

Samburu 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 Samburu 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 the county is 4.3 per cent, which is lower than the national average of 8.5 per cent. Youth unemployment rate in Samburu County is higher among males (6.1%) than females (2.7%). The percentage of youth who are neither in education, employment or training is 15.2 per cent among males and 16.0 per cent among females.
- (ii) The county, among other interventions, planned to train the youth on various soft skills, establish and equip two youth polytechnics, purchase assorted tools and materials for youth polytechnics, develop youth and sports policy, construct Archers stadium, Wamba, Baragoi and Maralal stadium, and construct and equip a high-altitude sports centre. The achievements included: training 4,930 youths on life and business skills, purchase of assorted tools and materials for 3 polytechnics, recruitment of 2 polytechnic instructors, rehabilitation of Maralal stadia and construction of 11 playgrounds.
- (iii) There was partial and sometime non-implementation of planned interventions. The implementation of the YEPs was constrained by inadequate financial resources and 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: ensure efficient monitoring, evaluation and learning, e.g. by adhering to the Guidelines for the Preparation of the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs), including comprehensive reporting of the performance review of the previous CIDP period, enhance availability of financial resources through enhanced collaboration with other actors and improved budget absorption; and design and implement entrepreneurship support programmes and comprehensive programmes that have multifaceted interventions, such as those that combine skills training, internship and job placement services.

1. County Youth Demographics and Labour Market Indicators

Samburu County has a total population of 310,327 people with a population density of 15 per square km. The youth population is estimated at 104,460 (50.3% male), with about 82.3 per cent residing in rural areas (KNBS, 2019). Both overall poverty and youth poverty were higher in the county at 66.2 and 59.6 per cent, respectively, compared to the national levels of 38.6 per cent and 34.2 per cent, respectively. While the proportion of stunted children decreased from 42.0 per cent in 2014 to 31.4 per cent in 2022, it is still higher than the national rate of 17.6 per cent (Table 1).

Table 1: County youth demographics and economic performance indicators

	County	National
County Population (KNBS, 2019)	310,327	47,564,296
Males	156,774(50.3%)	23,548,056 (49.4%)
Females	153,546(49.7%)	24,014,716 (50.6%)
Intersex	7	1,524(0 %)
Youth 15-34 years (per cent)	104,460(34.0%)	17,009,23036.1 (%)
Males	52,510(50.3%)	8,237,120(48.4%)
Females	51,950(49.7%)	8,771,410(51.6 %)
Population Density (km ²)	15	82
Persons with disability (per cent)	1.3	2.2
Population living in rural areas (per cent)	82.3	63.3
School going age (4-22 years) (per cent)	53.7	46.0
Overall Poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	76.0	36.1
Overall Poverty (2021) (per cent)	66.2	38.6
Youth Poverty (2015/2016) (per cent)	81.0	47.1
Youth poverty (2021) (per cent)	59.6	34.2
Stunted children (KDHS 2014) (per cent)	42.0	26.0
Stunted children (KDHS 2022) (per cent)	31.4	17.6
Gross County Product (Ksh million) 2022	33,901	0.3 (%) of total GDP

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

The total unemployment rate is 4.3 per cent, which is lower than the national average of 8.5 per cent. Labour force participation stands at 63.8 per cent and it is highest in female and rural youth. Compared to the national average (88.8%), an estimated 32.8 per cent of the youth in Samburu County contribute to family work (Table 2). For the employed youths, a significant share is engaged in poor-quality jobs characterized by informal working arrangements, low productivity, and inadequate earnings.

Table 2: A review of labour market indicators for the youth

Indicator	Level	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Labour force participation Rate (%)	Samburu	63.8	62.0	65.7	46.3	67.6
	National	55.7	57.1	54.4	55.3	56.0
Youth employment to population ratio (%)	Samburu	61.6	58.2	63.9	41.9	65.2
	National	51.0	51.1	50.9	49.0	52.2
Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) (%)	Samburu	15.6	15.2	16.0	26.2	13.5
	National	15.5	13.3	17.6	24.1	11.4
Youth unemployment (%)	Samburu	4.3	6.1	2.7	9.6	3.6
	National	8.5	10.6	6.4	11.5	6.8
Share of contributing family workers and own account workers (%)	Samburu	88.8	83.3	93.8	50.3	94.1
	National	65.7	54.8	76.0	39.9	79.8

Data source: 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census

2. Youth Employment Programmes and Interventions in Samburu County

(i) Proposed youth employment programmes by the county government

During the second CIDP period, Samburu County envisioned improving youths' employability. The proposed projects included: programmes aimed at making the labour market work better, such as youth policy; skills training such as to train the youth on various soft skills; making training programmes work better, such as to establish and equip 2 youth polytechnics and purchase of assorted tools and materials for youth polytechnics. The county did not plan to implement entrepreneurship support and comprehensive programmes, but planned to implement other related interventions that would empower and create jobs for the youth, including to construct Archers stadium, Wamba, Baragoi and Maralal stadium and construct and equip a high-altitude sports centre.

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"> Development of sports and youth policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy not developed
Entrepreneurship support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Programmes Planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable
Skills training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train 610 youth groups on various soft skills Train 500 boda boda riders on driving skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4930 Youths trained on in life and business skills
Making training programmes work better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train 640 coaches and referees/umpires and administrators Purchase 5 polytechnics assorted tools and materials Recruit 10 polytechnic instructors Construction of 1 training workshop at Maralal Establish and equip 2 youth polytechnics Recruit 10 youth polytechnic instructors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased assorted tools and materials for 3 polytechnics Recruited 2 polytechnic instructors Constructed 1 workshop Constructed Maralal stadia
Comprehensive approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No programme planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable
Other programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in 5 Kenya youth inter counties sports association events Mentorship programmes for identified talents Construct Archers Stadium, Wamba, Baragoi and Maralal stadium Construct and equip a high altitude sports centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VTCs enrollment increased from 172 to 444 students VTCs completion rate increased from 35% to 45% Rehabilitated Maralal stadia Constructed 11 playgrounds

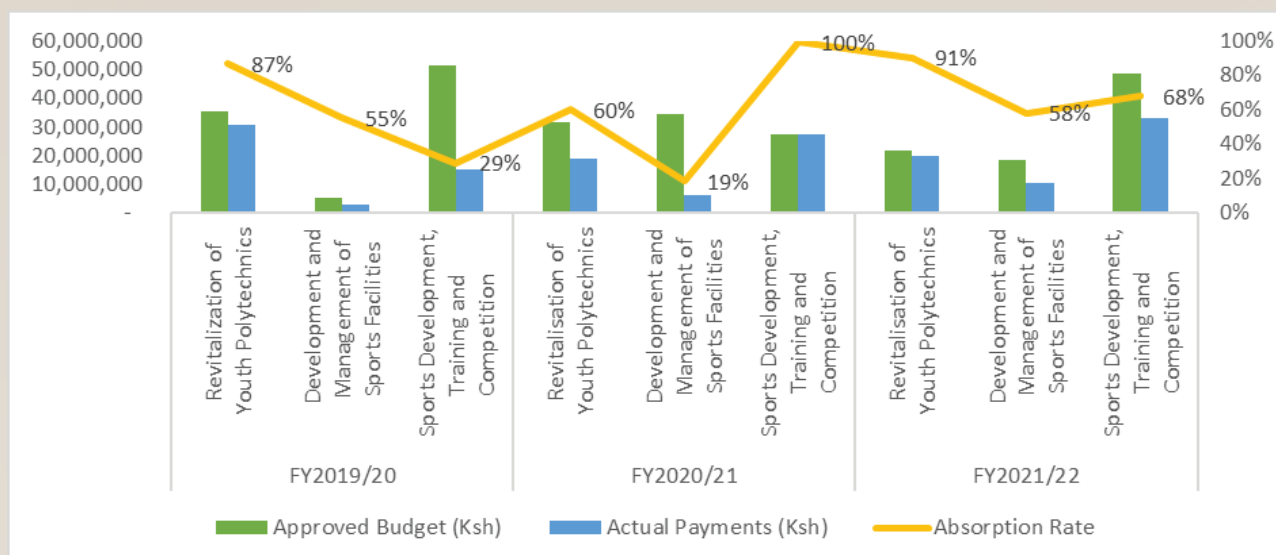
Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (various)

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, the county did not develop the sports and youth policy as planned. On the other hand, 4,930 youths were trained in life and business skills against a target of 610. Other achievements included purchase of assorted tools and materials for 3 polytechnics, recruitment of 2 polytechnic instructors against a target of 10, construction of 1 workshop, construction of Maralal stadia against a target of 2 stadiums, rehabilitation of Maralal stadia and construction of 11 playgrounds.

3. County's Budget and Expenditure on Youth Initiatives (2019/20-2021/22)

Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, Samburu County has consistently implemented three youth sub-programmes, namely: sports development, revitalization of youth polytechnics, and management and development of sports facilities. The county has consistently allocated financial resources towards these programmes although budgetary allocation varies across the programmes. Budgetary allocation towards revitalization of youth polytechnics decreased from Ksh 34 million in 2019/20 to Ksh 31 million in 2021/22. Allocation towards development and management of sports facilities training increased from Ksh 5 million in 2019/20 to Ksh 34 million in 2020/21 and later dropped to Ksh 18 million 2021/22. A similar trend was observed in the sports development sub-programme. The absorption rates for youth budgets fluctuated throughout the years and were varied for the various youth programmes. The low absorption rates point towards poor utilization of resources in youth programmes which has implications for the success, effectiveness, and impact of these programmes on the target population.

Figure 3: County spending and absorption rates on youth sub-programmes (2019/20-2021/22)



Sources: Office of the Controller of Budget Report

4. Constraints on Implementing Youth Programmes

There are various cross-cutting factors that affect effective implementation of youth employment programmes in Samburu 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 and low absorption of available resources.
- (iv) Inadequate comprehensive reporting owing to 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 that 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 Samburu County. The findings from the review indicate that the county has made efforts towards implementation sub-programmes aimed at skills training, making training programmes work better and other 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. In some programmes within the same year, the absorption rates were low, while in other programmes it was as high as 100 per cent. This could be because of delayed disbursement of funds from the National Treasury and the effects of COVID-19, which led to reallocation of resources towards the sectors affected by the pandemic. To ensure effective implementation of youth programmes, the county needs to:

- (i) Improve the reporting on the review of the performance of sector programmes as envisaged by the Guidelines for Preparation of CIDPs, where a comprehensive review of the previous CIDP will be expected. The 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 programmes aimed at making the labour market work better, entrepreneurship support and comprehensive programmes in the county to ensure a holistic approach in youth empowerment. There are opportunities to enhance synergies by implementing a comprehensive programme that, for instance, supports 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. <https://www.devolution.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/UASINGISHU-CIDP-2018-2022.pdf>

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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:

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