

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of the Measure Evaluation PIMA Activity Update is focused on support to the Department of Children Services (DCS). It also focuses on celebrations to mark the Day of the African Child (June 16) in Kenya.

The Day of the African Child has been observed every year since 1991, on June 16, by member states of the African Union (AU) and its partners. This occasion commemorates the 1976 uprisings in Soweto, South Africa, on June 16, when about ten thousand black school children marched in a column more than half a mile long, protesting the poor quality of their education and demanding their right to be taught in their own language.

Hundreds of unarmed young students were shot by police officials. The Day of the African Child further presents an opportunity to focus on the work of all actors on the continent committed to the rights of children, and to consolidate their efforts in addressing the obstacles hindering the realization of these rights. The Day of the African Child also provides an occasion for governments, international institutions, and communities to renew their ongoing commitments to improve the lives of children in Africa.

Improving Information Management Systems for Better Child Protection Services

The DCS recognizes that violence against and exploitation of children remains a major challenge, particularly in homes, at school, or within the community—the very settings that are supposed to provide a protective environment to children. According to the findings of a national survey, violence against children is a serious problem in Kenya. The current levels of violence reported by youth aged 13 years to 17 years indicate that 11 percent of girls and four percent of boys experience sexual violence and that 49 percent of girls and 48 percent of boys experience physical violence (UNICEF, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] and Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

In Kenya, children comprise over half of the country's population: There are 21 million children out of a total population of 38.6 million (GOK, 2010), which places a huge responsibility on DCS. The 2007/2008 post-election violence resulted in the major displacement of children, who were exposed to abuse, violence, and exploitation. In 2014/2015, DCS received almost 120,000 reported child protection cases. At that point, there was no information management system and the department could not distinguish cases emerging from violence from those related to other child protection issues.



Photo by Yvonne Otiemo, MEval-PIMA

Children from St. Monica Girls School recite a poem honoring the Day of the African Child

<http://www.measureevaluation.org/pima/meval-pima-news/improving-information-management-systems-for-better-child-protection-services>

Commemoration of the Day of the African Child in Kenya

Sadly, parents, teachers and relatives are the main perpetrators of violence against children. According to Susan Mochache, the principal secretary of social security and services in the Kenyan Ministry of Labour and East Africa Affairs, this fact implies deterioration in family values, hence the need to ensure that functioning families remain at the epicenter of the healthy growth of children. The principal secretary was reading a speech on behalf of Phyllis Kandie, the cabinet secretary, during celebrations to mark the Day of the African Child.

The 2016 Day of the African Child was observed under the theme, "Conflict and Crisis in Africa: Protecting all Children's Rights." The theme followed a continent-wide study on the impact of armed conflict on children in Africa as part of efforts to elevate the child protection agenda in conflict situations, as well as to guarantee the protection and preservation of life and well-being for African children.

To address these challenges, the cabinet secretary's prepared remarks emphasized that a multi-sectoral approach must be undertaken by development agencies to avert violence and to ensure that children grow in a violence-free environment

<http://www.measureevaluation.org/pima/child-health-and-safety/commemoration-of-the-2016-day-of-the-african-child-in-kenya>

Photo essay on celebrations marking the Day of the African Child in Turkana County, Kenya, June 16, 2016.

Photos by Yvonne Otieno, MEASURE Evaluation PIMA.

Susan Mochache, principal secretary of social security and services in the Kenyan Ministry of Labour and East Africa Affairs, flags off the procession to mark the Day of African Child



Dancun Harvey, country director for Save the Children in Kenya

Ngoja Jeremiah Ngala, president of the Kenya Children's Assembly, presents his organization's memorandum to Susan Mochache



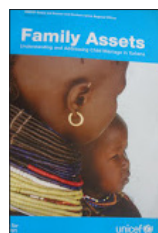
Susan Mochache, joins in a dance during celebrations



Susan Mochache receives a UNICEF report addressing child marriage



UNICEF representative, Jeannette Wijnants



A UNICEF report on understanding and addressing child marriage in Turkana County, Kenya

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