



EASTERN AFRICA REGIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

Theme: “Investing in Early Childhood: Building Human Capital along the Life Course”

We, the stakeholders in Early Childhood Development in the East African Community comprising of EAC Partner States governments, the East African Community Secretariat, Development Partners, Private Sector, and Civil Society Organizations, assembled here in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, today the 14th of March 2024, for the Eastern Africa Early Childhood Conference.

Noting that the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community provides for the development and adoption of a common approach towards the promotion of the welfare of children.

Further noting that significant strides have been made in the development of policies to enhance early childhood development, wellbeing, and survival as guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially on ensuring adequate access to quality health, education, and social protection services, promoting gender equity and improving livelihoods.

Acknowledging that Early Childhood Development is only achievable if there is political commitment from the Partner States and accountable governance in the policy-making and service delivery process.

Inspired by the goal of achieving an Africa fit for children by the year 2040 and the African Union’s theme of the year “Educate and Skill Africa for the 21st Century”, and motivated to contribute to the realization of Agenda 2063 on the Africa We Want,

Concerned that the investment in early childhood development is still below the recommended standards and support to programmes in education, health, specialized services, nutrition remains insufficient in the region.

Appreciating the continued support and commitment from the development partners, the Civil Society Organizations, and the Private Sector.

Aware that children, who live in difficult circumstances, are neglected and do not receive nurturing care; specifically, good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving and opportunities for learning, may not develop optimally and thereby achieve their full potential, putting an alarming number of children at risk and reducing the economic possibilities for our region,

Recognising that Early Childhood Development is the cornerstone for socioeconomic transformation and a critical foundation for building human capital, which is essential for the sustainable development and competitiveness of the East African Community.



Do hereby make the following resolutions and call on all stakeholders to take collective and complementary action on the following interlinked areas that are crucial to achieving transformational and cost-effective change for young children and nations:

1. **Strengthen** our commitment to prioritise Early Childhood Development in our national and regional agendas, ensuring adequate allocation of resources and implementation of comprehensive policies and programs.
2. **Enhance** collaboration and partnerships among all stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, and development partners, to leverage resources, expertise, and innovative solutions for scaling up Early Childhood Development services.
3. **Form** a ministerial forum of all ministers on early childhood development to champion the cause of young children across the eastern Africa region.
4. **Advocate** for increased investment in Early Childhood Development, emphasising the importance of quality education, health care, nutrition, and social protection services for the holistic development of children.
5. **Promote** accountability and transparency in the governance of Early Childhood Development programs, ensuring that policies are evidence-based, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all children, particularly the most vulnerable.
6. **Foster** a multi-sectoral approach to Early Childhood Development, recognizing the interconnectedness of health, education, nutrition, and social protection in nurturing well-rounded and resilient individuals.
7. **Encourage** the sharing of best practices, research, and innovations within the region and beyond, using but not limited to Regional Economic Communities, to continuously improve the effectiveness and impact of Early Childhood Development interventions.
8. **Commit** to regular monitoring and evaluation of Early Childhood Development programs, using data and evidence to inform policy decisions and program improvements.

We reiterate our dedication to advancing Early Childhood Development as a key driver of sustainable development in the Eastern Africa Region. Together, we pledge to create an enabling environment where **every child** can thrive and reach their full potential, laying a strong foundation for a prosperous and equitable future for all.