



## REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**SPEECH BY THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY – STATE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SENIOR CITIZEN AFFAIRS, MR. JOSEPH MOTARI, MBS DURING THE NATIONAL LEARNING CONFERENCE ON CARE REFORM IN KENYA HELD AT THE SAFARI PARK HOTEL ON 26<sup>TH</sup> -27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023.**

**Distinguished Stakeholders,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am honored to stand before you today as we reflect on our collective and individual contributions to the implementation of the Care Reform Programme.

The rapid progress of National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya in the first year of implementing the National Care Strategy is a testament to our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights and welfare of our nation's children. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for this remarkable display of dedication.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the dedicated committee responsible for organizing this event under the guidance of the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS).

I propose that we make this an annual tradition, even bigger and more inclusive in terms of the stakeholders we engage. Thank you, dear team!

I also extend my appreciation to all the participants who have come from across the country, despite busy schedules and other commitments, to attend this conference and share their experiences.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is crucial to emphasize that Care Reform is in alignment with our Constitution, the Children Act, 2022 and the Bottom Up

Transformational Agenda. This strong legal foundation obligates us, as duty bearers, to ensure that every child has a family.

I am aware that the Strategy outlines phased tasks, including prevention of separation and family strengthening, expansion and reinforcement of family and community-based alternative care options for children, and the tracing, reintegration, and transitioning of children to family and community-based care.

I am pleased to note that approximately 50% of Kenya's counties have initiated Care Reform, each at varying stages of the first phase of Strategy implementation. This should serve as a valuable reference point for other counties

The achievements we have made so far have been with the support of our partners, who include Changing The Way We Care,

UNICEF, Stahili Foundation, Lumos, Legatum, SOS, FADV, the Catholic Diocese of Meru and Muranga, and Weza Care.

I also acknowledge the efforts made to strengthen the legal framework, secure financing, establish leadership and coordination structures, and build institutional and workforce capacity at the national level. The enactment of the Children Act in 2022, ongoing development of Regulations to fully operationalize the Act, and the inclusion of Care Reforms as a flagship project in Kenya's Vision 2030 demonstrate the government's unwavering commitment to leading Care Reform.

Recently, my State Department launched the Positive Parenting Programme, aimed at promoting parenting methods that facilitate children's wholesome growth and development within families to prevent separation. Additionally, we are targeting households with children who have transitioned from institutional

care through the ongoing scaling up of the Inua Jamii Programme under the State Department.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In conclusion, I extend my gratitude once more for your dedication to this transformative cause, your willingness to share experiences and learn from one another, and your commitment of time and resources to this conference. Let us continue working together with renewed vigor, open minds, and fresh insights gained here. Together, let us further enhance our efforts to transition from institutional care to family and community-based care, ensuring sustainable improvements in the childcare system.

**Thank you, and keep up the good work.**