



# Localising Women's Economic Empowerment and Childcare in Kenya

LOCALISING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN AFRICA

PROJECT LAUNCH  
RADISSON BLU UPPERHILL  
06 MARCH 2024





We exist to make quality childcare accessible and affordable to all. We bring together different state and non-state actors to strengthen the response to the childcare crisis, emphasizing the importance of the first 1000 days to the brain development of children. We believe in strengthening the socio-economic status of female caregivers as a pathway to quality, affordable childcare.

### Our Work is focused on the following 5 strategic Areas

1. Childcare laws, Policy and Regulatory Reforms

2. Decent and Dignified Jobs for Women in Childcare

3. Maternal and Child Health

4. Foundational Literacy & Numeracy

5. Knowledge Management and Learning

### Our work focuses on Kenya, and other Countries

Our work in Kenya focuses on deepening work in selected counties across the country, setting the foundation for accelerated collective action across Kenya. Regionally, we hope to expand our work Malawi, Ghana, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. (In 2024 we will start operations in Malawi and Ghana)

### We work with a broad range of state and non-state actors in every country

#### IN-COUNTRY

Local/County Governments, Ministries of Health, Ministries of Gender; Ministry of Labour. National Industrial Training Authorities, County Governments; WROs. CSOs, Private Sector

#### REGIONAL

At regional level – EAC, SADC, AU, ECOWAS particularly to accelerate policy and regulatory reforms affecting childcare workers; World Bank, UN system to strengthen investments in paid care work

### CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Gender  
(inc Male Engagement)

Climate change

Agriculture

## The Collaborative Action for Childcare (CAC) Platform: Uthabiti's platform for Scaling Impact

- The CAC is the scalable platform for accelerating collective action and impact for childcare in Africa
- Kenya, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda and Ethiopia in 2024
- Over 500 subscribed members from across in 7 years
- # of co-designed initiatives across key strategic focus areas
- # \$100m crowded in for childcare over 7 years



- Emerged from the *Collaborative Action for Childcare in Urban Kenya* implemented by Uthabiti Africa between 2021 and 2023.
- The CAC has 5 TWGs now in place. These will form the core of the Collaborative going forward:
  - Childcare Policy and Regulatory Reforms TWG
  - Women's Economic Empowerment and Localisation TWG
  - Women in Childcare TWG
  - Maternal and Child Health TWG
  - Disability and Inclusion TWG
- Members can opt to belong to one or more of the TWGs, depending on their capacity to meaningfully engage
- Development of value-added activities that members can access including events, training, data

### Key Focus Areas for the CAC

- Learning networks – County, national, regional
- Women in Childcare Forum – at national and regional level
- Africa Childcare Forum
- National Policy Conferences
- CAC 365 – regular member-led webinars Seminars, Workshops, Conferences
- National, regional and international advocacy – for financing..
- Generation of learning materials

# Local Public Sector Alliance

*“An alliance of advocates for inclusive and efficient decentralization and localization”*

## Mission:

“The Local Public Sector Alliance seeks to promote inclusive, equitable societies and sustainable global development by enhancing the understanding of decentralization and localization as complex, cross-cutting and multi-stakeholder reforms.”

# “Elevating the Decentralization and Localization Debate”

*As a global professional network, the Local Public Sector Alliance aims to **elevate the debate on decentralization and localization** by informing, connecting and expanding the global Community of Practice.*

*Our main programs: (1) Knowledge development, (2) Knowledge Sharing; and (3) Convening, outreach, and field-building*

1. Stakeholders work on issues related to decentralization and localization in a fragmented, divided manner



2. A coherent global Community of Practice on decentralization and localization



3. Empowered, well-informed country-level decentralization and localization policy debates and reforms



4. More resilient, inclusive, sustainable, equitable and efficient communities, societies and development

**LPSA Board of Directors**

**LPSA Secretariat**

**LPSA Advisory Board**

**Regional & Thematic Working Groups**

*Africa, Asia, ECA, and LAC  
Subnat. finance, Local dem.,  
Gender equity*

**Project Activities**

*State of Local Governance  
Institutions in Africa  
  
Localizing Women's Economic  
Empowerment in Africa*

**LPSA Members**



**LOCAL PUBLIC SECTOR  
ALLIANCE**

**“The global challenges that countries face in the 21st century cannot be dealt with by any single government level alone”**

- Growing inequality in wealth and economic opportunity
  - Climate change and the impact of environmental disasters
  - Public health crises or pandemic responses
  - Urban crowding and congestion
  - Gender inequity and social exclusion
  - Political polarization and the rising threat of authoritarianism
- The scale of these challenges is so overwhelming that stakeholders at all levels of government and society need to work together to collectively solve these challenges.
  - **Inclusive and effective multilevel governance systems are needed to ensure that stakeholders at all levels of society can work together effectively to address these challenges.**



**The absence of effective intergovernmental  
(or multilevel governance - MLG) systems  
is often an important obstacle to  
inclusive, equitable and sustainable development**

**Yet, policy advocates may not even realize  
that their lack of success in sectors  
is caused by weak intergovernmental systems**

Development partners

Central government

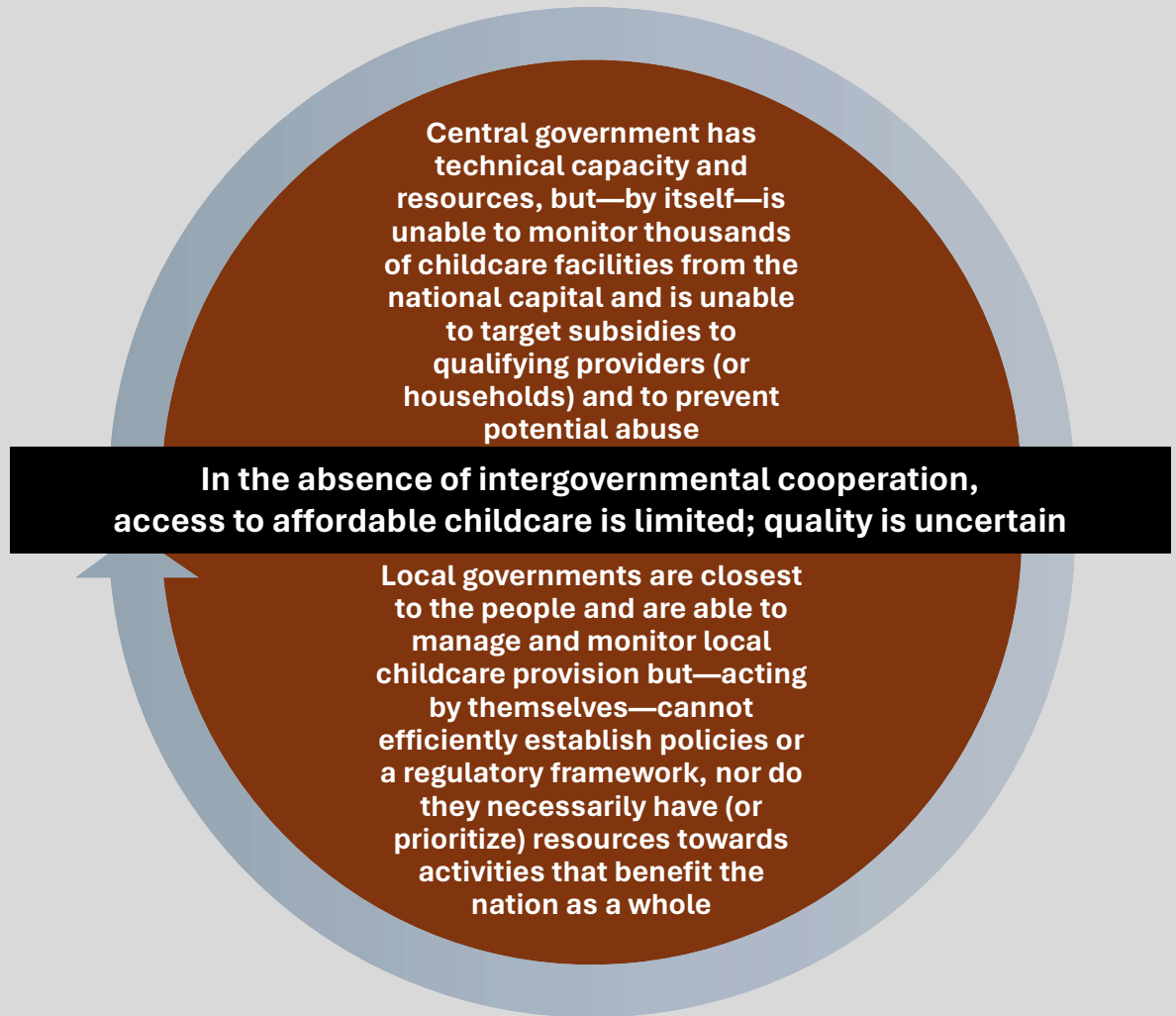
Local governments

Service providers

People

# A vicious cycle of ineffective multilevel governance:

an obstacle to women's economic empowerment and access to affordable childcare



**A virtuous cycle  
of effective  
multilevel  
governance:**  
an opportunity for  
women's  
economic  
empowerment  
and access to  
affordable  
childcare



# Which stakeholders need to be at the table to identify MLG problems and come up with MLG solutions?



- National government
- Regional and local government
- Intergovernmental experts
- Political / thought leaders
- Civil society organizations
- Think tanks, researchers
- Development partners / IFIs

# Project objective (Kenya)

**The core objective of the proposed project is to promote the adoption, funding, and implementation of intergovernmental policy solutions for women's economic empowerment in Kenya as a gender-responsive 'macro-level' (or multilevel) economic policy response that supports all women's opportunities, access to resources, well-being, and agency.**

The Project will engage with women's rights advocates and childcare organizations, county governments and their associations, think-tanks, development partners, and other policy champions to advocate effectively for local-level WEE interventions through improved MLG policymaking and implementation.

*For instance, a well-developed conditional grant scheme that supports county governments in achieving national ambitions with regard to gender equity and childcare (e.g., support for free or low-cost childcare services for qualifying households) may garner political and institutional support at all levels.*

Figure 2: Women's Economic Empowerment Theory of Change

**Goal**



To promote the adoption, funding, and implementation in East and West Africa of improved gender responsive economic policy that supports all women's opportunities, well-being, and agency.

**Shifting Power**



Actively address and combat patriarchal, racist, colonial, and neoliberal power structures and imbalances as root causes of discriminatory macro-level economic policies across lines of grantmaking in support of the overall goal.



**Strengthening the Macro-Level WEE Field**

A well-resourced, strengthened, and effective WEE field positioned to influence gender-responsive macro-level economic policy in East and West Africa.

Increased alignment of key actors on gender-responsive approaches, including purpose-driven collaboration and knowledge sharing, to address macro-level economic policy challenges and opportunities.

Greater number and more diverse actors are engaged in macro-level economic policy influencing.

Increased funding from a wider range of actors for gender-responsive macro-level economic solutions.



**Expanding Gender-Responsive WEE Macro-Level Economic Solutions**

Research institutions and think tanks in East and West Africa adapt, generate, and position contextually relevant, gender-responsive solutions for use in macro-economic policy formulation and implementation.



**Strengthening WEE Advocates**

Women's rights organizations, advocates, and feminist movements in East and West Africa effectively advocate for improved macro-level economic policymaking and implementation.



**Leveraging the Influence of IFIs, Multilaterals, and Bilaterals**

Select IFIs, multilaterals, and key bilaterals provide resources and gender-aware advice and guidance to national governments in East and West Africa on gender-responsive macro-level economic policy that aligns with national and regional priorities.

**1. Macro-level (MLG) WEE Solutions**

LPSA will work with research institutions and policy actors in East and West Africa to recognize MLG as a constraint to WEE, and to generate and position contextually relevant gender-responsive policy solutions that address the role of weak and ineffective multilevel governance systems for use in policy formulation and implementation

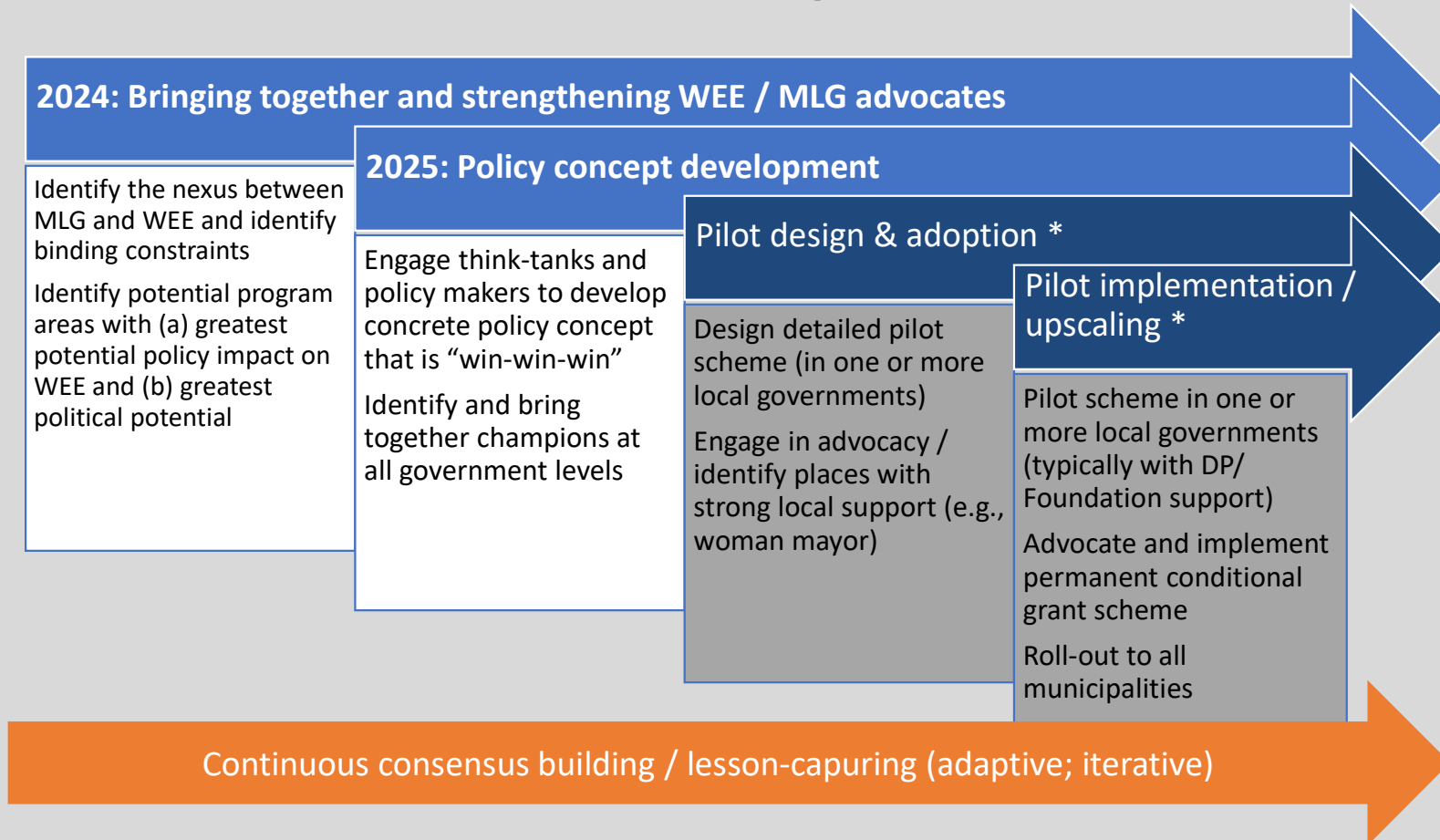
**2. Strengthening WEE Advocates**

LPSA will work with women's rights organizations, local government associations, advocates, and feminist movements in East and West Africa effectively advocate for local-level WEE interventions through improved MLG policymaking and implementation

**3. Leveraging the influence of IFIs**

IFIs and DPs can play an important role as catalysts for change. LPSA and partners will engage and leverage the World Bank (HQ and country offices) and other DPs to use their convening power to engage and pilot programs that resolve MLG constraints to effective WEE policies

# From context to concept and pilot design of a MLG WEE intervention (e.g., WEE / Childcare Grant)



# A process of adaptive co-creation: From problems and challenges to solutions and action

1. Problem-driven iterative and adaptive co-creation of possible policy solutions to get to a “win-win-win” solution
2. What could be a possible multilevel governance policy solution? **For instance, piloting a conditional WEE / childcare grant?**
3. What are the incentives/ disincentives for different stakeholders to support or oppose the proposed solution?
4. Are there (political, institutional or fiscal) binding obstacles or constraints?
5. Refine/adjust the concept multilevel governance policy solution (and/or add evidence-based inputs) to remove binding constraints and strengthen incentives



**Thank you!**

*We are excited to be on this journey  
with you together!*

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in Kenya**