

## Kwale County Brief: A Review of Youth Employment Programmes

### Key Highlights

The employment of the 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 Kwale County in the period 2018-2022. The brief describes: the county youth demographic and labour market indicators; youth employment programmes (YEPs) 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 youth unemployment rate in Kwale County is lower (8.4%) than the national average (8.5%). Youth unemployment rate in Kwale County is higher among male (13.2%) than females (4.4%). The percentage of youth who are neither in education, employment or training is 12 per cent among males and 14 per cent among females.
- (ii) Kwale County among other interventions planned to offer 30 per cent tenders to the youth, support 480 youth groups through disbursement of Ksh 48 million from the youth, women and PWDs fund, increase gross enrolment and retention rates in Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) to improve youth empowerment, furnish 40 VTCs, recruit 331 new staff in VTCs, hold 500 sports competitions and support 10 sports Teams with Ksh. 30 million. Achievements included: supporting youth groups with Ksh 34.8 million from the social welfare fund; recruitment, training and placement of 16,420 youths in sports, music and dance talents; construction of 13 twin workshops, 1 computer lab and furnishing of 40 VTCs; establishment of 1 stadium; rehabilitation of 47 sports fields and; construction and equipping of 1 Arts Talent Centre.
- (iii) There was partial and sometime non-implementation of planned interventions. The implementation of the YEPs was constrained by inadequate financial resources as well as unpredictable cash flows and lack of comprehensive reporting owing to a weak monitoring, evaluation and learning system on the implementation status of most YEPs.
- (iv) Some of the key recommendations to enhance implementation of YEPs, include the need to: enhance availability of financial resources through enhanced collaboration with other actors and improved budget absorption; design and implement programmes aimed at making the labour market work better and comprehensive programmes that have multifaceted interventions such as those that combine skills training, internship and job placement services; and, ensure efficient monitoring, evaluation and learning e.g. by adhering to the Guidelines for the Preparation of the CIDPs including comprehensive reporting of the performance review of the previous CIDP period. ,

### 1. County Youth Demographic and Labor Market Indicators

Kwale County has a total population of 866,820 people with a population density of 105 persons per square Km. The youth were estimated at 282,180 (46.8% male) (KNBS, 2019). The overall poverty rate is high at 50.5 per cent which is higher than the national rate of 38.6 per cent. The youth poverty rate (44.0 per cent) is also higher than the national levels of 34.2 per cent, respectively. Notably, multidimensional poverty rates among the youth in the county was 39.7 per cent, which is lower than the national rate at 47.1 per cent. While the proportion of stunted children decreased from 35.0 per cent in 2014 to 22.7 per cent in 2022, it is higher than the national rate of 17.6 per cent. High stunting rates in the county has implications on human capital development and eventual labour force participation in the subsequent years.

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

	County	National
County Population (KNBS, 2019)	866,820	47,564,296
Population Density (km <sup>2</sup> )	105	82
Male	425,121 (49.0%)	23,548,056 (49.4%)
Female	441,681 (51.0%)	24,014,716 (50.6%)
Intersex	18 (0.0%)	1,524 (0.0)
Youth 15-34 years (per cent)	282,180 (33.00%)	17,009,230 (36.1)
Male	132,180(46.8%)	8,237,120 (50.7%)
Female	149,990(53.2%)	8,771,410 (49.3%)
Persons with disability (per cent)	1.7	2.2
Population living in rural areas (per cent)	82.2	63.3
School going age (4-22 years) (per cent)	37.5	46.0
Overall Poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	47.0	36.1
Overall Poverty (2021) (per cent)	50.5	38.6
Youth Poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	51.9	47.1
Youth Poverty (2021) (per cent)	34.2	44.0
Stunted children (KDHS 2014) (per cent)	35.0	26.0
Stunted children (KDHS 2022) (per cent)	22.7	17.6
Gross County Product (Ksh million) 2022	151,362	1.2% of total GDP

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

The total unemployment rate in the county is 8.4 per cent, which is slightly below the national average of 8.5 per cent. The labour force participation rate for the youth is 58.8 per cent and is highest among females and rural youth. Compared to the national average (65.7 per cent), an estimated 79.2 per cent of the youth in Kwale County are engaged as contributing family workers and own account workers (Table 2). Thus, a significant share of youths are engaged in poor-quality jobs characterized by informal working arrangements, low productivity, and inadequate earnings.

**Table 2: County labour market indicators for the youth**

	Level	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Labour force participation rate	County	58.8	57.6	60.0	52.5	60.2
	National	55.7	57.1	54.4	55.3	56.0
Youth employment to population ratio	County	53.9	50.0	57.3	46.1	55.6
	National	51.0	51.1	50.9	49.0	52.2
Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	County	13.1	12.0	14.0	25.9	10.8
	National	15.5	13.3	17.6	24.1	11.4
Youth unemployment	County	8.4	13.2	4.4	12.1	7.7
	National	8.5	10.6	6.4	11.5	11.5
Share of contributing family workers and own account workers	County	79.2	66.2	89.1	46.6	85.0
	National	65.7	54.8	76.0	39.9	79.8

Data source: 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

Note: \*contributing family workers and own account workers are in self-employment the former working in a family unit/enterprise

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

### Youth employment programmes by the county government

During the second generation CIDP period, the County envisioned improving youth employability. Table 3 presents a summary of planned youth employment programmes by the county government and the achievements during the review period. The planned projects included initiatives aimed at: making the labour market work better such as offering 30 per cent tenders to the youth; entrepreneurship support programmes such as supporting 480 youth groups through disbursement of Ksh. 48 million from the youth, women and PWDs fund; skills training programmes such as increasing gross enrolment and retention rates in VTCs and; Programmes aimed at making training programmes work better such as

furnishing 40 VTCs and supporting 17,089 students with VTC grants. The county did not plan to implement comprehensive programmes but planned to implement other related interventions that would empower and create jobs for the youth including to hold 500 sports competitions, support 10 sports teams with Ksh. 30 million, establish community ICT centres, rehabilitate 60 sports fields and construct 1 Stadium.

**Table 3: Status on implementation of youth programmes by the county government**

Category	Planned activities 2018-2022	Achievements
Making the labour market work better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer 30 per cent tenders to the youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No achievements reported</li> </ul>
Entrepreneurship support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support 480 youth groups through disbursement of Ksh 48 million from the youth, women and PWDs fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disbursement of Ksh 48 million from the youth, women and PWDs fund to support youth not achieved</li> <li>Supported youth groups with Ksh 34,840,000 social welfare fund</li> </ul>
Skills training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase gross enrolment and retention rates in VTCs to improve youth empowerment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruited, trained and placed 16,420 youths in sports, music and dance talents</li> </ul>
Making training programmes work better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Furnish 40 VTCs</li> <li>17,089 students to benefit from VTC Grants</li> <li>Recruit 331 new staff in VTCs</li> <li>Construct 8 computer labs</li> <li>Construct 83 twin workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructed 13 twin workshops</li> <li>Constructed 1 computer lab</li> <li>Furnished 40 VTCs</li> <li>9,693 students benefited from VTC grants.</li> <li>Recruited 24 staff in VTCs</li> </ul>
Comprehensive approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No programmes planned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not applicable</li> </ul>
Other Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold 500 sports competitions</li> <li>Support 10 sports Teams with Ksh 30 million</li> <li>Establish community ICT centres.</li> <li>Rehabilitate 60 sports fields</li> <li>Construct 1 Stadium</li> <li>Construct and equip performance arts talent centres</li> <li>Establish 10 talent academies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established 1 stadium</li> <li>Rehabilitated 47 sports fields</li> <li>Constructed and equipped 1 arts talent centre</li> <li>Established 5 satellite academies</li> <li>Held 110 sports competitions</li> <li>Utilized Ksh 36 million to enhance support to sports teams</li> </ul>

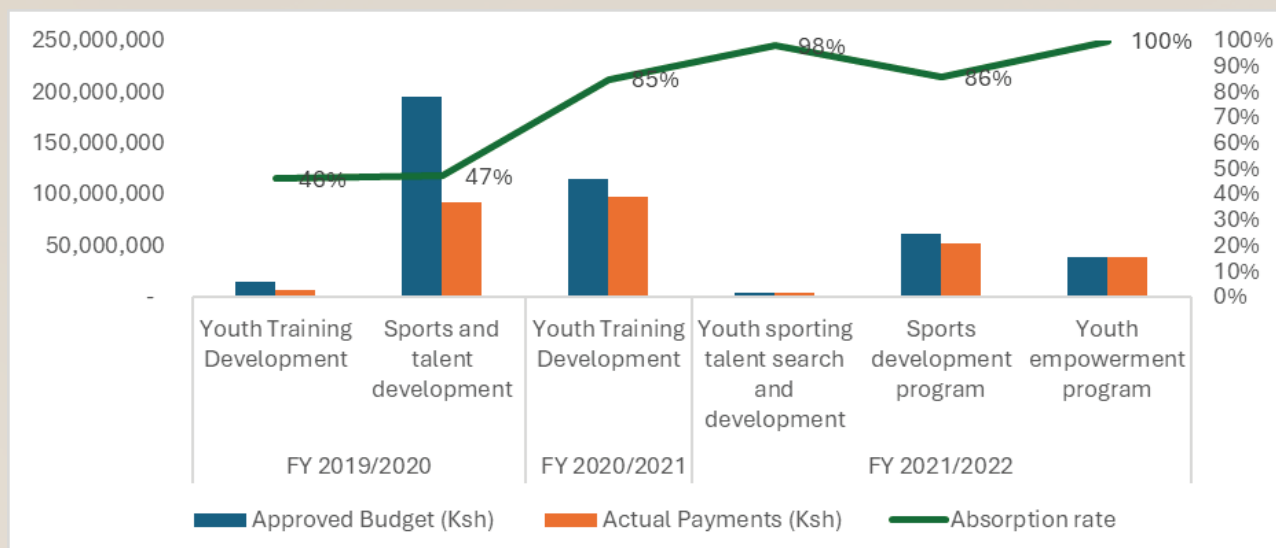
Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (various)

In tracking progress of the planned activities, a review of the second generation CIDP reveals that some of the planned activities were implemented while others were not. As an example, there was no record of offering 30 per cent tenders to the youth and disbursement of Ksh. 48M from the youth, women and PWDs fund to support youth not achieved. However, among other achievements, the county recruited, trained and placed 16,420 youths in sports, music and dance talents; Constructed 13 twin workshops against a target of 83; recruited 24 staff in VTCs against a target of 331; established 1 stadium as planned; rehabilitated 47 sports fields against the target of 60 and constructed and equipped 1 arts talent centre.

#### County spending on youth initiatives (2019/20-2021/22)

Between 2019 and 2022, county spending on initiatives towards the youth at the sub-programme level varied considerably. Low spending patterns were observed in youth training development for 2019/20 with an approved budget of Ksh 15.1 million, which increased to Ksh. 115.3 million in 2020/21. Sports and talent development had an approved budget of Ksh. 195.3 million in 2019/20 and was omitted in the subsequent years. The absorption rate for youth training development and sports and talent development were 46 per cent and 47 per cent, respectively, for 2019/20. For 2021/22, new sub-programmes were introduced namely, Youth sporting talent search and development, sports development programme and youth empowerment programme.

**Figure 1: County spending and absorption rates on youth sub-programmes (2019/20-2021/22)**



Source: OCOB Report

### Constraints in Implementing Youth Programmes

There are various crosscutting factors that affect effective implementation of youth employment programmes in Kwale County. These include:

- (i) Difficulty in targeting the most vulnerable youth to participate in the public projects aimed at creating direct jobs for the youth.
- (ii) Limited capacity and/or restricted mandate of some interventions such as entrepreneurship support programmes to provide strong business support services such as mentorship after delivery of credit.
- (iii) Inadequate financial resources as well as low absorption of available resources.
- (iv) Inadequate comprehensive reporting owing to a weak monitoring, evaluation and learning system on the implementation status of most YEPs.
- (v) Shortcoming in the design of youth employment programmes which tend to focus on a single aspect such as skills training rather than planning for comprehensive programmes which are known to have better outcomes.

## 5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The overall objective of the policy brief was to review the implementation of youth policies and programmes in Kwale county. Findings from the review indicate that the county has made efforts towards implementation of entrepreneurship support programmes, skills training programmes, making training programmes work better and other relevant programmes, singly and in collaboration with other stakeholders. An analysis of county expenditure patterns shows disparities in absorption rates across programmes during the period under review. This could be because of delayed disbursement of funds from the National Treasury. Further, there were inconsistencies in reporting and implementation of sub-programmes across the year across the years. To ensure effective implementation of youth programmes, the county need to:

- (i) Improve the reporting on the review of performance of sector programmes as envisaged by the Guidelines for Preparation of CIDPs where a comprehensive review of the previous CIDP will be expected. Present reporting is weak on information useful for monitoring, evaluation and learning on the implementation of planned YEPs. The sector reviews can be improved through:
  - (a) A greater focus on reviewing all planned interventions in the previous CIDP.
  - (b) Providing a review of the challenges, emerging issues, and lessons learnt for each YEP.
  - (c) Clearly highlighting the non-implemented programmes and the reasons for their non-implementation
- (ii) Plan for and implement comprehensive programmes in the county to ensure a holistic approach in youth empowerment. There are opportunities to enhance synergies by implementing comprehensive programme that for instance support trained youths in job placement and entrepreneurship support.
- (iii) Create more partnerships with other actors including the private sector and strengthen the existing ones to reduce the resource gaps associated with the implementation of YEPs.



- (iv) Improve budget absorption across all the sub-programmes and ensure consistency in reporting on the activities by creating standardized reporting procedures and formats to ensure consistency in the way sub-programmes report on their activities and financial performance.

#### **Endnotes**

1. Comprehensive programmes refer to those that encompass several types of interventions in one programme. An example is a programme that combines training, internship, and job placement. These programmes are known to have better outcomes than interventions that focus on single aspects of the youth employment problem. An example in Kenya is the KYEOP programme that has multifaceted services including skills training and job placement.
2. The Guidelines for Preparation of CIDPs include a chapter on performance review of the previous CIDP period. This section provides for a review of the performance of sector programs including challenges, emerging issues, and lessons learnt.

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### 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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