

## Busia County Brief on A Review of Youth Employment Programmes

### Key Highlights

The employment of youth (15-34) is critical in achieving sustainable development. This county policy brief provides an overview of planned and implemented youth employment policies and programmes in Busia County in the period 2018-2022. The brief describes: the county youth demographic and labour market indicators; youth employment programmes and interventions; county spending on youth initiatives; the constraints in implementing the youth programmes; and relevant policy recommendations.

The key highlights are as follows:

- (i) The total unemployment rate is 5.1 per cent, which is below the national average of 8.5 per cent. Youth unemployment rate in Busia County is higher among males (7.5%) than females (3.1%).
- (ii) The percentage of youth who are neither in education, employment or training is 7.5 per cent among males and 9.4 per cent among females.
- (iii) In its second generation CIDP, Busia County planned to implement youth sports and talent nurturing activities, skills training and development and youth empowerment activities. The county government implemented a leadership training programme where 50 youth leaders and serving organizations were sensitized, and the Busia County Internship Policy of 2019 was enacted.
- (iv) Various stakeholders such as the KCB Foundation and German Agency for International Co-operation (GIZ) in 2021 rolled out a Ksh 300 million programme to equip 1,750 youth from Bunyala Sub-County with building and construction skills.
- (v) Busia County needs to prioritize budgetary allocation towards youth sub-programmes through increased and consistent allocation.

### 1. County Youth Demographics and Labour Market Indicators

Busia County has a total population of 1,670,570 people with a population density of 342 per square km. The youth population is estimated at 308,075, with about 88.6 per cent residing in rural areas (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2019 Population and Housing Census). Overall poverty rates were the same as the national rate of 36.1 per cent, whereas youth monetary poverty was higher at 63.7 per cent compared to 28.9 per cent. Notably, the multidimensional poverty rate among the youth in the county was 74.1 per cent, which is higher than the national rate at 47.1 per cent. The proportion of stunted children decreased from 24.4 per cent in 2014 to 15.0, which is slightly lower than the national rate of 17.6 per cent.

**Table 1: County youth demographics and economic performance indicators**

	County	National
Estimated county population (KNBS, 2019)	1,670,570	47,235,230
Estimated population density (km <sup>2</sup> )	551	82
Males	812,146	48.6%
Females	858,389	51.3%
Intersex	35	0.02%
Youth population (15-34)	308,075 (34.0%)	17,009,230 (36.1%)
Male youth	144,245	46.82%

Female youth	163,830	53.18%
Population living in rural areas (per cent)	88.60	68.8
Persons with disability	2.00%	2.2%
School going age (4-22 years) (per cent)	45.70%	41.10%
Poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	36.00%	36.1%
Youth monetary poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	63.70%	28.90%
Youth multidimensional poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	74.10%	47.10%
Stunted children (KDHS 2014)	24.40%	26%
Stunted children (KDHS 2022)	15.0%	17.6%
Gross County Product (Ksh million) 2020	90,817	0.8% share of total GDP

Source: KNBS (Various years)

The total unemployment rate is 5.1 per cent, which is below the national average of 8.5 per cent. Labour force participation in the county is 53.9 per cent, the highest in female (55.6%) and rural youth (54%). Compared to the national average (65.7%), an estimated 80.2 per cent of the youth in Busia County contribute to family work. For the employed youths, a significant share is engaged in poor-quality jobs characterized by informal working arrangements, low productivity, and inadequate earnings. This county policy brief provides an overview of youth employment policies and programmes, highlighting the key challenges and policy recommendations that the county has implemented to address youth employment. It describes county youth demographic rates (Tables 1 & 2), national policy and legislative environment, county youth employment Programmes, the constraints in implementing the youth programmes, and the relevant policy recommendations.

**Table 2: County labour market indicators**

Labour Market Indicators	Busia County (2019)	National level (2019)
Labour force participation rate	Total (53.9%), Male (51.9%), Female (55.6%), Urban (53.1%) and Rural (54.0%)	Total (55.7%), Male (57.1), Female (54.4%) Urban (55.3) and Rural (56.0%)
Youth employment to population ratio		
	Male (48.0%), Female (53.9%), Urban (48.6%) and Rural (51.6%)	Total (51.0%), Male (51.1%), Female (50.9%), Urban (49.0%) and Rural (52.2%)
Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training NEET	Male (7.5%), Female (9.4%), Urban (18.9%) and Rural (7.1%)	Male (13.3%), Female (17.6%), Urban (24.1%) and Rural (11.4%)
Youth unemployment	Total (5.1%), Male (5.2%), Female (2.1%), Urban (6.5%) and Rural (3.1%)	Total (8.5%), Male (10.6%), Female (6.4%), Urban (11.5%) and Rural (6.8%)
Share of contributing family workers and own account workers*	Total (80.2%), Male (68.3%), Female (89.4%), Urban (58.0%) and Rural (83.8%)	Total (65.7%), Male (54.8%), Female (76.0%), Urban (39.9%) and Rural (79.8%)

Data source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019), Kenya Population and Housing Census

## 2. Youth Employment Programmes and Interventions in Busia County

### Youth employment programmes by the County Government

Between 2018 and 2022, the County envisioned improving the youth's employability through enhanced training and established youth programmes that could provide youth employment. The proposed projects included supporting trainees by subsidized polytechnic tuition; disbursement of loans to post-secondary students; offering of scholarships to university students; construction of workshops, equipping and refurbishing of VTCs; upgrading of VTCs to Centres of Excellence; establishment of Income Generating Activities (IGAs) exhibition rooms; construction of VTCs and TTIs; construction of community libraries; enhancement of the Youth Enterprise fund; increasing the number of youths benefitting from internship and mentorship programmes; construction, equipping and fully operationalizing Youth Empowerment Centres; offering tenders to youths; training youth on several skills, increasing the number of youths who participate in the trade fair and enhancing the Youth Exchange Programme. Figure 1 summarizes the proposed programme implementation status during 2018 to 2022. The categorization

uses 5 broad categories, i.e. programmes that: (i) make the labour market work better; (ii) entrepreneurship support programmes; (iii) skills training; (iv) make training programmes work better; and (v) comprehensive approaches.

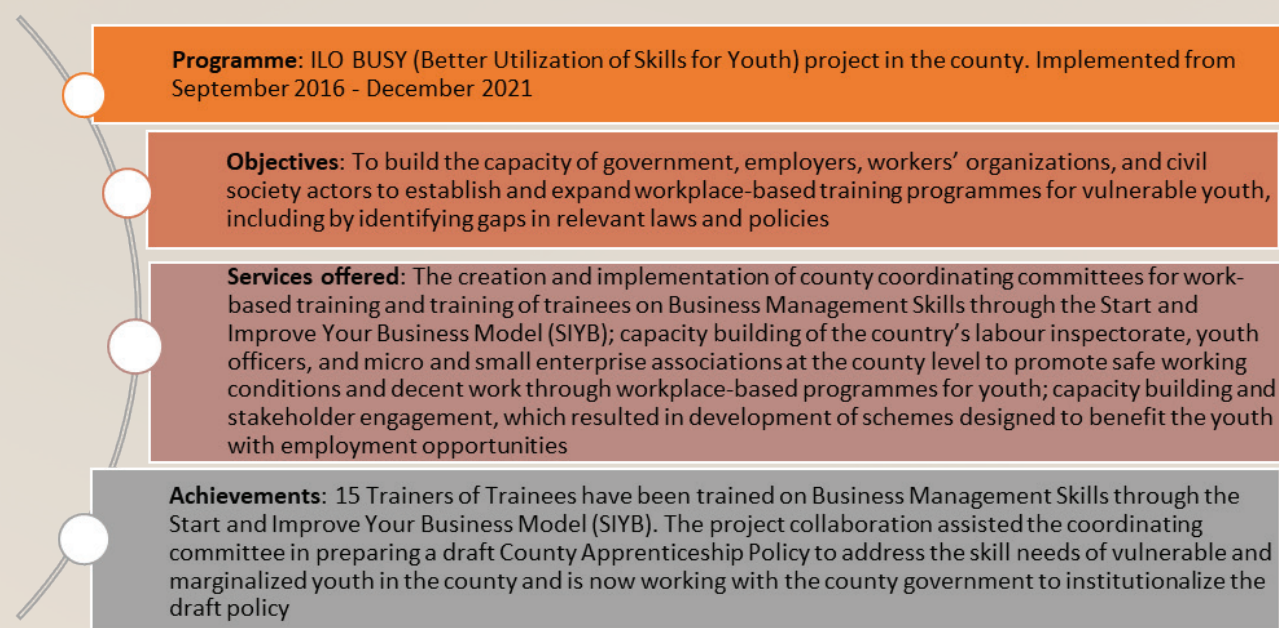
**Figure 1: Youth programmes implemented by the County Government**



Sources: Busia County ADP 2022/2021 and Busia CIDP (2018-2022) Review

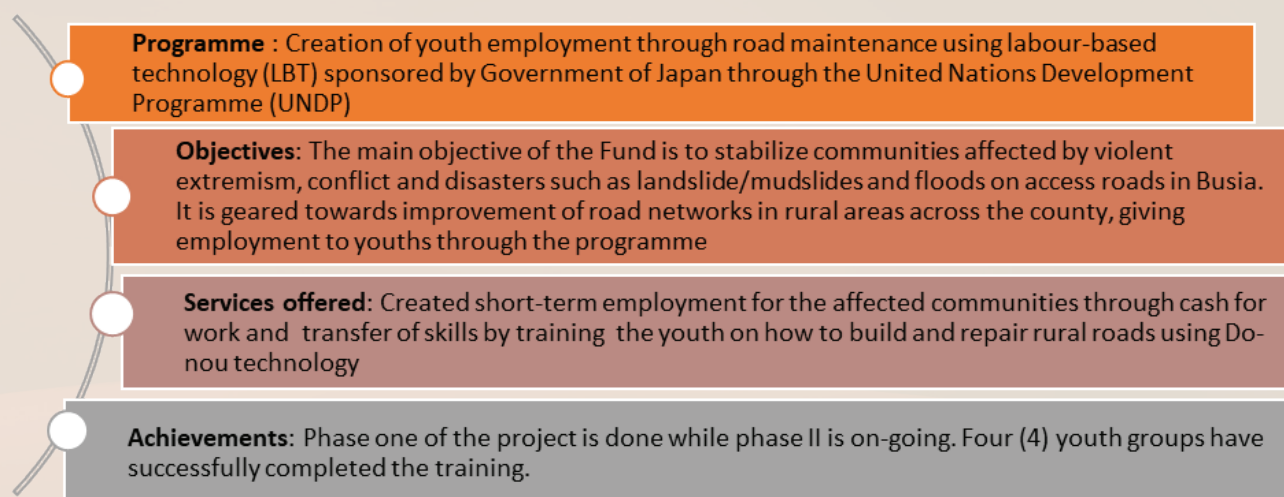


**Figure 2: Achievements of the ILO BUSY (Better Utilization of Skills for Youth) Project in the County**



Sources: Busia County Annual Development Plan (2022-2023) and ILAB: Better-utilization-skills-youth-busy-through-quality-apprenticeships

**Figure 3: Achievements of road maintenance using labour-based technology (LBT) programme**



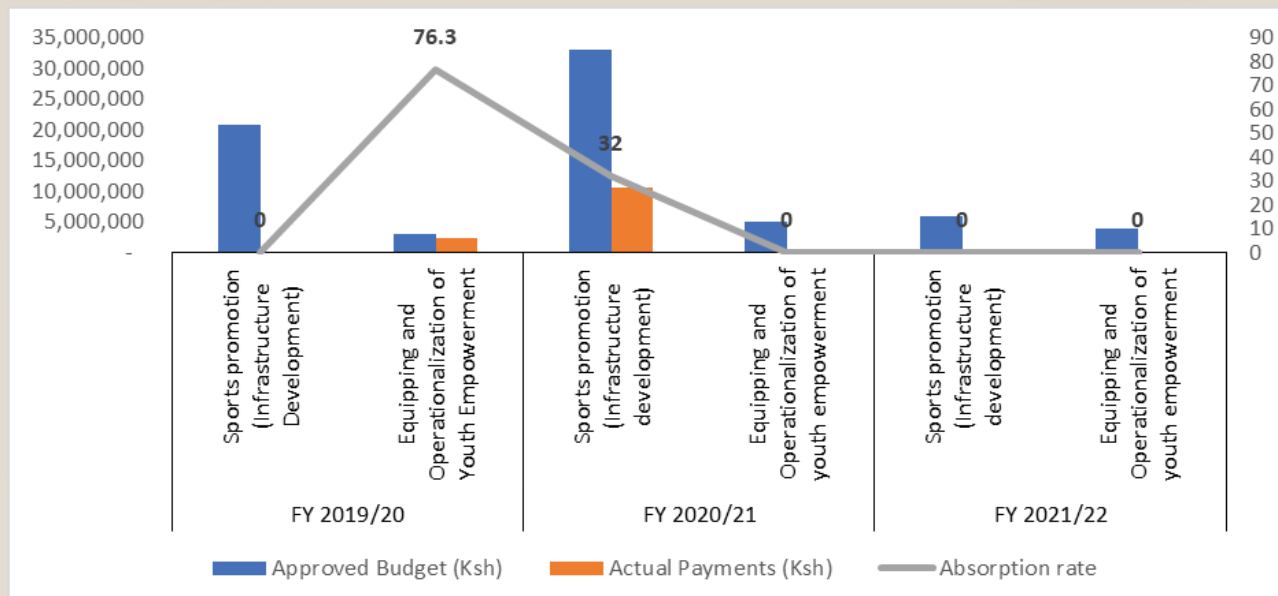
Source: Community Road Empowerment Programme (CORE) Website

### **Innovative youth programmes by development partners**

The KCB Foundation and German Agency for International Co-operation (GIZ) in 2021 rolled out a Ksh 300 million programme to equip 1,750 youth from Bunyala Sub-County with building and construction skills. The beneficiaries would undertake a 3-6month training at Bunyala TTVI through the KCB 2jjajiri programme that targets youth and small businesses and seeks to formalize the informal sector and create skills for self-employment. The programme beneficiaries will acquire knowledge on how they can undertake their own businesses and promote themselves. It also has a toolkit element where the beneficiaries are given the necessary equipment they require to undertake the kind of jobs in which they have trained. Ksh 300 million will also be spent on seed capital and on toolkits, in addition to training with 700 of the beneficiaries expected to receive toolkits at the end of the training. 400 others will receive seed capital to initiate their own businesses to create self-employment opportunities and employ other jobless youths.

### 3. County Spending on Youth Initiatives (2019/20-2021/22)

As shown in Figure 4 below, county spending on initiatives with a bias towards the youth at the sub-programme level was low for most of the initiatives. The county consistently allocates approved budgets for two sub-programmes, namely sports promotion (infrastructure development) and equipping and operationalization of youth empowerment. In 2019/20, sports promotion (infrastructure development) had zero absorption rate while equipping and operationalization of youth empowerment had the highest absorption rate at 76.3 per cent. Allocation towards sports promotion increased from Ksh 20,874,678 in 2019/20 to Ksh 33,057,600 in 2020/21 and later reduced to Ksh



6,000,000 in 2021/22. However, the allocation towards sports promotion was not utilized in 2021/22. In addition, there was no spending towards equipping and operationalization of youth empowerment in the same financial year.

**Figure 4: County spending and absorption rates on youth sub-programmes (2019/20-2021/22)**

Sources: OCOB Report

### 4. Constraints in Implementing Youth Programmes

There are numerous cross-cutting challenges that impact on effective implementation of youth employment programmes. This sub-section highlights a few of the key cross-cutting challenges affecting Busia and other counties. These include:

- Difficulty in targeting programme interventions, such as in targeting the most vulnerable households in a public works programme.
- Tedious application and approval processes for entrepreneurship support programmes. These programmes also face poor governance, delays and long waiting periods before the funds are disbursed.
- Poor coordination of the youth employment programmes, resulting from high fragmentation of the intervening institutions.
- Inadequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and hardly any focus on evaluation of the youth employment programmes, with little to no resource allocation towards M&E-related activities.
- Poor implementation of programmes characterized by failure to adhere to their designs.
- Low levels of awareness especially among rural youth about the YEPs in place and information on how to access benefits.

## 5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The overall objective of the policy brief was to review the implementation of youth policies and programmes in Busia County. The findings from the review indicate that the county has made efforts towards implementation of sub-programmes aimed at making the labour market work, skills training, entrepreneurship support programmes, making training programmes work better and comprehensive programmes, singly and in collaboration with other stakeholders. An analysis of county expenditure patterns shows that most of the programmes did not use the resources allocated during the period under review. This could be because of delayed disbursement of funds from the National Treasury. To ensure effective implementation of youth programmes, the county needs to

- (i) Prioritize budgetary allocation towards youth sub-programmes through increased and consistent allocation.
- (ii) Expand the scope of implementation of county programmes to include other significant aspects such as improving ICT infrastructure, entrepreneurship training and financing opportunities.
- (iii) Identify gaps that hinder budget absorption across the sub-programmes and ensure consistency in budget absorption.
- (iv) Enhance availability of data and information to support research and evaluation owing to inadequate comprehensive, accessible, regular, timely and granular data information on youth programmes, including their impacts, costs and lessons.

### Endnotes

1. <https://repository.kippra.or.ke/handle/123456789/1200>
2. <http://corekenya.org/ongoing-projects/>
3. <https://metropoltv.co.ke/2021/09/13/kcb-and-giz-invests-ksh-300-million-in-the-youth-in-busia-county/>

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In partnership with



### The 'What Works for Youth Employment in Africa' initiative

The Partnership for Economic Policy is partnering with the Mastercard Foundation for a three-year initiative on What Works for Youth Employment in Africa. The initiative aims to provide evidence that can drive policy reform to increase youth employment in 10 African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and South Africa. The initiative aligns with the Mastercard Foundation's Young Africa Works strategy that seeks to enable 30 million young Africans, particularly young women, to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030. Teams of local researchers and policy stakeholders are carrying out gender-aware policy and impact reviews in each country. The resulting analysis and findings will build a body of knowledge on youth employment policy in Africa, and will be stored in a new online knowledge repository.

For more information, please visit:

[www.pep-net.org/programs/youth-employment](http://www.pep-net.org/programs/youth-employment)

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KIPPRA Policy Briefs are aimed at a wide dissemination of the Institute's policy research findings. The findings are expected to stimulate discussion and also build capacity in the public policy making process in Kenya.

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