

Strengthening the capacity of Governments in the ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA regions to respond to the needs of youth in formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies”

**Youth Policy Toolbox
National Workshop Report**

February, 2017

1.0 BACKGROUND

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is working to strengthen youth policies and programmes through the development of tools and approaches to tackle emerging social challenges in the context of the school-to-work transition. This is within the framework of the joint Development Account Project on “Strengthening the capacity of Governments in the ECA, ESCAP¹, and ESCWA² regions to respond to the needs of youth in formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies.” The main objective is to strengthen the capacity of governments and other actors, including youth-led organizations, to develop regional knowledge management systems on youth development.

The project focuses on providing support to national initiatives, promoting exchange of experiences, and documenting innovative practices. Key areas include increasing understanding among policymakers of the issues faced by youth, strengthening capacity of policymakers to formulate cross-sectoral policies that enhance effective participation of youth in economic, social and political life, and enhancing engagement between policymakers and youth groups in jointly designing, amending and implementing youth-based policies for inclusive and sustainable development. The aim of the project is to assist governments and youth-led organizations in developing inclusive and sustainable development policies in the ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA regions through the use of an on-line Youth Policy Toolbox.

The Toolbox aims to act as a repository of knowledge, experience and good practices, and host learning modules that will provide policymakers with a comprehensive resource for developing inclusive and responsive youth policies. Particular attention will be directed towards enhancing the school-to-work transition for young people, specifically through the promotion of better understanding youth’s needs. The most important of these include access to relevant, high quality education; financial instruments to facilitate entrepreneurship; skills training and decent work. Capacity built by the Toolbox will contribute to member States’ ability to realize SDG 4 targets 3, 4, 5, 7 and SDG 8 target 5, 6, 8 and 10.

The good practices on the school-to-work transition for the Toolbox are being compiled according to the following clusters:

1. Youth with disabilities
2. Youth entrepreneurship
3. Youth who have dropped out from school
4. Youth and Technical, Vocational Education and Training
5. Gender and school-to-work transition

The project is engaging potential users of the toolbox to ensure relevance and utility, being conscious of the need to reflect the needs and interests of young women and men, as well as youth with disabilities and other social groupings. For the Africa region, testing and piloting of the toolbox will focus on three countries namely Kenya, Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

¹United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

²United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

1.1.1 Objectives of the National Workshop

ECA is organizing national workshops in the focus countries to engage strategic actors in the development of the Toolbox. Specifically, the workshops will seek to:

- Identify challenges, trends, opportunities and good practices on school-to-work transition in the country
- Consult stakeholders and obtain feedback on the design of the Toolbox
- Review documented national good practices on school-to-work transition
- Share experiences and good practices from other countries
- Test and apply the Toolbox

1.1.2 Why this Activity:

- ✓ To increase understanding among policy makers on the issues faced by youth, including young women, particularly in relation to their equal participation in economic development. This will involve one interregional expert group meeting, Regional analysis in the ESCAP and ESCAW and Organisation of a joint interregional capacity development workshop for young leaders and Government representatives
- ✓ Strengthening capacity of policy makers to formulate cross-sectoral policies that enhance effective participation of youth in economic, social and political life.
- ✓ Enhanced engagement between policy makers and youth groups in jointly designing, amending and implementing youth – based policies for inclusivity. The pilot countries includes: ECA: Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Kenya; ESCWA: Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen and ESCAP: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia,
- ✓ Interregional planning and methodological workshop was done in November, 2014; Develop regional analysis on youth – United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - five-year action Agenda was done between March – Dec 2015; Continental EGMS, was held in November, 2015.

The next step:

- ✓ Preparation of youth policy tool box
- ✓ National level workshops to test tool box (in 3 countries)
- ✓ Interregional capacity development, end of 2016
- ✓ Regional workshop to disseminate toolbox
- ✓ Grants to selected youth organizations to develop tools

2.0 DISCUSSIONS

Give the youth opportunity to give their experience – for the success of this particular project. Understanding the nature of youth hood as a stage in life – this requires understanding the aspects, and what the youth want.

Base the policies on evidences or experiences that the youth have. What is it that we can do to impart skills? – by empowering the young people – also focus on entrepreneurship.

Increasing the integration of young workers to enable them take opportunities that are available. The challenges faced by youth – “software” issues, there is a missing link due to behaviours, skills and attitude.

Botswana experience - For absorption in the labour market. Synthesize the program implementation challenges. Promotion of employment through legislation – what are other countries doing? In all countries – to what extent did the system of education contribute to their success? Are we able to adopt some of these good practices and are they sustainable? - In terms of selection, the ability of the intervention to give the desired results, we look at the possibility that this intervention can be implemented elsewhere, by assessing the success and replicability.

The skills mismatch is a perennial issue in Kenya's labour market and globally. Skills mismatch – indicators: under education, over education and the dissimilarity index. Skills mismatch in over education occurs when a job advertised requires somebody with a lower qualification yet one with higher qualification applies for the job. While under education occurs when the job advertised requires a higher qualification yet those applying have lower qualification and Dissimilarity index – is where majority who are unemployed are those who possess primary education qualification.

It is evident that passing exams determines one's future. In South Africa (SA) there is matriculation program – without matriculation no one goes on to tertiary institutions. They came up with a program to train the children – which indicated higher pass rate. Training on how to pass exams may be a good practice and there is also need to know how they fair in the job market. There is also teaching in mother tongue in a rural set up, the use of mother tongue can help in building soft skills but it MAY NOT be the best method in the urban set up.

Kenya's TVET institutions in the past has not performed well, and to this point the Government of Kenya is working on improving these institutions to equip the youth with industry based experience and skills that are relevant to the job market. The shared case studies of German Dual System is a good practice that could be borrowed to improve the TVET institutions in Kenya. The system provides a course structure where the student joining the course in the TVET institution knows areas to be covered in that course, where one shall be taking practicals' during the course. For example, 2 days in class and 3 days doing practical in the industry not in school.

The industry to absorb ones skills after completion, the category of jobs that one can do with specific skill acquired, the market rate wage/salary expected for entry jobs; the possible line of courses to take to upgrade one's skills in higher education and the relevant source of information about the course

Challenges

- ✓ Accessing more information about some of the project/interventions becomes a challenge due to lack of proper documentation and clear framework of monitoring and evaluation.
- ✓ Skills mismatch in Kenya as a result of over education and having education system that is not targeted to the labour market is the cause of the mismatch of skills
- ✓ Information asymmetry as a challenge affecting the labour market in Kenya and youth as well. The youth urgently need a repository and centralization of youth interventions as well as Robust Labour Market Information Systems(LMISs) that is updated regularly.
- ✓ Some employment policies do not favour the youth to get into employment. The youth citing cost implications that is unbearable and not affordable by many. For, example, the current requirements in Kenya for one to apply for a job:
 - i. Clearance from Criminal Investigation Department: Certificate of Good Conduct,
 - ii. Clearance from Ethics and Anti Corruption Commission
 - iii. Clearance from Kenya Revenue Authority,
 - iv. Clearance from Higher Education Loans Board,
 - v. Clearance from Credit Reference Bureau.
- ✓ The challenge of sustainability of jobs: Quality of jobs taken by youth is worrying. The youth shared their experiences, but it could be observed that majority are falling under the working poor category. What is holding the youth not to get the quality jobs and what can we do differently?
- ✓ High chances of possibility of violation of worker rights, with the increase of precarious work as shared by the youth.
- ✓ Business malpractice: The challenge where the youth register the business and the business run by other people.
- ✓ Youth noted that education system not working for them. **The Government of Kenya currently working on this.**
- ✓ Several projects/interventions have been implemented but how does the government reach the right target group?

- ✓ Most of the interventions targeting the persons with disabilities are not specific to the various types of disability hence makes it difficult to assess the target population and ensure their success.
- ✓ It is evident that the programs not anchored - to address sustainability since a large number of the interventions rely on donor funding.

Trends noted

- ✓ **Changing nature of work.** The future of work relies on what the youth experiences today. Taking into considering of emerging online work. Online working increasingly opening up the job market for the youth hence needs to be given more priority. The various jobs available are marketing, coding, virtual surveillance, writing, blogging but they need to be introduced to quality online jobs.
- ✓ Many youth finds it easy to join the **informal sector.** The question is how can we improve the informal sector to be a better place to work and attractive for the youth.
- ✓ Focus on **soft skills** – what skills are the youth taking to the labour market after schooling.
- ✓ **Mentorship** has proved to be a good practice to help the youth gain employability skills

Moving forward

- ✓ Marketing the sports to promote youth employment
- ✓ The youth must learn to persevere, have the right attitude and be positive
- ✓ Encouraging and recognizing the role of private sector and non-governmental organization
- ✓ There is need for a clear parameters of mentorship – to ensure that it is done
- ✓ Equipping the youth with skills, by promoting Technical Vocation Education and training Institutions (TVETs).
- ✓ Focusing on helping the youth with business ideas to start the businesses – Small and Medium Enterprises
- ✓ Reviewed curriculum of the education to create a synergy between the normal education system to address the market needs.
- ✓ Follow up mechanisms is how to improve the sustainability through PPP so that it is not just donor driven.

- ✓ In education and training institution – we can only design the curriculum that is relevant to the job market if we provide regularly updated labour market information systems and promoting public private partnership.
- ✓ Cluster the youth so as to provide interventions that effectively target the right group.
- ✓ Base the policies on evidences or experiences that the youth have.
- ✓ Persons with disabilities should not be generalized, as the categories are wide and market the intervention not reaches the right target.
- ✓ Kenyan model of 30% in procurement contracts, being given to the youth, women and persons with disability without competition from established firms is very good idea but may not be working effectively as presumed by many, since the 30% offer is for all the three categories (the youth, persons with disabilities, and women. There is no clear percentage to be distributed to each of them unless each category is specified and given specific allocation.
- ✓ Need for capacity building to all employers to understand the needs of the disabled and give them equal opportunity as the rest of the candidates. Each organization should have a representative of persons with disability who is skilled and involved in the recruitment panel. Allow the persons with disabilities be accompanied during interviews by a representative or a family member.
- ✓ There is need a repository and centralization of youth interventions as well as Robust Labour Market Information Systems (LMISs) that is updated regularly.
- ✓ For the youth to be equipped with employability skills, the institutions must now go beyond just assessing the technical skills. The soft skills can now be tested gradually together with life skills since the youth go through a lot of challenges that can affect their access to quality jobs.
- ✓ Focus on imparting non academic entrepreneurial skills.
- ✓ Up scaling monitoring and evaluation reports, to providing impact assessment to give a clear statistical difference to prove whether the intervention has assisted the youth as compared to those who were not supported through funding.

YOUTH INTERVIEW SESSION

The youth who attended the workshop were interviewed and they all shared their experiences. Below is a photo taken during the interview:



3.0 WORKSHOP GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS

To promote effective participation and involvement, the participants were grouped and required to give their views on the structure of the tool box, share lessons learnt throughout the workshop presentations and discussions. The participants were also required to give suggestions on way forward.

Group Work 1

Comments on the Tool Box

- ✓ Moving forward to change to way forward
- ✓ There is need for evidence based referencing

Lessons Learnt

- ✓ We all have a role to play- collective responsibility in regard to issues affecting the youth
- ✓ Government has an initiative in creating more awareness
- ✓ Synergize efforts between different programs
- ✓ Revise the methodology when dealing with youth. It should be a participatory approach
- ✓ Review entrepreneurship curriculum. We need practicality

Moving Forward

- ✓ Repository of the programs and publications to provide information

- ✓ Government agencies to implement social medical to reach the youth
- ✓ Consider proven interventions that are sensitive
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation needs to be robust

Group Work 2

Comment on the Tool Box

- ✓ Presentation of the tool box should be in a matrix form - reduce the number of words
- ✓ Use more pictures
- ✓ Including the parameters of monitoring and evaluation

Lessons learnt

- ✓ There is need for information integration
- ✓ Need of engagement of stakeholders
- ✓ Let the youth say what they need
- ✓ Harmonize the policies to cater for the needs of the youth
- ✓ Need to create awareness

Moving forward

- ✓ Public private partnership
- ✓ Cluster the youth since their needs are different, and at different stages consider upgrading
- ✓ Strengthen the youth initiatives
- ✓ Mentorship programs
- ✓ Curriculum review
- ✓ Consider nurturing talents – the government could come up with Talent Academies

Group 3

Comment on the Tool Box

- ✓ Tool box is OK – they could develop Apps then provide a section where they can receive comments or feedback

Lessons Learnt

- ✓ Importance of TVET institutions
- ✓ Have a frame work to review the tool box after a certain period of time

Group 4

Comment on the tool box

- ✓ Tool box is comprehensive through, consider less words, more images, user friendly
- ✓ Progressive and updated regularly.

Lessons learnt

- ✓ Borrowing the best practices from other countries
- ✓ Form synergies and partnership when managing issues affecting the youth
- ✓ Enhanced communication – using effective channels that reach the youth
- ✓ Government to provide information that is accessible to all

Moving forward

- ✓ Monitoring and evaluation to measure the progress
- ✓ Participation and involvement to promote ownership
- ✓ Need for updates and review of the tool box
- ✓ Good will in leadership
- ✓ Identify the youth champions and involve them effectively
- ✓ Capacity building
- ✓ Try and test the tool box first

In conclusion, the workshop was successful with full participation from the following participants who attended the workshop:

List of Attendees -Youth Policy Toolbox Workshop (Nairobi)

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Below is a photo taken during the National workshop.



4.0 Field Visits

1. Kenyatta University/Chandaria

i) Mwangi

Founder of Black Developers Africa.

Organization that does Software development, graphic design. They have products such as offline streaming apps – working without internet. Chandaria assisted to them get investors and funds for start up. The products also includes motivational videos – targeting clients aged 10 – 35 years who watch movies; other product also radio development. Their aim is to improve the entertainment industry and nurturing talents.

ii) George

Founder of Kibili Enterprises

They invented safari solar caps. One wears the caps throughout, it provides practical tangible solutions. This product provides clear energy source, convenient or environmental friendly. Target people who mostly spend their time out. Chandaria provided a plat form space, opportunity to meet potential investors; and also the mentors helping in the project development. They are in the process of sourcing the materials

iii) Boniface

Founder Beam Solutions

The organization that does branding, gorilla marketing solution and advertising strategy using scent of products e.g coffee. This channels the client to where the product is sold. They also have a think lab centre where they have come up with a system to now the prices of products, it defines the search based on what you have or how much you want to spend. Boniface started developing innovative ideas as a student at Alliance Lip Lab. Boniface needs to scale up the idea

Service 24

An innovative idea that links the customer and service provider. This provides a trusted partner and enables the customers know who is best at doing something. They also do digital marketing; branding campaign management.

iv) Mark

Ideal Legacy Media

A media platform, from Trans Nzoia from marginalized areas. Working on an innovative community radio station. The radio, produces its own power. The radio customized from shifting since the community moves from one place to another. They will have them on the Apps. They will be connected to this radio via the Apps - online radio. Scaling up the project by opening a resource centre. The resource center to help give other people the opportunity to show case their work. They also plan to scale up the project to provide clean water. The profit from the services provided by the radio station will be used to provide, other community services such as providing water. They plan to launch the radio in July 2017.

v) Kennedy

Founder of Magic Hope

This is a digital marketing platform. They seek to solve marketing problems. The idea was based on solving the problem of unemployment and information asymmetry. They will have an online job platform. They also plan to have product where one can get the goods, get what you want at the best price and also marketing businesses.



2. Fortress of Hope Africa (FOHA)

Founded in the 2006 and registered in 2007.

FOHA is supporting girls in social reproductive health and HIV/Aids

FOHA has branches in Kayole, Dandora, Mathare and Mukuru

In Dandora and Kayole - FOHA deals with adolescents without children in school and out of school

In Mathare and Mukuru – FOHA deals with young mothers, educating them for entrepreneurship for start ups

FOHA success

Basic earning has reduced domestic violence

Able to plan for their family

Reduced teenage pregnancy

FOHA Partners

Family Health, Kenya

NairoBits Trust

Young Women Leadership Institute, Hurligham

Taminus in Dandora – a working group to assist the girls and also working with authority

U-Tena – Ungana Tena, is a community based organization in Mukuru having initiative such as talent

Maxfactor – maximize resources they have to support children who have been affected by HIV/Aids

Funders

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

American Jewish World Service (AJWS) – has supported FOHA for seven years

FOHA also relies on well wishers

Creative Action Institute – USD 800

Other partners

Parents meeting to discuss what the girls are facing. FOHA has identified five schools – both primary and secondary schools that they are working with.

Brookfield Secondary School

Baraka Primary/Secondary School

Blessent Secondary School

Malisho Secondary School

Launch Community Centre

Starlight Secondary School

Good shepherd secondary school

Under FOHA we visited Brookfield Secondary School

The students at Brookfield secondary school noted that they do not know more about youth interventions and that they don't get involved since they do not know what is happening. "Those youth organizations are not helpful since we don't see the results"

What can the government do to ensure that Kenyan youth are successful?

- ✓ Free Wifi
- ✓ Identify the talented youth while they are in school
- ✓ Provide youth with employment opportunities
- ✓ Keep the youth informed of what is happening in the Government
- ✓ Corruption is a challenge and affecting the youth in accessing the services
- ✓ Involve the youth, reach them in schools earlier to prepare them before they complete their secondary education
- ✓ Accessibility to bursary, enhanced scholarship
- ✓ Empowerment and sensitization of the youth to identify their skills while still in school
- ✓ Lack of career guidance and development – "most of us complete secondary school when they still do not know what they can do"
- ✓ Sensitization on importance of TVET institutions. The students noted negative attitude towards TVET institutions, that they will be paid low wages, jobs like tailoring not interesting, lack of information about TVET institutions since they are perceived as training institutions for school drop outs
- ✓ Government to provide all girls in schools with sanitary towels



3. Women Enterprise Fund, Kenya

(i) IDA's Group

Group of 11 women

All are based at Kariakor market, all selling baskets and beads

Received a total of kshs.90,000, funded by Government - Uwezo fund. The group noted that the loan repayment is flexible.

The major challenge:

- ✓ They face lack of funds to enable them expand their business
- ✓ Marketing their product is also a challenge, they would like to take their products to Kampala, Zambia, Uganda and Rwanda

Way forward:

- ✓ The group needs capital – funds
- ✓ Requesting for individual loans, if possible

(ii) Zipporah's Group

The women group was started in 2016. The group started venturing into chicken rearing, but this did not succeed due to spread of bird flu that affected the chicken. They latter started pig rearing. At the time we visited, they are still rearing and have not started selling the pigs. They plan to start selling from April, 2017. They noted that pigs have ready market and they hope they will sell at a better price.

The group started with individual contribution to support their investment

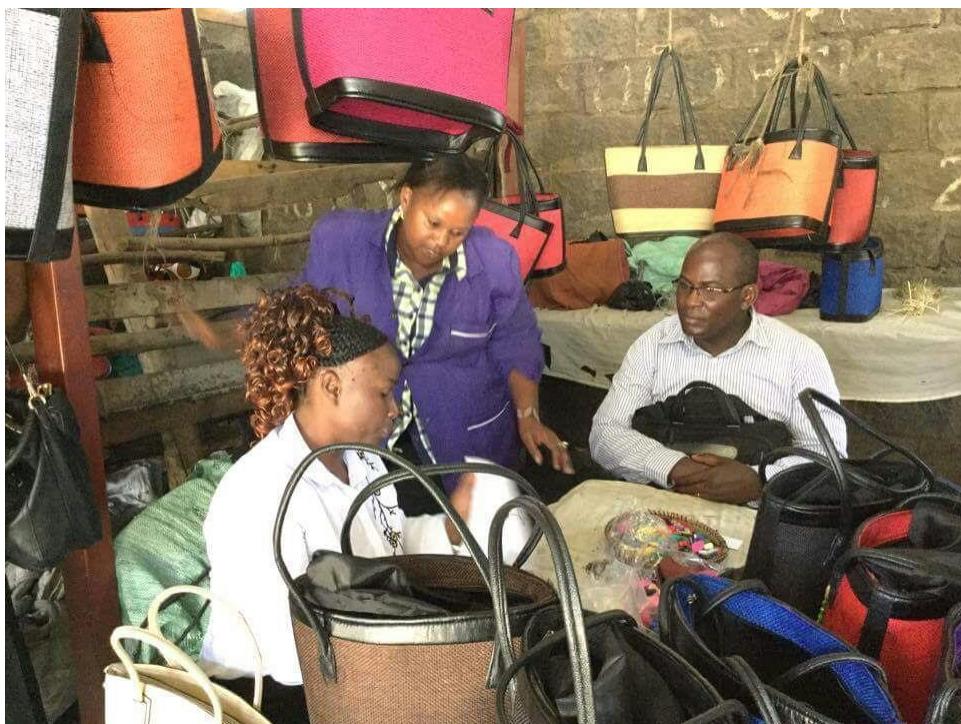
In 2016, the group received funds from WEF, Ksh.100,000

Challenges

Noted lack of funds to expand the business

Youth involvement

Some of the members are young women falling within youth category.



4. Nairobi Bits Trust

NairoBits Trust was founded in 1999 by Dutch Nationals. The main objective of NairoBits is helping the young people from the informal settlements access ICT multimedia skills, mentoring, training, job shadowing and placement. Funding partners; the Prince Claus Fund, the Dutch Embassy, interchurch organisation for development cooperation (ICCO) – Netherland and Cordaid in January 2000. In 2010, Microsoft and International Youth Fund partnered with NairoBits – the youth empowerment program provided USD24,000 in grant funding.

NairoBits deals with training youth from disadvantaged background, they enroll them in their program which is offered on three levels being:

- Level 1: Getting connected – which takes 2 months
- Level 2: Digital garage – takes 6 months
- Level 3: Media lab – takes 3 months

NairoBits have well equipped laboratory and qualified staff members, each student have access to their own machine to work with. Some of their programs are run via community based organizations as show in one site that was visited. The program is run by one of the beneficiaries of NairoBits. They also have programs where they provide counseling for their students since they come from disadvantaged background. This helps in ensuring that there is a balance in the life of students.

The case of NairoBits Trust focuses on the informal settlements (slum areas) of Kenya, where challenges are as diverse and debilitating/unbearable as the effects could be linked to the population that resides there.

Conclusion

The youth policy toolbox will offer a better approach towards bringing together the government, policymakers, youth, civil society, the professionals and community, to find better ways of responding to the needs of the youth as well as formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies. The approach is participatory and gives policymakers opportunity to share the good practices, as well as coming up with creative, effective and progressive policies to address the challenges faced by youth in the modern labour market. Youth sharing experiences from various countries also key towards addressing challenges affecting the youth collectively.