



UNICEF Kenya

Accelerating Early Childhood Development Impacts in Kenya

Acknowledgments

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This study was commissioned as an overview to the Strategy Workshop conducted by Banny Banerjee, Professor of Practice at the Stanford School and the Founder and Director of the Stanford Change Labs (30-31 March 2017) in Nairobi that in turn supports the system design for increasing impact, scale-up, and sustainability of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Kenya. The workshop brought together stakeholders from across sectors – public and private, health and education, County and National representatives, and profit and non-profit including social entrepreneurs to deliberate on and validate the SDG Philanthropy Platform's work to further:

- Collaborate around SDGs to reduce duplication, create synergies, and leverage resources among partners;
- Build joint and shared understanding of existing systems surrounding ECD in Kenya;
- Define common perspectives of key challenges and bottlenecks hampering effective delivery;
- Identify salient drivers and accelerators for change;
- Map out collective intervention pathways and agree on the next steps.

Report has been authored by Dr Anil Khamis and Karina Grosheva. A total of 14 fourteen interviews were conducted by Dr. Anil Khamis from University College London, which have been transcribed: (Mark Rotich, Education Development Trust; Kofi Marfo, The Aga Khan University; Najma Rashid, Aga Khan Foundation; Felix Edwards Adam Smith International; Sandrine Henton, Educate Fund; Fidelis Muthoni, Catholic Relief Sisters; Miresi Busana, Norwegian Refugee Council; Sri Bharatam, Kuza Biashara; Patricia Salleh-Matta, The International School of Kenya, U.S. Department of State; Isaac Ngere, Siyaya County; Hellen Inyega, University of Nairobi; Daniel Baheta, UNICEF; Eva Nderu, RTI International; Teresa Mwoma, ECD Network.

A total of 30 thirty participants attended the workshop: Kofi Marfo, Aga Khan University; Asifa Nurani, Aga Khan Foundation; Maureen Kapiyo, Catholic Relief Services; Damaris Wambua, ChildFund International; Dennis Wali, Kenya AIDS NGO Consortium; Afzal Habib, Kidogo; Wanjiku Manguyu, PATH; Caroline Ruoro, Plan International; Hecky Odera, Shining Hope for Communities; Agnes Ngonyo, UNICEF; Daniel Baheta, UNICEF; Pablo Stansbury, UNICEF; Lynette Okengo, AFCEN; Teresa Muoma, ECD Network; Anne Gachoya, Ministry of Education; Jennifer Kere, Kisumu County - CEC Education; Jacinta Odhiambo, Kisumu County – Health; Isaac Ngere, Siaya County – Ministry of Health; Pamela Akello, Siaya County - CEC ECDC; Sandrine Henton, Educate Global Fund; Sri Bharatam, Kuza Biashara; Rose Oluoch, SDG Kenya Forum; Oscar Kadenge, Kenyan Care for Child Development; Philip Thigo, Office of President; Gichobi Stanley Mwangi, Kuza Biashara; Caroline Opondo, ICS-SP; Esther Okoth, PAN - Parenting in Africa Network; Jeniffer Kaberi, African Institute for Children Studies; Hellen Inyega, University of Nairobi; Anil Khamis, University College London.

The workshop was opened by UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Kenya, Siddharth Chatterjee followed by welcoming remarks of Deputy Representative of UNICEF Patricia DiGiovanni.

The SDG Philanthropy Platform team has been instrumental in the oversight of this study and facilitation of the workshop: Arif Neky, UN Strategic Partnerships Kenya; Karolina Mzyk, UNDP; Karina Grosheva, UNDP; Imran Rattansi, UNDP.

Table of Contents

01 Kenya: Vision 2030 and the SDGs	1
02 Kenya: ECD Stakeholders and ECD Policy Context	3
03 Summary of Findings	12
04 Interviews	13
05 Strategy Workshop & a Set of Intervention Pathways	15

Definitions, Abbreviations & Acronyms

ACRWC – African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

ECD – Early Childhood Development

KICD – Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

IECD – Integrated Early Childhood Development

iGDP – Internet Contribution to Gross Domestic Product

KESSP – Kenya Education Sector Support Programme

MCH – Maternal Child Health

MPESA – Mobile Money Transfer

MRC – Madrassah Resource Centre

NESP – National Education Sector Plan

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SDG PP – Sustainable Development Goals Philanthropy Platform

UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children

UNDP – United Nations Development Fund

UNICEF – United Nations International Children’s Emergency Programme

01 Kenya: Vision 2030 and the SDGs

Transforming the Country

The Republic of Kenya envisages the country to be transformed to an industrializing, middle-income country that provides a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment as per its Vision 2030 Development Plan. The principles underpinning Vision 2030 articulate with the values enshrined in the promulgation of the Kenya's New Constitution (2010) which reflect the Sustainable Development Goals: dignity, social and individual wellbeing and capabilities, and equity and enfranchisement.

In the past decade, Kenya has made remarkable investments in infrastructure including roads for access that support development of local communities and for products to reach markets. Kenya, within the context of the wider Eastern African Region, heralds a number of important emergent developments.

The Kenyan economy is largely driven by the private sector with a significant presence of Multinational Entities (MNEs) in all key economic sectors.

With a high percentage of Kenyans connected to the internet Kenya, along with Senegal, it has Africa's highest iGDPs (internet's contribution to GDP). Kenya has made concerted efforts to stimulate internet demand; Kenya's internet penetration, with mobile telephony, is the second highest in Africa.¹



The Potential of African Economies

Given its rapid and increasing economic transformation enabled by the emergent digital ecosystem, Kenya is in effect becoming a modern economy faster than its East African peers with significant automation and productivity gains with leading technological applications innovations developed to improve health care, education, and e-government (Huduma Centres).

A McKinsey Report (2010) made certain predictions that have come to pass.² The report described a continent in transition, with urbanization and the rise of the middle-class consumer fueling growth – this is being led by Kenya in Eastern and Southern Africa.³

However, social inequality and bridging values to improve lives and support national development with employment and income enhancement opportunities remains a challenge. The Kenya Mid-Term Plan II 2013-2017 aims to ameliorate these inequalities by establishing four goals:⁴

- 1 Kenya has a digital skills training programme that aims to engage 1 million youth in online freelance work that also targets concerns with youth unemployment.
- 2 http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/high_tech_telecoms_internet/lions_go_digital_the_internets_transformative_potential_in_africa Lions on the move: The progress and potential of African economies
- 3 Fibre Optics has reached 30,000 homes with over 1,000 4G masts across the Kenya set up by Safaricom in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Meru, Eldoret, Kisii and surrounding Counties.
- 4 Second medium term plan 2013-2017 Kenya Vision-2030.

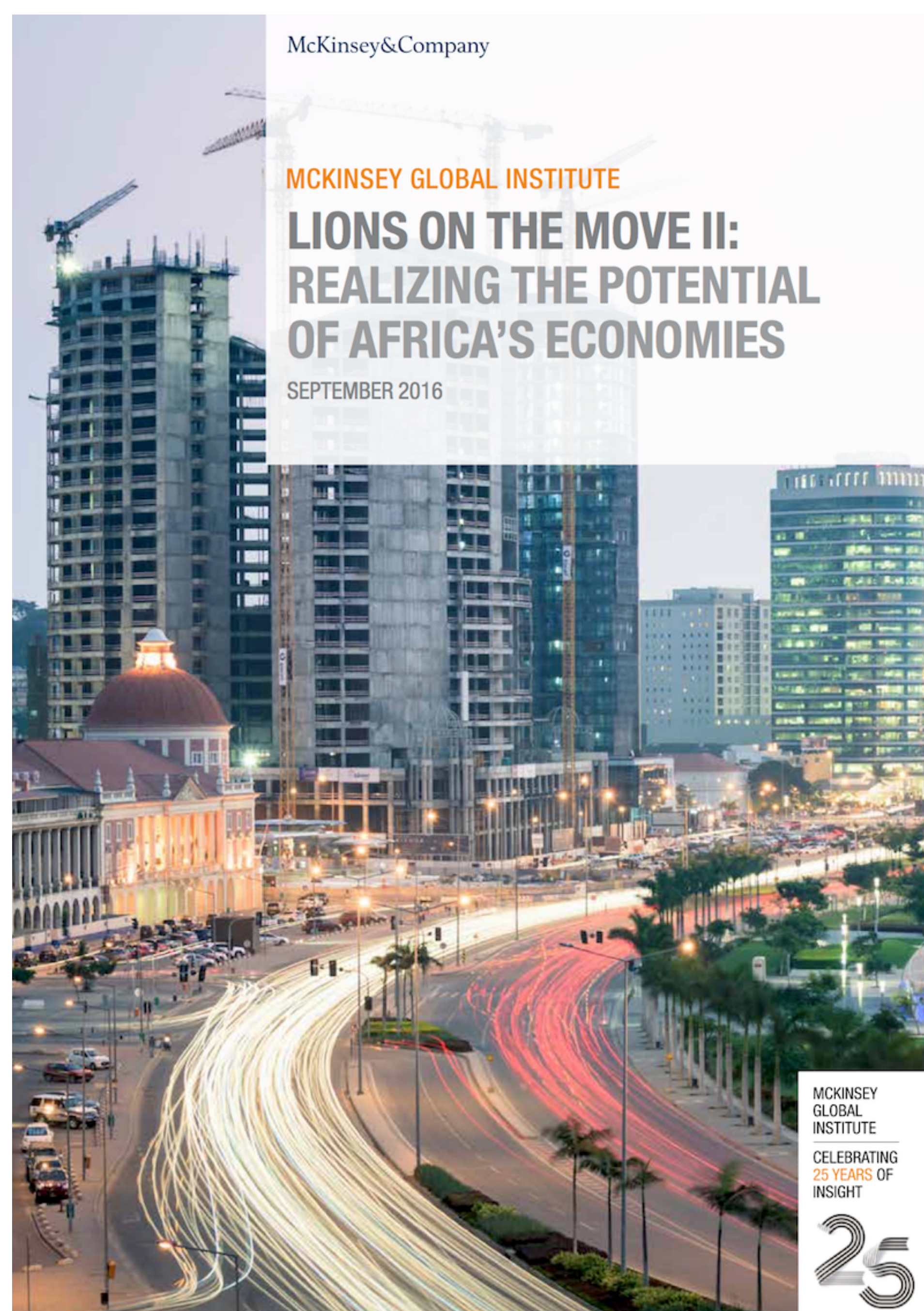


Figure 1: The 4 Goals of The Mid-Term Plan II 2013-2017



The Systems In Place

In effect both the socio-economic and political context as well as the views of study participants for the SDG PP Workshop and stakeholder interviews note that the current systems – reflecting the Constitution, the passing of Acts and Bills in Parliament over the course of the past five (5) years⁵, and the policy frameworks in place – have accrued significant benefits to Kenyans in terms of delivery of social services (health and education), improved and diversified the economy, and empowered local communities through the process of devolution.⁶ The prevailing view amongst stakeholders and actors in the development arena is that Kenya has a ‘fit-for-purpose’ system reflected in its policy and regulatory framework.

With greater harnessing of resources, with collaborative efforts of state and non-state institutions including the private sector and international partners, Kenya is poised to become a middle-income country with a diversified economy supported by ongoing industrialization and technological innovations facilitated by Government and greater equity and enfranchisement of populations living in severe environments: ASAL (for whom nomadism and animal husbandry reflect appropriate livelihoods in fragile ecosystems and communal inter-dependence in trans-cultural and trans-national/border areas). It is only a matter of time whereby key development indicators will reflect the benefits of the systems in place.⁷

It is evident with the advent of the SDGs the critical developments in the Science of ECD, and technological developments that have transformed the social and entrepreneurial ecosystem unleashing the power of social innovation that Kenya is primed to take advantage of significant potential benefits to be accrued from a focus on ECD.

⁵ The Equalisation Bills (signed in April 2017) has accrued an additional Shs 12bn to ASAL Counties in 2017 for infrastructure development.

⁶ Privatization Amendment Bill, Public Service Commission Bill, The Statute Law Miscellaneous Bill, The Appropriation Bill and the Equalization Fund Appropriation Bill Signed by President Kenyatta April 2017.

⁷ A 2017 Kenya Washichana Wote Wasome (Let All Girls Learn) Study funded by DFID Girls’ Education Challenge noted a ‘ceiling effect’ for marginalised areas. A vast majority of primary level children were enrolled in school and thereby suggesting that ‘accesses to education is not an issue per se in Kenya. The gaps in access are that children do not enter school at the appropriate age level and drop-outs in upper primary, particularly for girls, remains a systemic characteristic.

02 Kenya: ECD Stakeholders & ECD Policy Context

ECD Policy & Provision

Kenya has a long history of preschool provision along with a supportive policy framework from its independence. This preschool provision, originally known as ECCE – Early Childhood Care and Education, was provided by women for whom this was a source of livelihoods, income, and social standing in their communities, with provisions offered to the broad range of social, economic, cultural, and geographic groups. In both policy and provision, early childhood services were an important factor of local development building pre-school provision in the spirit of “Harambee” meaning self-help as a means to bottom-up nation building. From independence to the 1970s, during its first decade, this provision enabled local communities to determine and define their own needs and to create programmes to address their needs.

One of the first ECD programmes that considered systemic and community needs holistically was the Madrassah Resource Centre established by the Aga Khan Development Network. The instrumental function or purpose of ECD centres was one of the main concerns of the communities noted earlier. Official Kenyan government data beginning in the early 1960s, noted that Muslim children in the Coast and North-Eastern provinces were failing to gain entry to primary schooling in large measure because of the absence of formal basic education provision in those regions, which then affected their employment prospects.⁸

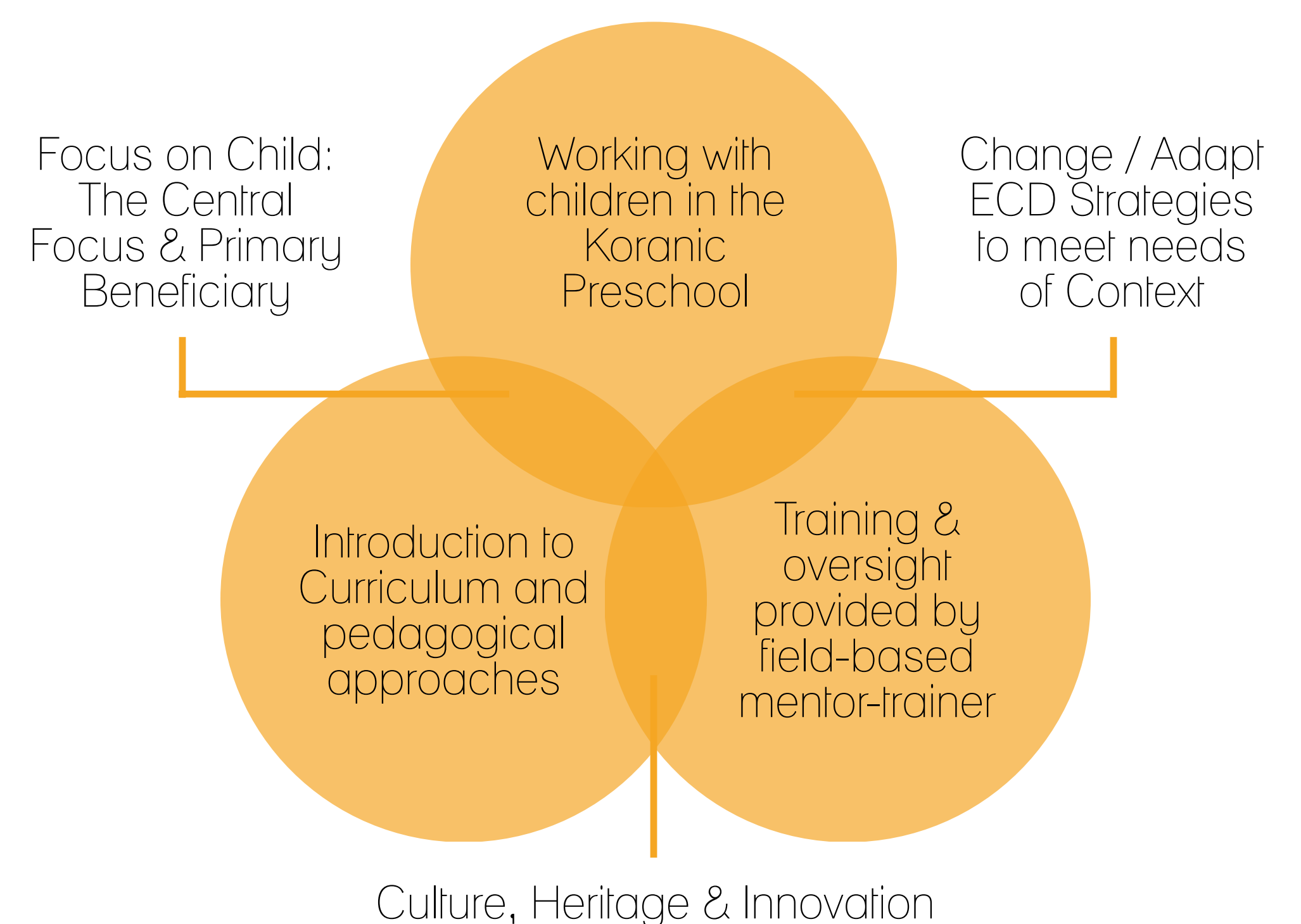
The MRC provision focused on early literacy and numeracy, along with best practices in community development and mobilization to own the process and thereby sustain the innovation, building on evidence that preschool education has important cognitive and psycho-social gains for children that last for a lifetime with curriculum integration based on local community religious or Quran’ic education. This provision effectively integrated the communities’ religious values with the indigenous culture – language (Kiswahili), oral traditions, stories, and songs. In so doing, children learnt how to behave (for example, prayer) as Muslims and that linked to their learning and educational skills formation, including problem solving approaches that are age appropriate. The MRC approach, now over 30 years, has supported an open-ended process that facilitates the system, community and teachers and learners to pursue greater learning, reflection and engagement with their specific immediate circumstances and their aspirations.

The MRC work was instrumental in establishing Kenya’s first early years curriculum in collaboration with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD).

The MRC work and development of the ECD curriculum illuminates important considerations for further innovation and development of education: the critical need to adapt provision to specific contexts. Whereas the MRC began in Kenya and spread to the rest of East Africa, Kenya and Uganda did not have the same approach with regard to the language of instruction and the value systems of communities are different. The medium of instruction along with knowledge about mother tongue instruction is fundamental to successful learning outcomes, particularly at ECD level, and facilitates transition from the home to school.

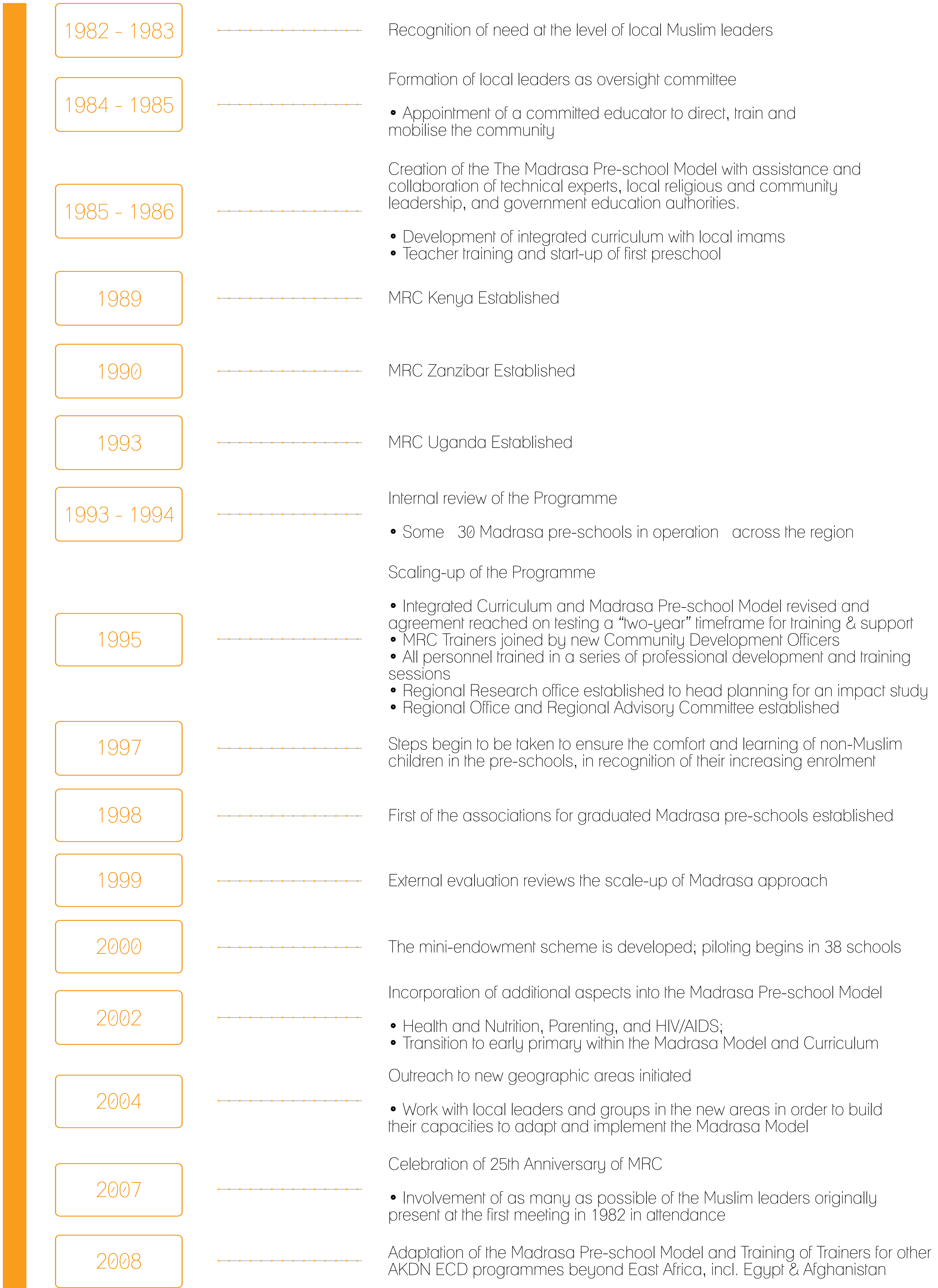
Another critical lesson is that teachers who implement and thereby co-design innovations at the community level must be supported by educators who are available to them where they are most needed: in teachers’ classrooms where the innovation can take root or wither away.

Figure 2: The MRC Approach can be illustrated as below (from Khamis 2013):



⁸ Muslims were recognised to be educationally disadvantaged by the Kenya Education Commission Report of 1965 (Ominde report pp 34-36) of Khamis (2013) A BRIEFING PAPER MUSLIM PRE-SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION: LESSONS AND POLICY OPTIONS, UNICEF WCARO

Figure 3: MRC Development Chronology / Timeline – A 25 Year Project ⁹



9 Adapted from Khamis (2013) op cit.

Kenya has a number of policies or national instruments that relate to ECD with their origin prior to the new 2010 Constitution. These policies are meant to regulate sector-specific ECD services including guidance and objectives in the areas child survival, growth and development including for those children with disabilities as well as living in marginalized and disenfranchised areas. Governments of Kenya have supported various external efforts to promote the welfare of children over the past 60 years. Kenya is a signatory to:



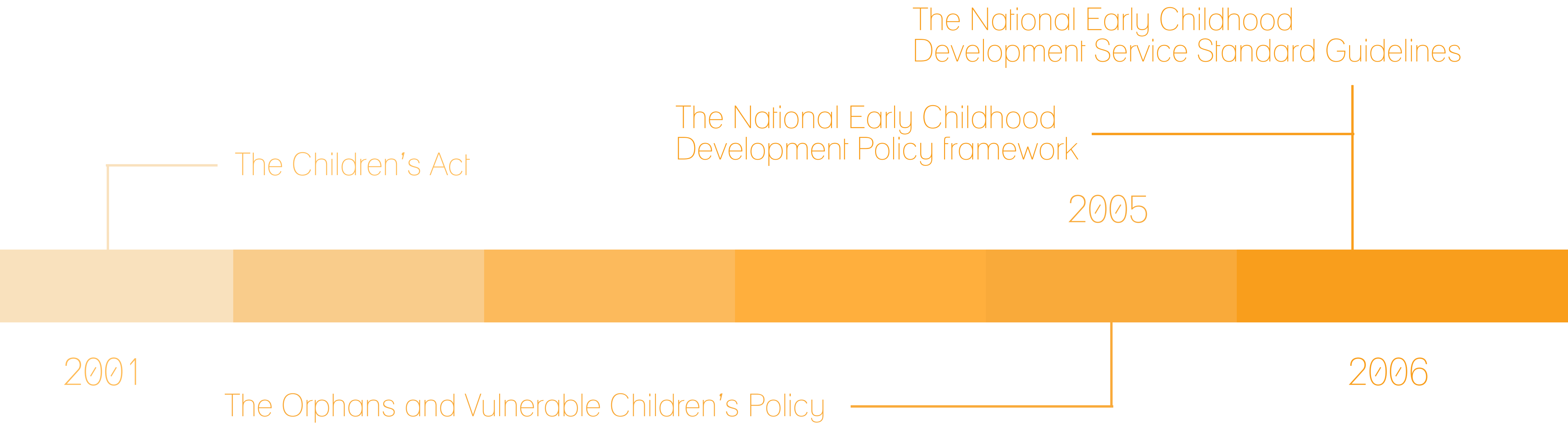
The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC)

Both of which it has ratified and indigenized into national law and policy guidelines.

Figure 4: Kenya has enacted the following pieces of legislation:

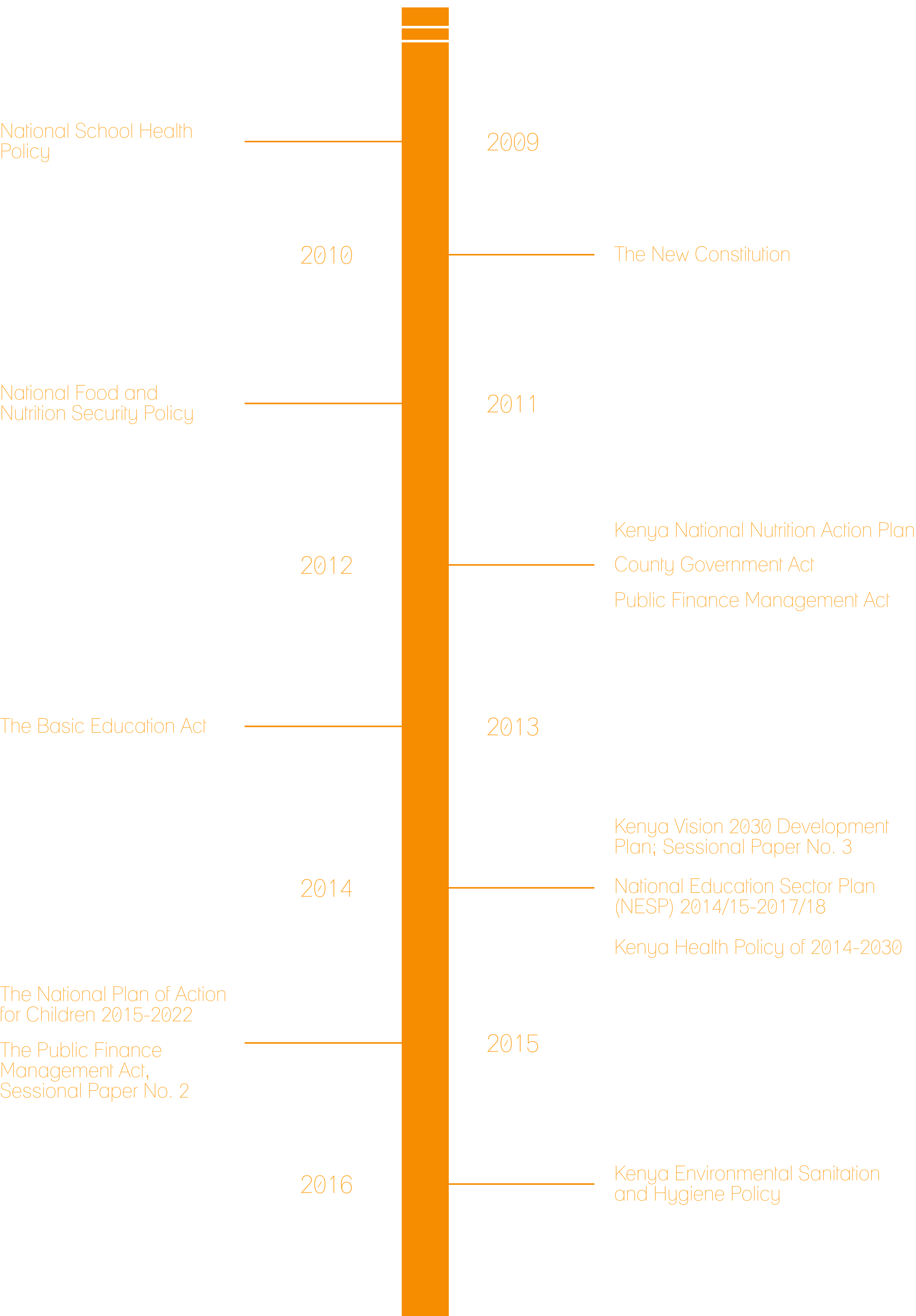


Whilst the various policies have been promulgated and developed, the provision of children's services is divided amongst various line ministries particularly Education, Health, and Labour. The resulting situation thus is that despite the efforts by the Kenyan government and its international partners, ECD is subject to a lack of an overarching policy imperative with the resultant responsibility for the provision separated and collaboration potential mitigated. The National ECD Policy Framework 2006, developed with the support of UNICEF, along with ECE (early childhood education) service standard guidelines, was superseded by the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution as well as the SDGs (2015) thus requiring a policy framework to reflect and articulate with the new national instruments:



10 These include: the New Constitution 2010; Basic Education Act (2013); Kenya Vision 2030; National ECD Policy Framework (2006); Parliamentary Sessional Paper No. 3 (2014); National Plan of Action for Children 2015-2022; National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2014/15-2017/18; Kenya Health Policy of 2014-2030; National School Health Policy (2009); National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2011); Kenya National Nutrition Action Plan (2012 – 2017); Kenya Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene Policy (2016 - 2030); County Government Act (2012); Public Finance Management Act (2012); and Parliamentary Sessional Paper No. 2 (2015).

Figure 5: The New National Instruments



The Constitution is the overarching legal document for Kenya. It has two articles that promote the welfare and development of all children. These frame ECD in Kenya which is reflective of the domains of good ECD.



Article 43

Article 43 ensures economic and social rights to all people with the right to education and access to adequate housing and reasonable standards of sanitation.

Article 53

Article 53 focuses on free and compulsory basic education for all children; basic nutrition, shelter and health care; protection from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labor and parental care and protection.

The NESP

The National Education Sector Plan (NESP 2013-2018) sets itself as the goal to go beyond access to quality along with sustainability of provision. NESP, building on the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP 2005-2010), targets governance, management and accountability as per the devolved functions to Counties as per the principles of the Constitution, with active engagement and promotion of partnerships with guidelines for coordination, transparency, and reporting at the national, county, sub-county and institutional levels. Along with the current Curriculum Reform process underway from the 8-4-4 to the 2-6-3-3 system, early childhood is a national aspiration with universal access and establishes the foundational basis of ECD as integral to human capacity and development and thereby contribution to national development. The place of ECD after 60 years is now firmly established in national policy with clear guidelines for provision.

In October 2016, with UNICEF support, the IECD Policy Framework was rejuvenated with an aim to roll-out an integration framework. The initial work has involved stakeholder dialogues, high-level inter-ministerial government engagement, and awareness-raising to support an integrated approach to ECD whilst also targeting multiple SDGs to catalyze programme development whereby ministries and social service sectors collaborate, ideally in a synergistic manner.

The gap in the recent draft of the new Integrated ECD Policy Framework 2016 (See the Figure 1) is the lack of a policy implementation framework or an inter-ministerial mechanisms

that facilitates policy uptake and collaboration at the programmatic level, with individual line Ministry budgetary oversight bifurcating resources and leading to duplication of efforts aimed at holistic and integrated ECD provision at the County level.

This systemic character mitigates collaboration amongst various ECD service providers to meaningfully engage in inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships and networks. Existing bills, laws and policies need to be harmonized and to reflect National Instruments to overcome procedural and authority oversight. This would counter the inertia currently in place at the system-wide level, avoid duplication of efforts and resources that limit services, and reach a wider array of children in a more equitable manner. The current modus operandi, with reporting responsibilities to individual line ministries, results in policies being adopted but not implemented and weak monitoring and reporting on impact at the level of the individual child.

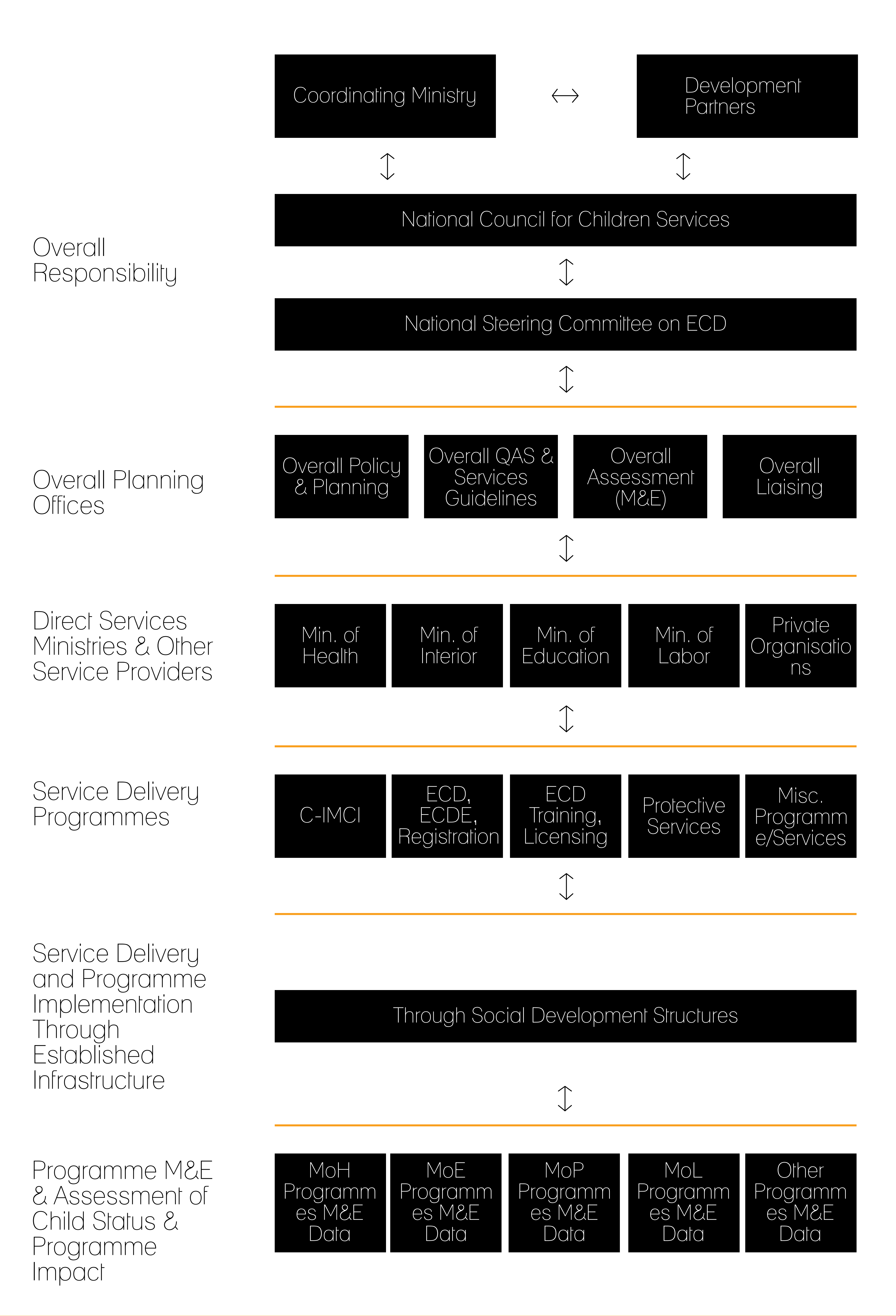
The Ministries of Health and Education have made attempts to work together on school health and this provides a good reference point for collaboration and development potential. The IECD policy framework builds on these attempts by incorporating more ECD service providers. However, stakeholders reserve the right to refer to their sector-specific policies to inform their decision-making processes concerning services to children. Their policies and the policy framework aims to demonstrate that the work of individual ministries and providers is really complementary rather than competitive as per the notion on holistic child development.

Two areas of innovation are (i) a robust database that updates information on individual children in real time and (ii) mechanisms to inform and ascertain officers are aware of various laws and policies, regulations and guidelines, supportive of ECD.¹¹

11 The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education are working jointly towards school health promotion. Areas of innovation include school health education, children as creators of their own solutions, child-to-child pedagogy, and outreach to community for wellbeing and community empowerment (child-to-child.org)

12 Republic of Kenya December 2016 The Kenya Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy Framework

Proposed system for coordinated direct service provision in the ECD Policy Framework ¹²



With devolution and a renewed impetus to meet societal and developmental, including economic, outcomes the Government has enabled a number of stakeholders to engage in the delivery of services:

Figure 6: Stakeholders to engage in the delivery of services



Illustrative

Illustrative of the high-level policy intent and roll-out is provided by the Ministry of Education oversight of the RTI implemented Tyari Programme, which also oversees Early Learning for children aged up to eight years. Tyari seeks to reach all children aged 4 and 5 years old or the pre-primary stage. Tyari educationally, conceptually, and pedagogically builds on the USAID funded PRIMR and Tusome programmes in Kenya.

It provides technical support including human resources focused on learning models underpinning Tyari, and works at the systemic level in four Counties: Siyaya, Likipia, Usain Guisu, and Nairobi with the focus on school readiness. Tyari maps from EGRA/EGMA competencies with pedagogical approaches that are deemed to be appropriate for the younger age range and the school readiness index focused on pre-reading: identify letters, numbers, sounds, and pre-numeracy as well as social and life skills development.

In doing so, Tyari works with KICD to develop a curriculum framework with multiple individual and social developmental objectives, including measurements of competencies such as executive function, for which tools needs to be developed which are acknowledged to be context-specific. The Tyari innovation at the County level is the teacher supervision cadres and a sub-county ECD Coordinator who supports, mentors, and assesses teachers in classroom twice a month.

- Key characteristics of this programme are:
- That it is teacher supervision focused – which is the main innovation and unit of analysis for the success of the programme on which ECD outcomes rely;
 - That is maps onto EGRA/EGMA competency preparedness which has a focus on pre-literacy and pre-numeracy outcomes;
 - That it is devolution driven with implementation oversight by County Government and accountability with MOE at the national level; verification of teacher supervisors by TSC.
- The RTI Tyari Programme is instructive of the ingredients of what is seen to be ‘good’ ECD in the Kenyan context and how different stakeholders at various levels of the formal education system can promote ECD programming within the umbrella of the IECD policy framework.



We are very much working on upstream and downstream policy work at UNICEF. There are some significant challenges facing Kenya: poverty, marginalization, inequitable access to services and the like. When looking at Kenya and the progress it has made in the last few years this is quite remarkable, particularly when compared to the region and to Africa more generally. Kenya has managed to increase access to services: MCH, ECD, schooling for marginalized children and promotion of health. These gains have come about and there is much promise in the move towards devolution, which has much to commend as well as difficulties to confront. Overall it is clear that the 'value-addition' to greater coordination of services, with a focus on ECD, has a transformative potential for the country. This will require an intervention or innovation at a high level with the establishment of a Minister for ECD or a Directorate to provide a holistic approach to unleash synergies and promote collaboration amongst different providers, address gaps, and ensure accountability with monitoring capability to ensure impact of the IECD Policy Framework.

Daniel Baheta, UNICEF

Illustrative

The Government of Kenya has developed the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy framework in recognition of its primary responsibility to observe, respect, protect, promote and fulfil children's rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The document gives effect to Chapter Four of the Constitution by providing a comprehensive, integrated and coherent framework that elaborates children's rights to ECD and affirms that child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child in order to guide government and state and non-state actors in enforcement of a holistic ECD service delivery.

The Government's commitment to ECD is derived from Constitution of Kenya, 2010 and numerous local, regional and international legal and policy instruments that Kenya is a state party to. The Bill of Rights in the Constitution, an indispensable framework for all social, economic and cultural policies in Kenya, articulates children's rights that are invaluable for the well-being of children with and without disabilities and those in difficult circumstances. The Bill of Rights are a critical ECD building block for yielding manifold proven benefits to children including better health and nutrition, improved educational efficiency and gender equity, greater employability and earnings, and better quality of life. For the specific section in the Bill of Rights that focuses on children to be actualized, an inter-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach to policies, programmes and budgets across both national and county levels and between state and non-state actors, must be sensitive to and be in compliance with children's rights principles and standards as guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights thus finds expression in the adoption of an IECD policy framework that acknowledges provision of ECD services as a shared responsibility. This requires collective action and coordinated solutions and, to that end, service delivery mechanisms must be brought under one roof to advance and fast track access to goods and services of good quality by children in ECD centres across the county in ways that promote transparency, accountability and collaboration and partnerships.

Kenya has experienced many challenges which have had deleterious effects on actualization of children's rights to ECD. These challenges hinge on child survival, growth and development and include poor quality of ECD centres and nutrition for children, access to clean and safe water, sanitation, healthcare and care, protection and safety against the backdrop of inequality, poverty, diseases and corruption.

The challenges appear insurmountable and thus require a strong political will and social and economic commitments by all stakeholders working and/or interested in ECD to overcome them if our children are to contribute meaningfully to sustainable national development.

In light of increasing interrelationships between individuals' needs and rights and national development processes, especially for poverty reduction and economic growth, governments are assuming greater responsibility for ensuring the needs and rights of young children are met. Governments play a particularly crucial role in creating enabling environments that allow children to develop into healthy, well-balanced and responsible adults. The government of Kenya has made great strides over the years to improve ECD service provision. However, these efforts have been hampered by the lack of an integrative framework to create cross-sectoral and cross-agency collaboration and coherence in the many policies, programs and plans that have been developed. This IECD policy framework is thus timely and comes with the clear understanding that in order to deliver on the ECD agenda, Kenya needs an overarching holistic, comprehensive and coherent framework that integrates and mainstreams ECD in national development planning, implementation and evaluation in all line sectors. The development of this policy is also a reaffirmation of the Government's commitment to address the various challenges as it moves towards the creation of a better, cohesive and just society.

This IECD policy framework focuses on a set of key priority areas that were identified and analysed by all major stakeholders at all levels during transparent, consultative, consensus-building and participatory hearings conducted countrywide and spearheaded by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF. These key areas are categorized as follows: In Economic and Social Rights- the right to the highest attainable standard of health, housing, adequate food of acceptable quality, clean and safe water in adequate quantities, education and a clean environment; and in the area of Group Rights- the rights of specific vulnerable groups, children with and without disabilities, marginalized and minority groups and internally displaced persons and refugees. The IECD policy framework restates the Government's commitment to education as a basic human right through broad undertakings. It also identifies the challenges and shortcomings that hinder the realization and enjoyment of children's rights in ECD centres across the country and outlines key strategic areas of intervention to address the challenges.

Illustrative

The Government acknowledges that for ECD to be meaningful, children's rights standards must be implemented in a non-discriminatory, transparent, participatory and accountable way. The Government thus adopts a rights-based approach to the development and operationalization of the IECD policy framework. The IECD policy framework will be implemented through a five-year action plan. The Policy Implementation Plan (PIP) outlines specific priority action areas and outcome indicators to measure progress in provision of ECD service to all children 0-8 years. A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) will guide determination of progressive achievement of key milestones outlined. Every state and non-state actor is expected to observe, respect, protect, promote, fulfil and champion children's rights to ECD. The PIP identifies these actors and designates specific responsibilities for the realization of their individual and collective goals where children are concerned. PIP will be used by National and Country Governments to consciously mainstream children's issues within government's planning and development processes.

Lastly, the IECD policy framework is a product of the experiences, practice and wisdom of various ECD stakeholders including: representatives from Ministries of Education, Health, Labour and Interior and Coordination; Universities and research institutions; and (I)NGOs, CSOs and development partners such Africa Early Childhood Network, Aga Khan Foundation East Africa, Build Africa, Child Fund Kenya, Early Childhood Development Network for Kenya, International Child Resource Institute, KANCO, Kenyatta University, Kidogo, Little Rock Inclusive Centre, Parenting in Africa Network, PATH, RTI, Save the Children, UNICEF Kenya; and World Vision Kenya. ECD teachers and parents were represented as well.

It is widely acknowledged by current actors and institutions in Kenya that universal ECD uptake and roll-out is relatively straightforward and the current policy and systems in place are fit-for-purpose. Stakeholders note that the manner in which children develop and learn is generic to all human beings and that there is sufficient evidence-based knowledge on how learning is facilitated at the ECD age range based on pedagogies that include imitation, play acting, repetition, and reinforcement of ideas formation.

03 Summary of Findings

Stakeholders, particularly researchers, note that there are aspects of ECD that are not readily adaptable, which are linked to systemic operationalisation and beliefs that certain communities, parents and teachers hold about young children and their capacities. This requires contextualisation of ECD provision. An example of context dependent provision is delivery and teaching methodology. In Kenya young children may not be encouraged to be ‘active’ in formal education centres as this may seem to encourage children to be ‘disruptive’. Other examples of systemic features including approaches to young children’s development link to teaching culture and values which reflect teachers’ notions or beliefs about children, their development potential, and how they learn and interact with the world around them.. One such aspect or notion is with regard to adult roles and responsibilities who oversee the care of children who are not ‘individuals’ but an intrinsic part of larger kinship structures. Thus a priori notions of what a child is, what his or her role is at present in society as well as later, and how that child ‘contributes’ to the overall welfare of the larger unit in which s/he exists are very important considerations.

A story was related of a pastoralist who faces a present and current dilemma is poignant: given the devastation caused by the drought this year in Kenya and the region, he had to determine which of his livestock would live and die and which of his nine children should survive as it was impossible for all his livestock and all his children to be sustained at this time. On the surface it is incomprehensible how to face such a decision which must by necessity be made and yet with a deeper understanding of culture and context, including ideas of time and mytho-history, enables a much more nuanced appreciation of the meaning people ascribe to their life and the choices they face. For example, in Kenya and more widely across sub-Saharan Africa amongst many different communities, naming of children follows patrilineal and matrilineal systems that link to birth order based on kin and kith relations which establishes the child in the family order.

This system of naming thereby not only ascribes a character upon the child but also a preset understanding of ‘who’ that child is in relation to a wider consideration of where that child comes from – genealogically, culturally, and socially. The circumstances within which a child is born and raised has consequences for the experiences the child will have at different stages as s/he grows, the exposure afforded to children that shape their perceptions of themselves, and their environs including initiation and other cultural rites of passage and ceremonies. These are areas of ethnographic and anthropological knowledge that are intrinsic to understand how to promote ‘good’ ECD programming that have formal and non-formal systems that underpin observed behaviour in communities. The key insight from stakeholders who are educators, policy implementers and supporters or advocates of ECD is that at present there is a positive juxtaposition between prioritising ECD and other developments or innovations such as Curriculum Reform that reflects agreed national development needs, cognizant of the socio-economic context, the geo-political and strategic position of Kenya and its aspirations with regard to increasing citizen’s entitlements as well as preparing for a more prosperous Kenya in line with is Vision 2030 Development Plan.

An example of current multi-stakeholder collaboration is with regard to school readiness and support for children aged 2-4 years old. This age group’s primary care givers are parents whose main consideration is their children’s optimal development. The focus on developmental milestones is supported by Community Health Workers/Visitors – who are Ministry of Health representative – working with County Governments and UNICEF and local NGOs supported by international and bilateral aid agencies.

Kenya National Education Curriculum	
Current	Proposed
University Education Age: 18+ 4+ Years	University/Tertiary Education Age: 18+ 3+ Years
Secondary School Form 1-4 Age: 14-17 4 Years	Senior Secondary School - Grade 7-9 Age: 15-17 3 Years Junior Secondary School - Grade 7-9 Age: 12-14 3 Years
Primary Class 1-8 Ages 6-13 3 Years	Primary Grade 1-6 Age: 6-11 6 Years
	ECD/E Age 4-5 2 Years

Figure 7: Curriculum Reform Framework 8-4- 4 to 2-6- 3-3- 3

They also focus on young teenage mothers whose education has been interrupted and are encouraged to go back to school. Thus, both health and education workers work together to respond to the holistic needs of the family: teenage mother, young child and extended family, in a manner to support the ECD age child including nutritional supplements, the parents and community including community conversations to support school re-entry for teenage mothers with sanitary pads and breastfeeding kits, and enable the school to be ready for children to enter with the pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills with crèche-type facilities.¹³ The above programmes have sought innovations in the areas of within a proposed ‘theory of change’:

- Financing: unleashing community and County funds for innovative programmes;
- Governance: with local community conversations (Concern Worldwide) to identify and own community development, advocate for their entitlements, and engage in management of programmes to highlight the voices of the community;
- Leadership: empower Community Elders with the authority they have bolstered by skills and knowledge to engage in community development and hold local authorities accountable;
- Service delivery/ Technology, research and development: improve coordination and targeting of the resources and efforts of multiple agencies – government, donors, and NGOs – to focus on delivery of social service programme. Alternative service delivery mechanisms using social media and IT-based approaches being experimented with attendance at school for young children, disease prevalence and surveillance, and school opening times including teacher absenteeism.

13 DFID Funded Girls Education Challenge 2014-2017 sought to promote access to 81,000 girls from marginalised areas including teenage mothers.

04 Interviews

Culture and behavior standards were mentioned by interviewees numerous times as having influence on ECD. Behavior change via awareness raising and role-modelling with a focus on younger, including teenage mothers is identified as pathway for intervention. Ideas of using positive aspects of culture such as extended family and inter-dependent relations to impact on wellbeing of mother and young children in the family. Intervention or acupuncture point is the paternal grandmother or mother-in-law. She is the key to changes and innovation uptake in the family that links to behavior and social norms development. Whether this be the value of the promotion of 'play' in the family, the 'focus' on the girl-child and her schooling, and the 'contribution' of the young mother to the family and its livelihood activities.



Key Message: "Use culture as a positive aspect for ECD"

Most people don't plan for pregnancy and access health clinics only in the last trimester many times just the week before giving birth. We need to look beyond just the health sector; that is, social workers: mothers have issues – no scans, don't know what to expect, role of the media, the religious institutions, local administration, police and other sectors. We cannot continue to work in silos; we need to integrate and work as teams and this develops and links to our value systems. Mothers live in a compound with husband and mother in law who may favor a traditional birth attendant. We need to engage and educate the mother in law and make her part of the solution as well as fathers, aunties; our community structures are the basic social fabric and all need to be engaged to offer much needed social support; for example, to help the pregnant and new mother to fetch water. When I walk with a pregnant mother and see her joy and her dreams for her unborn child, and see those dreams unfold, this is what gives me great satisfaction.

Fidelis Muthoni, Catholic Relief Services

A number of stakeholders, including donors and technical team experts, work in parallel; there is the potential to unleash synergies via collaborations. The following immediate activities or low-hanging fruit to upscale ECD very quickly, which link to livelihoods' development, employment opportunities, and youth and women's empowerment.



Key Message: System ready – focus on innovation at the programme level

Generally a positive picture as we move in the domain of ECD, which is now clearly recognised at the policy level. We have implementation problems but we will get there. Our values base as well as understanding of children and communities needs to be better understood. With devolution the County Governments want to and need to respond to community development needs, which they sincerely are trying to do.

We need more support, professionalisation, and a focus on child development outcomes. We are hopeful that we are on the right course and will get to where we need to be working together with others – experts – and learning from experiences of other countries.

Mark Rotich, Education Development Trust

ECD needs to be looked as an holistic programme and bring together the 'language' used by different partners that has different terminologies and nomenclatures to communicate coherently including to financiers to give direction via engage in awareness building to enhance the position and understanding of ECD to move the area forward. We can do it and it doesn't take a lot as we have quite a few programmes running through different ministries.

Najma Rashid, Aga Khan Foundation



Key Message: Greater Participation of Private Sector

Developing relatively good ECD provision in Kenya is relatively straightforward if we consider two caveats: (i) government's capacity to be a service provider is limited and (ii) an essentially market-oriented approach where the parent and community are clients to be respected. Three aspects are clear: (a) ECD or child care is where it is in Kenya and can be characterised as child care plus; (b) many adults are engaged with child care for whom ECD provision is effectively an employment opportunity; and (c) we don't have the time or luxury to debate things like teacher professionalization, buildings, materials development and the like. The employment threshold to be an ECD teacher does not need to be very high and ECD 'centres' need not be purpose-built to begin with. Anywhere in the community can serve for ECD provision with a minimum threshold of training and curricula frameworks. We don't need a lot of investment in 'nice-to-haves' (glossy learning materials and the like which are expensive). Government role is thus QA oversight and with devolution County Government's capacity to oversee QA needs to be improved. Local NGOs to be encouraged to be service providers and the approach to be inter-sectoral bringing health and education sectors together.

Felix Edwards, Adam Smith International

ECD in Kenya is part of a larger system of schooling with certain expectations – to enter into primary school and then all the way to university; that is, it's a formal system with instrumental purposes to develop a certain skill set. If ECD is going to be important in and of itself as a stage and yet articulate to further development, the whole system needs to be reconsidered so that different pathways are possible for different children with various capabilities and capacities. For a school such as ISK, which is owned by the US Embassy and Canadian High Commission, there is much Social Capital and we can build on our ongoing community outreach, such as the Service Learning Programme that is a critical part of the educational offering for children of all ages. Peer learning (child-to-child), teachers' field-based education and (whole school) support, and outreach – with a focus on the role of school to support other community

Patricia Salleh-Matta, The International School of Kenya, U.S. Department of State

It is evident that where knowledge and information is not available problems tend to be ignored, for example maternal depression and teenage sexual health and behavior, or the local culture is caricaturized or seen to be deficient with an 'inoculation' as the proposed 'intervention'. This is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of mothers and children and perpetuates a cycle of inter-generational conflict and difficulty. Equally aspects of the local context which are supportive of 'good' ECD, for example African children on average tend to walk earlier than their international counterparts, are not sufficiently highlighted for the region to be a source of knowledge the common good of humanity at large.



Key Message: Build on Local Knowledge

In our work in ECD, we have to think societally with respect to systems and system development. This will mean we think about the two aspects: (i) access – most children to have access to what is important and (ii) quality – what are we exposing children to? Thus, curriculum issues come into play; not everything at ECD should be at a school/center – the access-quality interface is where the system and its development deal with both, which is beyond the factory model of just babysitting young children.

It is not sufficient to build classrooms, recruit teachers, and the like but to create a system where those involved with children understand what child development means. This will necessarily take time as it needs to be underpinned by a solid base; this is most important to develop human resource capacity with a solid knowledge base. There are fads and fashions or 'solutions of the day', which come and go – these need to be taken with a grain of salt. We cannot settle to have simple answers to complex questions: we are not beginning with a blank slate and thereby write whatever we want on it. As a medium of intervention, whether with regard to ECD or any other development, we are not the carriers of sacrosanct knowledge to impose 'our' solution to all and sundry and thereby denigrate what parents do and question their (good) intentions of looking after their children.

The question will be as we go forward whether we have the courage to understand the limits of our own knowledge and to understand that differences in approaches – as a principle – the difference does not mean one approach is better than the other. The nexus of knowledge limitations – working across cultures – and the outcomes we seek need not to do with the civil part of our societies. That is, we must develop the capacity and ability to put ourselves in someone else's shoes and to focus on 'nurturing', the 'common good' where the system and its values are articulated and promoted with the due regard for children whom we are not moulding but complementing their child's development with our interventions

Kofi Marfo, Aga Khan University

05 Strategy Workshop & a Set of Intervention Pathways



The workshop was opened by UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Kenya, Siddharth Chatterjee. Mr. Chatterjee discussed that Kenya can invest in ECD for economic impact, reaping dividends from population growth and transforming the country, where Kenya has the potential to be an exemplary in setting the track to advance the SDG agenda. Mr. Chatterjee closed with the challenges Kenya still had to face, including the urgency of addressing violence and conflict affecting children, amongst other issues in the ECD.

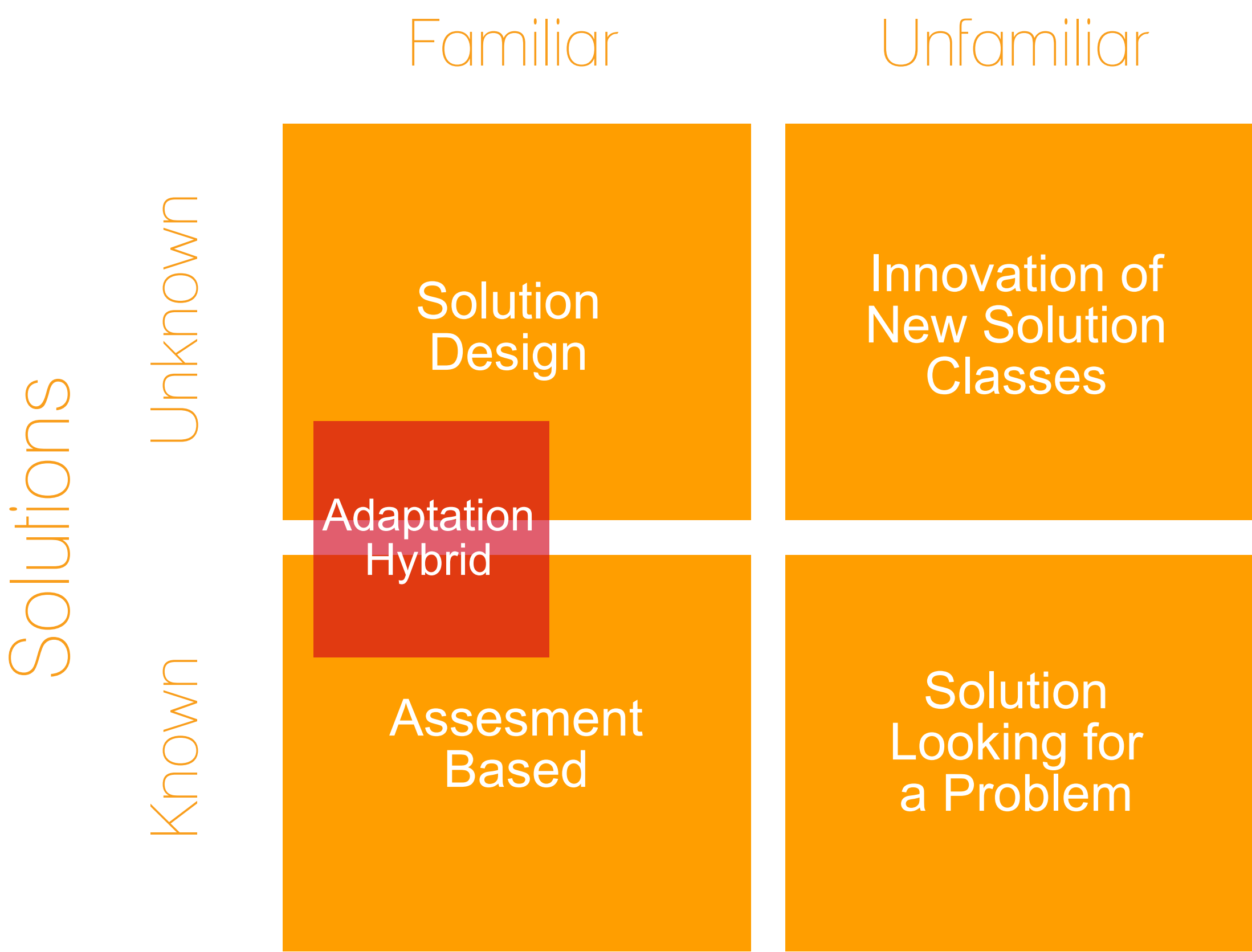
Mrs. Patricia DiGiovanni ECD focused work of UNICEF, including issue of the latest Lancet Series on the science of ECD and commitment of UNICEF in further supporting collaborative frameworks and solutions that are expected to come out from this multi-stakeholder dialogue and interventions. Finally, the representative from the Ministry of Education, Anne Gachoya, expressed the commitment and interest of the Ministry in taking this dialogue forward and learn from others: service providers, funders, international NGOs and other agencies.



Dr. Banny Banerjee, Director of Change Labs at Stanford University and facilitator of the workshop gave an introductory presentation, serving as a primer and guidance for the day. He explained why wicked challenges like the SDGs require massive innovations, emphasizing that there were no single bullet solutions. Instead, there is a need to understand unique intervention pathways, that will accelerate the Impacts of ECD using systems approach.



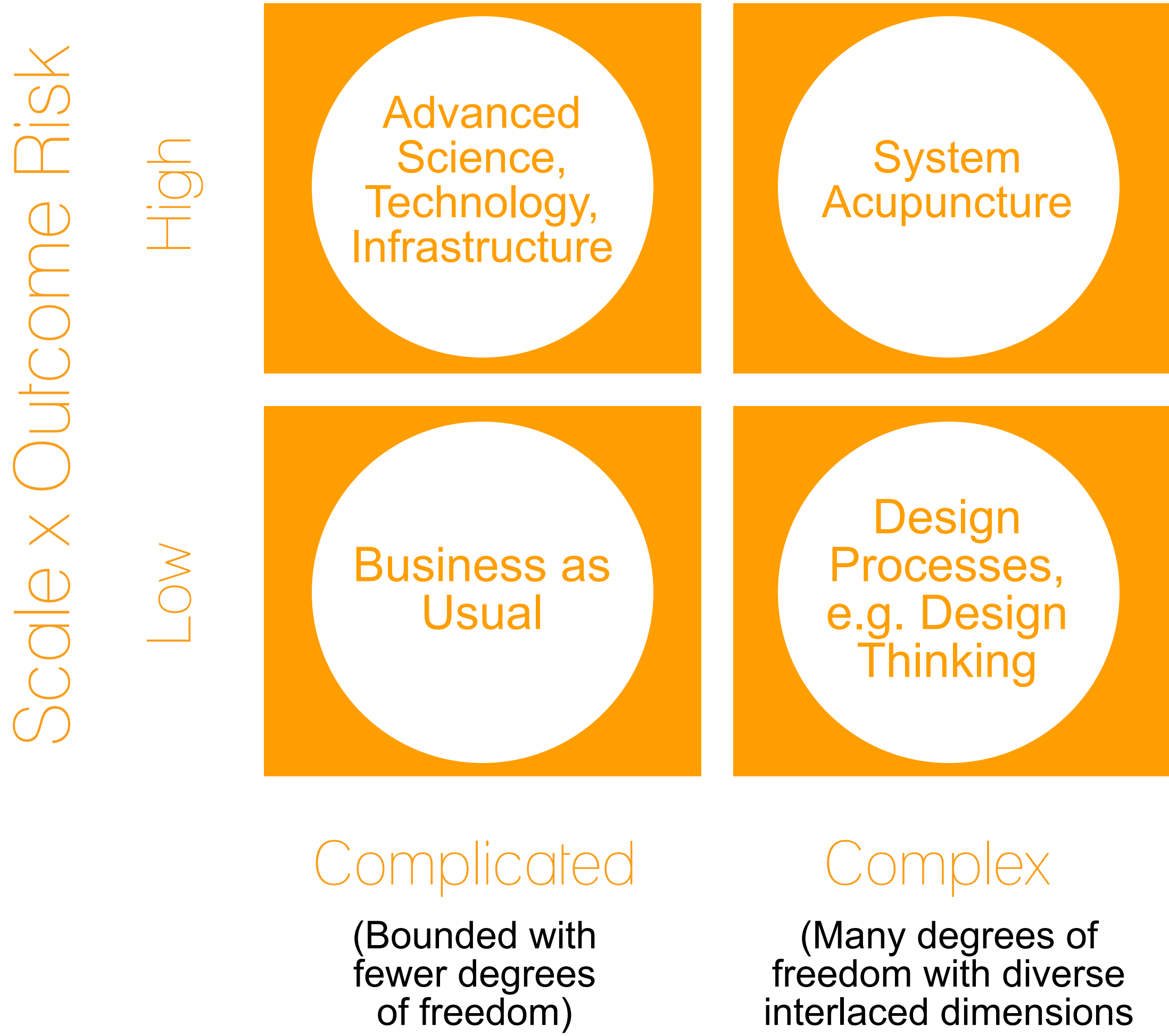
Challenges



New methodology: System acupuncture

Innovation is defined as outperforming normative modes, to drive new outcomes, behaviors, paradigms, system transformation and system trajectories. Of the most important aspects of innovation is to be able to reframe the challenge, therefore:

- understand the challenge in its complexity, including different facets of the issue, the drivers, root causes, and links to outcomes
- reduce the complexity by identifying the system "knots" or "acupuncture points", and
- map potential intervention pathways to address the "acupuncture points", and therefore, design the innovation of new solution classes.



Systematic Challenges Need Systematic Solutions

Participants were introduced to the System acupuncture approach, which is needed for the complex systems and complex challenges that SDGs present. The advancement of the SDGs, therefore, requires the change in the system behavior, i.e. transforming markets, policies, use of data, knowledge, behavior, agency and governance structures, and resources.

Banny Banerjee, Founder of Change Labs

Challenge Type

Figure 8: System acupuncture approach

Workshop Exercises

Participants initially were grouped into 6 groups, with participants in each group representing different sectors (government, UN, business, philanthropy) and function.

The workshop activities were based on the following process:

1

Setting Outcomes

What are desired outcomes? What are the dimensions of a good system?

2

Driving Dynamics and Voting

What are the key drivers, root causes and stakeholder behaviors? How they influence the outcomes?

3

Mapping the System

Causal path / What are the relationship between different drivers? How they cumulatively influence outcomes?

4

Acupuncture Points

Where to intervene? What changes at the intervention point? Which acupuncture points are more leveraged?

5

Rapid Brainstorm and Change Storm

Generating ideas: markets, agency, behaviors, resources, technology / What ideas fit for acupuncture points?

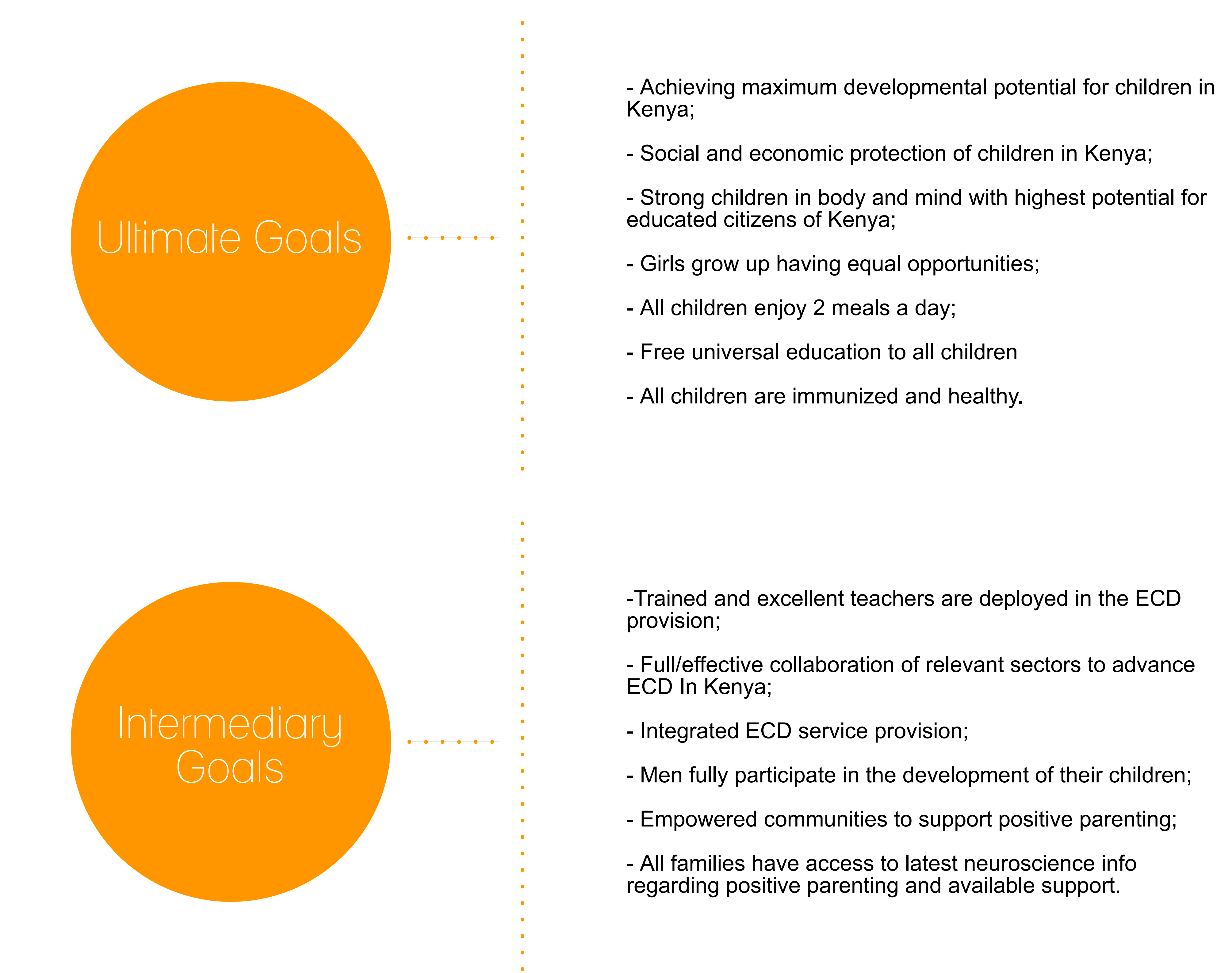
6

Intervention Design and Prioritization

What are mechanisms? What is theory of change? Converging on intervention pathways. Discussing feasibility, roles, and how to realize?

Setting Outcomes

Participants defined the outcomes, as what constitutes a good ECD. The documented outcomes included those attributable to:



Driving Dynamics

During the exercise, each participant proposed 2-3 drivers that effect the outcomes negatively or positively. For each driver, the participants documented the primary cause and root cause, thus allowing themselves to think deeper and understand the causality. Participants then voted.

Key Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Integration gaps in service provision;- Knowledge deficits;- Unaffordable cost of ECD services;- Absence of ECD innovation;- ECD financing;- Inadequate service provision in ECD centers with dilapidated infrastructure;- Malnutrition of children in the early age;	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Marginalization;- Children vulnerability;- Parents' attitudes to ECD;- Absence of indigenous research on ECD;- Inadequate school feeding programs;- Health workers' capacity and understanding of ECD;- Rapid urbanization and change of child rearing practices In Kenya.
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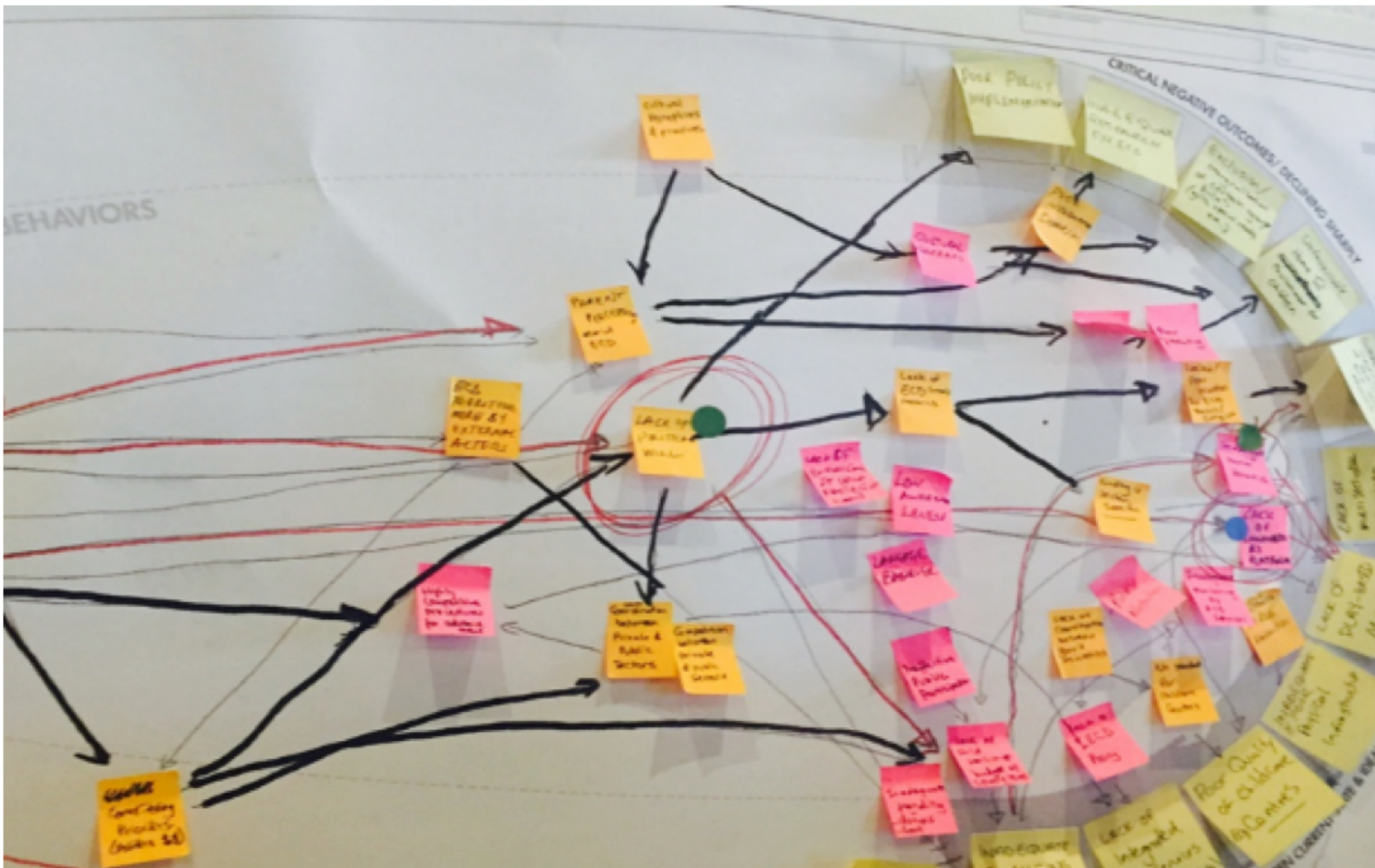
While the driver dynamics exercises demonstrated the diversity of views of what influences the children's receiving a quality ECD services, it is noted that in nearly 90% cases l the participants included parents, caregivers and guardians as a key stakeholder.

Mapping the Systems

Building on the results of the two exercises each group mapped the complex systems and linked drivers, i.e. root causes to positive or negative outcomes. Groups spotted loops and chokepoints in the system and focused on these.

The chokepoints

Acupuncture 7, Acupuncture 8



Most clustered around the following:

- Policy fragmentation in ECD;
- Lack of political leadership, financing for ECD in the national/subnational agendas;
- Lack of knowledge of ECD by caregivers, lack of positive parenting;
- Poor accountability mechanisms and governance over the provision of services to a child;
- Lack of integration of services for a child, i.e. nutrition, health, early learning;
- Lack of private sector involvement, i.e. market-based approaches and innovation.

Intervention Pathways

Collectively participants agreed on the list of the potential Intervention Pathways, assessed their feasibility, scalability and complexity. The discussed Intervention Pathways include:

- Sustainable financing for the ECD delivery in counties
- Integrated ECD policy with the clear set of roles and accountability mechanisms with government leadership
- Adapted local knowledge
- Communication channels to bring the science and appreciation of ECD to every household in Kenya
- Building pluralistic models of ECD to address difference in family structures, lifestyles, including tribal communities, and young parents in peri-urban and informal settlements.
- Boost private sector and entrepreneurialism in the ECD service provision
- Develop Integrated ECD delivery so every child gets a birth registration, vaccination, protection, proper water and sanitation, nutrition along early learning.

Challenge Prize

The objective of the exercise is to demonstrate proof-of- concept that facilitating new and innovative forms to collectively understanding system blockages and accelerators can lead to efficiencies and opportunities for disruptions, locally found.



About – SDG Philanthropy Platform

Vision

Strong partnerships between philanthropic organizations, the United Nations and other development partners, governments, civil society, and businesses - including social enterprises - in achieving the SDGs.

Outcomes

- Collaboration around SDGs to reduce duplication, create synergies and leverage resources among partners.
- Increased voice of philanthropy and grantees in the national plans for the SDGs implementation.
- Innovation and scaling methods from private sector are applied in the UN and government programs.

Milestones achieved

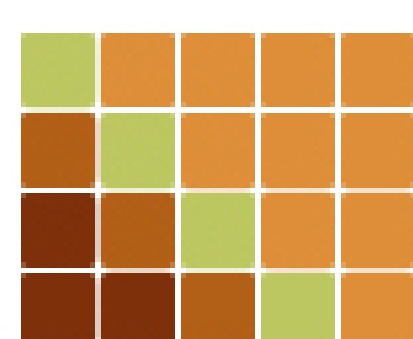
- Established pathways for philanthropy to engage with national and local governments and the UN in SDG processes.
- Country-level pilots for philanthropic collaboration with local partners developed in Kenya, Colombia, Indonesia, Ghana, the US, Zambia, and soon India, with more countries in the pipeline.
- Creation of SDGfunders.org – a credible and accessible online data and knowledge portal on philanthropic giving related to the SDGs.
- Creation of the SDG maps for Kenya, Ghana and Zambia at SDGphilanthropy.org
- Connected thousands of foundations and other stakeholders globally and locally to facilitate greater awareness of philanthropy's role in promoting the SDGs.



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