of the basic education system has grown steadily since independence in 1963. The government's involvement was formally institutionalized with the establishment of the Thomas Barnado Nursery School in 1964. The sector further gained momentum following the issuance of Presidential Circular No. 1 of 1980, which mandated the Ministry of Education to coordinate ECDE services nationwide.

Subsequently, significant strides were made with the establishment of the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) in 1984, followed by the roll-out of District Centres for Early Childhood Education (DICECE) in 1985. These institutions played a crucial role in curriculum development, teacher training, community sensitization and quality assurance of ECDE services across the country.

In 2006, the Ministry of Education introduced the first National ECDE Policy Framework to guide sector coordination among key stakeholders, including government ministries, parents, communities, civil society and development partners. However, its implementation faced setbacks due to limited resource allocation and weak institutional frameworks.

A more targeted approach emerged with the development of the Pre-Primary Education Policy in 2018, following consultations with County Governments and other stakeholders. The Policy emphasizes access to quality, inclusive and developmentally appropriate learning for all children aged 3–5 years in alignment with the competency-based education (CBE) and Kenya's Vision 2030.

With the devolution of pre-primary education under the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, County Governments were mandated to manage and finance ECDE programme.

In Kiambu County, the Boards of Management (B.O.M s) in public ECDE centres serve as the cornerstone of community-level governance. They are responsible for overseeing

the implementation of ECDE policies, infrastructure development, teacher support, learner welfare and community engagement in the centres.

Current Status in Kiambu County

Most ECDE centres have B.O.Ms in place, and their establishment is standardized. The performance of B.O.Ms varies widely across sub-counties. Some take a lead role in the management of the centres whereas others are dormant due to lack of training or facilitation. There is no systematic capacity-building programme to equip B.O.Ms members with governance, financial or child protection skills.

Strengths

1. Community Ownership: B.O.Ms provide an entry point for parental and community participation in ECDE affairs.
2. Support for Centre Needs: Active B.O.Ms have mobilized community resources for school feeding, security and infrastructure.
3. Local Oversight: B.O.Ms help monitor general operations.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of Training: Most members lack formal training on their roles, governance practices and ECDE Policy guidelines.
2. No Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Absence of uniform criteria for selection, reporting, and monitoring across the sub-counties.
3. Poor Communication: Minimal coordination between B.O.Ms, ECDE teachers and County ECDE Directorate.
4. No Incentives: Members serve voluntarily without stipends, motivation or recognition.

Opportunities

1. Capacity-Building Initiatives: The County Government can collaborate with partners to develop structured training programmes for all B.O.Ms.
2. Policy Development: Establishment of standardized guidelines for formation, operations, tenure, and reporting for B.O.Ms.
3. Digitization of Management: Introduction of digital tools for data recording, budgeting, and communication.
4. Enhanced Community Engagement: Leverage the existing B.O.M structure to mobilize local resources and improve centre sustainability.

Threats

1. Political Interference: Appointments sometimes influenced by local politics, compromising merit and functionality.
2. Low Morale and Commitment: Due to lack of facilitation, members are often unavailable or disengaged.
3. Rapid Policy Shifts: Frequent changes in education or county administrative structures disrupt continuity.
4. Inequity Between Urban and Rural Centres: Rural centres are more affected by non-functional or absent B.O. Ms compared to urban ones.

County Government of Kiambu, with its unique demographic and socio-economic context, has since been actively involved in building a resilient and accessible ECDE system that responds to the needs of its children.

2.2 Status of ECDE in Kiambu County

2.2.1 Administration and Governance

County Government of Kiambu has taken significant steps toward operationalizing ECDE services through structured administration across its 13 municipalities. Currently, the County Education Directorate deploys Municipality Education Officers in each municipality to oversee quality assurance and Policy implementation.

To strengthen coordination and streamline service delivery at the grassroots, the County intends to expand its human resource capacity by recruiting:

- Assistant Director of ECDE at the County level
- Municipality ECDE Officers for decentralized support and monitoring
- Lead ECDE Teacher for mentorship and peer supervision within centres

These positions are designed to align with the devolved structure and improve efficiency, accountability and child-centred service delivery.

2.2.2 ECDE's teachers Training and Staffing

County Government of Kiambu has approximately 2,150 trained ECDE teachers, with varying qualifications from certificate to degree levels. However, onlyare employed under formal contractual terms by the County Government.

While efforts have been made to improve teacher recruitment and remuneration, staffing gaps persist due to the high enrolment rates and population growth. The County plans to:

- Increase employment of trained teachers to increase teacher–child ratios.
- Support continuous professional development (CPD) through local training institutions.

- Promote teacher registration with the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to ensure professional standards.
- Ensure that teachers employed by B.O.Ms should have at least a diploma in ECDE and must be registered with TSC.

2.2.3 Establishment and Distribution of ECDE Centres

As of 2024, County Government of Kiambu boasts approximately 551 public ECDE centres and 781 private centres. These centres are spread across rural and urban settings. Despite the progress, some areas—particularly in rural municipalities like Lari and Gatundu—face challenges in accessibility due to long distances between centres. To ensure equity, the County has initiated needs assessments to:

- Identify underserved areas for new centre construction.
- Upgrade satellite centres to full ECDE status.
- Partner with community-based organizations to expand access.

2.2.4 Infrastructure and Learning Environment

A few public ECDE centres still operate in semi-permanent or dilapidated structures. While the County has made investments in classroom construction, furniture procurement and learning materials remains uneven.

Key challenges include:

- Inadequate child-friendly furniture and sanitation facilities.
- Inadequate outdoor play equipment.

To address these gaps, the County is developing a Public–Private Partnership (PPP) framework to leverage support from NGOs, faith-based organizations, and corporate sponsors to improve infrastructure.

2.2.5 Funding and Resource Allocation

County Government of Kiambu allocates an annual budget for ECDE that caters to teachers salaries, infrastructure development, and teaching/learning materials. However, funding remains below the growing demand, resulting in:

- Delayed implementation of feeding programmes.
- Incomplete classrooms and sanitation blocks.
- Limited instructional resources, especially for CBE delivery.

Mitigation Measures

To optimise resources:

- All monies in form of levies or fees should be paid to a bank account in the ECDE centre.
- Conditional grants from National Government.
- Collaboration with development partners.
- Community-based resource mobilization strategies.

2.2.6 Health and Nutrition Services

Nutrition is critical in supporting learning and physical development in early childhood. Despite growing evidence that school feeding programmes increase enrolment and reduce absenteeism, many ECDE centres in Kiambu lack consistent meal provision. Where available, feeding programmes are supported by parents and school management committees. The County intends to:

- Introduce a subsidized school meals programme beginning with vulnerable wards.
- Provide nutrition education to teachers and parents.
- Establish linkages with the Department of Health Services for growth monitoring, deworming and immunization campaigns.

Proposed Operational Feeding Model:

Component	Details
Meals Provided	Fortified porridge daily; eggs twice weekly; milk once a week
Meal Preparation	On-site preparation by trained and certified food handlers
Food Safety Measures	Certified suppliers, routine inspections, safe storage and hygiene training
Oversight Mechanism	Procurement via pre-qualified vendors; community monitoring at ward level

2.2.7 Child Protection and Welfare

Children's wellbeing in ECDE centres is paramount. In County Government of Kiambu, there have been concerns over child neglect, corporal punishment and inadequate psychosocial support in some centres.

The County Government, through the ECDE Directorate, plans to:

- Develop and Implement Child Protection Guidelines.
- Train teachers on child rights, safety and mental health.
- Establish reporting channels for child abuse cases.
- Promote inclusive practices for children with disabilities and special needs.

Conclusion of Situational Analysis

The ECDE landscape in Kiambu County reflects both significant progress and persistent challenges. The County Government is committed to transforming early learning environments into safe, inclusive and stimulating spaces where every child has the opportunity to thrive. Addressing gaps in infrastructure, staffing, nutrition and governance will require a multi-sectoral approach involving all stakeholders—government, communities, teachers and development partners.

This situational analysis forms the basis for designing responsive Policy interventions that align with national goals and the rights of the child as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

CHAPTER 3: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Legal and Policy Framework supporting children's rights to education

This Policy is anchored in the provisions in the existing national legal frameworks, relevant international protocols and conventions which include: -

a. Kenya Constitution (2010):

- i. Article 43: Everyone has the right to education, decent housing and good sanitation.
- ii. Article 53: Every child must get free basic education, nutrition, shelter, healthcare, protection from harm and parental care.
- iii. Article 189: Explains how the National and County Governments share responsibilities, especially in providing services close to the people. Article 189(2) which provides for cooperation between the National Governments and County Government in performing the functions and exercising powers in the provision of proximate and easily accessible services.

b. International Agreements and Conventions:

- i. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Promotes equal rights and dignity for all.
- ii. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966): Recognizes the dignity and rights of all people.
- iii. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966): Calls for special care and education for children.
- iv. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989): Governments must protect children and ensure their education and well-being.
- v. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006): Children with disabilities must also enjoy their full rights, including early education.

c. Kenyan Laws and Policies:

- i. Children Act (2022): Outlines children's rights and the responsibilities of adults and the government to uphold them.
- ii. Basic Education Act (2013): Enforces free and quality education for all children.
- iii. National Children's Policy (2010): Focuses on children's survival, development and protection.
- iv. National Plan of Action for Children (2015–2022): A plan to ensure children's rights like health, protection and education are fulfilled.

v. Kenya Vision 2030: Emphasizes the importance of early education for national development.

vi. National Pre-Primary Education Policy (2017): Aims for equal access to quality early childhood education.

d. Global Declarations:

a. Jomtien Conference on Education for All (1990): Stressed the importance of early childhood education as a key foundation for life.

3.2 Institutional Framework for Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE)

The Institutional Framework for ECDE provides a structured system for managing and coordinating ECDE services across different administrative levels—County, Municipality, and Ward. This framework aims to ensure that all children in the formative years (0–6 years) have access to equitable, quality and holistic early learning experiences. The governance is anchored in a multi-tiered structure with clear roles and responsibilities for various stakeholders to ensure effective implementation, regulation and accountability of ECDE programmes.

3.2.1. Governing Body: Board of Management

Each ECDE Centre shall be governed by a Board of Management (BoM) constituted in accordance with relevant laws.

The functions of the board of management are to—

- (a) identify the needs of early childhood education and development services within their local communities and develop viable strategies for meeting these needs;
- (b) mobilize the parents and local communities to initiate and sustain education centres and support early childhood education programmes;
- (c) manage the early education programme in the centre in ensuring the provision of quality early childhood education;
- (d) identify local resources necessary to equip the education centre and identify sources for and undertake fundraising activities to raise funds for the education centre;
- (e) ensure the provision of quality early childhood education services in the education centre in accordance with the set standards;
- (f) ensure the provision of adequate equipment and facilities within the education centre and ensure that such equipment and facilities are well maintained;
- (g) ensure that the ECDEs are in conformity with the new uniform's rules;
- (h) ensure the feeding programme is well managed;

- (i) ensure that all monies in form of levies or fees should be paid to a bank account;
- (j) carry out advocacy in relation to the needs and the rights of the child in relation to early childhood education; and carry out such other functions as may be necessary for the implementation of this Policy.

3.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Key Institutional Actors

A. County Executive Committee Member (CECM) in charge of Education, Gender, Culture and Social Services

The CECM for Education plays a key Policy and oversight role within the county. Responsibilities include:

- a. Formulating County-specific ECDE policies and ensuring alignment with National frameworks.
- b. Ensuring the existence and enforcement of a legal and regulatory framework governing ECDE.
- c. Leading budgetary and resource allocation processes for ECDE programmes.
- d. Presenting ECDE matters for consideration at the County Executive Committee and County Assembly.
- e. Overseeing the monitoring and evaluation of ECDE programmes and policies.

B. Chief Officer in charge of ECDE

Reporting to the CECM, the Chief Officer acts as the accounting officer for the education docket. Key responsibilities:

- a. Facilitating the operationalization of ECDE policies.
- b. Liaising with state and non-state actors (NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, development partners) for programme development and support.
- c. Coordinating Policy reviews and strategic plans for ECDE.
- d. Ensuring adequate staffing, capacity development and welfare of ECDE personnel.
- e. Supervising the budgeting, procurement and infrastructure development.

C. County Director in charge of ECDE

The County Director serves as the technical lead for ECDE at the county level. Duties include:

- a) Ensure implementation and monitoring of curricular, co-curricular, health and school feeding programmes.
- b) Co-ordinate and evaluate ECDE programmes and projects.
- c) Prepare and implement the departmental annual work plans and budgetary

requirements

- d) Recommend to County Executive Committee member strategies, policies, guidelines and regulations for better implementation of this Policy.
- e) Implement the ECDE staff training and appraisals
- f) Promote awareness on early childhood needs and demands to local communities and parents.
- g) Prepare and submit quarterly and annual reports as requested and/or when needed.
- h) Promote the development of quality early childhood development and education within the County.
- i) Supervising municipality Education Officers and ensuring harmonized service delivery.
- j) Implement strategies to increase access, retention and quality early childhood education.
- k) Advise the Executive member in charge on any matters related to early childhood development and education curriculum.
- l) Undertaking any other relevant duties as may be assigned by the Chief Officer.

D. Municipality ECDE Officers

The Municipality ECDE Officers operates primarily at the Municipality level and supports field operations. Duties include:

- a. Maintaining accurate and up-to-date ECDE records and data.
- b. Mobilizing and sensitizing communities on the importance of ECDE.
- c. Building the capacity of teachers and ECDE staff through training and mentorship.
- d. Interpreting and localizing the National ECDE Curriculum to suit the county's context.
- e. Organizing regular meetings for teachers to promote knowledge-sharing and collaborative learning.
- f. Overseeing the implementation of ECDE Policy at the municipality levels.
- g. Supervising ECDE Coordinators and learning programmes.
- h. Ensuring quality assurance and standards are adhered to in all ECDE centres.
- i. Coordinating professional development and teacher support programmes.
- j. Facilitating school readiness and transition programmes from ECDE to primary school.

F. ECDE Headteacher (Centre Level)

The ECDE Headteacher is the senior-most teaching professional at each ECDE centre. Duties include:

- a. Coordinating day-to-day operations and activities within the ECDE centre.
- b. Supervising and mentoring other teachers and support staff.
- c. Ensuring a child-friendly, inclusive and safe learning environment.
- d. Facilitating documentation, lesson planning and learning assessments.
- e. Engaging parents and local community in school-based management and development efforts.
- f. Implementing all county programmes including feeding programme at the centre level.
- g. Preparation and implementation of centre budgets.

3.3.3 Coordination Mechanisms

To ensure seamless coordination across levels, the following mechanisms shall be in place:

- a. Interdepartmental Committees: Regular meetings involving all education stakeholders (planning, health, child welfare) at County and municipality levels.
- b. Monitoring and Evaluation Units: Responsible for assessing progress and outcomes of ECDE programmes using established indicators.
- c. Public Participation Forums: Community engagement forums will be held to solicit input on ECDE development and accountability.
- d. Digital Management Systems: County-level ECDE Management Information Systems (EMIS) will be used to track enrolment, teacher deployment, infrastructure and performance metrics.

A well-structured and collaborative institutional framework is essential for the success of ECDE programmes. By clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of various actors, this framework aims to enhance service delivery, promote accountability and ensure every child in the County receives quality early childhood education. The County Government must invest in capacity building, Policy enforcement and community involvement to realize this vision

CHAPTER 4. POLICY STATEMENT AND FRAMEWORK

4.1. Policy Problem issue

Despite constitutional provisions and national legislative backing for Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE), the education sector in County Government of Kiambu continues to face systemic challenges that hinder the realization of quality, equitable and inclusive early learning opportunities. The key Policy problems identified include:

Policy issue

4.1.1 Inadequate Infrastructure and Sanitation

A few ECDE centres lack sufficient physical facilities. Classrooms are either too few or overcrowded. Inadequate ablution blocks and handwashing facilities compromises health standards.

Policy statement

Infrastructure Development

Ensure all ECDE centres have safe, child-friendly and conducive learning environments.

Interventions:

- Construct standardized twin-classroom ECDE centres in every ward.
- Equip centres with age-appropriate furniture, play materials, water tanks, kitchens and solar-powered lighting.
- Design all buildings with climate-resilient features and incorporate tree planting for natural shading.
- Build gender-sensitive and disability-friendly sanitation facilities in line with WASH standards.

Policy issue

4.1.2 Human Resource Challenges

There is persistent understaffing of ECDE centres. Teacher recruitment and deployment are inconsistent with some centres understaffed. Many teachers operate without adequate professional support and career development pathways.

Policy statement

Human Resource Management

Objective: Improve teacher availability, motivation and professional growth.

Interventions:

- Implement regular recruitment and fair deployment of TSC-certified ECDE teachers.
- Introduce Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to encourage peer-to-peer support and continuous reflection.
- Offer scholarships, incentives and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers.
- Ensure full implementation of the ECDE Scheme of Service that outlines teacher promotion and remuneration structures.

Policy issue

4.1.3 Curriculum and Instructional Gaps

The roll-out of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) has been uneven, with inadequate training for teachers and limited access to appropriate teaching and learning materials. There's also a lack of culturally responsive content that reflects local community values.

Policy Statement

Curriculum Delivery and Instruction and Assessment

Objective: Ensure effective, context-sensitive teaching aligned to national learning goals.

Interventions:

- Fully implement the KICD-approved Competency-Based Education (CBE) for pre-primary levels.
- Develop and disseminate culturally relevant teaching and learning materials, especially in indigenous languages.
- Strengthen curriculum support and mentorship by coordinating with Zonal Quality Assurance Officers (QASOs).
- Regularize and standardize the ECDE Centres Fees.

Policy issue

4.1.4 Ineffective Data and Quality Assurance Systems

There is no centralized, real-time system for tracking learner performance, enrolment trends or centre-level quality standards. The County currently lacks Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs).

Policy issue

4.1.5 Exclusion of Children with Special Needs

Children with disabilities and developmental delays face significant barriers to access early childhood education due to a shortage of trained teachers, lack of assistive devices and inadequate support services.

Policy Statement

Inclusive Education

Objective: Promote equity by ensuring all children, including those with special needs access quality ECDE services.

Interventions:

- Establish at least one inclusive education resource centre per municipality.
- Hire trained special needs educators and child development therapists.
- Create systems for early identification, assessment, and referral of children with developmental delays or disabilities.
- Procure assistive devices such as hearing aids, braille materials and visual aids.

Policy issue

4.1.6 Low Public Awareness and Community Involvement

There is limited community participation in ECDE matters. Many parents and community members are not sensitized on the value of ECDE, inclusive education or their roles in supporting school governance.

Policy issue

4.1.7 Health, Nutrition and Safety

Children at ECDE level are vulnerable to nutritional deficiencies that negatively affect concentration, attendance and growth. A structured school feeding programme is essential not just for welfare but as a key learning support strategy.

Policy Statements

- i. Ensure that there is healthy feeding for children to enhance smooth learning through inclusion of fortified porridge, eggs and milk.
- ii. Promote child growth and cognitive development through balanced nutrition.
- iii. Increase learner enrolment, reduce absenteeism and improve attention spans.
- iv. Promote hygiene practices, food safety and positive eating habits.
- v. Reduce disparities among learners from food-insecure households.

4.1.8 County uniform Policy

To promote equity, identity and a sense of belonging among all learners, the County Government shall develop and enforce a common County uniform for all the ECDE centres. The design, colour and material shall be standardised across the County.

4. 2. Cross-Cutting Interventions

4.2.1 Access and Equity

- Map underserved and vulnerable communities across the County.
- Construct additional ECDE centres where enrolment is high or access is poor.
- Provide transportation or mobile ECDE units in hard-to-reach areas.
- Distribution of resources to reach all the intended ECDE Centres.

4.2.2 Governance and Management

- Strengthen governance through functional Boards of Management (BoMs) and Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs).
- Provide training in financial and asset management for school administrators.
- Introduce accountability mechanisms including community scorecards and periodic audits.

4.2.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Data Management

- Develop a County ECDE Management Information System (CEMIS) to track enrolment, teacher data, learner progress and infrastructure status.
- Integrate monitoring tools for real-time feedback from QASOs and other stakeholders.
- Conduct annual sector reviews to inform evidence-based decision-making.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

5.1. Implementation Framework

The execution of this Policy will be spearheaded by the County Department of Education, working closely with a coalition of critical stakeholders to ensure holistic and sustainable outcomes. The County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education will lead implementation through the Department of Education. Government entities, private ECDE providers, partners and sponsors will be guided by MoUs aligned with this Policy including:

- a. **Teachers Service Commission (TSC):** Facilitates teacher registration, professional development and ensures adherence to national standards.
- b. **County Public Service Board:** Oversees recruitment and deployment of ECDE personnel within Kiambu.
- c. **Ministry of Education (MoE):** Provides national curriculum oversight and quality assurance.
- d. **Development Partners, NGOs and FBOs:** Offer technical and financial support for innovation and scaling of ECDE services.
- e. **Parents and Local Communities:** Serve as grassroots enablers of ECDE success through voluntary participation and oversight.

The Policy implementation shall be anchored in a multi-sectoral approach—leveraging public sector institutions, donor organizations and private players to drive impact.

5.2 Key Implementation Roles

- **County Executive Committee Member (CECM) – Education:** Provides leadership, strategic direction and supervises Policy rollout. They shall also monitor Policy outcomes, ensure quality standards are adhered to and oversee implementation progress.
- **County Director ECDE & Municipality ECDE Officers:** Ensure decentralized supervision, compliance and coordination of ECDE programmes at the local levels.
- **ECDE Headteachers:** Are responsible for the day-to-day execution and compliance of ECDE programmes at the centre level.
- **Private Service Providers:** Provide services through a formal Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) aligning with this Policy.
- **ECDE Directorate:** Supervises funding, procurement and monitoring.
- **Public Health Department:** Ensures food and kitchen safety and certifies food handlers.
- **Board of Management (BOM):** Oversees implementation of ECDE programmes
- **Parents/Guardians:** Provide support to ECDE programmes.

- Development Partners: Support with funding, nutrition, research and technical inputs.

5.3. Budgeting, Financing and Resource Mobilization

A mix of County budget allocations, national government grants, donor funding and public-private partnerships (PPPs) will support the rollout of interventions.

Finances, resources and support required for implementation of this Policy shall be sourced from both public and private sectors with the objective of building human and physical capabilities of the young children and interested parties including developing competencies of the learners. Targeted steps will be undertaken to engage with the private sectors with a view to strengthening provision of quality early childhood education programmes. The interventions and initiatives identified in this Policy shall be supported through mobilization of monetary and non-monetary resources from National Government, County Government, private sector, development partner, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), communities and individuals among other stakeholders. All funding sources and strategies will be required to balance between the short- and long-term goals. The various mechanisms of financing and mobilizing resources will purpose the following areas: -

- Infrastructure (construction and renovation).
- Provision of appropriate instructional resources.
- Capacity building of teachers and other key stakeholders.
- Social mobilization and advocacy.
- Quality assurance and assessment.
- Research and regulatory framework.

To operationalize this Policy:

- a. The County Government shall earmark at least 10% of the total education budget specifically for ECDE development.
- b. Donor funds, government grants and PPPs will be mobilized to fill infrastructure and staffing gaps.
- c. Partnerships with private sector entities will support co-investment in facilities, digital tools and nutrition programmes.

5.4 Sustainability Measures

To ensure the continuity of ECDE programmes there shall be the following interventions:

- Partnerships with local farming cooperatives to supply food.
- Introduction of school gardens, water harvesting systems and energy-saving stoves
- Formation of nutrition clubs and school-level audit teams.
- Digital tracking of costs and service delivery.

5.5. Nutrition and Feeding programme Framework

The Policy targets all public ECDE centres with a focus on vulnerable children. Principles include equity, sustainability and community ownership.

Feeding Structure and Operations

Component	Details
Meals	Daily fortified porridge, eggs twice weekly, milk weekly; tailored meals for age/needs.
Preparation	Onsite by trained, certified food handlers.
Food Safety	Regular inspections, health certification, safe storage and child-safe kitchen tools.
Delivery	Pre-qualified suppliers, with local oversight through community forums and ward administrators.
Feeding Days	Monday to Friday during school terms; usage monitored via stock registers and meal logs.

Scope and Framework

The programme targets all public ECDE centres and shall operate under the principles of universality, sustainability and community involvement. It will prioritize areas with high levels of vulnerability and malnutrition.

Structure and Operational Guidelines;

S/N	Component	Details
1	Meals Provided	Fortified porridge (daily), Milk (once a week), and Eggs (twice a week); meals are age-specific and nutrient-dense.
2	Meal Preparation	Done onsite by certified food handlers trained in nutrition, hygiene and child protection.
3	Food Safety Measures	Mandatory public health certification of cooks and suppliers, food storage protocols, regular inspections, child-safe utensils and serving points.
4	Delivery Mechanism	Procurement through pre-qualified suppliers; community accountability forums and ward-level distribution oversight.

Implementation Plan (Phased Approach)

Timeline Key Activities

Year 1–2 Policy rollout, ECDE teacher recruitment, set up 15 model centres.

Year 3–4 Scale inclusive education, digitize M&E tools, expand feeding programmes.

Year 5+ Achieve countywide ECDE standardization and universal access.

Lead Agency:

• Directorate of ECDE, under the Department of Education, Gender, Culture and Social Services

CHAPTER SIX: MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

6.1 Overview of MEAL Framework

The implementation of the ECDE Policy in County Government of Kiambu shall be guided by a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework. This system will ensure the Policy achieves its intended objectives by tracking progress, assessing outcomes, ensuring transparency and facilitating learning for continuous improvement.

The County Department of Education shall institutionalize a results-based approach to monitoring and evaluation that uses clearly defined output, outcome and impact indicators. The system will not only track service delivery but also assess the quality and inclusiveness of ECDE programmes.

6.2 Core Components of the MEAL System

The MEAL system will incorporate the following core components:

- **Quarterly Data Reporting**

ECDE centres shall submit standardized data every quarter to inform decision-making at municipality and county levels.

- **Annual Sector Reviews and Public Forums**

Annual reviews will assess sector-wide performance and provide a platform for stakeholder engagement and public accountability.

- **Triennial Impact Assessments**

Every three years, independent evaluations will be carried out in collaboration with research institutions to measure the long-term effects of ECDE interventions.

- **Digital Performance Tracking System**

A centralized online dashboard shall be developed and maintained to track key indicators, such as:

- o Enrolment and attendance (disaggregated by gender, age and special needs)
- o School feeding programme coverage.

- o Teacher-pupil ratio.
- o Continuous Professional Development (CPD) uptake by teachers.
- o Learning achievement levels and development milestones.

6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

To assess the effectiveness and equity of ECDE service delivery, the following indicators shall be regularly monitored:

- Number of ECDE centres constructed, renovated or equipped
- Teacher deployment statistics and CPD participation rates
- Enrolment, retention and attendance rates
- Disaggregated data by gender and disability
- Operationalization of inclusive resource centres
- Learning outcome benchmarks and development indicators
- Coverage and nutritional impact of the school feeding programme

6.4 Accountability Mechanisms

The MEAL framework shall enhance accountability through the following:

• School-level Monitoring Tools

Tools shall be developed to track classroom-level attendance, learner progress, teacher performance and availability of resources.

• Annual Independent Audits

Each ECDE centre shall undergo independent audits to ensure financial integrity and effective use of resources.

• Citizen Report Cards

Parents and communities will provide feedback on the quality of ECDE services through structured scorecards to promote social accountability.

• Quarterly Review Meetings

Stakeholders—including parents, teachers and administrators—shall participate in quarterly reviews to enhance transparency and local ownership.

6.5 Data Management and Technology Integration

The County shall invest in digital innovations for efficient data collection, analysis and reporting. This includes:

- Mobile applications for real-time data submission
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for infrastructure mapping
- Integration of biometric or digital attendance tools
- Use of drones or remote sensing for spatial monitoring (where applicable)

6.6 Learning and Adaptive Management

Monitoring and evaluation findings shall inform Policy adjustments and programme redesign. The County shall:

- Conduct reflection and learning forums to discuss evaluation findings
- Facilitate peer learning between municipalities and ECDE centres
- Document and disseminate best practices to stakeholders

6.7 Implementation Oversight

The Department of Education shall oversee the overall coordination and execution of the MEAL framework. It shall:

- Develop an implementation plan specifying timelines, roles and responsibilities
- Collaborate with relevant departments, including health, nutrition, gender and special needs education
- Ensure alignment with national education monitoring tools and frameworks

6.8 Commitment to Inclusion and Equity

To ensure that no child is left behind, the MEAL framework will integrate social performance indicators that measure:

- Equity in service delivery across urban, peri-urban and rural areas
- The inclusion of children with disabilities and other marginalized groups
- Gender parity in enrolment, attendance and participation
- The representation of women, youth and PWDs in ECDE governance

This MEAL framework underscores Kiambu County's dedication to data-driven, inclusive and accountable delivery of ECDE services. By embedding robust mechanisms for tracking, learning and adapting, the County ensures that the Governor's vision—"Leaving No Child Behind"—is not only aspirational but operational and measurable.

CHAPTER SEVEN: POLICY REVIEW AND TRANSITION

7.1 Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years or as need arises and its implementation monitored systematically due to the dynamism. The review shall include emerging issues and trends.

7.2 Transition

Existing agencies and initiatives will remain in force and guidelines shall be issued by implementing institutions as and when need arises to operationalize this Policy. Such guidelines shall take into consideration the principles of this Policy. An appropriate legal framework may be developed for the effective implementation of this Policy.



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