



**KENYA YOUTH WORKING  
GROUP ON SDGs**  
*Leave No Youth Behind*



## **YOUTH CONSULTATIVE SYNTHESIS REPORT TOWARDS KENYA'S HLPF VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS**

**Theme: *Enhancing Youth Engagement in SDGs Implementation***

***Held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2017, Bruce House Nairobi***

### **INTRODUCTION**

This progress reports on the implementation of SDGs in Kenya as pertains to perspectives, aspirations and recommendations, commitment and action frameworks of the Kenya YouthWorking Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with regards to the Kenyan Voluntary National Reviews (VNR). The consultation was sanctioned by Projects and Programs Directorate Office, Ministry of Planning and Devolution.

**Goal of the Process:** The goal is to work with the government in the voluntary national reviews process by getting the views of the youth and feeding into the VNR document

### **Objectives of the Process**

1. To establish inclusion and support of the Kenyan youth in the review process; to share their experiences, successes, challenges and best practices in SDGs implementation
2. Advocate for the Government of Kenya , to include a specific and dedicated section, 'Youth Paragraph/article', of its reviews on the role of young people in SDGS implementation with regards to monitoring, tracking and reporting the progress on the SDGs implementation process
3. Documentation of youth contribution in the achievement of SDGs in Kenya

**Justification:** *Why engagement in the Voluntary National Reviews relevant to Kenyan youth?*

- It offers a platform for the Kenyan youth to link global, regional , national and county based processes and high level engagement spaces that influence the SDGs delivery methods at local level
- We are still in the early stages of the follow-up and reporting cycle for the SDGs, (year two of fifteen),
- By working with the government, the Kenyan youth have the real opportunity to shape ambitious inclusive reporting standards the can set the SDGs on the trajectory of success by 2030.

- Offer a chance to provide best practice on citizen input and feedback to country reporting.

**Methodology:** This Report was compiled through online and offline consultations of the youth that were consolidated in a synthesis workshop held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2017.

## OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATIONS

### I. The Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGS Perspective: The Youth Paragraph

*The Opening statement by the Kenyan Head of State at HLPF in New York will highlight the key messages from the review and touch on critical issues in implementation of sustainable development in the country, we suggest that part of the speech recognizes the role of youth in SDGs implementation and could read;*

Recognizing that the African Union (AU) declared 2017 the year of the African youth, the Government of Kenya in implementing the SDGs through the SDGs roadmap seeks to effectively involve, support and engage the Youth through the Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs in; creating awareness, holistic and collaborative implementation and continuous monitoring of SDGs not as "riders" but as "drivers" at the National, County and grassroots levels.

While Agenda 21 recognized YOUTH as one key stakeholder of the Major Groups under the UN framework whose participation in decision-making is essential for achieving sustainable development, the Government of Kenya reiterates this position by noting that this populace encompasses over 36% of total National populace and will be most affected if the SDGs are not collaboratively implemented with and, owned by the Youth.

### II. Policy and Enabling Environment

It is imperative to note that, the 2015 enactment of the SDGs efforts have been consistent, progressive, ambitious and hinged on the realization that attainment of the SDGs aspirations calls for deliberate and strategic partnerships coupled with diverse coalitions by Kenya as a Government and Country both internally and externally.

Locally, Kenya has set its foundation and is subsequently in progress on the post 2015 process as evidenced by; the National official launch of the SDGs, strategic formulation of the SDGs implementation framework that recognizes the position of the Youth and translation of the SDGs to Swahili in an effort to reach the masses and enhance awareness and understanding of the SDGs.

#### Visible Progresses and actions towards SDGs ownership in Kenya

*A. We acknowledge the government's efforts to promote ownership of SDGs and involve the youth through some of the following visible efforts;*

- Official launch of SDGs at Kasarani International Stadium

- Development of Roadmap to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Kenya's Transition Strategy
- Translation of SDGs into Swahili
- Creation of an office to handle SDGs at Directorate of Programs and Projects

B. *The Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs Network notes the following pillars of progress on Goals 1, 2, 3, 5 & 9:*

### **SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

- The government of Kenya embarked on a Slum Upgrading program to improve the quality of human habitation in its major informal settlement of Nairobi - Kibera Slums. Since commencement of this program, there has been a significant improvement in the living conditions of the slum population which mostly composed of Youth;
- In 2015, The Government of Kenya also revamped the National Youth Service (NYS) Program which saw the creation of jobs for both male and female youth living in Kibera. This program has subsequently increased the purchasing power for youth-led households in various parts of the country in cities, towns, semi-urban and rural areas. The program sought to improve the road and sanitation infrastructural; *and*
- Despite these great strides, the government should also consider focusing on sensitizing the Youth on the existing poverty reduction programs such as the Youth Enterprise Fund in an effort to increase the youth uptake of the loans available therein building group and individual economic power. Emphasis must be put on youth in rural areas.

### **SDG 2: End Hunger, achieve food security & improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**

Agriculture is the backbone of Kenya's economy by extension employing a significant number of Youth across the country. There is need for the government to create an enabling environment for youth to effectively engage in agriculture. This can be done by:

1. Financing youth-friendly financial programs;
2. Inclusion of agribusiness as a course content in vocational training institutions;
3. Integration of technology in agriculture by investing more on research and technology in agriculture; *and*
4. Continuous provision of assistance to youth taking vocational training to be involved in agribusiness and urban farming.

### **Goal 3: Ensure health lives and promote well-being for all ages**

- The Government of Kenya has put in place the Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Policy which has to date effectively guided youth-focused health rights engagements;
- The SRHR policy is also assisting in the effective implementation and monitoring of the level of accessibility, coverage and quality of SRHR services by youth as marginalized communities; *and*
- While the Government of Kenya has done a lot in setting up youth friendly centers/spaces that are particularly relevant to accessing SRHR services at facility level, there is still great potential to do more towards equipping the facilities with modern equipment and also establish more centers across the country.

## Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- Since 2015, there has been a steady and consistent rise in the number of girls in schools as pertains to enrollment and completion;
- The Government has established Anti-FGM commission which has also seen a significant reduction in early marriages. This effort has also been strategic in increasing the number of girls accessing school; *and*
- In celebrating these achievements, the government should also focus on gender equity as opposed to only focusing on equality. This approach will work towards achieving a just society for all youth categories with different needs.

## Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

- It is imperative to note that no economy can grow without a proper infrastructure; the Government of Kenya has made great strides by establishing a rail network -The Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) and the Road Network. These railways and road networks are works in progress and their completion will create great opportunities for Kenya's largest community – The Youth.

### C. Other actions

- The Youth- Formation of Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs
- CSOs- Formation of Kenya SDGs Forum
- Private Sector-Formation of Private Sector SDGs Alliance
- Philanthropists-Formation of Kenya Philanthropists SDGs Forum

## III. Challenges:

While Kenya has made great strides on the aforementioned SDGs, this has not been without challenges, mainly faced by Youth Serving Organisations. These included;

1. There has been limited awareness and understanding by many Kenyans on the SDGs and its aspirations. This has been occasioned by lack of popular and summarized versions of the SDGs for improved understanding. From most youth consulted, the level of unawareness could be as high as 80%;
2. For Kenyans who comprehend the SDGs, they have also not been able to effectively co-relate the SDGs to their daily lives;
3. Through these goals are strategic in the realization of Kenya's Vision 2030 Agenda, its implementation has not been well resourced to form its foundation on mass awareness of the SDGs and specific indicators; *and*
4. Though government is working a host of CSOs towards engaging more youth, lack of systems that guide effective monitoring the implementation of SDGs is also limited the quality of Youth participation.

## IV. Institutional Mechanisms:

In an effort to ensure that Kenya is on course on SDGs, the Government of Kenya has adopted the following strategies for its institutionalization of the post 2015 processes;

1. Document the progress and outcomes of the incorporation of SDGs within vision 2030's Medium Term II and continuation of the same in Medium Term III
2. Establishment of an SDGs unit within the Department of Projects and Programs in Ministry of Planning and Devolution
3. Development of Roadmap to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Kenya's Transition Strategy

In an effort to ensure that Kenya is on course on post2015 process on SDGs, the Government of Kenya can adapt the following strategies for its institutionalization of the post 2015 processes;

1. Continuation of the SDGs incorporation in Medium Term III
2. Support the establishment of Kenya Youth on Working SDGs
3. Setting up of SDGs Youth Desk/Division at the Ministry of Planning, capacity building of the directorate and its staff.
4. In the Roadmap to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Key Strategies and Activities for Transitioning from MDGs to SDGs should spell out the youth constituency in Partnerships Mapping of Stakeholders and Establishing Advocacy and Sensitization on SDGs

#### **V. Means of Implementation:**

- There needs to more structured and effective monitoring and evaluation of implementation gaps, multi-stakeholder approach in assessing progress and qualitative evaluation and reporting of emerging challenges, opportunities all geared at ascertaining the effectiveness and quality of policy engagement and implementation;
- Establishment of SDGs-specific exchange programs for Youth organizations, networks and Coalitions from different countries for shared skills, learning & practice and resource mobilization;
- Capacity build the Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs and link it to the members of the high level committee on SDGs/Technical Working Groups
- Consistent advocacy aimed at influencing resource allocation by government during the budgeting and planning processes by Youth Organizations and Networks to influence resource allocation for effective implementation of SDGs;
- The Government to initiate a volunteering program for its ministries & department to effectively put to use the Youth human resource. This approach will enhance awareness and build a critical mass that will own and drive the SDGs implementation process;
- Review of the existing Poverty Eradication Strategies and Policies (PES) such as the Youth fund to be more Youth friendly, youth focused and subsequently, youth-relevant;
- Positively exploiting the social media space to mainstream technology in the process of creating awareness and ownership on SDGs through *google+, facebook, youtube, twitter* and deliberate websites;
- Consistently engaging the fourth estate as a strategic partner and key stakeholders in the SDGs implementation process;

- Mapping Organizations that have deliberate programs that speak to the SDGs and using such spaces to fundraise for implementation of the SDGs and also to establish strategic coalitions; *and*
- Working with the corporate sector on the basis of their CSR programs by relating the programs to the SDGs and seeking resource support.

## **VI. Next Steps:**

The Youth-Led initiatives on SDGs are steadily gaining momentum in Kenya.

The Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs continues to strategize and focus on mobilizing a Youth mass that is; aware and understands the Agenda 2030 process at National, County, Constituency and Ward levels by establishing engagement opportunities and creating spaces for access to information on SDGs, resource mobilization, collaborative engagements with national and county governments all geared at ensuring that Youth have spaces to be heard and own the SDGs process.

The Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs is steadfast in ensuring that the youth have spaces and platforms to learn about and understand policies that impact their individual and collective lives.

In effect, Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs proposes that the government of Kenya to;

1. A position for a Youth envoy on SDGs be established;
2. Establish a desk division within the Projects and Programs of Department of Ministry of Planning for a National Coordinator be established to coordinate CSOs and Government initiatives on SDGs;
3. Review County Youth Officers' job description to focus on SDGs; *and*
4. Assign financial resources for the SDGs Implementation Framework

## **VII. Statistical/Data Annex:**

1. Country based Government systems should effectively involve the youth to guarantee that data collected is youth informed, data analyzed is youth geared and reporting is youth targeted.
2. The government should work with the Youth Working Group on SDGs, collaboratively to develop, equip and develop content for online system for data sharing on SDGs
3. Youth Organizations to form County Based Social Accountability Platforms as spaces for Youth to engage in effective implementation, monitoring and reporting on SDGs implementation at county and National levels.

## **YOUTH COMMITMENTS:**

**To keep the progress on post 2015 process on SDGs, the Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs commits to;**

1. Report on the progress of post 2015 processes every year without fail as a Network;

2. Carry out consistent campaigns geared at creating awareness on SDGs through the social media;
3. Build capacities of youth leaders to enhance their capacities and understanding of SDGs to reach out to more youth across the country;
4. Brand the SDGs and formulate popular (in local Swahili and other local dialects) and summarized versions of the SDGs for popular understanding;
5. Actively support the work with Youth Organizations, Youth Networks, groups and individuals youth by running webinars, preparing capacity building materials and ensuring that they are comfortable leading their own processes yet working within the Kenya Youth Working Group to ensure consistency;
6. Network with organizations that have been successful on specific SDGs e.g. climate change, health and poverty eradication;
7. Engage in diversely through cultural competitions and talents i.e. music & drama, sports, spoken word, Logo competition to localize SDGs;
8. Use short videos to monitor action by policy makers/implementers on SDGs promises for implementation;
9. Convene Inter-universities debates on SDGs to augment awareness and understanding of all the 17 SDGs and their specific indicators;
10. Formulate interactive E-Journals geared at creating awareness on SDG relevant success and initiatives by youth across the country as a mode of reporting on progress;  
*and*
11. Devolved the post 2015 process to the county level by posting SDG ambassadors in all 47 Counties.
12. Organise Annual National Youth SDGs Summit

## **KEY MESSAGES:**

### **The Kenya Youth Working Group on SDGs proposes the following messages on SDGs process:**

1. Awareness Service Advocacy Philanthropy –(ASAP)
2. Nothing About Us! For Us! Without Us!
3. Leaving No One Behind!
4. There is only now!
5. Data is Key. Involve YOUTH in generation of data!