

Government to speed up roll out of early child care centres ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

This follows a report, released yesterday, that says most rural women were spending much time of the day doing household chores that were of no economic value.

Zaina Nyiramatama, the executive secretary of National Commission for Children, said they have earmarked 400 million toward setting up the centres this financial year.

The report by ActionAid, an international NGO, mentions other activities like collecting firewood, fetching water, among other domestic work that is unpaid for, which leaves them economically dependent on their spouses.

Nyiramatama added that they have already supported the establishment of 105 centres across the country.

However, she encouraged women to own the initiative and seek support whenever they need government intervention.

"The issue of unpaid care work is a challenge to women; however, they need to come together and initiate the care centre projects and where they fail, government will always support them," Nyiramatama told The New Times.

She said they target to support 90 community centres before end of the year.

The study, sampled in Rwanda and Ghana, recommends that reducing women burden from unpaid chores can be done by prioritising public investments in areas such as early childhood education, healthcare decentralisation, woodlots and water.

According a survey carried out in the two districts of Nyanza and Gisagara, collecting firewood takes a woman between three and four hours a day.

Women who spoke to The New Times at the launch of the report said it was still a challenge for them to work while babysitting.

Seraphine Nyiramani, a mother of five from Muganza Sector in Gisagara District, said if they were allowed time to engage in productive work, it would have an impact on national economy.

She said she spends two hours fetching and three hours collecting firewood, suggesting that if government extended water to her neighbourhood it would help her to concentrate on economically-viable activities.

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