

ECD – CSO’s Position Paper on the Tanzania National Vision 2050.

1. Introduction

Recognizing the significance of the current national process to develop Tanzania's National Vision 2050; acknowledging that Early Childhood Development (ECD) is a crucial component and foundation for any nation's progress; and understanding that ECD has been underemphasized in the concluding Tanzania Vision 2025, we, the members of Civil Society Organizations advocating for ECD in Tanzania, find it essential to present this position statement. This document outlines our contributions and key recommendations for the development of Vision 2050.

We assert that ECD should be prioritized as a fundamental sector in Vision 2050, serving as a cornerstone for achieving the nation’s broader goals and aspirations by 2050. The future of Tanzania's population, generation, and human capital will be profoundly shaped by how we address ECD today. A serious commitment to early childhood development and welfare will determine the quality of the country's future economy, leadership, livelihoods, and overall development.

In this context, we, as members of the ECD-CSO coalition, strongly recommend that Vision 2050 incorporate ECD as a central element of its vision statements. Specifically, we propose the inclusion of the following statement to acknowledge the role of ECD as a critical sector and driving force towards realizing the Tanzania we envision by 2050.

2. Propose Vision 2050 ECD Statements

2.1. By 2050, Tanzania will have a well-sustained and adequately financed independent Early Childhood Development (ECD) sector, ensuring that all children receive the foundational support they need to thrive and contribute to the nation's long-term development and prosperity.”

Rationale statement for the vision statement: Achieving a high quality of life requires a strong commitment to Early Childhood Development (ECD). Investing in young children is not only socially impactful but also economically advantageous, offering substantial returns on investment (ROI). Evidence shows that it is far more cost-effective to implement preventive measures and support systems during early childhood than to address disadvantages and inequalities later in life. Research from the United States demonstrates that returns on investment in ECD programs can be as high as 15-17 percent. In India, investing in ECD has been shown to increase the net present value of lifetime wages by USD 29 per child, with an investment of just USD 1.70. Similarly, countries like Singapore and South Korea have recognized the importance of ECD by establishing dedicated agencies and divisions to manage and coordinate all activities related to early childhood development.

For instance, Singapore established the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) in 2013 to oversee ECD programs, while South Korea's Early Childhood Education Division (ECED) is dedicated to managing its ECD initiatives. South Africa has also strengthened its ECD framework through amendments to the Children's Act, incorporating early childhood education, development, and care into its national programs.

By 2050, Tanzania's population is projected to reach 141 million under a high fertility scenario, and 121 million under a low fertility scenario—more than double the current figures. This rapid population growth highlights the urgent need for substantial investment in ECD to ensure that future generations are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and well-being necessary to drive the nation's development. Therefore, we strongly advocate for increased investment in an independent and well-financed ECD sector, which is essential for nurturing a capable and resilient future workforce and achieving sustainable national growth and prosperity by 2050.

Strategic Approaches to Achieve the Strategic Vision: To realize the vision of a well-sustained and adequately financed independent ECD sector in Tanzania by 2050, the following strategic approaches must be implemented:

1. **Establish ECD as an Independent Sector:**
 - Develop comprehensive administrative structures, systems, and specialized personnel dedicated to ECD. This will ensure the sector is equipped to provide high-quality services across the country and that ECD provisions are standardized and accessible nationwide.
2. **Inclusive and Integrated Policies:**
 - Formulate and implement inclusive, integrated ECD policies and guidelines that address multisectoral interests. Ensure these policies are effectively operationalized and monitored to support the diverse needs of children and families.
3. **Strengthen the Economy for ECD Access:**
 - Build a resilient and inclusive economy that facilitates the provision of free and equitable access to ECD services for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background or geographic location.
4. **Innovative and Sustainable Financing:**
 - Develop innovative and sustainable financing mechanisms for the ECD sector at both national and local levels. This could include establishing dedicated ECD funds, leveraging international funding opportunities, and exploring innovative financing models like social impact bonds.
5. **Public-Private Partnerships:**
 - Foster robust collaborations with the private sector to secure additional funding, resources, and expertise for ECD initiatives. This will enhance the sector's capacity to deliver quality services and expand its reach.

2.2. By 2050, Tanzania will be a nation free from child violence, upheld by robust laws and practices that prioritize the safety, peace, stability, and unity of all children."

Vision Statement Justifications; Tanzania's children are currently exposed to a variety of adverse psycho-social environments and forms of maltreatment, including but not limited to corporal punishment, maternal stress, ongoing family conflicts, inadequate child support and protection, and various types of abuse. These issues directly threaten the peace, stability, and unity of the nation.

Data from the Tanzania Police Force reveals that between 2020 and 2022, 27,369 children were subjected to various forms of violence—an alarming average of 1,140 incidents of child abuse per month. Additionally, domestic violence remains prevalent, with 49% of women experiencing spousal violence. Nearly 30% of girls in Tanzania experience sexual violence before the age of 18 (World Bank, 2022).

Rising divorce rates further exacerbate the situation, leading to poor parenting and contributing to the growing numbers of street children, child labor, and the emergence of criminal groups in communities. Addressing these challenges is critical to fostering a safe and nurturing environment for children, which, in turn, is essential for achieving national peace, stability, and unity. By establishing and enforcing strong legal frameworks and practices that prioritize child safety and protection, Tanzania can safeguard the well-being of its children and lay the foundation for a peaceful, stable, and united society by 2050.

Approaches to Achieve the Vision of a Child Violence-Free Tanzania by 2050

- 1. Empowering Children to Resist and Protect Themselves Against Violence:**
 - Promote awareness programs that educate children on their rights and how to recognize and report abuse.
 - Strengthen policies and laws that protect children from violence, ensuring their effective enforcement.
 - Foster family unity and positive parenting practices to create safe and nurturing environments for children.

- 2. Strengthening Counseling Services and Professional Support:**
 - Expand and professionalize counseling institutions and expertise to address family and community conflicts effectively.
 - Collaborate with legal aid providers recognized under the Legal Aid Act of 2017 to act as key counseling agents, offering support and resolution services for affected families and children.

- 3. Promoting a Responsive Society Advocating for Early Childhood Development (ECD):**
 - Increase community awareness and advocacy for ECD by formalizing the roles of Community Health Workers (CHWs) and ECD stakeholders in promoting child safety and development.
 - Implement community-based programs that educate families on the importance of ECD and child protection.

4. **Integrating Technology for Child Safety and Protection:**

- Support caregivers with technology tools such as CCTV and mobile phones to monitor and report child abuse cases effectively.
- Encourage the adoption of advanced technology in investigating and preventing violence against children, enhancing the capacity of law enforcement and community stakeholders to address these issues proactively.

2.3. By 2050, Tanzania will be an ECD-literate society that upholds and protects the principles of Early Childhood Development while embracing and integrating Tanzanian culture, customs, traditions, and innovations to ensure the effective provision of ECD services for all children."

Vision Statement Justification: Investing in early childhood development (ECD) is one of the most effective strategies to reduce extreme poverty and inequality, promote shared prosperity, and build the human capital essential for economic diversification and growth. Research by Heckman (2006) and Gertler et al. (2014) indicates that high-quality early childhood programs can yield a 13% annual return on investment (ROI), making it a highly efficient use of resources. However, in Tanzania, 53% of children aged 2-5 years are developmentally off track, which poses significant challenges to the country's future human capital (TDHS, 2022). Addressing these issues is critical to ensuring a prosperous and equitable future for Tanzania.

Approaches to Achieve the Vision:

1. **Strengthening Educator Training Systems:**

- Establish a robust system for training early childhood educators by increasing the number of teachers training colleges and enhancing curricula to address the specific needs of both teachers and children. This will ensure a high standard of early childhood education across the country.

2. **Community Engagement and Ownership:**

- Promote community awareness and understanding of early childhood education, empowering communities to take ownership and management of pre-schools. This community-driven approach will allow the government and other stakeholders to focus on ensuring the quality and sustainability of ECD services.

3. **Develop a Standalone Early Childhood Care and Development Policy:**

- Formulate a separate Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy, distinct from the existing Child Development Policy, to provide clear guidelines and strategic direction for the ECD sector.

2.4. By 2050, Tanzania will have attained an inclusive and robust economy that empowers families and individuals to meet the demands for Early Childhood Development (ECD) services, ensuring equitable access and sustainable growth for all."

Justification: The Government of Tanzania is committed to enhancing family economic capacities to promote holistic early childhood development by 2050. This commitment includes efforts to reduce poverty, ensure equitable access to services, and strengthen social protection

systems, enabling families to support the physical, cognitive, and emotional development of their children. However, despite these efforts, poverty still affects 26.4% of the population, particularly in rural areas, which limits access to essential services such as healthcare, nutrition, and education. Consequently, 53% of children aged 24–59 months are developmentally off track (TDH-MIS, 2022). Without targeted economic support, achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), and 4 (Quality Education) remains a challenge.

Investing in family economic stability is crucial for children's development and national economic growth. Research indicates that a 10% increase in household income improves educational outcomes by 5%. Additionally, quality ECD programs offer a significant return on investment, with every dollar spent yielding between \$6 and \$17 in societal benefits (World Bank data). Strengthening the economic capacity of families, particularly in rural and underserved areas, will ensure that all children have access to the opportunities necessary for their holistic development, contributing to Tanzania's long-term prosperity.

Policy Approaches:

1. Cash Transfers and Social Protection Programs:

- Expand and enhance the coverage of conditional and unconditional cash transfer programs, such as the Productive Social Safety Net (PSSN), to reach more vulnerable families, especially in rural and underserved regions. Studies show that participation in PSSN has led to improved school attendance, responsive caregiving, and better nutrition, with households reporting a 10% increase in child enrollment and a 5% reduction in malnutrition rates (World Bank, *Tanzania PSSN Impact Evaluation Report*, 2022).

2. Women's Economic Empowerment Initiatives:

- Support income-generating activities for women by increasing access to microfinance, vocational training, and entrepreneurship development programs. Data from the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS, 2020) shows that women's economic empowerment directly contributes to better child health outcomes, with maternal income contributing 50% more to child survival rates than paternal income.

3. Affordable and Accessible Childcare Services:

- Promote the establishment of affordable, community-based childcare services to enable parents, particularly mothers, to engage in productive activities. Evidence from local programs indicates that quality childcare services can increase household income by 15-20%, as parents are able to pursue employment or entrepreneurial activities without compromising their children's well-being (World Bank, 2022).

4. Agriculture and Food Security Programs:

- Strengthen agricultural productivity and food security initiatives, especially for smallholder farmers who constitute 65% of the Tanzanian population. Improving access to agricultural inputs, markets, and extension services can enhance household food security, thereby reducing childhood stunting, which currently affects 30% of children under five.

5. Education, Technology, and Financial Literacy Programs:

- Invest in financial literacy, technology, and savings programs that empower families to make informed decisions about spending, investing, and saving for their children's education and healthcare. Households participating in such programs have been shown to invest 25% more in their children's education and are better equipped to manage financial shocks.

3. Conclusion

We, the members of the ECD-CSOs, believe that incorporating the proposed vision statements into Tanzania's Vision 2050 will pave the way for significant advancements in Early Childhood Development over the next 25 years. This will ensure that all laws, national policies, guidelines, and frameworks are created or amended to align with the Vision's goals, leading to improved practices in ECD service provision across the country.

The recommended approaches serve as a foundational blueprint for achieving the Vision's policy statements and will guide the development of future programs, policies, and practices in the ECD sector. We trust that the government will consider these recommendations, recognizing the importance of nurturing and protecting our young population and children in Tanzania.

As committed civil society actors, we stand ready to collaborate with the government to ensure both the integration of these statements into the Vision and their successful implementation, working together to secure a brighter future for all children in Tanzania.

NO	Member Organization Name	Position
1	HakiElimu	Coordinator
2	TECDEN Secretariat	Secretariat
3	Biharamulo Originating Socio-Economic Development	Member
4	Nishike Mkono Tanzania	Member
5	Lindi Women's Paralegal Aid Centre	Member
6	Promotion of Integrated Development and Relief Services	Member
7	Hope for Girls	Member
8	Africa Child Foundation Mission of Tanzania	Member
9	Kilombero Organization for Community Development	Member
10	Wezesha Mabadiliko Trust	Member

11	Soma Kwa Furaha Initiative - SKFI	Member
12	TAHEA Mwanza	Member
13	Amazing Step for Children	Member
14	Lake Rukwa Development Organization	Member
16	Save the Women and Children Health Organization	Member
17	KIMAS	Member
18	Mutual Generation Initiative (MGI)	Member
19	PADI Songea	Member