

[View this email in your browser](#)



## Eastern and Southern Africa regional learning platform on care reform

Monthly update - February 2024

---

Welcome to the monthly update from the regional learning platform on care reform in Eastern and Southern Africa. The platform is an opportunity for policy makers and practitioners in Government, UNICEF and NGOs to exchange learning on care. The platform was established by UNICEF and Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC) and is supported by the consultancy firm Child Frontiers.

---

## Announcements on the platform

- **Webinar - care in the context of the poly-crisis.** Our next webinar will examine care in the context of COVID-19, climate change and conflict. We will explore how the pandemic has left a lasting legacy on the care system in Uganda, and will examine the impacts of climate change related drought on children's care in Kenya. We will also explore efforts to deliver effective care for children during conflicts in countries such as Ethiopia. The webinar will take place on the 13th of March at 2pm Nairobi time/ 11am Dakar time. [Zoom login](#) Meeting ID: 839 8291 870 Passcode: 613777
- **New case study on care in the context of prolonged drought in Kenya.** Our latest case study explores the impacts of climate change related drought on family separation, kinship care and the use of residential care in Kajiado county. The case study is summarised below and will be available [here](#) over the coming days.
- **Other resources on care in the context of the poly-crisis from the learning platform.** In 2022, we looked back at the COVID-19 pandemic and explored lessons learnt that can be used to improve care reform in the future (see this [paper](#), this [webinar recording](#), this [video](#), this [case study](#) from Kenya, and this [case study](#) from Uganda). In 2023, we explored how to adjust care reform efforts in the face of climate change (see this [paper](#) and this [webinar recording](#)). We have also carried out a [webinar](#) and have a [case study](#) on care reform in humanitarian settings.
- **Seeking examples of promising practice on supervised independent living for under 18s.** We are looking for examples of promising practice on supervising children to live independently. We'd like to know when it is

have any examples to showcase or would like to share learning via a quick call, please contact Ismael Ddumba-Nyanzi: [iddnyanzi@childfrontiers.com](mailto:iddnyanzi@childfrontiers.com).



© UNICEF/UNI272718/Charbonneau

## Care in the context of climate change in Kenya

Recent droughts in the Horn of Africa are widely attributed to climate change. Many areas of Kenya have experienced unpredicted drought that has decimated cattle herds and increased poverty and hunger. Although the adverse impacts of climate change on some aspects of child well-being are starting to be understood, the links between climate change and children's care remain understudied. To begin to fill this gap, nine interviews were carried out to develop a case study on care in the context of climate change in Kajiado County.

The case study indicates that the drought in Kajiado has increased many of the drivers of family separation, including poverty, stress and violence in the home, and lack of access to education. Drought has led to some forms of family separation increasing or changing in nature. For example, more children appear to be leaving

children are rising due to pregnancy or an attempt to escape increasingly poor and violent homes. Demand for residential care in Kajiado is also increasing as desperate families can no longer afford to feed their children. Care reform processes in Kenya mean that some facilities will no longer accept children purely because of household poverty. However, admissions due to child marriage, child abuse, and exploitation appear to be increasing in some residential care homes.

The reintegration of children from residential care back into families is becoming more challenging due to the drought. In some cases, parents are no longer at home to care for the child as they have migrated for work. In other instances, staff felt that families were unable to care for children well, and that returning them to their homes at this time places them at risk of hunger, pregnancy, marriage, and work. Overall, rising demand for care and falling rates of reintegration seem to have reversed the reductions in the number of children in some facilities.

Children's experiences of separation are becoming more complex, with some children facing multiple forms of separation over a relatively short period of time as a result of drought. For example, poorly supported kinship care placements leading to work or child marriage, followed by placement into residential care.

Drought seems to be affecting the quality of children's care. Alongside rising rates of violence in the home, the drought was also said to have reduced the capacity of families to supervise and engage with children. As well as these negative reports around the quality of children's care, several of the participants were keen to point out how hard families continue to try to look after children in the face of enormous adversity.

These findings indicate that that:

- Recognising and responding to climate change must now be a major feature of all care reform processes in the region.
- Climate change places enormous pressure on families and creates an even greater impetus for reallocating resources away from residential care and towards families. Efforts on families strengthening and de-institutionalisation must be stepped up.
- Linkages between climate change and care are complex and further research is needed.
- The support that children in residential care and their families receive may need to be adjusted to reflect a growing number of children entering facilities because of marriage, work, and violence in the home.



---

## About the platform

- **Introducing the platform.** In this short [video](#), we explain who the platform is for, why it was developed and how you can get involved. Alternatively, you can take a look at this [PowerPoint](#).
  - **Platform work-plan and google drive folder.** We have developed an online rolling work-plan for the platform which lists our planned webinars and other activities for the coming months. The work-plan can be found [here](#). We also have a google drive folder with the PowerPoints from our webinars and other associated resources which can be found [here](#).
  - **Sign up to our mailing list.** To receive these monthly updates and regular notifications about webinars and other opportunities to exchange learning on care reform, please complete this short [form](#). Please share this opportunity with UNICEF, NGO and government colleagues.
  - **Introduction to our resources.** Since the platform started in 2020, we have developed eight policy papers, nine case studies, virtual study tours on care reform in five countries, six videos and numerous webinars. Explore our past webinars, case studies, videos and policy papers [here](#). All our webinars and videos can be found on our [YouTube channel](#) - subscribe to get regular notifications of new resources. You can find a guide to our resources [here](#). This explains where to look if you are new to care reform, want to understand about an specific aspect of the care system, or are keen to learn about care reform in a particular context.
  - **HelpDesk:** Do you have a dilemma about care reform? Would you like to know about how others have succeeded in their care reform efforts? Whether you are just starting out on your care reform journey or a long way down this road, we can help. As part of the learning platform, we offer a HelpDesk for all UNICEF and government staff in Eastern and Southern Africa. Please contact Emily: [edelap@childfrontiers.com](mailto:edelap@childfrontiers.com).
-

- **State of the social service workforce in Uganda.** A new report from the Global Social Services Workforce Alliance examines progress in social service workforce reforms globally, and in detail in three countries including the Uganda. The report can be found [here](#).
- **Learning brief on a framework for collaborating, learning and adapting in care reforms.** This [short brief](#) explains how the collaborate, learn and adapt framework developed by Changing the Way We Care can be used to enhance workforce strengthening and improve case management in care reform across a number of countries including Kenya.
- **New global interagency guidance on kinship care have just been launched.** The summary can be found [here](#) and full guidance [here](#).

**Want to share resources or advertise a webinar or event on care reform in Eastern and Southern Africa?** Please contact Bertha Lutome of Child Frontiers: [blutome@childfrontiers.com](mailto:blutome@childfrontiers.com)

The learning platform was established by UNICEF Eastern and Southern African Regional Office (ESARO) in collaboration with Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC) and has been made possible by funding from USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund through UNICEF ESARO.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



*Copyright © 2024 UNICEF*

Photo credit top image: ©UNICEF/UN0306257/Soko

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).