

**COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT 2021 BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT
FOR THE MTEF FY 2021/22 - 2023/24 BUDGET
SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL TREASURY
ON 1ST FEBRUARY 2021
SUBMITTED BY
JOINING FORCES ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN IN KENYA**

The Joining Forces Alliance for Children in Kenya (whose members are ChildFund Kenya, Plan International Kenya, Save the Children Kenya, SOS Children's Villages Kenya, Terre des Hommes and World Vision Kenya) submits the comments below to the National Treasury for consideration when finalizing on the 2021 Budget Policy Statement.

1. In the Best Interest of the Child (Article 53(2) of the Constitution of Kenya), The 2021 Budget Policy Statement should include an exclusive and substantive **Child Focused Statement** that demonstrates **the Government of Kenya' commitment towards the realization of Children Rights** as provided for under Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya.
2. The 2021 Budget Policy Statement should include a substantive paragraph that outlines how the Government of Kenya is complying to the **General comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights (art. 4), by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child**
3. Recalling that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its General comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights (Art. 4), reminds state parties to regularly hear children's views on budget decisions that affect them; and that during budget consultations children should be enabled to contribute freely and without fear of repression or ridicule; and that in particular, a deliberate effort should be made to ensure meaningful consultation with children who face difficulties in making themselves heard, including children in vulnerable situations; it is important that the 2021 Budget Policy Statement includes a **substantive paragraph that demonstrates how the view of Children in Kenya are being considered in the Budget making process.**
4. To enable the Government of Kenya to improve on Budgeting for Children Rights, The 2021 Budget Policy Statement should demonstrate a commitment that the National Treasury will develop a Comprehensive Integrated Child Rights Planning, Budgeting, Implementation,

Monitoring and Reporting Framework for Kenya, with specific guidelines for Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Development Partners, the Private Sector and other Non-State Actors, on how to plan and budget for the rights of children.

5. The 2021 Budget Policy statement should take into cognizance the fact that the various Ministries, Department and Agencies that have a mandate on children matters have not aligned their Outcomes, Key performance Indicators, Programmes, Sub-Programmes and Outputs to the specific Sustainable Development Goals and Targets on children matters. This calls for a commitment from the National Treasury in ensuring that such MDAs review their Outcomes with a view of including specific Outcome statements, Key performance Indicators, Programmes, Sub-Programmes and Outputs that are specific to the Rights of the Child that are relevant to their mandates.
6. Whereas the Government of Kenya has a detailed National Prevention and Response Plan (NPRP) on Violence Against Children (VAC), with very Strategic focus areas and multi-sectoral actions and interventions, it is noted that the key outputs, indicators and targets as planned for by the Department of Children Services for the next FY are not aligned with the plans and targets in the NPRP on VAC. In this regard, the National Treasury should introduce a substantive Programme and Sub-Programme to be known as Ending Violence Against Children and establish a specific delivery unit for Ending Violence Against Children and include all the Outcomes, Outputs and related Indicators from the NPRP on VAC to be part of the state departments targets for the next FY and beyond.
7. There is need for direct policy measures to improve Food access and affordability for children especially in rural and low income areas post COVID 19 especially after school reopening.
8. Resource allocation measures should be put in place to address the risk of food shortages occasioned by locust invasion and COVID 19 effects in the past one year.
9. Resource allocation measures should be put in place to address the risk of food losses and food waste due poor storage and excess supply in the market.
10. The budget allocation fluctuation in the Agriculture Rural and Urban Development (ARUD) sector in the medium term should be addressed by maintaining a steady increase since population and food demand will go up in the medium term.
11. Health Sector budget should be proportionately increased to ensure healthcare programmes targeting children are funded adequately (table.8)

12. Paragraph 237 should include information on progress made in achievement of SDG targets particularly healthcare programmes targeting children.
13. Paragraphs 237-241 should provide information on health sector performance during the period 2017/18- 2019/2020. Such information should be disaggregated by age and gender to make it easy to track equity in distribution of public resources to Kenyans as well as monitor the implementation of programmes targeting children right to healthcare services
14. According to the 2020 Economic Survey Report, 18% of Kenyan are covered by the NHIF. In view of the low coverage, the national rollout of the Universal Health Coverage should be expedited as part of the realization of SDG Target 3.8 on universal health coverage (par.242)
15. Prioritize to conduct a National Assessment of all Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Schools use the findings as part of the basis for developing the Schools Situation Analysis Report. This can be done in collaboration with Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. Thereafter the National Schools Situation Analysis Report should tabled in the National Assembly for debate and approval to inform prioritization of the resource requirements for schools.
16. Take into consideration the population of all school going children in Kenya, the number of Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Schools; and the specific needs of each of the schools (to be able to prevent COVID-19) and use that as the basis for computing the Budget estimates for improving the conditions of schools.
17. Prioritize resource allocation for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in schools to ensure that all public and private pre-primary, primary and secondary schools have adequate regular, readily and equitably accessible clean and safe piped water; and the supply of such water should take into consideration the population of all children in every school. Schools that are closer to existing piped water supply systems should be connected to such water systems. Boreholes should be drilled and equipped in schools that are not closer to existing piped water supply systems.
18. Need for improvement of physical infrastructure for children education due to: (a) the 100 per cent transition rate from primary to secondary; (b) the new requirement of social distancing and also due to students from closed private schools moving to public schools; (c) emergencies like climate change, terrorism that have displaced students to other regions thus putting a strain to the physical facilities.
19. Need to promote child friendly guidance and counselling services and make them accessible to every learner. This is mainly due to: (a) increase in psychosis cases among learners and trainees in educational institutions; (b) increase in children pregnancies and sexual activities among children;

(c) increase in indiscipline activities among children such as burning of schools, attempts to kill or harm teachers; (d) children who have been negatively affected by COVID-19 for example loss of parents or parents losing their income etc. This also calls for a child friendly environment where children can actively participate and share opinions.

20. The pressure to change the conventional face to face classroom instruction calls for innovations to remote learning that will provide non-discriminatory access to education by every child.
21. Need to improve provision of appropriate human resource, that meets the needs of every child in basic education especially post COVID.
22. Every child has a right to a name, nevertheless it has been observed that Registration of primary school learners was hampered by low coverage of birth certificates. There is need therefore to ensure ease of access of birth certificates by every child.
23. Right to a name and ease of registration of the name is paramount for children accessing early education since the lack of the same is a setback for primary school learners who need the same for registration.
24. While the following measure are in place already, expanding the same to cover more vulnerable children is important, this includes, school feeding programme, and low-cost public boarding facilities. Aim is to improve retention of learners in schools.
25. Increase provision of school feeding programme to the vulnerable, expanding intake to low cost public boarding schools and other measures so as increase children's retention to learning.
26. With the positive prospect of development of COVID-19 vaccine, there is need for the government to purpose to provide the same to children, trainers and parents.
27. Prioritize investments on psychosocial support programmes for children, parents, caregivers and teachers especially in regards to the effects of COVID-19 that has resulted into mental health issues and psychosocial support needs for children, parents, caregivers and teachers
28. A National Children's Psychosocial Support programme should be designed, funded and rolled out with immediate effect and all children in all households, in all villages and estates in Kenya, reached with psychosocial support services while at home and in schools; and a status report published on the extent to which all children shall have benefited from such Psychosocial Support services.
29. After para 114: prioritize mainstreaming psychosocial support to children and care givers/parents following the Covid-19 impact through both levels of government

30. Under education sector: Include measures/interventions to ensure non-violent environment for children in school
31. Under the Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector, there is need to address the issue of rights and violence against children in the criminal justice system
32. After para 258: mainstream the radicalization and terrorism issues in both the social services and education sectors
33. Para 262: prioritize how to deal with capacity building the public to ensure reporting and reduce stigmatization

CONTACT



Bonyo Elijah Don

Head of Secretariat

Joining Forces Alliance for Children in Kenya

Hosted at World Vision Kenya

E-mail: elijah_bonyo@wvi.org