



In Kenya, violence against children remains a serious problem, with nearly half of females (45.9%) and more than half of males (56.1%) experiencing childhood violence.¹ Nearly one in six females experienced childhood sexual violence, and 62.6% of these females experienced multiple instances of such violence, according to the 2019 National Violence Against Children Survey report.

Kenya is also a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. One-third of all trafficking victims is a child, mostly trafficked for sexual exploitation.² Kenyan children face several issues that expose them to violence and exploitation. Social and economic vulnerability makes children from families or communities with harmful practices or struggling economies more susceptible to violence and exploitation. Neglect, lack of parental care, and poor parenting further increase children's vulnerability to exploitation. Harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage subject children to forms of violence and abuse.

Sexual exploitation is particularly concerning, with 62.6% of females experiencing multiple instances of sexual violence in childhood, and between 5-13% of internet-using children aged 12-17 reporting online child sexual exploitation and abuse in the past year. Additionally, children are at risk of child labour and human trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Most incidents of violence go unreported, with less than 5% of children subjected to online sexual exploitation formally reporting to the police. Weak laws and enforcement exacerbate the problem, as some forms of online child sexual exploitation are not treated as criminal offences in Kenyan law, and law enforcement and social support systems lack the capacity to respond effectively.

The primary focus of Terre des Hommes Netherlands in Kenya is on curbing sexual exploitation of children, child labour, child trafficking and unsafe migration. We do this by working with communities, government, private sector, civil society organisations and children themselves, at the centre, to address systemic and structural drivers that expose children to exploitation.

We collaborate with other actors to influence the strengthening of the legal and policy environment for better promotion and protection of children's rights.

CHILDREN IN KENYA

Kenya is a lower middle-income country with a total population of 56.2 million people and over 37 million children population.³ With its high population and poverty rates, Kenya faces challenges in the provision of services and access to social amenities including access to good health, quality education, food and other basics.

Children living in poverty are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, child labour and child trafficking, forced marriage, abuse as well as other forms of exploitation.

DEMOGRAPHICS



Population

56.2 MILLION



Children (up to 18 years)

50%



Urban - rural ratio

28% - 72%

Social-economic data

\$ 5130

Per capita income (GNI per capita)

85.7%

Living below the poverty line (% Under US \$5.50 Per Day)

7.5%

Annual growth of per capita (GDP growth)

83%

Literacy rate

2024 Budget

€ 1,483,649

Percentage of children in school



85%

Net attendance of children in primary school (Rural age)



42%

Net attendance of children in lower secondary age



36%

Net attendance of children in upper secondary age

OUR WORK IN KENYA

We work with communities, government, private sectors, civil society organisations and children themselves, at the centre, to address systematic and structural drivers that expose children to exploitation. Our work focuses on preventing and stopping sexual exploitation of children and child labour.

◆ Sexual Exploitation of Children

Sexual exploitation of children in Kenya remains a significant national concern, with 62.6% of females experiencing multiple instances of sexual violence in their childhood. Additionally, 5-13% of internet-using children aged 12-17 report experiencing online sexual exploitation and abuse. Most offenders are familiar to the child, and many victims do not disclose their experiences due to stigma. When formal reports are made, law enforcement, justice, and social services systems often fail to provide adequate support to victims. Factors contributing to this issue include poverty, lack of awareness, inadequate laws, weak enforcement, and socio-cultural norms that enable abuse.

Sexual exploitation of children occurs both offline and increasingly online. In Kenya, online sexual exploitation of children is a serious and growing issue. Key findings from the Disrupting Harm research report reveal that between 5-13% of internet-using children aged 12-17 reported experiencing online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA). Additionally, 7% of children said they had been offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos of themselves, 4% had been threatened or blackmailed online to engage in sexual activities, and 7% had their sexual images shared without consent, affecting an estimated 350,000 children per year in Kenya.

◆ Child Labour

Three out of ten Kenyan children have to work to survive. They live in deep poverty and are forced to do heavy and dangerous work. Children spend long days doing work that is not appropriate for their age and even puts them at risk, for example when they have to handle dangerous tools or toxic substances, chemicals and pesticides. They work as motorbike drivers, in hotels, food stalls, in the market, in construction or in housekeeping.

◆ Humanitarian Action

Kenya is host to a large refugee and asylum seekers community. About 87% of them are displaced from neighbouring countries Somalia and South Sudan. The majority has found shelter in Dadaab and Kakuma camps in the north of the country.⁴ Living in refugee settlements exposes children to violence, abuse and exploitation. Strengthening child protection systems, both in the refugee and the host communities is key.

Kenya is also prone to extreme drought, jeopardising the livelihood and food security of many. In these circumstances, children become more vulnerable to trafficking for labour or sexual exploitation. Our drought response focuses on food security and livelihood conservation, as well as ensuring children are well protected.

OUR APPROACH

◆ Child empowerment

We work with partners in mobilising and organising children in spaces where they can develop their agency and at the same time learn about the risks of exploitation.

◆ Research & learning

We conduct research to identify child exploitation issues, and generate and document evidence about where and how exploitation is happening. The research helps in developing evidence-based solutions for stopping child exploitation. TdH NL envisages a learning hub for the collection, storage and sharing of knowledge and learning around child exploitation.

◆ Raise awareness & provide information

We believe in improving knowledge, changing attitudes and transforming practice. As such, we disseminate information about child exploitation and its harms to the general public using different approaches and media; work with our partners to address harmful social and cultural norms by providing information and awareness about their detrimental impact on children; raise awareness among children, families, communities and duty bearers about the harms of child exploitation.

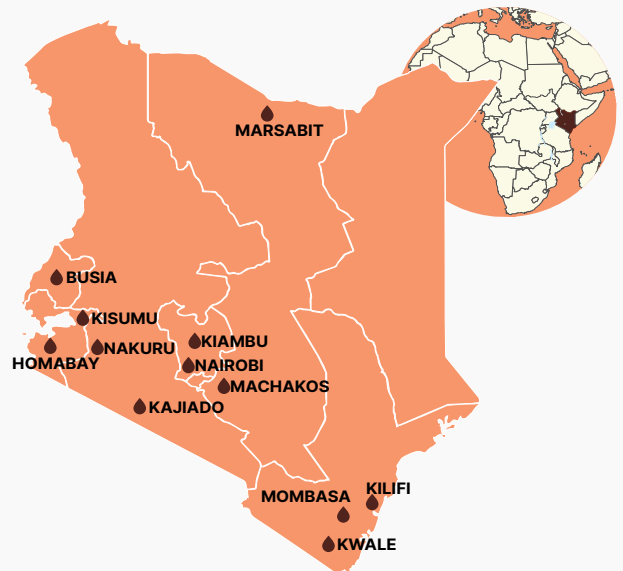
OUR PROJECTS

Project locations

Our projects are spread across various regions of Kenya including Nairobi, Central (Kiambu), Rift Valley (Nakuru, Kajiado), Eastern (Machakos), Coastal (Kilifi, Mombasa and Kwale), Western (Busia), Nyanza (Kisumu, Homabay) and Northern (Marsabit) regions.

Current projects

- ◆ Sexual Exploitation of Children - 8 projects
- ◆ Child Labour - 1 project



2023 REACH

- ◆ **21,353** survivors and children at risk of exploitation supported with direct services (rescue, psychosocial support, education scholarships, legal aid among others) by our implementing partners.
- ◆ **946** government officials across 10 counties trained. Being at the forefront in supporting the government to ensure timely, quality child protection services, Terre des Hommes Netherlands actively participated in key technical working groups.
- ◆ **26,343** Civil Society Representatives, Private Sector staff, Government Officials and law enforcement agencies strengthened in technical and organisational capacity to ensure quality delivery of child protection services to children.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ Together with Joining Forces, Terre des Hommes Netherlands conducted an accountability event where key stakeholders were invited to reflect on the progress of implementation of the Children Act of 2022.
- ◆ Supported and prepared over 200 children to participate in key decision-making spaces and advocacy platforms, from local to regional levels.
- ◆ Shared evidence in relevant national and regional advocacy spaces to influence policy and programming.
- ◆ Contributed to capacity building of the justice system and social workforce for effective response of exploitation cases.
- ◆ Contributed to knowledge building through research under the thematic programmes of sexual exploitation of children and child labour.
- ◆ Contributed to improved agency of over 20,000 children through empowerment programmes.
- ◆ Secured additional funding from Impact Amplifier for capacity strengthening and to increase our engagement with law enforcement agencies in the fight against OCSE aiming at realising access to child friendly justice for survivors of OCSE in Kenya.
- ◆ Successful Dissemination of National Plan of Action(NPA) on OCSE 2022-2026.

- ◆ [https://www.unicef.org/kenya/media/1516/file/2019%20Violence%20Against%20Children%20Survey%20\(VACS\)%20.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/kenya/media/1516/file/2019%20Violence%20Against%20Children%20Survey%20(VACS)%20.pdf)
- ◆ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/kenya/>
- ◆ World Population Dashboard -Kenya
- ◆ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/451117/ratio-of-government-expenditure-to-gross-domestic-product-gdp-in-kenya/>
- ◆ <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/04/Kenya-statistics-Package-as-of-March-31-2024.pdf>

“ **Play has enabled us to be close to the children. We have established relationships with them. They are freely opening up on issues affecting them at home.** ”

A teacher during the Time to Play Project reflection session

“ **Child exploitation is both a cause and consequence of poverty, reinforcing social inequality and discrimination. Elimination of exploitation of children starts with everyone, but primarily, it starts with our leaders and governments making a genuine commitment to protecting children. It calls for coordinated effort amongst actors in tackling the root causes of exploitation of children while ensuring that children are at the centre of all actions.** ”

Magdalene Wanza
Country Director, Kenya
Terre des Hommes Netherlands

PARTNERSHIPS

Terre des Hommes Netherlands is part of the;

- Joining Forces for All Children, an alliance of the six largest child-focused international NGOs.
- She Leads, a five-year strategic partnership between the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and four consortium organisations- Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Plan Netherlands, DCI-ECPAT Netherlands and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET).
- SDG Kenya forum strategic network.
- Better Migration Management.
- We closely collaborate with the Government of Kenya's key ministries/departments, UN agencies and with other CSOs. Additionally, children are key partners in all our interventions.
- With observer status at the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), we are currently contributing to the technical working group to develop a Child Online Protection Policy.

We collaborate closely with local organisations across the 12 counties to deliver our programmes namely;

- African Gender and Media Initiative Trust (GEM Trust)
- Action for Children in Conflict (AfCiC)
- Childline Kenya
- Investing in Children and their Societies (ICS-SP)
- Kenya National Outreach, Counselling and Training Program (K-NOTE)
- Jitegemee Children's Program
- Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa (NAYA)
- Strategies for Northern Development (SND)

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- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Impact Amplifier/Google
- Individual donors(well-wishers)

About Terre des Hommes Netherlands

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is an international child rights organisation committed to stopping child exploitation. Our mission is to protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation, and by empowering children to make their voices count. Our vision is that 'children can flourish in a world free of all forms of exploitation.

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