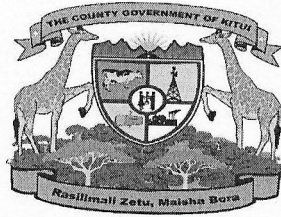# COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KITUI
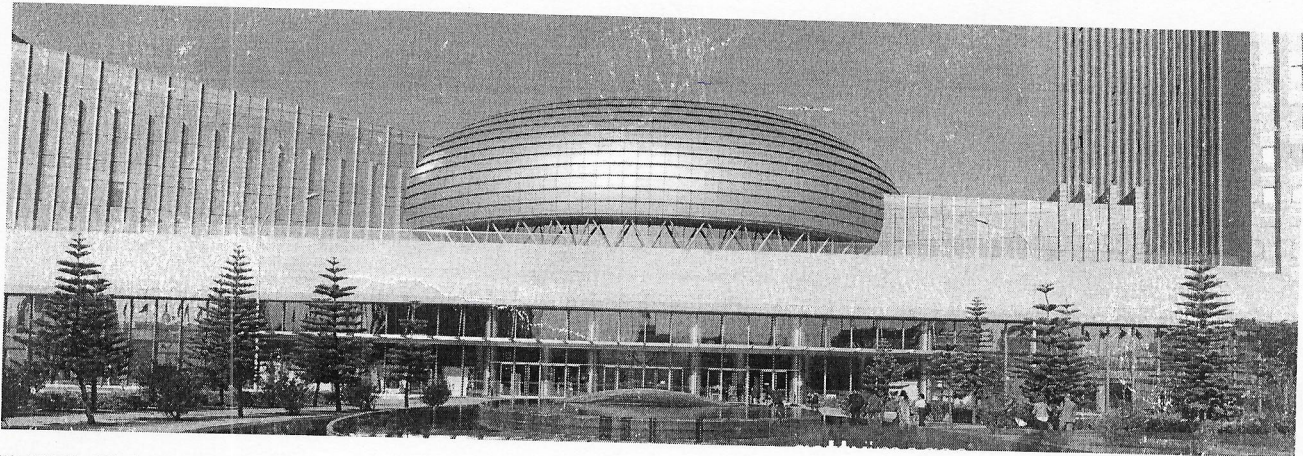

THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY

THIRD ASSEMBLY – (THIRD SESSION)

COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.

REPORT ON A STUDY VISIT AND A TRAINING WORKSHOP ON ADMINISTRATION OF INTEGRATED MULTI-SECTORAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CAPACITY TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN HELD IN ADDIS ABABA -ETHIOPIA FROM 25TH TO 29TH NOVEMEBR, 2024.

CLERK'S CHAMBERS,

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF KITUI,

P.O. BOX 694-90200.

KITUI.

DECEMBER, 2024

Contents

ANNEXURES

Annexure 1:   Report Adoption list

Annexure 2:   Photo Gallery

Annexure 3:   Passports and Boarding pass copies

Annexure 4:   Training Programme

Annexure 5:   Invitation letter.

Annexure 6:   Trainee Attendance form

Annexure 7:   Travel Clearance to Addis Ababa-Ethiopia

LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CAK - County Assembly of Kitui.

CBC - Competency-Based Curriculum.

ECD - Early Childhood Development.

ECCE - Early Childhood Care and Education.

ECDCs - Early Childhood Development Centres

ECDE - Early Childhood Development Education.

ECE - Early Childhood Education.

IECE - Integrated Early Childhood Education.

MCA - Member of County Assembly.

MEL - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. PREFACE

Mr. Speaker Sir,

On behalf of the Members of the Sectoral Committee on Basic Education, Training and Skills Development and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 179 (6) and 190 (5) (g), it is my honour and duty to present to this honourable House, the Committee's report on a Study Visit and a Training Workshop on Administration of Integrated Multi-Sectoral Early Childhood Education and Capacity to Improve the Well-Being of Children held in Addis Ababa -Ethiopia from 25th to 29th November, 2024.

1.2 Committee's mandate

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The Sectoral Committee on Basic Education, Training and Skills Development derives its mandate from the provisions of Standing Order No. 190(5) and the second schedule to the Standing Orders, which define the functions of the committee as follows: -

a) Investigate, inquire into and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities, administration, operation and estimates of the assigned department;

b) Study programs and policy objectives of departments and the effectiveness of the implementation;

c) Study and review all county legislation referred to it;

d) Study, assess and analyse the relative success of departments as measured by the results obtained as compared with their stated objectives;

e) Investigate and inquire into all matters relating to the assigned departments as they may deem necessary, and as may be referred to them by the County Assembly;

f) To vet and report on all appointments where the constitution or any law requires the County Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 185 (Committee Appointments); and

g) Make reports and recommendations to the county assembly as often as possible, including recommendations for proposed legislation.

1.3 Committees membership.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

The Committee on Basic Education, Training and Skills Development as currently constituted comprises the following members: -

1.	Hon. Mark Kitute Nding'o	- Chairperson
2.	Hon. Priscilla Martha Makumi	- V/chairperson
3.	Hon. Munyoki Mwinzi	- Member
4.	Hon. Gabriel Mutunga Munyao	- Member
5.	Hon. Mercy Muliwa Muema	- Member
6.	Hon. Paul Maluki	- Member
7.	Hon. Charity Kathathi Musyoka	- Member
8.	Hon. Cyrus Kisavi Musyoka	- Member
9.	Hon. Immaculate Wanza John	- Member
10.	Hon. Joseph Musyoka Mbite	- Member
11.	Hon. Alphonce M. Mukwayu	- Member

1.4 Delegation Composition.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

The following members of the Committee constituted the delegation which attended the said workshop as held from 25th to 29th November, 2024 in Addis Ababa- Ethiopia: -

1.	Hon. Priscilla Martha Makumi	-Leader of the delegation.
2.	Hon. Charity Kathathi Musyoka	- Member
3.	Hon. Joseph Musyoka Mbite	-Member

4. Hon. Gabriel Mutunga Munyao   -Member
5. Hon. Cyrus Musyoka Kisavi   -Member
6. Hon. Paul Maluki   -Member

This team was accompanied by Senior Serjeant-at-arms, Mr. Lawrence Kirigwi, who assisted in the documentation of the committee's findings and recommendations.

1.5 Acknowledgement.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I take this opportunity to express my reflective gratitude to the members of the delegation for making up time to share their experiences from the training workshop and the study visit to Addis Ababa-Ethiopia. I also appreciate the secretariat to this delegation for his technical support and compiling of this report, not forgetting the facilitators from Intelligent Business Centre Dr. Michelle Wangira under the leadership of Fadi Tayfur (Managing Director)

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Finally, Special mention must go to the office of the Speaker of the Assembly and that of the Clerk for the facilitation accorded to this delegation in fulfilment of the study visit to Addis Ababa -Ethiopia.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

On behalf of the Committee, I now wish to table the report and urge the House to adopt the same and the recommendations therein.

Thank You,

SIGNED: .... DATE: 17/12/2024 ....

HON. PRISCILLA MARTHA MAKUMI, (MCA)

LEADER OF THE DELEGATION, COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF KITUI.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Pursuant to Article 185 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, and Section 8 of the County Government's Act, the County Assembly of Kitui is mandated to conduct; Legislative, Oversight, and Approval functions on behalf of the County Government of Kitui.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Kenya has undergone significant developments in recent years, with a growing emphasis on its importance for a child's overall development. The government has implemented various policies and programs to promote access to quality ECE, including the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) which integrates pre-primary education into the formal education system.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

In Kitui County, Early Childhood Education (ECE) has seen notable progress, with an increasing number of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) centres being established across the County. These centres provide a stimulating learning environment for young children, focusing on holistic development through play-based learning, language development, and social skills. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher training, and resource allocation persist, hindering the full potential of ECE in the County.

2.1 Justification for the training workshop and the study visit.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

The Committee on Basic Education, Training and Skills Development is mandated to oversee the County Ministry of Education Training and Skills Development by ensuring adequate budgetary allocations, formulating policies to enhance Early

Childhood Education and Vocational Education and exercising oversight to ensure prudence in the utilization of public resources.

To achieve these objectives, the committee must ensure that all members are equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge necessary to execute their mandates effectively.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Based on this fact, the Committee planned a training workshop and study visit to Ethiopia from 25th to 29th November, 2024. The purpose of this visit was to learn best practices and standards that can be employed to promote ECE in the County.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

It is for this matter that the Committee chose to visit Ethiopia since Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Ethiopia has a rich history which is rooted in both traditional and modern practices which could be applied in Kitui County.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The ECE is attributed to the following aspects;

2.1.1. Traditional Practices.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Historically, early childhood learning primarily took place within the home where children learned basic life skills, cultural values, and social norms from their parents and extended family members.

2.1.2. Religious Education.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Religious institutions, such as churches and mosques, played a significant role in early childhood education as children were taught religious texts, moral values, and basic literacy skills.

2.1.3. Colonial Era.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

During the colonial period, European missionaries introduced Western-style education, including early childhood programs. These programs focused on formal academic skills and were often limited to urban areas and privileged children.

2.1.4. Post-Colonial Period.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Following independence in 1941, the Ethiopian government recognized the importance of early childhood education. However, progress was slow due to limited resources and infrastructure.

2.1.5. Socialist Revolution (1974-1991).
The socialist regime prioritized education and introduced policies to expand access to early childhood education. Preschool programs were established, and teacher training was initiated.

2.1.6. Post-Socialist Era.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

After the fall of the socialist regime in 1991, the government continued to invest in early childhood education. However, challenges such as poverty, inequality, and a lack of qualified teachers persisted.

2.1.7. National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy Framework (2010).
Mr. Speaker Sir,

This policy framework outlines the government's commitment to providing quality early childhood education for all children.

2.1.8. Establishment of the Centre for Early Childhood Care and Education (CECCE) (2014).
Mr. Speaker Sir,

This centre at Addis Ababa University plays a crucial role in research, training, and capacity building in the field of early childhood education.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Despite significant progress, challenges remain in providing quality early childhood education for all Ethiopian children. These challenges include;

i. Limited access to quality early childhood education, especially in rural areas

ii. Lack of qualified early childhood educators;

iii. Inadequate infrastructure and resources; and

iv. Sociocultural barriers and gender disparities.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

It is imperative to note that Kitui County has undergone similar periods and challenges and therefore benchmarking with Ethiopia was the best choice for the Committee since it has been able to address the concerns that Kitui County needs to realize improvements in the Early Child Education sector.

2.2 Objectives of the training workshop and the study visit.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The training workshop and the study visit was in furtherance to the mandate of the Committee and under the Committee's annual work plan. The overall objective of the visit was to enhance the capacity of the county assembly committee in overseeing the implementation of effective and equitable early childhood education (ECE) policies and programs in the county.

2.2.1. Specific Objectives.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

These included;

1. To gain a comprehensive understanding of Ethiopia's integrated multi-sectoral approach to early childhood education by;

i. learning the institutional framework and coordination mechanisms for ECE.

ii. Understanding the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices used in Ethiopian ECE programs.

iii. Exploring the role of different sectors (health, education, social protection, etc.) in supporting early childhood development.

2. To identify best practices and innovative strategies for improving the well-being of young children by;

    i. Learning about evidence-based interventions to promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

    ii. Exploring strategies for addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalized children, including children with disabilities.

    iii. Understanding the importance of early childhood development for long-term outcomes, such as educational attainment and economic productivity.

3. To learn about the role of county assemblies in promoting early childhood education by;

    i. Understanding the legislative framework for ECE in Ethiopia and its implications for county-level policies and programs.

    ii. Learning the oversight role of county assemblies in ensuring the quality and accessibility of ECE services.

    iii. Exploring strategies for advocating for increased investment in early childhood development.

4. To establish partnerships and collaborations with Ethiopian stakeholders;

    i. Networking with Ethiopian policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to exchange knowledge and experiences.

    ii. Identifying potential opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing between Kenya and Ethiopia.

iii. Building relationships with Ethiopian organizations that can support the implementation of ECE initiatives in the county.

5. To develop a strategic plan for improving early childhood education in the county by;

i. Using the knowledge and insights gained from the training workshop to develop a comprehensive plan for improving ECE in the county.

ii. Identifying key priorities and action steps for the committee to take in the coming years.

iii. Being able to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and assess the impact of the plan.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS DURING THE TRAINING WORKSHOP.

Mr. Speaker,

The workshop facilitator, Dr. Michelle Wangira, welcomed the members and provided a brief overview of the County Assembly's role, the workshop's objectives, and the members' expectations from the training.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The workshop covered several topics that shall be discussed briefly in this report. Additionally, site visits were conducted to enable a comparison of ECE in Ethiopia with that of our County. The key topics included:

3.1. Foundation for Lifelong Wellbeing

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Early Childhood Development (ECD) refers to the processes by which young children grow and thrive physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally during their formative years (0–8 years). Further, it is the foundation for Lifelong Health and well-being of our children since 90% of a child's brain develops by the age of five (5) years. Early stimulation enhances cognitive and emotional outcomes.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Early childhood is critical for cognitive, social, and physical development. Multi-sectoral approaches are essential for maximizing ECD outcomes. Evidence-based global initiatives provide a roadmap for success. Also, children who access quality ECD interventions are more likely to succeed academically. Therefore, investments in ECD is paramount as it will yield high returns through increased productivity and reduced societal costs later in life.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members learned that globally, 250 million children under five (5) years of age are at risk of not reaching their full potential due to poor development. Moreover, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 4.2, emphasize access to quality early childhood care and education for all children. For instance, Successful global programs like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India and Cuba's "Educa a tu Hijo" illustrate how multi-sectoral approaches can yield remarkable outcomes.

3.1.1. Barriers to Effective ECD Implementation.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Honourable members were taken through some of the shortfalls that hinder full implementation of early childhood Education in most of the developing countries. These include but are not limited to

  i. Inadequate resource allocation which has in turn resulted in limited ECE infrastructure.

  ii. Policy gaps which are manifested in fragmented policies and weak enforcement.

  iii. Absence of multi-sectoral coordination where there has been difficulty in aligning health, education, and social services.

  iv. Insufficient capacity building for ECD practitioners and administrators.

3.2. Multi-Sectoral Approaches to ECD.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were taken through multi-sectoral collaboration in Early Childhood Development (ECD) where they learnt that this involves coordinated efforts across various sectors to address the holistic needs of children. This approach ensures comprehensive support for physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Key Sectors Involved in ECD are Health, Education, Nutrition and Social Protection but there should be adequate resource allocation in all the departments so that they can collaborate with ease. Multi-sectoral coordination will lead to Shared goals for improved child outcomes Leveraging expertise from diverse sectors and building sustainable systems through collaboration, clear communication channels among stakeholders, Alignment of sectoral goals and strategies and use of data-driven approaches to monitor and evaluate programs.

3.3. Policy and Regulatory Frameworks for ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members of the delegation learnt that policies are very crucial for systemic changes in ECD. Policies are categorized into;

3.3.1. National Policies Supporting ECD

Mr. Speaker Sir,

These policies focus on pre-primary education, teacher training, health integration, and funding for infrastructure. They may include the following: -

a. Kenya: Basic Education Act (2013) which prioritizes access to early childhood education.

b. South Africa: National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (2015).

c. Ghana: Early Childhood Care and Development Policy (2004).

3.3.2. International Policies Supporting ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

These include but not limited to;

a. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which advocates for universal commitment to child protection and development.

b. Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) where goal 4.2 aims at providing universal access to quality pre-primary education.

c. WHO Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health which emphasizes holistic health for ECD.

d. UNICEF Framework which is a guidance on policy design and implementation globally.

3.3.3. Designing Policy Frameworks for ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were taken through elements of successful policy frameworks for ECD where they were told that it was important to have the following: -

i.   Community participation in decision-making.

ii. Use of data and evidence to inform practices.

iii. Allocation of sustainable funding.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

During the training, it was noted that Advocacy for Child-Friendly Policies and Legislation will ensure alignment of policies with children's needs. Further, collaboration among stakeholders is essential in delivering impactful outcomes.

3.4. Program Administration and Leadership in ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Administration and leadership is an important component of ECD. The key areas of focus include;

i.   Strategic Planning and Resource Allocation for ECD.

ii. Strategic planning by assessing needs, setting goals, identifying resources, and action planning.

iii. Resource allocation to ensure effective use of financial resources (grants, funding), human resources (trained staff), and materials (learning aids, infrastructure).

3.4.1. Leadership Skills for Effective ECD Program Management.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Transformational leadership in community ECD centres improves service delivery.

Leadership and administration are key to successful ECD programs, Strategic planning and accountability ensure sustainability.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were taught the traits of an effective leader as one who has Vision, possesses adaptability, empathy, and good communication skills.

3.4.2. Monitoring, Reporting, and Accountability in ECD Programs.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were taken through the advantages of monitoring, reporting and accountability in ECD programs in that;

i.   Monitoring tracks progress and ensures quality.

ii. Reporting practices enhance Sharing of progress transparently with stakeholders by using data-driven approaches for decision-making.

iii. Accountability is vital as it ensures ethical service delivery.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were encouraged that there is a need moving forward for them to be champions for effective program administration and Partner with other stakeholders to amplify leadership impact in our ECD in Kitui County.

3.5 Health, Nutrition, and Early Childhood Wellbeing.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The delegation was taken through health and nutrition as key foundational components for early childhood well-being that ensures holistic child development.

Health services play a critical role in ECD through Immunization services by protecting children against preventable diseases. Further, nutrition ensures the

proper growth and development of a child as well as improved cognitive and physical development.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

In addition, members were informed that it is important to address malnutrition and developmental delays in young children for this affects brain development and overall health of a child.

This could be done through early interventions such as fortified foods and supplements, educating caregivers on balanced diets, identifying delays through health checkups and providing therapy and support services to children.

3.5.1. Integrating Health and Nutrition into ECD Programs.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members of the delegation were informed that it is important to take care of the holistic development of children to address multiple needs simultaneously. This could be done through;

i.   Collaborating with health sectors.

ii. Embedding nutrition education into ECD curricula.

iii. Advocating for integrating health services into ECD.

iv. Promoting awareness of nutrition and developmental needs.

3.6. Early Childhood Education and Learning.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Early childhood education is important in the cognitive and social development of a child.

The trainer emphasized on the need to have an effective Early childhood Education curriculum and environments to enable holistic growth of children in the early learning process.

Integrating early learning with other ECD programs enhances impact and has Long-term benefits in academic achievement and social behaviour.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

She further stressed the role of ECE in cognitive development in terms of Language acquisition, memory, problem-solving, and critical thinking as well as neural connections which are formed during early years.

3.6.1. Designing Curriculum and Learning Environments for Young Children.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members of the delegation were taken through the process and factors to consider when designing and developing a curriculum and learning environment for young ones. These include;

i. It should be child-cantered, play-based, culturally relevant, and inclusive. All these should incorporate language and literacy, math, physical activities, and creative arts.

ii. The learning environment should be considered where it should be safe, engaging, and equipped with age-appropriate materials.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

In order to realize success in the above considerations it is very imperative to collaborate with parents, communities, and health services and embed education in multi-sectoral ECD programs for instance Kenya's Tayari Program integrates learning with nutrition and parental engagement.

3.7. Social Protection and Parental Support

Mr. Speaker Sir,

This was an interesting topic to the members of the delegation since they were informed that this is where all members of the society come in Early Childhood education. Members were told that social protection is essential for reducing inequalities in ECD. When there is social protection, parents are always willing to support programs that help build a resilient and supportive family in the society. Some of the social protection programs may include; cash transfers (conditional and unconditional), subsidized childcare and free education.

Social protection ensures financial stability for families to access ECD services and a reduction in child poverty and associated risks.

Further, Engaging parents and guardians strengthens the home environment for children.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were briefed on the importance of engaging Parents and caregivers in Early Childhood Development through Parenting workshops, home visits by trained ECD professionals and Community-based support groups as this will be instrumental towards this goal. These parent programs provide;

i.   Guidance on positive parenting practices.

ii. Information on child health, nutrition, and development.

iii. Emotional and peer support networks for caregivers.

iv. Strengthening parent-child relationships and health practices.

v.   Improved parenting skills and child outcomes.

3.8. Community Engagement in ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The training underscored the importance of community involvement indicating that it is critical for effective and sustainable ECD programs through mobilizing resources and building capacities

3.8.1 Importance of Community Involvement in ECD Programs.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

it is important to note that community involvement in ECD programs because;

i.   It encourages local ownership and sustainability.

ii. It addresses the cultural and contextual needs of children.

iii. It enhances resource mobilization and social support.

Some of the roles that the community may be involved directly may involve participating in planning and decision-making, supporting infrastructure development and maintenance.

3.8.2. Strategies for mobilization of Community Resources and Volunteers for ECD.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were taken through some of the strategies that may be taken to involve the community in this noble course so that they may provide financial contributions (grants, donations), human resources (volunteers, skilled professionals) and materials (building supplies, learning tools). This includes;

i.   Mapping community assets and strengths.

ii.   Raising awareness through advocacy campaigns.

iii. Engaging local leaders and influencers.

3.9. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) in ECD Programs.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The trainer further stressed the need for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) frameworks indicating that they are essential for tracking progress and improving ECD outcomes. In addition, it ensures accountability and informs decision-making because it draws a road map by providing clear objectives and indicators, data collection and analysis methods and feedback mechanisms for continuous learning.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The use of data-driven approaches enhances program effectiveness by providing reliable and valuable insights for implementation. Moreover, data-driven decision-making identifies areas of improvement and measures program effectiveness.

3.10. Building Capacity for ECD Systems.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The training further stressed on the need for capacity building as an essential tool for sustainable ECD systems. This may involve training the existing teachers, recruiting trained teachers and institutional strengthening. It was indicated that

qualified personnel are key to delivering quality ECD services and effective workforce planning ensures sustainability.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were informed that training and capacity building for ECD practitioners could be done through workshops, online courses, mentoring programs, on-the-job training and peer learning networks. The main objective of doing this is to enhance the knowledge and skills of ECD practitioners and ensure alignment with best practices and local contexts.

3.11. Financial Management of ECD Programs.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Another aspect that was discussed was during the workshop was effective financial management is crucial for ECD program success. Budgeting and resource allocation ensure sustainability, equity, and efficient allocation of resources, and support sustainability and scalability of initiatives.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

Members were also taken through the various steps in financial planning such as:

-

i.   Assessing needs and setting priorities;

ii.   Developing detailed cost estimates; and

iii. Monitoring expenditures and adjusting plans.

Further, the trainer emphasized the strategies for resource allocation where members were informed that resource allocation should prioritize high-impact interventions and ensure equity in resource distribution.

3.12. Future Directions and Innovation in ECD.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

The trainer discussed with the honourable members on the importance of innovations and technology in driving positive changes in ECD where she stressed on the sustainability and long-term impact on ECD in learning.

Additionally, honourable members were taken through the need for leveraging technology to Enhance ECD Interventions where they learned the importance of: -

i.   Digital platforms for parenting education and support.

ii.   E-learning tools for early childhood educators.

iii. Mobile health applications for monitoring child development.

3.13. Action Planning and Program Implementation.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

It is important to note that the training further stressed the need for action planning and program implementation as it ensures clarity and accountability in ECD programs. It requires collaboration and adaptive strategies to overcome challenges by having strong engagement to arrive at contextual solutions.

3.13.1. Developing Action Plans for Multi-Sectoral ECD Interventions.
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Further, honourable members were taken through the key components of an action plan where they were told that an action plan comprises: -

i.   Clear objectives and expected outcomes;

ii.   Defined roles and responsibilities for stakeholders;

iii. Timeline and milestones for implementation; and

iv.   Budget and resource allocation.

In addition, the trainer underscored the strategies for scaling ECD programs as: -

i.   Building partnerships with local and international stakeholders;

ii.   Leveraging data and evidence to demonstrate impact; and

iii. Piloting programs before scaling to larger areas.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. LESSONS LEARNED.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

These lessons were noted from the main elements of the study tour, which included presentations, briefings, meetings, discussions with the resource persons/experts, and a review of relevant literature. From the interface, the delegation learned the following lessons: -

1. **Core Concepts of Integrated Early Childhood Education (IECE).**

   Members of the delegation learnt the fundamental concepts of IECE, including its holistic approach to child development. Further, they learnt the positive impact of IECE on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

2. **Multi-sectoral collaboration and Coordination.** Additionally, the delegation learnt the importance of multi-sectoral partnerships where emphasis was put on the significance of collaboration between various sectors (health, education, social welfare and nutrition) to ensure comprehensive child development. More importantly, they gained practical skills in building strong partnerships, sharing information, and coordinating efforts.

3. **Early Childhood Development (ECD) Assessment and Monitoring.** Honourable members learnt to identify and assess critical developmental milestones by using Tools and techniques for tracking children's growth and development.

4. **Data collection and analysis.** Members were able to acquire Knowledge and skills on how to collect, analyze, and utilize data to inform program planning and decision-making.

5. **Inclusive Early Childhood Education.** Members underscored the importance of considering diverse types of learners by understanding that all learners have different abilities of grasping and how to accommodate children with disabilities and special needs. Moreover, they learnt strategies that ECDE teachers could use for creating inclusive learning environment such as practical tips for creating welcoming and supportive learning spaces for all children.

6. **Child Protection and Safeguarding.** Honourable members learned that there are several child protection policies and procedures and they familiarized with relevant child protection laws and regulations. Further, members learnt how to recognize signs of child maltreatment and take appropriate action for the creation of a safe and nurturing environment for all children's safety and well-being.

7. **Capacity Building and Professional Development.** Members of the delegation learned that ECDE instructors must have continuous professional development to enhance learning and skills. In doing so, teachers will learn about different training approaches and how to deliver high-quality training sessions

8. **Resource Mobilization and Sustainability.** Further, members of the Committee learnt that resource mobilization is essential for the provision of services. This could be done through identifying funding sources, effective resource management (budgeting, financial planning, and procurement) and building sustainable early childhood programs to create long-lasting and impactful early childhood programs that will cut across generations.

Mr. Speakers Sir,

Despite the lessons drawn from the topics of discussion as put above, the delegation also learned other lessons from the real interaction with the environment and the people in Ethiopia. These include: -

1. **The importance of play-based learning:** Ethiopian early childhood programs often prioritize play-based learning, recognizing its role in developing cognitive, social, and emotional skills. This approach encourages children's natural curiosity and creativity.

2. **Community involvement:** Early childhood education in Ethiopia often involves strong community engagement. Parents and caregivers are actively involved in their children's learning, and local resources are utilized to create rich learning environments.

3. **Adapting to diverse contexts:** Ethiopia's diverse cultural and socioeconomic landscape necessitates flexible and adaptable early childhood programs. Lessons can be learned about tailoring curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of different communities.

4. **The power of language and culture:** Early childhood education in Ethiopia emphasizes the importance of language and cultural identity. Children are encouraged to learn in their native language and to connect with their cultural heritage.

5. **Challenges and opportunities:** Ethiopia faces challenges in providing quality early childhood education for all children, particularly in rural areas. Lessons can be learned about overcoming these challenges and expanding access to early learning opportunities.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0. COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Having undergone this training successfully and owing to the lessons learnt from the presentation and the experience obtained through site visits, the committees' delegation categorizes its recommendations into two (2) categories as follows: -

A. To the Kitui County Executive.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

That the County Executive: -

1. Increases budgetary allocation by prioritizing early childhood education (ECE) in the annual budget through allocating sufficient funds for infrastructure development, teacher training, and provision of quality learning materials. Further, explore innovative financing mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships, to supplement government funding. This will go a long way in ensuring that the young children of Kitui get the best education as the saying goes the foundation of everything is the key.

2. Strengthens Inter-sectoral Collaboration by establishing a dedicated inter-sectoral committee to coordinate and monitor ECE initiatives involving relevant departments such as health, education, and social services. In addition, develop clear guidelines and protocols for inter-sectoral collaboration to ensure efficient and effective service delivery. This will ensure that there is support of other related sectors to the early Child Education in the County.

3. Enhances teacher training and development by investing in comprehensive pre-service and in-service training programs for ECE teachers to equip them

with the necessary skills and knowledge. This could be done by providing ongoing professional development opportunities to improve teaching practices and pedagogical skills for the Kitui ECDE teachers. This will boost their working morale and thus improve their performance since they will be teaching up-to-date content.

4. Improve Early Childhood Education Infrastructure by constructing and rehabilitating the existing early childhood development centres (ECDCs) to ensure accessibility and conducive learning environments. Further, these centres be equipped with age-appropriate learning materials, toys, and play equipment to enable the growth and development of the psychomotor domain of the young ones.

5. Promote Inclusive Early Childhood Education by developing inclusive education policies and practices to cater to the needs of children with disabilities. Further to this, provide specialized training to teachers to support the inclusion of children with diverse abilities. This will ensure that all categories of the Kitui child are taken care of thus

6. Strengthen Early Childhood Development Monitoring and Evaluation by establishing a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track progress, identify challenges, and inform decision-making. This will ensure that this data is utilized to inform evidence-based policies and interventions and thus improve early childhood education in Kitui County.

B. To the Kitui County Assembly.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

That the County Assembly: -

1. Enact Strong Early Childhood Education Legislation by developing and passing comprehensive legislation that outlines the rights of young children,

standards for ECE services, and the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders. Further, ensure that the legislation aligns with national and international standards for early childhood development.

2. Conduct regular oversight visits to ECDCs to assess the quality of education, and adherence to standards and to hold the County Executive accountable for the implementation of ECE policies and programs.

3. Initiate public awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of early childhood education and its impact on child development by advocating for increased investment in ECE and lobbying for supportive policies. This will ensure that the standards of early childhood education are raised and the public is aware of the importance of taking children to acquire this education.

4. Empower Parents and Communities by organizing parent-teacher association meetings to foster partnerships between parents and educators. This will empower communities to participate in decision-making and contribute to the development of ECE programs.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker Sir,

It is important to note that the devolved units in Kenya have an enormous duty as provided for in the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 to make sure that their development goals and objectives marry those in Vision 2030, sustainable development among other development plans to make sure that they are not left behind by what the rest of the world is doing.

In so doing the County government should involve all stakeholders from all levels by contacting public participation on all the development projects and programs before they are implemented. This will go a long way to ensure that the priority needs of the citizenry are taken into consideration during the preparation of the County Planning documents.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

A strong collaborative effort between the County Assembly and the County Executive is the cornerstone for effective oversight. This partnership fosters transparency, accountability, and ultimately, improved service delivery to the citizens. By working together, they can leverage technology for data analysis, performance tracking, and public communication, ensuring efficient use of resources and a more responsive government. Further, this will strengthen the pillars of devolved governance, leading to a brighter future for the people of Kitui County.

REPORT ADOPTION

We, the delegation of honourable members from the Committee on Basic Education, Training and Skills Development, do hereby affix our signatures to this report to affirm our approval and confirm its accuracy, validity and authenticity: -

Members	Designation	Signature
1. Hon. Priscilla Martha Makumi	-Team Leader	
2. Hon. Joseph Musyoka Mbite	- Member	
3. Hon. Charity Kathathi Musyoka	- Member	
4. Hon. Gabriel Mutunga Munyao	- Member	
5. Hon. Cyrus Musyoka Kisavi	- Member	
6. Hon. Paul Maluki	- Member	