



**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF UASIN GISHU**

**DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS, SPORTS, ICT AND  
INNOVATION**

**UASIN GISHU COUNTY YOUTH POLICY 2024**

***“VIJANA NI NGUZO, TUWAKUZE”***

**March, 2024**

# UASIN GISHU COUNTY YOUTH POLICY 2024

## Foreword

Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy shows the County's dedication in spearheading pragmatic tactics and initiatives to address the issues facing our youth currently, while optimizing the numerous strengths and opportunities that the youth present.

This framework is a result of a broad-based consultative process intended to mainstream youth programs as per the 'Nguzo Kumi' Manifesto. The objective is to maximize youth's contribution towards building a progressive County. Priorities set out in the Policy include alignment of the youth programs to the Constitution of Kenya 2010; Kenya Vision 2030; Sustainable Development Goals 2030; Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) of Kenya Kwanza Government, National Youth Council 2009; National Youth Service Act 2018; Kenya Youth Development Policy 2019; Nguzo Kumi Manifesto, Access to Government Procurement Opportunities 2013 (AGPO); Uasin Gishu County Integrated Development Plan (2023-2027) and several Affirmative Action Funds.

This Policy shall enable the establishment of Uasin Gishu County Youth Fund, Uasin Gishu County Youth Service, Uasin Gishu County Youth Development Index and many others that are geared to nurturing youth talents & innovations, reengineering skilled youth towards entrepreneurship, accessing both local and international labour markets, monitoring and assessing the results of every youth program, project and activity that shall be carried out.

The Policy shall be anchored on youth development, entrepreneurship, employment, creativity, skills development, ICT and reducing drug and substance abuse. In order to guarantee the implementation of the Policy objectives, the Policy offers the institutional, communication, monitoring, coordination and evaluation framework.

The primary goal of the Policy is to integrate youth issues into the public, private, family and youth organization spheres of County development. The Policy encourages all stakeholders to use affirmative action for young people as a means of empowering and participating in their development while realizing their full potential.

Ultimately, for the Policy to be implemented successfully, it will need to be approached from multiple angles and have the backing of all parties involved in the youth agenda.

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In order to make the Policy's goals a reality, the youth themselves, private sectors, the County and National Government, international community, Departments, development partners, families, general public and all youth-serving organizations and groups will take the lead.

Uasin Gishu County Government is dedicated to supporting all initiatives aimed at helping young people reach their full potential and develop into well-rounded individuals.



**H.E Dr. Jonathan Bii Chelilim, E.G.H**  
**GOVERNOR, COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF UASIN GISHU**

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## Acknowledgement

The formulation of Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy has been informed by His Excellency the Governor's Manifesto, envisaging that young people will have fruitful opportunities to attain their potential as individuals and engaged members of the society. The Policy requires young people to be patriotic, value driven and actively utilize the wealth of resources and opportunities available to them in the County. This Policy was developed through inclusive, consultative and participatory processes that included public participation forums, County Government validation forums, experts and executive meetings, the youth themselves, partners and stakeholders.

I thus take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the people, groups and organizations that helped to successfully formulate the Policy. Much appreciation to the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) alongside her support partner Diakonia and also SOS Children's Villages for not only contributing ideas to enhance the strategy but also providing financial enablement towards public participation forums and various professionals whose opinions were gathered to create the Policy's content. Their support also enabled the formation of Uasin Gishu County Youth Sector Working Group committee as outlined in the Kenya Youth Development Policy 2019.

I am grateful to the staff in the Department of Youth Affairs for their assistance in developing the Policy. Special appreciation goes to His Excellency the Governor and the Deputy Governor for their guidance, candid opinion and overall organization of the entire Policy development process, refining and completing the document.

Finally, I appeal for more support from all the people who participated in the Policy preparation process to dedicate more support to the next stages of the Policy.



**Eng. Lucy Ng'endo Njoroge**  
**COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER**  
**YOUTH AFFAIRS, SPORTS, ICT AND INNOVATION**

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## **Executive Summary**

Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy (UGCYP) 2024 aims to give young people a chance to engage in community and civic affairs, as well as socio-economic processes. In order to enable young people to participate as partners in county development, this Policy promotes the establishment of a positive social, cultural, political and economic environment.

The Policy is designed to unlock maximum youth productivity through removing all physical, psychological, structural and financial barriers. By adopting platforms accessible to every youth, this Policy is hedged on a co-worker mindset. Harnessing the youth's energy, creativity and numbers is mission-critical to spur the development of the County Government of Uasin Gishu. This Policy underscores the importance of affirmative action for the youth as a strategy of participation in decision making and empowerment. It upholds the approach of continuous investment in the development of improved services and opportunities for long term impact and sustainable development.

**Abbreviations and Acronyms**

HIV	Human Immune-deficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CSO	Community Service Organizations
FBO	Faith Based Organization
AGPO	Access to Government Procurement Opportunities
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BETA	Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda
CBO	Community Based Organizations
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
ILO	International Labor Organization
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KYDP	Kenya Youth Development Policy
KYOP	Kenya Youth Opportunities Programme
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
NEET	Not in Education Employment and Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UGCYP	Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCEF	United Nations Children Educational Fund
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
YLC	Youth Leaving Care

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## Definition of Terms

**Youth** - defined as residents in Kenya and in particular Uasin Gishu County Government in the age bracket of 18 to 34 years (Constitution of Kenya 2010).

**Youth Empowerment** - a procedure emphasizing structural, cultural and attitudinal change that gives young people the power, authority and agency to decide for themselves and other people, carry out change and accept responsibility for the results of their choices and actions now and as adults.

**Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy** is referred to as "Policy" in this context.

**County Executive Committee Member** - refers to the Committee Executive Member responsible for the Department of Youth Affairs, Sports, ICT and Innovation.

**Constitution** - refers to the Kenya Constitution 2010.

**County Public Service Board** - means Uasin Gishu County Public Service Board

**Disability** - denotes any physical, sensory, mental or other impairment that negatively affects a person's ability to participate in social and economic activities. This includes any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapacity.

**Executive Committee** - refers to the Uasin Gishu County Executive Committee in accordance with Kenyan Constitution Article 179.

**Youth Service** - refers to Uasin Gishu County Youth Service.

**Services** - means engagement in the County activities not limited to building, infrastructural development, irrigation, clearing drainage systems, disaster response, digging of holes, bush clearing, planting of seedlings, nurturing of trees, entertainment, community service and any other activities.

**Service Member** - indicates a trainee for the Uasin Gishu County Youth Service.

**Youth Leaving Care** - refers to anyone who was in and is in the process of leaving alternative care facilities based on their age as a child. Foster care, institutional care (primarily children's homes), or other arrangements outside of the immediate or extended family may be used for this type of care.

**Stakeholders** - an individual, group or organization with a stake in the decisions made and actions taken in the development, formation, publication, implementation and reporting on the youth Policy.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Regarding the upper age limit, there are numerous definitions of what a youth is. Article 260 of the 2010 Kenyan Constitution defines a youth as an individual between the ages of 18 and 34. The United Nations (UN) defines a youth as any person between the ages of 15 and 24. The African Union defines a youth as any individual between the ages of 15 and 35.

This County Policy shall adopt the Constitution of Kenya definition but consideration of age limit will be given to People Living with Disabilities. The population of youth between the ages of “18 to 34” years were estimated to be 28.78 percent of the total population in Kenya. (National Census, 2019) and this represented 61 percent of the total labour force. Uasin Gishu has a population of around 1,163,186 which implies that 337,323 are youth and out of which 131,556 are estimated to be unemployed. To support the growth of the County, this portion of the labor force that has the potential to be productive needs to be fully utilized. The government has prioritized youth-related issues since they are comparatively underrepresented in socio-economic outcomes, such as employment. A lot of young people continue to be on the fringes of social, political and economic life in the County. Youth consistently exhibit the highest rates of labor underutilization, and many of them still struggle with low levels of education, a lack of skills, a lack of mentorship opportunities and a lack of economic empowerment among recent graduates. Attention must also be given to youth with special needs, such as those who are involved in the criminal justice system, those who have HIV/AIDS, girls and women, underprivileged boys and people with disabilities. The youth also deal with new social-economic and political issues that affect their age group, such as the youth's role in fostering peace in the county, efforts to promote cohesiveness and resolve conflicts, and the expanding impact of information and communication technology (ICT) development.

To address the needs of the youth, the Kenyan government and other stakeholders have persisted in creating and putting into action a variety of interventions. Kenya Vision 2030 and the Medium Term Plans (MTPs) that go along with it, Sector Plans, the Big 4 Agenda and the Bottom-up Transformational Agenda are a few of these interventions. Creating the National Youth Policy in 2007 was the most revolutionary intervention.

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Since then, the 2007 National Youth Policy has to be thoroughly reviewed due to the shifting national, regional and international landscape. The Kenya Youth Development Policy (2019) was developed with the necessity of reviewing the youth policy in mind.

Providing a framework for policy to address issues affecting youth, such as job creation, health, education, sports and recreation, environment, art and culture, partnership and empowerment, was the main goal of the National Youth Policy of 2007. The national youth council was founded as a policy-making research and advisory organization for youth issues in the nation as a result of the policy. Nonetheless, since the implementation of this policy, the nation has undergone a number of changes. The 2010 Constitution, which requires the government to create affirmative action programs to guarantee that young people have access to relevant education and training, are shielded from harmful cultural practices and exploitation. Additionally, new political, social, cultural and economic issues have emerged that have an impact on young people.

Through the Uasin Gishu County Youth Policy (UGCYP, 2024), the County government is committed to increasing youth participation in social, political, cultural and economic processes for sustainable development. The Policy's full implementation will help communities, families and young people because it is founded on the ideas of action, inclusion and measurable results. In order to realize the county's goals, the Policy is crucial.

### **1.2 Policy Statement**

The Policy has been prepared by the County Government of Uasin Gishu in order to provide a legal framework to address issues affecting youth and other marginalised segment of our society in a holistic and focused manner. The Policy shall address the challenges facing the youth in the County and other stakeholders. The Policy shall act as a guide for the County in ensuring the youth realise their full potential by participating in socio economic activities for growth and development.

### 1.3 Youth Challenges and their Strengths

The Policy has highlighted key strengths and advantages that the youth possess. These positive aspects include, among others: their sheer numbers, which represent the largest workforce that needs to be optimized; their high level of education; their openness to learning and following instructions; their eagerness to practice entrepreneurship and agri-business; their ease in embracing ICT and making the most of its applications; their productivity, availability and energy; their strong affinity for networking, innovativeness, creativity, teamwork and the potential to become transformative leaders.

These strengths should be harnessed and optimized for the realization of the demographic dividend.

Although recognized as a resource, the youth are faced with various challenges which include: inadequate access to life skills and knowledge, health challenges, inaccessibility to mentorship; financial constraints; underemployment & unemployment in part due to a failure of economic activity to keep pace with population growth; lack of employable skills; limited socio-economic support; substance misuse and drug abuse; involvement in crime; inadequate access to basic services especially in rural areas; high level of youth inactivity; limited sports and creational facilities; restricted availability of technology and information; educational disparities;

Scarce housing; deviant behaviour and crime; susceptibility to radicalization into violent extremism; pregnancy among teens; unequal opportunities and restricted involvement in socio-economic domains; violence against women.

### 1.4 Rationale

The County Government of Uasin Gishu realizes the need for a coherent and comprehensive framework to discourse problems faced by young people because of unemployment as individuals, stakeholders, and agencies in matters about them to address their plight.

The county aspires to promote and uphold the rights of young people as provided in the constitution, their development and have a county with an active and productive population geared towards development and growth through inclusiveness, equity and participation in decision-making.

- i. Facilitate the creation of a structure addressing the coherence, clarity and coordination of youth initiatives and programs.

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- ii. Create wide-ranging plans and alliances to give young people better chances to reach their full potential.
- iii. Offer a comprehensive framework that enables stakeholders' varied efforts to be maximized in order to make meaningful investments in young people.
- iv. Standardize the delivery of services to youth, including support for underprivileged youth.
- v. Describe concepts meant to eliminate barriers and hazards to young people's engagement in political, economic, cultural, and social development
- vi. Make suggestions for tactics and methods of implementation.

## **2 THE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Policy Context**

The Kenyan concept of youth development is influenced by the historical conditions that have shaped the country and its democratic goals. It is based on the principles of social and economic justice, human rights, empowerment, participation, active citizenship, the promotion of public benefit and distributive values. Youth development therefore determines future and is at the core of its development agenda hence the youth should be considered as beneficiaries and as agents of change and not as passive recipients of government services. The shaping of youth as active and productive citizens is critical for the economic growth of the County and the nation at large. The Policy proposals made here are intended to create the conditions through which County Government of Uasin Gishu would seize the opportunity to capture the demographic dividend through comprehensive effort, resulting in overall development and inclusion of youth.

### **2.2 Policy Goal**

To encourage youth's comprehensive empowerment in socio-economic domains for independence and long-term County development.

### **2.3 Policy Vision**

To have a society where youth have an equal opportunity to realize their fullest potential in socio-economic aspirations, through honesty and hard work.

### **2.4 Policy Objective**

To initiate and support programs that champion holistic nurturing of responsible enterprising youth, mainstreaming of youth issues, supporting youth for business incubation programs and talent development.

### **2.5 Policy Value**

They include respect for diversity and moral principles, fairness and resource accessibility, equality, participation, integration, inclusivity, sound governance and mainstreaming of youth issues.

### **3 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Background**

The youth agenda has its roots in Kenya's post-independence era and the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which placed a strong emphasis on promoting children's growth and well-being. Over 50% of the global population is under the age of thirty and in less developed nations, youth make up over 60% of the population. Despite their large population, they nevertheless experience a variety of inequalities, struggle with a lack of access to opportunities, decent housing & services that results in unsustainable development. In order to achieve sustainable, inclusive and stable societies, youth must actively participate in sustainable development initiatives, according to the United Nations World Youth Report and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It aids in averting threats and problems to community development, including the impacts of climate change, joblessness, scarcity, gender, inequality, conflict and migration.

The Government has worked diligently to establish a number of institutional, legal and policy frameworks to address issues impacting young people since the country's independence. These include creating policies, passing laws and advocating for youth development. In order to address youth-related issues specifically, the government has established a number of institutions and interventions. The National Youth Council, National Youth Service, the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, the Uwezo Fund, the Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunities Programme (KYEOP), and the establishment of the Directorate in charge of Youth Affairs are a few of these.

#### **3.2 Success of previous Institutional, Legislative and Policy Frameworks**

The Policy has emphasized the value and contribution that earlier institutional, legislative and Policy frameworks has made to Kenya and Uasin Gishu County Government in advancing the youth agenda. It recognizes a number of significant legal instruments.

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### National Government:

- i. **The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 articles 10, 27 and 55** that demands affirmative action programs to guarantee that young people have access to appropriate education and training, opportunities to associate, be represented, and participate in political, social, and economic spheres of life; protection from harmful cultural practices and exploitation; development of their cultural values, languages, and practices; and reasonable access to infrastructure, water, and health services, among other things.
- ii. **The National Youth Council (NYC) Act, No. 10 of 2009** was to facilitate co-ordination, promotion, monitoring and support youth-led projects and issues under the jurisdiction of the Ministry responsible for youth. The goal of the NYC (Revised Edition 2012) was to guarantee that youth-related interventions were effectively coordinated and that youth were involved in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of these interventions.
- iii. **Kenya Youth Development Policy, 2019** aimed at ensuring that youth play a role in the development of the country. The Policy goal was to promote youth participation in community and civic affairs to ensure that programmes are youth centred. It spelt out the strategic areas that must be addressed and implementation mechanisms. The current policy takes into account emerging issues affecting the youth.
- iv. **The youth of Kenya Vision 2030** are expected to be prosperous, globally competitive, and responsible. The vision calls for a number of specific interventions, including the creation of youth centers, mentoring programs, hubs for the creative industries, and funding for youth-run businesses.
- v. **Ministry of Youth Affairs** was founded by the national government in December 2005, in response to the realization that the government could not accomplish millennium development without addressing the numerous socioeconomic issues that Kenyan youth face.
- vi. **Youth Enterprise Development Fund** was founded in 2006 as a financing model that would lend money to youth enterprises in order to support youth entrepreneurship.
- vii. **Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO)** was established in 2013, in order to specifically encourage young people to do business with the government. Under this program, thirty percent of public procurement for the supply of goods and services in

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all ministries and departments was set aside for young people, women, and people with disabilities.

- viii. **Launch of the Marshall Plan** for Youth Employment and Development in March, 2008. The plan focused on creation of immediate and medium-term youth employment opportunities. The *Kazi Kwa Vijana* Program was the main initiative under this plan and it aimed at creating 500,000 jobs per year for youth in rural and urban areas in labor-intensive public works projects implemented by various ministries. Currently, the Kazi mtaani programme domiciled in the Ministry of Housing targets jobs creations for youths in the informal settlements.
- ix. Increased annual intake to **National Youth Service** to over 20,000 between 2013 and 2020.
- x. The Directorate of Youth Affairs' implementation of the **Kenya Youth Empowerment Programme (KYEP)** from 2010 to 2016. Under this World Bank pilot program, 20,000 young people received training and internship placements to improve their employability.
- xi. The National Government's initiative, the **Kenya Youth Employment and Opportunities Project (KYEOP)**, which was carried out by the Ministry of ICT, Innovation, and Youth Affairs and was funded by the World Bank, and trained 280,000 youth between 2017 and 2022.
- xii. Ongoing efforts to improve access to affirmative action funds in the **Biashara Fund Kenya**, which was formed by the merger of the **Uwezo Fund, Women Enterprise Fund and Youth Enterprise Development Fund**.
- xiii. The introduction of the **Bottom Up Transformative Agenda** and the **Big Four Agenda**. Affordable housing, universal health care, manufacturing, food security and nutrition are the main areas of focus and allocation of time, energy and resources for this plan. Investments in these areas should increase the need for labor, improve youth employment and improve services to the youth.

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### **Uasin Gishu County Government:**

Since the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, Uasin Gishu County Government has undertaken various strategies and interventions on youth empowerment including;

- i. **The “Nguzo kumi” Manifesto** of His Excellency the Governor.
- ii. **The County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2022 - 2027)**, which champion establishment of County Youth Service, County Youth Fund, Youth Empowerment/ Incubation Centres, Youth Development Index, Kikao cha Vijana (convention), Kijana na Acre programmes that promote youth matters.
- iii. **Establishment of Youth Affairs sector** under the department of Youth Affairs, Sports and Talent Management in 2022.
- iv. **Uasin Gishu County Education Revolving Fund, 2016** to support students in tertiary institutions.
- v. **Uasin Gishu County Bursary and Skills development support Fund, 2014.**
- vi. **Uasin Gishu County Enterprise Development Fund Act, 2016** and **Uasin Gishu County Enterprise Development Fund (Amendment) Act, 2017** to support the cooperatives access funding through the credit facility.
- vii. **Uasin Gishu County Inua Biashara Fund Act, 2018** and **Uasin Gishu County Inua Biashara Fund (Amendment) Act, 2020** to support Small and Micro Enterprises access soft credit and capacity building in the County.
- viii. Participation of the youth in the **Uasin Gishu County Governor’s Cup sports tournament** that bring the young people together to foster unity, identify, nurturing and develop their talents and provide safe space. The County also provides support to various sports disciplines and the department lobbies in hosting events and championships.
- ix. **Ward Development Fund Projects:** Provision of assorted tools and equipment to support youth groups in expanding their productivity, fostering sustainable development and promoting economic growth within the County.
- x. **Distribution of Sports Kits:** This is in line with departmental effort to support local teams and empower young people towards nurturing and developing their talents by providing sports-wear and kits.

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- xi. **Youth Capacity Building Programmes:** The County invest in training young people by equipping them with entrepreneurship skills, life skills, mental health awareness and knowledge about drug and substance abuse. This education is vital for their personal development and contributes to a healthier and more informed youth population.
- xii. **Promotion of Youth Employment and Safe Road:** The youth within the County benefit on driving lessons that enable them acquire essential skills for employment and safety road use. The initiative not only enhances their employability and acquisition of Digital Driving Licenses but also contributes to road safety within the County.
- xiii. **Establishment of Uasin Gishu County Contact Centre:** This is a state of art facility located within the Kapseret Sub-County office compound. It is established with the aim of promoting open governance, citizen engagement and public participation. The young people are offered with a free-call and social media platform for inquiry of County information, services and opportunities. In return, feedback from the citizen enables the County improve service delivery.

Insufficient legislative framework and Policy guidelines to address youth issues are reasons that has motivated the department to develop this Policy to provide youth with opportunities to realize their full potential in development and decision-making.

## 4 POLICY IMPERATIVES AND INTERVENTIONS

### 4.1 Priority Strategy Areas

The Constitution's Article 260 makes provisions for youth as a separate demographic group. The Bill of Rights' Article 55 outlines the fundamental values and rights of youth, as well as the state's obligations to guarantee that those rights are upheld.

Within the framework, the Policy has outlined the priorities for youth development, empowerment, objectives, strategies, interventions and measures meant to support the sustainable development of the County while empowering, developing, engaging and maximizing youth potential in relation to the current dynamics.

The Policy proposes comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach in youth programming. This is to ensure that youth initiatives and aspirations are well responded to for sustainable County development. As a result, this policy gives priority to young people and interventions that align with the County's development plan.

The priorities that will guide youth programs and activities include: Youth Health and Nutrition; Volunteerism; Leadership, Participation & Representation; enhancing Skills & Employment; Entrepreneurship; Creativity and Talent; ICT Development & Cyber Security; Agriculture & agribusiness; Environment & Sustainable Development; Reducing Drug, Substance Abuse & Crime; Security and Peace Building. The vital priority areas for policy intervention include:

#### 4.1.1 Youth Development in Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing

Health is a fundamental requirement for youth to be productive. A major concern is the lack of knowledge regarding non-communicable diseases, reproductive health, preventable and communicable diseases like HIV and AIDS. Depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, psychosis and drug and alcohol abuse are some of the most common mental health issues affecting young people. Access to information on health, develop skills and positive values will enable youth to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, making informed decisions and responding to any challenge.

Teens who drop out of school are becoming more and more problematic due to their mental health.

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This group of young people is primarily jobless, lacks adult supervision, receives inadequate assistance and is susceptible to drug and substance abuse. High-risk behaviours like transactional sex, prostitution, rape, sexual abuse and exploitation are especially dangerous for young girls. They frequently run afoul of the law and are subjected to violence and exploitation. An emerging area of concern is online relationships where youth fall prey to predators that take advantage of their vulnerability.

Presently, there are limited programs intended at addressing the needs of these groups of the young people in the County.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Encourage and support young people to lead healthy lifestyles that include recreational activities, a nutritious diet and good eating habits.
- ii. Encourage and educate youth about sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- iii. Encourage young people to participate in important policy, advocacy, decision-making, budgetary, planning and implementation processes.
- iv. Encourage and support initiatives pertaining to reproductive, mental, physical and hygiene health; enhance the institutional and technical capacity of youth organizations and community-based organizations (CBOs) to empower them to effectively advocate for and advance youth health initiatives.
- v. Encourage collaborations between the public and private sectors, as well as civil society organizations (CSOs), to fund youth-friendly medical facilities.
- vi. Enhance the youth's capacity in leadership and advocacy to enable them support and manage youth health programs.
- vii. Encourage research in fields linked to youth health and disseminate the results to guide intervention and action.
- viii. Make health information and services more accessible to young people and make investments to fortify the County's youth-friendly health management system.
- ix. Provide youth-oriented information, education and communication (IEC) materials.
- x. Focus on young people dealing with a range of health concerns by offering secure venues for interaction and interventions.
- xi. Involve young people in the protection, condemnation and prevention of gender-based and sexual violence.

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- xii. Develop initiatives that tackle the stigma attached to mental health issues and illnesses. Foster young people's mental and emotional health by engaging them in creative, social and commercial pursuits.
- xiii. Encourage and support youth campaigns that aim to deter drug and substance abuse, teenage and early pregnancy, negative peer pressure and changes in sexual behavior.
- xiv. Create and grow youth-friendly counselling and guidance departments in technical schools, youth centers and medical facilities.
- xv. Create accessible, youth-friendly rehabilitation facilities and rescue centers to assist young people who are addicted to drugs or other substances.
- xvi. Encourage parents to play a proactive role in educating and counselling their teenagers about appropriate sexual behavior.
- xvii. Build the capacity of the youth development officers on provision of youth friendly services.
- xviii. Provide community-based psychosocial services, such as counselling.
- xix. Hold educational programs for young people about chronic illnesses, how to prevent them and related health awareness.

### **4.1.2 Transformative Leadership, Mentorship, Participation and Representation**

The advancement of youth development requires the effective involvement of young people in leadership and governance. Uasin Gishu County Government, in collaboration with important stakeholders, has a duty to create a conducive atmosphere that fosters youth leadership potential and solidifies the values of community service and volunteerism in the youth.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Initiate and implement youth mentorship programmes in the County.
- ii. Institutionalize semi-annual forums and 'Kikao cha vijana' to receive views and feedback on youth concerns.
- iii. Strengthen the registration and capacity of youth groups, youth database and youth serving organizations.
- iv. Encourage youth exchange programs/ initiatives.
- v. Create a youth led structure consisting of both genders drawn from the grassroots. The department of Youth Affairs will play a vital role in information dissemination and adoption of key County projects and

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work as County marketers to the established youth SACCOs and cooperatives.

- vi. Promote and encourage independent, youth focused civil society initiatives and appoint some to represent in the relevant youth sector working groups.
- vii. Recognize and expand opportunities to help young people with disabilities and different abilities achieve their goals.
- viii. Promote and encourage volunteerism in community service.

### 4.1.3 Youth in Agriculture and Agri-Business

Uasin Gishu County is the food basket of the Country and Agriculture is a key livelihood pillar for many youths. Youth are economically active population and therefore there is need to increase their productivity by initiating programmes that will engage them fully. Both direct and indirect jobs are produced by the agribusiness subsector in both urban and rural areas. The sector includes horticulture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, industrial crops and food crops. One of the pillars of Uasin Gishu County Government is agriculture and food security.

However, the county's agriculture industry is dominated by an aging population that prefers traditional rain-fed farming practices over more contemporary ones. Young people working in agriculture are more likely to use ICT to help develop new and cutting-edge farming techniques, add value, market their products, create jobs, and ultimately improve food security and nutrition. Thus, the goal of the Policy is to guarantee that the energy, innovation and passion of the youth are fully integrated in the operations of the agricultural sector.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Encourage young people to work in agriculture by adding value to agricultural products and establishing systems that encourage young people to get involved in agribusiness.
- ii. Encourage innovation, sharing of information and access to financing.
- iii. Promote the growth of young people's agribusinesses by improving the planning, observation and assessment of product development and supply chains in agribusiness operations.
- iv. Start and encourage contract farming to give young people interested in agribusiness access to markets.
- v. Reposition agriculture as the next unchartered area for commercial expansion and also brand agriculture as sexy enterprise.

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- vi. Motivate young people to spend money on bee-keeping, fish farming, herbs and related research.
- vii. Invest in value addition through processing, branding, quality and shelf-life improvement.
- viii. Invest in irrigation and water harvesting technologies to facilitate full time engagement of the youth and shorten waiting time for economic returns.
- ix. Digitize agricultural production and marketing information into web-based resources.
- x. Profile successful youth role models in agribusiness who can mentor other upcoming youth.
- xi. Promote the participation of the youth in smart agriculture as a viable career opportunity for the youth and as an economic and business option.
- xii. Source for local and export markets for youth agricultural produce.
- xiii. Promote agriculture, livestock skills development through quarterly ward trainings/information sharing and access to finance.
- xiv. Develop innovative financial packages that provide incentives for youth entrepreneurs in the sector.
- xv. Develop and operationalize county agricultural information system hub and space allocation in market hubs to include youths.
- xvi. Encourage youth to form and join cooperative schemes that produce and market agricultural goods and services.

### **4.1.4 Environment Management and Climate Change**

Eldoret is about to attain the City Charter and hence the need to safeguard the environment and actioning for sustainable development within the city and its surrounding. Considerable actions are required in handling solid waste management, air pollution, congestion in the informal settlements, protection of the forests, water pollution and greening of the towns within the County. County Government shall ensure there are mechanisms that support youth engagement in the development, protection, conservation of the natural resources and environment while engaging in eco-entrepreneurship/ green jobs. The Policy therefore acknowledges the critical role the environment plays and encourages County Government to take leadership in creating partnerships and networks, including the youth, to scale up and strengthen environmental programmes in the county.

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The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Build capacities of youth on green energy, waste management and general environmental conservation/ management.
- ii. Develop and implement the human resource training strategy in green processes and technologies.
- iii. Invest in the conversion of waste to wealth initiatives.
- iv. Rally, support and implement the presidential call of 15 billion tree planting campaign with youth taking an active role.
- v. Identify high potential value chains in green energy, waste management and alternative prudent natural resources utilization.
- vi. Educate and support youth to take advantage of green jobs and carbon credit opportunities.
- vii. Empower youth as climate change ambassadors across the county by creating awareness of initiatives that reduce carbon emissions and heating effects to the environment.
- viii. Establishing Eldoret as a smart city and greening the surrounding towns by the efforts and participation of the young people.

### **4.1.5 Security and Peace Building**

High rates of poverty, idleness and disillusionment brought on by rising unemployment rates are among the factors that lead to young people becoming involved in criminal activities. Drug and substance abuse, as well as peer pressure are additional factors that lead to youth crime.

The youth should be involved as stakeholders in peace-building processes and decision-making in order to address this issue.

Young people's participation and inclusion improves their capacities and gives them the chance to make positive changes in both their personal and community lives.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Collaborate with families, communities, and multi-agency groups to involve young people in fostering a safe, secure and crime-free environment.
- ii. Encourage the involvement of young people as particular stakeholders in efforts for peace-building, mediation, community security & reconciliation.

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- iii. Establish a framework for participatory monitoring with built-in safeguards to guarantee the active involvement of youth.
- iv. To provide funds for tools and systems that will increase awareness and reach out to all young people.
- v. Create and carry out initiatives that support societal and national values, intergenerational communication and livelihood skills.

### **4.1.6 Youth Employment, Skills Development, Entrepreneurship, Apprenticeship and Incubation**

There is a problem with the high youth unemployment rate. Even with the County's obvious skills gaps, education and training are still essential tools for resolving the mismatch between entrepreneurship, the demands of the labor market and skill development and training.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall:

- i. Promote market oriented technical training and apprenticeship programme.
- ii. Strengthen and equip Technical, Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions. Promote awareness on existing County Vocational Training Centres VTCs.
- iii. Develop a labour market information system to support decision-making on youth employment opportunities within the County.
- iv. Create awareness and prepare the youth to position themselves in the upcoming opportunities and development of County Aggregated Industrial Parks CAIPs, Export Processing Zones EPZ and affordable housing.
- v. Undertake tracer studies of technical institutions and university graduates to gauge the relevance and level of uptake of learning programs.
- vi. Establish and profile the youth not in education, employment, training (NEET) and mount targeted programs for them.
- vii. Incorporating entrepreneurship and marketing curriculum in VTCs and equipping them with relevant materials and tools.
- viii. Sensitize on attachments and internship programs for the undergraduates.
- ix. Promote driving skills and training on road safety precautions and issuance of digital driving licenses for youths in partnership with transport ministry.

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- x. Provide sensitization and linkage of the youth to different programs implemented by various organizations globally that are aimed at providing trainings, job opportunities and scholarships to the youth.
- xi. Establish training camps, talent academy, indoor arenas and open field facilities in all the Sub-Counties.
- xii. Establish and equip youth information, empowerment and incubation centres to cater for youth competencies, innovative ideas and skills into business empires.
- xiii. Support young people to venture into bodaboda, tuktuk and matatu transport industry by providing conducive and clean business environment.
- xiv. Identify and develop a framework of rewarding coaches, captains and team managers who provide mentorship to the youth participating in sports and other youth programmes.

### 4.1.7 Youth and Vulnerability

Many children have found themselves in the urban and city streets, children homes, children charitable institutions because of difficult circumstances at their homes due to poverty, orphanage, family conflicts, internal displacement and abandonment among other social challenges. Most of these children have been under foster care and adoption through judicial process. Most homes and children charitable institution lack a comprehensive exit strategy for children who have completed formal and informal education. "**Youth leaving care**" refers to any individual who was placed in foster care, an institution (mostly a children's home), or other arrangements away from their immediate or extended family during their formative years.

This policy aims to address issues of youths who have attained the age of 18 years and are to exit these institutions and be reintegrated into the society.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall;

- i. Develop data base for youth leaving care, young care leavers and other vulnerable youth in the County.
- ii. Encourage youth leaving care to be catered for and a percentage of the funds to be used in supporting the youth leaving care in Vocational Training Centres.
- iii. Mobilize funds for start-up kits for youth leaving care exit strategy.

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- iv. Link talented and innovative vulnerable youths to relevant organizations, departments or ministries.

### **4.2 Target Youth Groups**

The foundation for creating opportunities for every young person in the County is this Policy document. But because each group has different needs, particular attention must be given to them when addressing the needs of the youth. Most of the young people in groups are facing the challenge of group dynamics and the mobility of the young people. The youth join groups majorly to solicit for external funding due to lack of structured capacity building programs. Uasin Gishu County Government and youth-serving organizations shall have to pay extra attention to affirmative action in each of the targeted youth groups.

#### **4.2.1 Young People Living with Infirmary**

The Policy approaches infirmity as a human right and development matter. Adequately meeting the needs of youth with disabilities can greatly contribute to the social and economic development of the county, provided that special measures are implemented. For youth with disabilities to ensure full participation in society, specific strategies are needed. The Policy promotes the human rights, inclusion, and participation of young people with disabilities through a developmental approach. The Policy promotes a heightened understanding of the challenges encountered by young people who are physically, mentally, or visually impaired, or who have hearing impairments.

#### **4.2.2 Street Young People**

The policy promotes stronger family structures as well as improved reintegration, rehabilitation, and empowerment of street youth in the community. The young people possess a variety of skills. In our towns, the number of street families has continued to rise as a result of the collapse of the social fabric. We now have street youth and families, from street boys and girls. Many of these individuals are homeless and live, work, or study on the streets. Due to their lack of adult supervision, guidance, or protection, street youth are particularly vulnerable.

#### **4.2.3 Youth infected with HIV / AIDS**

According to Kenya News Agency, Uasin Gishu County recorded over 1000 HIV new infections in the year 2019 majority of who are aged between 15-24 years. Majority of the infected youth are from informal settlements and sex workers.

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The high number of adolescent pregnancies, abortions, school dropouts, and STDs indicates that young people are having sex at a young age and are becoming more and more exposed to HIV/AIDS and STDs. A combination of biological, sociocultural, and economic factors expose young people to HIV/AIDS. The policy advocates for life skills training HIV/AIDS test and counselling and specially designed economic empowerment programmes for this category of youth.

### **4.2.4 Female Young People**

Young people start having sexual relations fairly early in life. More than 44% of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have engaged in sexual activity. In addition to the negative socioeconomic effects, having sex at this age has negative health effects. Young girls who engage in high levels of unprotected sexual activity run the risk of catching STIs like HIV and AIDS. unintended pregnancies, school dropout and use of contraception at an early age. As a result of this challenges the female youth engage on low wage jobs such as house helps, cleaners, garden work, hawking, bar maids and petty crimes in trying to eke a living. Due to early marriages, sexual and gender-based violence are witnessed and increase in female headed families.

These elements have contributed to the underrepresentation of female youth in decision-making and low participation in socioeconomic development.

### **4.2.5 Unemployed and Underemployed Youth**

Majority of the youth lack strong societal support systems to face their challenges. They engage in boda-boda, casual jobs, garbage collection which earns them very little to support themselves and their families. Joblessness brings along with it social ills such as misconduct, alcohol and drug abuse and a lot of condemnation from the wider population. Under employment in the county is a result of mismatch of training, low economic development leading to closure of industries as compared to huge number of graduates from tertiary institutions.

Young people should be provided with empowerment opportunities, in addition to access to life skills training, mentorship programs and further training opportunity.

#### **4.2.6 Teens who are not enrolled in school, working or training (NEET)**

Youth unemployment is high as a result of the growing gap between the annual output of school dropouts and the growth of jobs in the economy.

The imbalance of skills among young people brought about by the educational system exacerbates unemployment, which is primarily a result of fast population growth and increased pressure on land and other resources.

Reluctance by the youth to join technical training institutions were due to low publicity, low consideration of the institutions, orientation towards white collar jobs and negative attitude on blue collar jobs

#### **4.2.7 Youth Leaving Care (YLC)**

Anyone who was placed in alternative care as a child is considered a care leaver. Foster care, institutional care (primarily children's homes), or other arrangements outside of the immediate or extended family may provide this kind of care.

#### **4.3 Rights and Responsibilities of stakeholders**

The Policy underscores the importance of portraying a positive image of the youth, highlighting their responsibilities and obligations. It aims to protect youth's rights while assisting them in realizing and carrying out their civic duties for the betterment of society. The Policy further stipulates the responsibilities of other stakeholders in ensuring the development of the society as a whole.

## **5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND CORDINATION**

### **5.1 Legislation**

The existing legislative framework shall be revised and laws and regulations shall be developed to support implementation of the Policy.

The County Government shall take steps to:

- a) Address the statements in the Policy through the revision of any existing laws and enacting other relevant laws and regulations;
- b) Give legislative support to the objectives of the Policy by developing new laws and regulations. New legislation will include but not limited to:

#### **5.1.1 Uasin Gishu County Youth Fund**

The County shall establish a fund for undertaking projects and programmes. The funds shall be utilized in fulfilling the Policy and any other laws that touch on the youth. The County Government shall partner with other stakeholders to realize this mandate.

Shall therefore include:

- a) Develop legal framework for its operationalization.
- b) Develop regulation and guidelines for identification of projects/ programmes and beneficiaries.
- c) Develop recovery mechanism for loaned projects/ programmes.
- d) Set aside funds for administrative purposes.

#### **5.1.2 Uasin Gishu County Youth Service**

Youth Service refers to non-military, intensive engagement of young individuals within a fixed time in an organized activity that contributes to the development of the society.

The objective of the program is to engage unemployed youth in community service. It shall involve recruitment of young people in every electoral Ward in the County with a view to engage them in community service and labour based programs initiated by the County Government.

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The County Government shall;

- a) Develop administrative and management structure for the Service.
- b) Develop recruitment procedures and guidelines for service-men and service-women.
- c) Employ/deploy human resource with relevant skills, competences and qualifications necessary to manage the Service.
- d) Develop training needs and curriculum for the Service.
- e) Purchase relevant tools, equipment and gears to be used by the service members.
- f) Prepare pass-out ceremony to usher-in the servicemen and servicewomen into the community engagement.

### **5.1.3 Uasin Gishu County Youth Sector Working Group**

The County Government lead by the department of Youth Affairs shall ensure alignment of youth programs to the national development goals. Various department shall mainstream youth priority areas in their plans and programmes. There shall be a Youth sector working group (YSWG) that provide overall coordination within the stakeholders. The sectoral level shall be chaired by County Executive Committee Member responsible for Youth Affairs; the secretary shall be the County Director of Youth in the national government (NG); and the members shall be all relevant stakeholder representatives including private sector, CBOs, FBOs, MoE, GOs, NYC, YEDF, NYS among others.

### **5.1.4 Uasin Gishu County Youth Development Index**

In order to facilitate the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the Policy, the County government shall develop a Youth Development Index to track and measure impact of youth initiatives. The index will help monitor changes in the situation of young people, their contribution and support in achieving sustainable development. This is in line with creation of County Skills Database to facilitate placement of qualified youth to available job vacancies. All relevant departments and the 30 wards will be involved in the monitoring and evaluation processes.

## 6. PARALLEL SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.1 Communication Strategy

A Policy is restricted if it does not move from rhetoric to a realistic implementation stage. It has to facilitate development and implementation of related plans, programmes and projects. It has to receive buy-in and support from the general population through an engagement process that elicits interest and participation by all stakeholders. It has to clearly convey the benefits of the policy so that they can be identified, received and accepted. It also has to stimulate a change in behaviour where there is a desire to develop a best practice approach. A communication strategy shall be developed to effectively convey the vision, mission, goal and objectives of the Policy and also detail the roles and responsibilities expected of the stakeholders it guides. It shall be a tool to lend support to the implementation process.

The strategy shall address but not be limited to the following objectives:

- i. Build awareness of the Policy among a wide group of stakeholders;
- ii. Secure the commitment of a defined group of stakeholders to the vision and goals of the Policy;
- iii. Influence specific policies and policymakers to act on the key issues in a timely basis;
- iv. Encourage participation by all stakeholders within the population.

### 6.2 Financing and Resource Mobilization

Implementation of this Policy shall require resources in terms of human, financial and materials.

The County Government with support from stakeholders shall;

- i. Allocate sufficient funds in its annual estimates to facilitate successful implementation.
- ii. Involving the youths themselves in fundraising and resource mobilization for their different programmes and facilities.
- iii. Deploy/employ adequate staff with required qualifications, competencies and skills relevant to run the programmes and activities.
- iv. Encourage public private partnership.

### **6.3 Mechanisms for Implementing, Monitoring, Evaluation, Coordination and Impact Assessment.**

The department in charge of Youth affairs will keep a close eye on the Policy's implementation and shall use a quarterly reporting framework to report on its progress. Additionally, a regular evaluation shall be carried out to determine the benefits and impact.

The Policy offers a clear framework to facilitate the efficient execution, synchronization, oversight, assessment and documentation of interventions aimed at empowering youth and promoting development. Officers in charge of Youth Affairs, Inter-Agency Forums, thematic working groups and pertinent stakeholders shall all be a part of the mechanism. Every participant shall be given distinct roles and expectations.

The CIDP, strategic plan and Annual Development Plans shall be used to operationalize the Policy implementation mechanism. These plans shall include information on Policy priorities, key actions, indicators, timelines, responsibilities and the estimated annual budgetary requirements as well as the financial and non-financial resource mobilization.

County Executive Committee Member for Youth Affairs, Sports, ICT and Innovation shall appoint a monitoring and evaluation team to oversee the process from time to time.

### **6.4 Policy Review**

This Policy shall be reviewed regularly in response to the needs of the young people and in line with other County Government Policy guidelines. The evaluation shall be done against a series of criteria that would effectively measure the level of success so that lessons learnt are documented, modifications needed are addressed and responses to current demands are fulfilled.