

**EFFECTIVE BUDGETARY PLANNING FOR  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

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## Introduction

The Kenyan constitution defines the youth as young people of ages between 18 and 35 years. This constitutes about 11 million, representing 29% of Kenya's total population<sup>1</sup>. Overtime the youth have largely been excluded from designing, planning and implementing programs and policies that largely affect them, yet they have a vital role in shaping the present and future of the country's social, economic and political development. The youth are dynamic, full of energy and can play a key role in promoting growth and development within the economy.

This presentation focuses on the contributions the government should embrace to enhance the development of young people. The recommendations focus on the economic and social components which if addressed enable young people to reach their full potential, both as individuals and as active participants of the society. Young people should be protagonists of their own development and not merely recipients of government support.

According to the National Youth Policy, there are eight thematic areas identified as being of critical importance when addressing issues of the youth. These are: Employment creation, health, education and training, sports and recreation, environment, art and culture, the media and participation and empowerment. The presentation touches more on the economic component, focusing much on youth unemployment and the initiatives aimed at addressing it under Agenda 4 of NARA. However, it also looks into other issues affecting the youth as highlighted in the National Youth Policy.

The provisions for the youth under the new constitutions are highlighted under article 55. It states that the state shall ensure that the youth;

1. Access relevant education and training
2. Have opportunities to associate, be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life
3. Access employment

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<sup>1</sup> The Kenya Budget Integrated Household Budget Survey (2008—2009).

4. Are protected from harmful cultural practices and exploitation

The presentation seeks to address the thematic areas of concern that will see the youth achieve positive youth development which will also see the youth contribute towards the attainment of Vision 2030.

### **Highlights of the FY 2011-12 Budget**

The theme of the 2011/2012 budget read the Minister of Finance was, “***Building Resilience and sustaining inclusive growth for a prosperous Kenya.***” In this regard, the budget focused on;

- ❖ Nurturing the growth momentum in the face of emerging domestic and global challenges
- ❖ Uninterrupted social programme of education and health for all
- ❖ Sustained investment in infrastructure, especially in road, energy and railway
- ❖ Implementation of the new constitution
- ❖ Maintaining macroeconomic stability.

### **Youth-focused provisions in the FY 2011-12 Budget**

The 2011/2012 budget promised more hope and relief to the Kenyan youth most especially on the issue of Youth Unemployment. The government focused more on the Kazi Kwa Vijana initiative and the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, which are among the initiatives designed under the Agenda 4 of the National Accord and Reconciliation Act (NARA) of 2008 to address youth unemployment.

The youth being a susceptible group have been affected greatly by massive unemployment. To cushion this, the government decided to consider going on with the scaling up of youth empowerment programmes in order to ensure the youth get access to descent employment. The government set aside kshs.210 million to go towards labour- intensive works and social services, bringing the total labour-intensive works and social services total expenditure to ksh.1.8 billion in 2011/2012 financial year. This was to reduce the vulnerability of the unemployed youth through expansion and enhancement of the kazi Kwa vijana initiative. The additional amount of money was to enhance the coverage of the programme and targeted youths aged between 18 – 35 years under kkv. It aimed at putting money in the youth’s pockets while at the same time enhancing community access to social and economic infrastructure.

The Youth Enterprise Development fund was also increased by ksh.385 Million. Through increased lending of the fund, the expectations were that more youth and youth groups would engage themselves in entrepreneurial activities thereby enhancing increased employability.

The budget also sought to address the challenge of young people being denied access to formal employment due to lack of experience. Many youths cannot access relevant internships to gain this experience. To address this, the government resorted to engage the private sector in consultations on the best ways to extend tax breaks to firms offering internships and training placements for the youth, training and passing on the relevant work experience and enhancing the employability of youth. The minister urged hard working private firms under the leadership of KEPSA and KAM to reciprocate and avail opportunities for internship while also harnessing on the potential of the Kenyan youth.

It should be noted that the 2011/12 budget focused much on the economic component, highlighting more on how to cushion youth unemployment. Social issues affecting the youth weren't considered much.

### **Youth and Unemployment**

Following the violence that hit the country in early 2008 as a result of disputed elections, the Kenyan government put in place certain initiatives to promote youth employment and empowerment. Youth unemployment was among the major factors that fuelled the violence. The main aim of the initiatives was to increase youth employment in the country as well as enhance their engagement in governance, reforms and economic development. The initiatives aimed at addressing youth unemployment under agenda 4 of NARA include;

- Generation of an average of 740,000 new jobs each year from 2008-2012
- Revitalization and expansion of the Youth Polytechnics in all districts to facilitate training of the young people in Technical, Vocational, and Entrepreneurial Skills to equip them with relevant skills to participate fully in productive activities

- Rehabilitation or establishment of Youth Empowerment Centers in all constituencies
- Development and enactment of a National Youth Council Bill
- Establishment of Youth Enterprise and Employment Programme to promote SMEs and self-employment among the youth
- Increasing Youth Enterprise Development Fund and the establishment of mechanisms for easy access to credit and collateral

**Budgetary recommendations towards enhancing youth development issues are addressed effectively**

The initiatives above are noble in addressing youth unemployment. However the magnitude of their benefit lies with the manner in which they are implemented. The government needs to increase its effort in the implementation of these initiatives and others that impact directly on the youth. A prosperous nation becomes prosperous when its human resource is healthy and literate, since this makes implementation of development oriented policies easy. The success of the Vision 2030 development strategy depends on these too.

**Youth and Economic Development Recommendations**

**i. Generation of 740,000 jobs annually from 2008-2012**

The government's promise to create 740,000 jobs for the youth per annum from year 2008 still remains one of the biggest delivery tests for the grand coalition government. Most of the young people both skilled; semi skilled and unskilled cannot secure gainful employment opportunities because of the never expanding labour market. The government should therefore make efforts in expanding the job market since the country's economy has not kept pace with the number of youth entering the job market each and every year. Even with the rapid expansion of the education sector, without the expansion of the labour market to accommodate the many graduates coming from the education institutions, youth unemployment will still rife. In this regard, the youth propose;

1. Reduction in the business registration and operation costs for foreign investors as well as offering of incentives such as tax rebates and holidays to boost investments thus creation of more jobs.
2. Revision of the Kazi kwa Vijana policy to become more sustainable and able to accommodate graduates from institutions of higher learning. This also calls for adequate funding to facilitate effective implementation.
3. Revision of the education policy such that education is made to create job opportunities for the youth other than creating job seekers
4. Allocation of funds to enhance establishment of an employment bureau to collect, assess and act on data concerning the number of unemployed youths, their level of education and skills, their geographical spread and their preferred occupations.

**i. The Youth Enterprise Development Fund**

This was an employment marshal plan which recommended a collaborative strategy through which the youth were to be engaged in useful employment. The fund has focused greatly enterprise development as a key strategy that has seen an increase in economic opportunities for the youth. So far the government has allocated Kshs.2.25 billion to the fund since its inception with further commitments in the future. However, even with the fund in place, still majority of the youth haven't benefitted. It's in this regard that the youth propose;

1. An increase in the budgetary allocation for the youth fund to 1 billion in the upcoming budget.
2. Allocation of funds to enhance establishment of commercial infrastructure to enable majority of the youth who have businesses but without structures benefit. This will also ease the problem of hawkers in major towns

**ii. Revitalization and expansion of the Youth Polytechnics in all Districts**

Revitalization and expansion of youth polytechnics in all districts was to facilitate training of the young people in Technical, Vocational, and Entrepreneurial Skills so as to equip them with the relevant skills to participate fully in productive activities. Only 56 Youth polytechnics have been refurbished and equipped with sufficient tools to facilitate the provision of appropriate and quality vocational and technical training to the youth. Also the subsidization programme rolled out to all youth polytechnics has only managed to benefit 4,400 youth from 89 polytechnics countrywide. The country can only bridge the youth unemployment gap if majority of the unemployed youth have skills that can enable them start up their own enterprises, hence we propose that;

1. The government should increase its budgetary allocation to the youth polytechnics to facilitate purchase of relevant equipment for technical skills transfer
2. The government should also set aside a budget to facilitate establishment and revitalization of more youth polytechnics

**iii. Rehabilitation or establishment of Youth Empowerment Centers in all constituencies**

The government also promised to rehabilitate or establish Youth Empowerment Centers in all constituencies. Three years down the line, the MOYAS and CDF have managed to establish 105 Constituency Youth Empowerment Centers. This implies that still 107 constituencies need to be established and equipped for the benefit of the youth. It's also shocking that only 20 centres have been fully equipped and thus the benefit of these centres to the youth in terms of addressing youth unemployment hangs in the balance, hence we propose that;

1. The government should allocate more money to enhance the completion and facilitation of all the youth empowerment centres in the country as well as come up with a sustainability plan such that the use of these centres is continuous and majority of the youth can benefit from them.
2. The government should also set aside a budget to facilitate programmes that are going to benefit persons with disabilities from these centres

**iv. Development and Enactment of the National Youth Council Bill**

The National Youth Council was set by an Act of Parliament (National Youth Council Act 2009) with the mandate to coordinate, monitor, advocate and promote youth issues, youth led initiatives in Kenya, design and continuously review the National Youth Policy. Although the Act was gazetted in 2010, it was meant to ensure the effective implementation of the National Youth Policy which proves the fact that the process is long overdue and has resulted in uncoordinated implementation of the Policy. The NYC elections were conducted in March 2011, but they were stopped following a petition, whose court hearing is to take place in February. The youth however propose that;

1. The government should set aside a budget for MOYAS to facilitate effective civic education and awareness as well as election of the National Youth Council Elections

**Recommendations on other issues impinging on the youth**

**Youth and Healthcare**

The Youth face a myriad of health related problems which include widespread malaria, HIV/Aids among other diseases. More than 33% of the Kenyan youth are infected with Aids. It is prudent that the government does a lot of healthcare campaigns and sensitization on how the youth can prevent themselves from contracting HIV/Aids. Sensitization and proper medication should also be the order of the day when it comes to the other diseases that affect the youth. The youth therefore

propose that;

1. The government should set up more health facilities especially at the constituency and county levels
2. Facilitation of the hospitals with proper equipment and drugs should be enhanced
3. A curriculum on HIV/Aids should be rolled out and implemented at all levels of education to create enough awareness

### **Youth and Education**

Many youth drop out of the various education institutions because of the high cost of education and poverty. This is dominant in secondary schools, colleges and higher institutions of learning. Also lack of readmission policy for teenage mothers ends up leaving many youth out of school. The youth propose that;

1. The government comes up with a subsidization plan to cushion against high school fees charged in secondary schools
2. Increase in the budgetary allocations for bursaries to the CDF which facilitates sustainable education at the constituency levels
3. Design and implementation of a re-admission policy for teenage mothers

### **Youth, Crime and Deviant behavior**

Due to idleness, unemployment and drop out from schools, many youth have ended up engaging in drug abuse and drug related activities. These are some of the issues that contributed to the engagement of the youth in violence during the post election violence. Majority of the youth who have been affected are the youth in Nairobi and those at the Kenyan coast. We recommend that;

1. The government sets aside a budget to establish rehabilitation centres in the areas hit worst by drugs
2. The government conducts a lot of civic education on drugs and dangers of drug abuse

### **Youth and Environment**

Environment degradation through pollution, poor waste management and deforestation still remain a major challenge. The need to conserve the environment has become increasingly important and many organizations have embarked on activities to conserve the environment through tree planting, bio-diversity conservation, agro-forestry among others. We recommend that;

1. The government should strengthen the involvement of the youth in environmental conservation programmes through effective funding
2. Promote the set up of resource centres to provide vocational training and dissemination of environment research work

## **Youth and Sports**

Sports and recreation are vital for youth development. They have contributed much in making the youth make good use of their leisure time instead of being idle. The issue of large numbers of unemployed and idle youth in the country is believed to have played a critical role in the eruption of violence that followed the 2007 disputed general elections. Sports teach so much more than what is easily seen on the surface. The physical benefits are obvious, as are the social benefits, such as learning to work with others and acceptance of those who are different. The youth are able to find their role, change or adapt their role and redefine who they are, giving them self worth and accomplishment. Kenya's youth have overtime shone both in the regional front and the world at large in athletics, soccer, volleyball and Rugby. Through their engagement in sports, they have managed to earn a livelihood too. In this regard, we recommend the following to be incorporated in the upcoming budget;

1. The government should set aside a budget to promote sports at the constituency level. This fund should be managed by the CDF and a proper audit and monitoring evaluate its effectiveness such that it is not used as an avenue of corruption.
2. It should also ensure that it comes up with a sports policy that will see its sports men and women motivated through good remunerations, exchange programmes, good sporting facilities among others.

*THANK YOU!*