

3RD

National Youth Leaders
Convention

NAIROBI, KENYA
19th April 2018



***“Create an inclusive
society and promote cohesion:
A call to Action by the Youth”***

The **Youth
Congress**



Abstract

This report summarizes the discussions, resolutions and evaluation of the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, held at Utalii Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya, on 19th April 2018. The National Youth Leaders Convention which brought together delegations from national and county governments, constitutional commissions and independent offices, development partners, private sector, youth-serving organizations, policy makers, researchers and youth leaders from Kenya's 47 counties was organized by The Youth Congress in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ford Foundation, Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), East Africa Institute of the Aga Khan University (EAI) and the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC).

***Themed;
“Create an inclusive society
and promote cohesion: A call to
action by the youth”***

The National Youth Leaders Convention developed and presented bold resolutions and delivery areas which provide a roadmap and actions that the government of Kenya, the youth and other players should take to ensure socio-economic development and prosperity for all Kenyans especially the youth.

Acknowledgements

The Youth Congress would like to thank partners who made the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, a success. In particular, we are grateful to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ford Foundation, Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), East Africa Institute of the Aga Khan University (EAI) and the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC).

We are grateful to the National Government especially the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Directorate of Youth Affairs and National Youth Council (NYC).

Additionally, we want to thank partner organisations, these include; Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC), Action Aid, Kenya Community Development Foundation among others for being part of these.

Special thanks to youth serving organizations that participated including; The Youth Agenda, Africa Youth Trust, County Governance Watch, Governance Pillar Organization, Akili Dada, PAWA254, Kenya Muslims Youth Alliance among others.

Many thanks to the chairs, speakers, volunteers moderators, rapporteurs, translators, the hotels and all the participants who took part at the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention.

Finally, our gratitude to The Youth Congress Secretariat, who worked tirelessly to ensure the Convention was a success under the leadership of Raphael Obonyo (Convener), Henry Stanley Ogola (Programme Coordinator), Halima Hanii (Programme Officer), Christine Osongo (Finance Officer) and Fredrick Ndirangu (Programme Associate).

Asanteni Sana.

All material pertaining to the Forum (including report, photos) are available at The Youth Congress website; www.theyouthcongress.org



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Executive Summary

The 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention held on 19th April 2018 in Nairobi came up with concise and elaborate strategies on how the youth will meaningfully participate in future leadership, enhance their inclusion in politics and economy, and promote cohesion in Kenya.

About 80 per cent of Kenya's population constitutes people aged 35 years and below, a demographic dividend that the country can tap into to spur socio-economic development. However, efforts by successive governments to tackle youth unemployment, marginalization and underdevelopment have not been backed with a solid implementation strategy to inclusively integrate the youth in the growth and leadership of the country. "There is need for multi-sectorial approaches that look at youth as influencers and asset, not just a deficit and numbers if Kenya is to achieve sustainable development," said Raphael Obonyo, Convener of The Youth Congress.

To chat the way forward, The Youth Congress, a national youth-serving organization held the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention (NYLC) at Utalii Hotel in Nairobi. The Convention brought

together over 200 youth leaders drawn from Kenya's 47 counties and stakeholders from government, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), Ford Foundation, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), East Africa Institute of Aga Khan University (EAI), Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC), Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Directorate of Youth Affairs, National Youth Council (NYC), the National Gender & Equality Commission (NGEC), the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA), Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), non-governmental organizations, community based organizations, research and academic institutions, Private sector among other key actors.

By drawing representatives from 47 counties and with a strong theme: "Create an inclusive society and promote cohesion: a call to action by the Youth", the Convention came up with a clear road map that will enhance youth participation and leadership in political and socio-economic development at all levels.



Youth leaders representing the counties with The Youth Congress members of Secretariat

braved the chilly weather, researchers and development experts loaded with information and data on the magnitude of youth marginalization and exclusion in Kenya pointed out that there was need to address the soaring youth unemployment, nurture a new generation of youth leaders and promote positive ethnicity, human rights and cohesion. Most importantly, youth were urged to play a big role in the realization of Vision 2030, which seeks to turn Kenya into a middle-income economy. “Success of Vision 2030 and other development agenda depend on empowering young people. Youth empowerment should be high up on the list of the priorities,” said Mr. Obonyo.

Youth unemployment estimated at 70 percent requires joint interventions between the government, development partners, the private sector and the civil society. Mr Per Knutsson, Head of United Nations Resident Coordinator Office & Strategic Advisor, reiterated that Kenya was at the right strategic positioning for young people to grow. “All the 47 Counties have great economic potential for young people to tap into and develop themselves and the country,” said Mr Knutsson.

In particular, county governments have a role to play in youth development in the country. There is a strategic positioning to devolution for youth to tap into, he added. This calls for young people to look at the positioning of the society strategically. “For youth inclusion in socio-economic development, young people need to look at the frameworks at the county level to make an impact,” said Mr Knutsson.

“Most of the government’s projects, objectives and targets should focus on the youth and ensure that the benefits of growth reach the youth to aid poverty reduction” said Ms. Margaret Mliwa, Programme Officer at the Ford Foundation.

The magnitude of the inequalities between the rich and the poor in the Kenyan society is a yawning gap with visible disparities. “Youth are the only agency that can bridge this gap, and they have a huge role to play,” said Mr. Kegoro, Executive Director Kenya Human Rights Commission.

“Currently, Kenya’s life expectancy stands at 58 per cent, according to a recent study by the African Migration and Policy Development Center (AMADPOC)” said Dr. Eric Nyanjom, Senior Research Associate. If the government takes opportunities to drive economic development, the youth bulge can be a blessing. “The country can leverage on its youth bulge by creating opportunities for the youth in the Big Four agenda and tap into the creativity and innovation of this huge demographic dividend,” said Dr. Nyanjom.

Dr. Alex Awiti, Director, East Africa Institute of the Aga Khan University challenged the youth to ‘hack’ into President Kenyatta’s Big Four development agenda which focuses on affordable housing, food security, affordable healthcare and manufacturing. Dr Awiti told the youth that the Big Four Agenda was an opportunity for them. “You can find your space in the Big Four Agenda through innovations and development of new designs that save on time, costs and that are smart enough. You can show the president how he can attain food security when 70 per cent of the country is arid and semi-arid” Dr. Awiti observed.

Dr. Awiti’s sentiments were echoed by Mr. Cornelius Ombagi, a Policy Analyst at the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, who reminded the youth that the Big Four Agenda was an opportunity to tap into. “Now, the President is focusing on the Big Four Agenda for economic development to harness resources. But the first critical resource is the youth of Kenya. As youth, you have to organize and align yourselves to tap into the four thematic areas; housing, health-care, food security and manufacturing” said Mr. Ombagi.

Mr. Obonyo appealed to the President to ensure that the Big Four delivers decent jobs for Kenya’s youth, and addresses inequality in access to education, food, housing, healthcare and jobs. “To tap their creativity and productivity, the government must invest more in youth programs if it expects to deliver the provision of food security, affordable housing, affordable healthcare, manufacturing, which the president spelt out as key areas of growth in his second term in office” said Mr Obonyo.

Similarly, Mr. Raymond Ochieng, the Chief Executive Officer at the National Youth Council (NYC) lamented that the youth in Kenya had been marginalised for decades and that the 2007 National Youth policy which is under review and the Big Four Agenda present opportunities that the youth in Kenya can make use of, to transform the state of the youth, and that of the nation. “Some doors cannot just open, you have to knock and seek out,” Mr. Ochieng told the youth.

While noting that Kenya had recently gone through difficult times in politics, but the country was now at a “handshake” political moment, Mr. Knutsson advised that it was important for the interests of youth to be captured in the reconciliation process. “There is need for the government to support young people by thinking about the solutions for the future from a devolution point of view. If devolution could be accelerated with a focus on marginalized areas, it could offer more economic opportunities for young people to develop themselves and the country,” said Mr. Knutsson.

Similarly, Mr. George Kegoro, the Executive Director of the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) noted that the youth in Kenya were the villains and victims of political processes. “They are the majority of the voters, but when provoked through non-transparent processes, they throw stones, they kill; and they are also killed, if not badly injured,” he illustrated. It is therefore important that in a handshake moment like today, if its meaning is told to the youth, and the interest, concerns and aspirations of the youth are taken on board. “This would be great for the healing process of the nation,” said Mr. Kegoro.

“While devolution is taking away about 35.2 per cent of the national budget, there are barriers that prevent young people from accessing employment and business opportunities at the counties. The government can create an enabling environment for young people to do business and to create employment, but unfortunately, this is not happening”, said Dr. Nyanjom. “There is an urgent need to open up the rest of Kenya so that young people do not have to come to the city, especially Nairobi to look for employment opportunities,” he added.

Youth leaders urged the government to set up a stand-alone Ministry for the youth, review the National Youth Policy, support the National Youth Council and appoint youth to serve in public service. “Time has come for the youth to have their ‘own’ ministry that primarily focuses on their issues,” said Mr. Obonyo.

The move to review the National Youth Policy is in tandem with the Commonwealth Plan of Action for young people to be able to participate and share ideas concerning their socio-economic development. “This will enable the youth in Kenya to execute their power and decisions within an enabling environment,” said Mr. Ombagi.

Similarly, Dr. Awiti urged the youth to wake up, fight and occupy their rightful space. He urged the youth to chart their path to those spaces where they would want to be. “There is nothing that stops you from doing what you want. There is nothing that stops anybody with determination. Be the ultimate version of yourself. Make the choices that you want and fight hard. Decide what you would want and get it. Rise up and go grab that which is yours,” he advised.

Rapid population growth seen as a hindrance to economic growth and stability of the youth due to over-dependence. “Population control will help the country to manage resources in the economy. Young people in Kenya have got high dependency rates, which have fueled a spending culture among young people who have got no savings. An increase in opportunities for the youth to exploit will yield higher socio-economic gains, which translates into more savings. This would see Kenya register a higher economic growth,” Dr. Nyanjom said.

Mr. Kegoro further said that young people have not yet found the opportunities to develop themselves economically, and that poverty in Kenya today is being felt more in urban areas than before. “The poorest in Kenya have got no jobs, they lack housing and livelihoods. They lack access to clean water, sleep in open parks and struggle to raise Ksh1000 rent,” lamented Mr. Kegoro.

He noted that there was need for the government to create socio-economic opportunities for

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young people. “Youth can provide sound leadership and much needed development for the country if they are listened to, and when their voices are not suppressed,” he added.

Most of the youth leaders said that they are unhappy with some of the leaders that they elected in the previous general election. Mr. Obonyo observed that having more young people in parliament would put their issues on the decision making table. Mr. Ombagi castigated the youth for making wrong political choices that leave them lamenting and deprived. “On the voting day every Kenyan is given the time to go and vote, but we do not know what young people do” he posed.

The Convention urged young people to organize themselves into citizen accountability networks and groups if unhappy with elected leaders and hold them to account.

The resolutions made at the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, captured as 10 Point Agenda, call for robust action to ensure youth inclusion in socio-economic and political spheres. However, and most important, the true test of the resolution and commitment to the agenda will be implementation.

Introduction

In brief

The Convention “Create an inclusive society and promote cohesion: a call to action by the Youth” organized by The Youth Congress in cooperation with other youth serving organisations, national and county governments, development partners, media and other agencies was held at Utalii Hotel, Nairobi, on Thursday, April 19th, 2018. Participants discussed the important need for inclusion and cohesion in relation to the Kenyan youth.

The National Youth Leaders Convention brought together over 200 representatives drawn from all the 47 counties, and stakeholder organizations that include representatives from national and county governments, youth serving organizations, civil society organisations, Kenya Young Parliamentarian Association (KYPA), Young Professionals, learning institutions, private sector, National Youth Council, development partners, media, among others. Participants were selected carefully through an application and vetting process to ensure that they include youth in their diversity and are representative as possible.

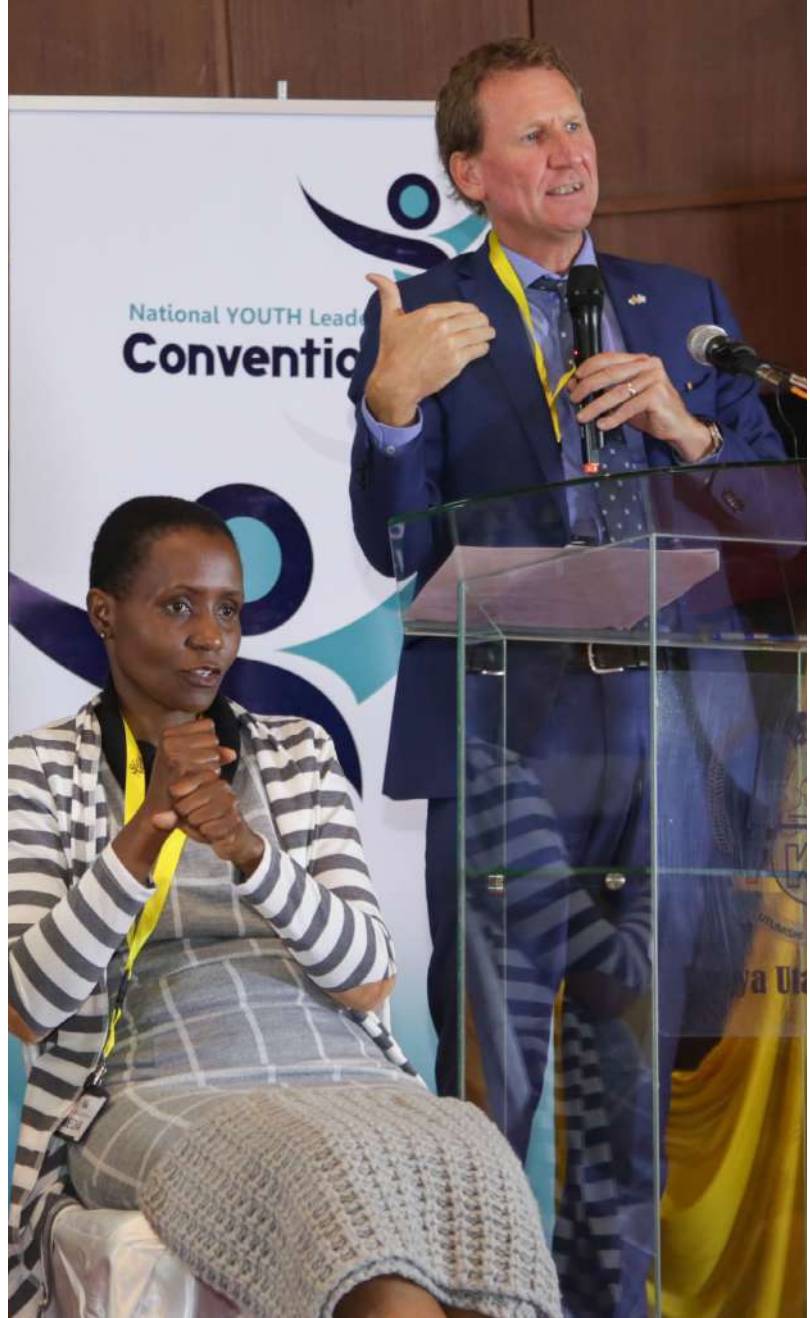
The 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention gave participants and Kenyan youth a chance to cast spotlight on challenges faced by young people, and the perils of growing exclusion, as government strive to achieve Vision 2030, and realize Sustainable Development Goals.

A wide ranging panel discussion on the theme of creating inclusive society and promoting cohesion – a call to action by youth, set the stage for general discussion and working sessions in which delegates focused on three main issues namely; Economic development (youth and jobs), Leadership (youth leadership) and Ethnicity, security & cohesion. Most importantly, participants emphasized among other points, how Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goals and Kenya’s success is hinged on the empowerment of young people.

The 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention coincided with the 10th anniversary of The Youth Congress, and provided a platform for the launch of the Organization’s County Youth Representatives, and the release of the organization’s new strategic plan (2017-2020).

The forum proposed resolutions on some of the actions required to create an inclusive society and promote cohesion.

Out of **882**
Board Members
in Kenya’s State Corporations
Only 9 are Youth



Context

With 80 per cent of its population being under the age of 35 years, with a median age of 19 years, Kenya is one of the young nations in the world. Unfortunately, although successive governments have identified various measures to tackle youth problems, the implementation strategy seems to be weak.

It is tragic that the most productive constituent of the country's population is underutilized and not sufficiently included in governance and the economy. With many young people unemployed, the threat of disruption to growth and development has always been real in the country.

Kenya has recorded steady economic growth, with major infrastructure projects under construction that can rightly be said to have created more jobs. However, there are no elaborate plans to create sustainable jobs commensurate with

the gravity of the problem of joblessness among the youth.

There is a need for a joint strategy and policy changes to target inclusion and integration of all citizens especially the youth in the growth and leadership of the country, to enhance cohesion.

Kenya should focus more on youth in the country to fast track socio-economic development. Kenya must start looking at youth as influencers, not just numbers.

The population of young people in Kenya is growing rapidly, and the country is getting younger every day. There are growing numbers of youth with good education but unemployed. Many are not empowered enough to sustain themselves. Government in collaboration with other actors should devise strategies to help young people and the country as whole.

The government's intention to empower the youth has been good. Unfortunately, none of these efforts appreciates the history of the youth in this country. Coming from a marginalised background, an element of affirmative action is needed if the country is to reverse the existing situation.

Young people have an important role to play in the country's development, especially in the realization of Vision 2030, which seeks to turn Kenya into a middle-income economy. Success of Vision 2030 depends on empowering young people. Youth empowerment should be high up on the list of the priorities of the Vision 2030 programmes. Youth unemployment estimated at 70 percent, remains the single biggest challenge in the country, and most of the government's projects, objectives and targets should focus on the youth.

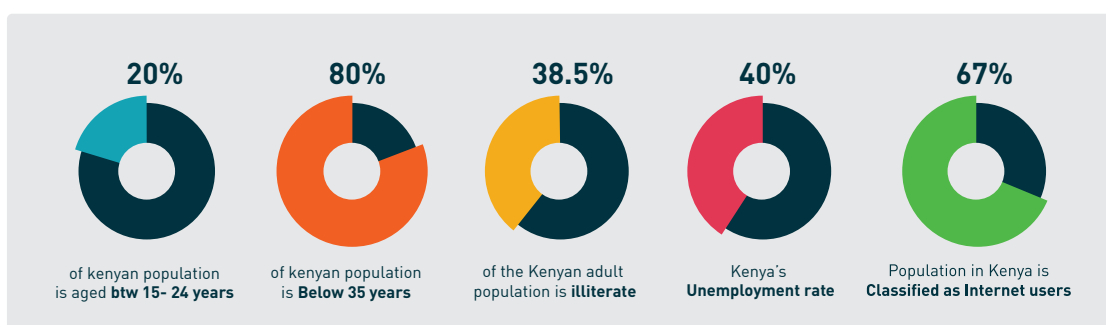
Government through its Ministries has already prepared the third Medium Term Plan (MTPs), which outlines Kenya's development focus for the next five years (2018-2022). The key drivers of MTPs include the achievement of 10% GDP growth, and assuring Kenya's transition into a middle-income economy. As Kenya implements MTP3, there is need to reflect on the condition and position of youth.

Equally important, the government's vision for improving the economy, also referred to as the Big Four delivery pillars that include affordable housing and healthcare, food security and manufacturing, must have youth at the centre. The big four must deliver decent jobs for Kenya's youth, and address inequality in access to education, housing, health care, jobs among others.

If Kenya fails to involve and target the youth in the implementation of the Big Four, all the other challenges, including insecurity and crime will just become greater, and threaten to destroy us. The compounded effect of these challenges is a country that lags behind in its pace of socio-economic development, especially when investment is put in growth areas without targeting the youth factor.

Noteworthy, the challenge confronting Kenya is inequality and exclusion. The much-touted economic growth that is being witnessed in Kenya today is not sustainable unless the government promotes inclusiveness in all spheres and sectors. Kenya must ensure that the benefits of growth reach more people, especially the youth, thereby aiding poverty reduction. Although the government has, in recent years successfully sought integration on a number of issues, very little has been achieved in improving the social – economic wellbeing of the youth.

1. **Creation of jobs for youth**, through education reforms, skills development, empowerment programs and expansion of manufacturing, agriculture, entrepreneurship sectors.
2. **Build the next generation of ethical leaders**, and prepare youth to take up leadership positions at different levels.
3. **Interventions that will promote positive ethnicity, security and cohesion**, and ensure that Kenyans are assured of peace and Cohesion.



The National Youth Leaders Convention

On April 19th 2018, The Youth Congress hosted the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention (NYLC). The convention provided a platform for youth and diverse stakeholders to deliberate on issues of Inclusion and Cohesion, with a view to generate recommendations that further enhance youth development in the country. The key sub-themes of the 3rd NYLC included youth employment, youth and leadership and ethnicity, security and cohesion.

The second National Youth Leaders Convention focused on ways of building partnerships for

youth development. The forum discussed ways in which young people could play an active role in the implementation of Sustainable Development, and change the leadership dimension. It also addressed how the youth could best communicate on the Agenda, bringing on board the innovative use of social media and communication tools. The emphasis was for young leaders to be the people's representatives, and for Kenya to review the Youth Policy and develop effective framework for youth representation, participation and empowerment.



The first National Youth Leaders Convention focused on youth and devolution. The forum brought together decision makers on issues of devolution in Kenya, experts on devolved system of governance, policy makers, development partners, private sector and leaders of youth serving organizations. In that case, the national youth forum was a real engagement between youth and main actors in devolution. The forums was a profound step towards influencing policy and governance and ensure that youth and youth issues are placed at the core of decision making at the national and county levels.

This, 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention built on the previous conventions and related processes. The conventions brought together 200 diverse youth representatives from all the 47 counties. The 200 representatives from different counties and groups were selected for participation out of 4000 applications received in 2018. There were online participants who were trending on the twitter hash (#) tag #YouthEmpowerment2018.

The forum was divided into sessions with panel and plenary discussions and working groups. Input through pre-event information gathering tools, and the social media formed part of the discussions.

The report and resolutions (outcome document) will be forwarded to the relevant institutions for further deliberation and action. Prior to the convention, The Youth Congress collected and col-

lated relevant information from youth at the county and national levels, to create the context, set stage for discussions at the forum and draft the outcome document.

The Youth Congress used media and other platforms to sensitize and engage youth on the topical issues for discussion. Key issues of discussion were posted for comments from the public and other young people both at the forum and outside the forum. The comment and questions were flagged at the forum and read to the panel and delegates for their further inputs. A statement/resolutions on key issues discussed and passed at the convention have been captured in traditional and social media.

The Youth Congress has a communication strategy as part of the organization's 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. Additionally, Youth Congress developed an elaborate plan to utilize traditional media, through engagement on TV Talk Shows, Opinion Pieces, Press Release among others.

Most important, the organization used social media to create awareness, and to share information about the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention. By using all forms of media, The Youth Congress was able to reach youth in their diversity – and a large number that would not make it to the forum. Social media was utilized to realize the objectives of the Convention including; 1. Facebook 2. Twitter 3. YouTube. 4. Instagram 5. Website among others



The 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention

Goal

Reduce barriers to inclusion and cohesion in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

1. To share lessons, experiences and explore opportunities for youth contribution to national cohesion and development.
2. To share and explore opportunities for youth participation and engagement with the new leadership at the county levels.

Results

- Demonstrated positive contribution of youth to national conversations especially on inclusion and cohesion.
- Facilitated knowledge exchange and joint action to build momentum for creation of inclusive society and promotion of cohesion
- Identified and shared suitable good practices for youth development from the counties and beyond Kenya
- Promoted cooperation and partnerships among the youth, government, civil society and development agencies particularly in the areas of job creation, leadership and cohesion
- Helped in broad dissemination of information on youth development from different stakeholders, taking advantage of the networks in the 47 counties, and at the national level.
- Consolidated partnership for youth development.
- Enhanced involvement of youth in socio-economic and political spheres in the country, to enhance real development in the country.

Project sustainability

The Youth Congress is keen to ensure continuity of the National Youth Leaders Convention, as well as full and proper implementation of the resolutions and commitment made at the forum. In light of the significance of the sustainability of the project and programs, The Youth Congress ensured the following;

1. High Level Planning: Ensured robust leadership across and within systems throughout the process.
2. Resource planning, mobilization and management: Mobilized resources from different partners to meet the needs at the Convention and beyond.
3. Sustainability strategy: The Youth Congress developed a sustainability strategy that defines the organization's goals and ways of ensuring sustainability of its projects, and how improvements can be achieved.
4. Sustainability Standard: The Youth Congress is assessed and certified by Viwango, and one of the key components considered is the sustainability of the organization and its programs.
5. Management of the project: The Youth Congress put in place a project team with competence and expertise to ensure that the project met all the goals including sustainability goal.
6. Partnerships: Reached out and ensured the involvement of stakeholders and advocates.



7. Communication: The Youth Congress put in place an elaborate communication plan, which was key to success and sustainability – to share progress, get feedback and enhance ownership.
8. Community awareness: The organization conducted awareness about the Convention, Resolution and Youth related issues.
9. Engagement of youth and youth organizations: The Youth Congress worked with a constellation of youth organization at the local and national level.
10. Evaluation: The organization ensured evaluation and has incorporated lessons learned in ensuring sustainability of the program.



Resolutions adopted at the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, 2018

Youth leaders called for, and committed to the actions listed below as important to the empowerment of the youth and the creation of an inclusive society and promotion of national cohesion:

- 1 The government to speed up the review of the National Youth Policy through participatory and youth-centred process to accommodate the prevailing states of youth in Kenya with keen focus on unemployment and alignment with the newly identified Big Four agenda that are expected to guide development in the next five years and beyond- universal health care, food security, housing and manufacturing.
- 2 The government to clearly map out what role each county government should play as it rolls out the Big Four Agenda for economic development. This must be informed by an elaborate audit and collection of the data of the existing situation of the youth in every county, outlining their expected participation in the Big Four agenda, their education, skills and training status. Ultimately, the two levels of government must together map up the areas of collaboration and pull the resources needed, both in capital and human to tap unique opportunities each county harbours in order to grow wealth.
- 3 The President H.E Uhuru Kenyatta should create a stand-alone ministry so that it can coordinate all the issues related to the youth.

The problems of the youth are inter-related and mainstreaming them in various ministry has posed a lot of challenge, hence why the government must move from this paradigm. The new ministry should among other things focus on how more youth can be absorbed in the job market, entrepreneurship, linkage to the market, mentorship, access to credit and more importantly be involved in policy formulation on all the issues related to the youth to ensure that emerging problems are nipped at the bud on time.

- 4 The government should tap into the public-private partnerships by creating enabling environments at the national and county governments where more private companies can inject more resources in the counties. Just as the national government is keen on direct foreign investment that is today a huge component of the country's investment profile so should the county governments. They must focus on creation of support infrastructure such as the access roads, water, security and favourable fiscal measures at the county level and more importantly market and seek international partners to allow more investor in their counties to create more job opportunities for the youth.
- 5 The government to deliberately create opportunities for young people as an affirmative action by absorbing more of them in both the county and national government's public service positions. It should also do so in big Big



Four Agenda and all the government projects. This will ensure that the benefits of growth reach the youth to aid in poverty reduction. The magnitude of the inequalities between the rich and the poor in the Kenyan society is a yawning gap with very visible disparities, justifying an affirmative action. If economically empowered, the youth can help to bridge this gap.

- 6 The government to focus on the fight against corruption at both the county and the national government. The issue of corruption and waste of resources at the county level is so huge that it has denied the counties opportunities to create the necessary infrastructure they need to grow wealth.
- 7 The government should capture the interests of the youth in the 'handshake' reconciliatory process and ensure that more will participate in the reconciliation processes that are being conducted to heal the nation. The government in collaboration with the county governments should create social transformation programmes such as inter-county sports competition. Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) report should be implemented to address other historical injustices that have continued to divide the nation with both levels of the governments enhancing national cohesion through participation of diverse groups.
- 8 Youth leaders must unite the youth as the 'Youth Tribe' so that they can harness their

numbers into a political machinery to deliver the Kenya that they want, the Kenya that carries their aspirations and prosperity for all. This would shun negative ethnicity and deliver Kenya from the politics of ethnic patronage and marshal the entire country towards a new progressive dawn for all Kenyans. Youth leaders to send a call for action to all the youth to be involved by the political actors constructively and to refuse to accept the prevailing status quo and seek to build the Kenya that Youth want - a better Kenya.

- 9 Youth must form citizen accountability groups at the county level to enhance their participation in governance, check the excesses at county level, demand for financial accountability and better services and more importantly participate in budget making processes. They should also enhance participation in governance, leadership, accountability and ensure that youth are mainstreamed into development programs and projects at the county level.
- 10 Youth must identify areas in which their innovation will be accommodated in the Big Four Agenda thematic areas to create jobs for themselves. They should help Kenya find solutions leveraging on technology to help to deliver the Big Four Agenda to Kenyans. In this regard, youth should not sit and wait for the government to involve them, but should find a niche around the four thematic development areas and start working on them.



Discussion Proceedings

at The 3rd National Youth Convention held at Utalii Hotel on April, 19, 2018

Welcoming and Opening Remarks

Stanley Henry Ogolla, Programs Coordinator, The Youth Congress

Stanley started by narrating a story, “Somewhere in Africa, a story is told of a young man who approached an old man to ask how his future would turn out. The old man looked at young man, and drew two circles on the ground - Circles A and B, and said he would release a grass hopper, and if it falls on circle A, the young man’s future will be successful, and if it falls on circle B, his future would be tragic. So he released the grasshopper, which jumped from one circle to another- Circle A...Circle B...back and forth, and when it was just about to get tired and rest on circle B, the young man grabbed it, and threw it on circle A.

The old man looked at the young man with astonishment, wondering why he had grabbed the grasshopper and threw it on circle A. The young man responded that he could not sit back and watch a mere grasshopper trying to decide his future. What had the young man done? He had taken action to determine his destiny.

The moral of this story is very simple. Our destiny is in our hands, we must take action to determine our destiny. We cannot sit back and allow life to take its course.”

The Youth Congress was founded to create a platform for youth to articulate their issues, and to

chat a desired path to their destiny. The Youth Congress (TYC) is a youth serving Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) providing young people in Kenya with a platform to articulate their issues, explore opportunities for youth participation and leadership to effectively address their interests and concerns and engage young people in social, economic and political development.



Stanley Henry Ogolla
Programs Coordinator, The Youth Congress

In the past, some political leaders used to make decisions for the youth, and determine the future of young people in Kenya. This has sent a false picture of the youth in Kenya as mere recipients of decisions already made, and empowerment programs developed without their involvement. It is from this perspective that The Youth Congress initiated forum sessions where they worked with political aspirants to re-align their manifestos so that they could prioritize the socio-economic development of young people in Kenya.

Different surveys have been carried out in different parts of the country and findings are herein included:

1. Young people are excluded in policy development for the country.
2. The few individuals in power are deciding the fate for young people despite the fact that they have the will to decide for themselves.
3. Young people are being used to source ideas for development and neglected, not included as the beneficiaries. The people who benefit are those in power.
4. Young people's needs are dictated by the interest of the few in power and corruption cartels.

Therefore, The Youth Congress has created the forum – National Youth Leaders Convention to discuss the problems and generate solutions on youth issues; since it has a structure, and a representation to work with young people from across Kenya who are part of their network. The Youth Congress has developed an agenda to partner with youth organizations, government stakeholders and private institutions all over the country to address these key issues.

Grasshopper movement from circle to circle



Lesson: Young people in Kenya cannot sit down and watch some few individuals determining their future.



“For Kenya to prosper, the youth should be included in every sphere to ensure sustainable socio-economic development. The country cannot move forward when over 80 per cent of its population is lagging behind in development.”

Raphael Obonyo
Convener, The youth Congress

We are in an interesting season, the season for signals. We are glad that the Youth Congress has hosted this historic convening – 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, to send out a strong signal.

I am delighted to welcome all the delegates to the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, which is not a start, but a continuation of a journey, whose destination we all know – the Kenya that youth want.

The Youth Congress expresses profound gratitude to all the delegates for finding time to attend one of the most powerful platforms for youth leaders in Kenya.

It is said, and it is true, that to gauge the stability of any country, you only need to look at the condition and position of its youth. If the youth are doing well, the country will do well. If the youth are not doing well, don't expect the country to make progress.

For Kenya to prosper, youth must be included in every sphere. Make no mistake, excluded and deprived youth are a threat to the country's political stability, economic prosperity and social cohesion.

The National Youth Leaders Convention under the theme; "Create an inclusive society and promote cohesion: A call to action by the youth" is a space and platform to develop a bold vision, roadmap and actions that youth should take to ensure prosperity for all – that is our Idea of Kenya.

The Third National Youth Leaders Convention is sending a signal to the rest of Kenyans that Youth are ready to provide fresh and alternative leadership that this country deserves. This is an important opportunity to talk and devise strategies on how to ensure that youth meaningfully participate, and are included in socio-economic and political spheres.

As we often say, and it is true, if we are not at the decision-making table, we shall surely be on the menu. We must demand and occupy our rightful space, in our politics and the economy. We must

bring our seats to the decision making table, or rather we must turn the table over and build a new one.

The National Youth Leaders Convention, have over the years evolved to be a strategic space and platform for youth leaders to speak with policy makers about the steps that should be taken to address youth issues and concerns.

And we want to remind us, indeed, the Kenyan youth, that we have to rise to new levels of consciousness, embrace new thinking and new ways, if we are to address the problems that bedevil the youth and our country.

Youth must be disruptive, but constructively. We must refuse to accept the status quo, without being destructive. We must refuse to accept the country as it is, and seek to build the Kenya that Youth want - a better Kenya.

We must leave the waiting room, we must stop agonizing and start organizing -we have to take action. This country, depends on us, to provide a new vision, and new direction. We must not let Kenyans down – we must secure the future.

The future is in our hands – the youth. Most important, youth must be aware, that, our future isn't written for us, but by us.



Session I

State of Youth in Kenya

Presenters:

- **Mr George Kegoro**, Executive Director Kenya Human Rights Commission
- **Mr Per Knutsson**, Head of UN Resident Coordinator Office & Strategic Advisor
- **Mr Cornelius Ombagi**, Policy Analyst, Representative, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs
- **Mr Raymond Ochieng**, CEO, National Youth Council
- **Dr Alex Awiti**, Director, East Africa Institute of the Aga Khan University (EAI)

Presentation by Mr George Kegoro, Executive Director, Kenya Human Rights Commission

Mr. George Kegoro, Executive Director, Kenya Human Rights Commission set the stage by outlining the establishment of the commission in the United States before moving to Kenya due to the challenges of registration encountered. The commission in the last 25 years has been excited to promote and spread awareness on human rights in Kenya.

Kenya Human Rights Commission has partnered with The Youth Congress to raise the voices of marginalized young people in Kenya who are often on the edges of society. Mr Kegoro shared



*Mr George Kegoro
Executive Director,
Kenya Human Rights
Commission*

“The approach used by government to end violence and crime by killing the young people is not working and will not solve the problem”

Mr George Kegoro

some experiences of his youth, and how through determination and hardwork he endeavored to achieve his goals.

His past experience was detrimental and he learned that as a young person;

1. Life will never give you a hearing to share your views and talents.
2. Chances are that the environment will be very hostile for you either projected as cultural barriers, political differences, ethnicity, or strict legislation by the authority.

3. If you are lucky enough to be lifted up by someone, make it an effort to lift someone else up as well.

In addition, Mr Kegoro, pointed out that excessive use of force on the youth by police will never solve the insecurity problem in Kenya. “The discrimination being meted against young people is a form of violence against them”, Mr Kegoro noted. “Both males and females face discrimination and abuse, which normally presents itself in different ways”, he observed.

In Kenya, young people have not yet found the opportunities to develop themselves economically. Poverty is today being felt more in urban areas in Kenya than before. According to Mr Kegoro, the poorest in Kenya are young people who have got no jobs, they lack housing and livelihoods. They lack the access to clean water, sleep in open parks and struggle to raise Ksh1000 rent. They are knocking but they are being killed mercilessly so that they can go away. There is therefore a need for socio-economic opportunities for young people. Youth can provide sound leadership for the country if they are listened to, and when their voices are not suppressed.

In Kenya, young people are involved in elections in a big way. They are the majority of the voters. When provoked through non-transparent processes, they throw stones, they kill; and they are also killed, if not injured. Sadly, the youth in Kenya are the villains and victims of political processes.

In a handshake moment like today, if its meaning is told to the youth, it would be great for the healing process of the nation. The problem with political leadership is to keep youth on false engagements and a false consciousness. Political leaders should not define problems of the youth. It is rather the youth to define real problems, to define the agency and the disruption. The youth agency should unite and demand a leadership that is responsive to the issues that they are faced with and the action plans that they require.

According to the Amnesty International report, the police killed 242 young people in 2017 and 214 young people in 2016.

Key highlights by Mr Kegoro

- Problems and solutions identified by the politicians are not for the development of this country. They are false problems with false solutions.
- The people who are affected by extreme actions by the government are usually young single, young married, poor and young widows.
- High levels of poverty among young people and high rates of migration impact negatively on development.
- Poverty is today being felt more in urban areas in Kenya than before. The poorest in Kenya are young people who got no jobs, they lack housing and livelihoods. They lack access to clean water, sleep in open parks and struggle to raise Sh1000 rent.
- Young people are the hope of this nation; let them define the problems and solutions for the country.
- There are huge inequalities between the rich and the poor in the Kenyan society. Youth are the only agency that can bridge this gap and have a huge role to play.
- In a handshake moment like today, if its meaning is told to the youth, it would be great for the healing process of the nation. The problem with political leadership is to keep youth on false engagements and false consciousness.
- Sadly, the youth in Kenya are the villains and victims of political processes. They are the majority of the voters. When provoked through non-transparent processes, they throw stones, they kill; and they are also killed, if not injured.
- Youth can provide sound leadership for the country if they are listened to, and when their voices are not suppressed.

These perspectives form a concrete thesis for the commission to identify and work with the youth agencies to use better approaches and opportunities to address the youth challenges. One of the existing approaches is the Post-Election Programme by the commission on investigating what and how the handshake will mean to change the lives of young people.

**Presentation by Mr Per Knutsson,
Head of UN Resident Coordinator
Office & Strategic Advisor**



Mr Per Knutsson,
Head of UN Resident Coordinator Office
& Strategic Advisor

“Recently, Kenya has gone through difficult times in politics, but the country is now at the handshake political mood. But the interests of the youth are extremely important in the reconciliatory process.”

Per Knutsson

Mr Per Knutsson, represented the Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator where he posed to the audience the personal reflections on youth inclusivity and cohesion on leadership by highlighting its three components as;

- Strategic youth leadership positioning.
- Strategic youth leadership choice.
- Strategic youth leadership action.

He outlined that youth leadership today requires strategic reasoning and strategic action plans. To achieve Vision 2030, youth leaders in Kenya can adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is a global resource. To achieve a strategic plan, youth leaders need strategic reasoning in order to make strategic choices.

He recalled his time as a youth and the inspirations that he draw from his teachers and those above him and learnt how those with few resources and opportunities are able to give the most significant knowledge to those with more resources. Mr Knutsson presented Kenya as a

youthful country constituting two-thirds of the population associating it with greater potential, intelligence and skills from young people for development. He contrasted this with Sweden and other nations in Europe where the youth are few and have less potential to develop the country due to their small number hence making it difficult to strategically integrate young people in Sweden unlike in Kenya.

He noted that Kenya is at the right strategic positioning for young people to grow. The youth in Kenya have to get rich before they grow old. They have the opportunity to invest in the choices that Kenya has made. All the 47 counties have economic great potential for young people to tap into and develop themselves and the country.

He elaborately explained that in their capacity as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), they have challenged the UN to collaborate with County Governments and Local Governments to bring young people on board via the youth organizations instead of bringing their expertise to solve issues. It has been identified in different studies that youth organizations are extremely important since they are ready to change the shift of a country’s strategy, he observed. He urged the Kenyan government and private institutions to invest in competencies in their youth not just through formal education but also in inclusive policy processes.

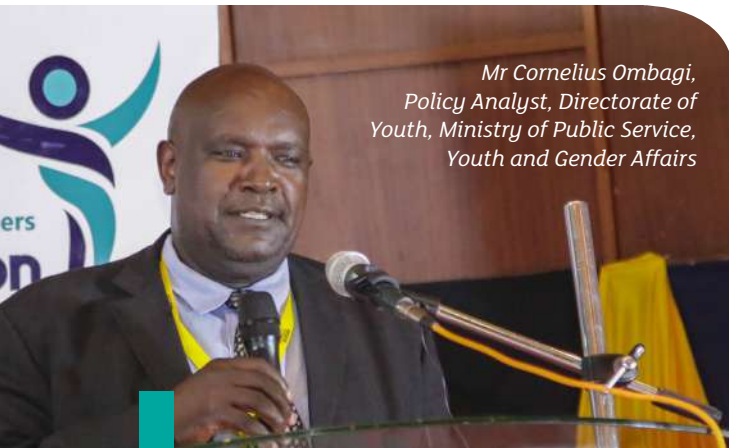
“There is need for the government to support young people by thinking about the solutions for the future from a devolution point of view”, he shared. “Accelerating the devolution process is an opportunity and solution for young people to invest in small scale investments and inclusive innovations”. Mr. Knutsson added that there is a strategic positioning to devolution for youth to tap into. This calls for young people to look at the positioning of the society strategically. For youth inclusion in socio-economic development, young people need to look at the frameworks at the county level to make an impact, he emphasized.

Key highlights by Mr Per Knutsson

- Youth organizations are extremely important since they are ready to change the shift of a country's strategy.
- The government and private institutions should invest in competencies in their youth not just through formal education but also in inclusive policy processes.

- Kenya is at the right strategic positioning for young people to grow. The youth in Kenya have to get rich before they grow old. They have the opportunity to invest in the choices that Kenya has made.
- There is need for the government to support young people by thinking about the solutions for the future from a devolution point of view. This calls for devolution to be accelerated.

Presentation by Mr Cornelius Ombagi, Policy Analyst, Directorate of Youth, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs



Mr Cornelius Ombagi,
Policy Analyst, Directorate of
Youth, Ministry of Public Service,
Youth and Gender Affairs

“The president is now focusing on the Big Four Agenda for economic development to harness resources. But the first critical resource is the youth of Kenya. As youth, you have to align yourselves to tap into the four thematic areas.”

Cornelius Ombagi

Mr Ombagi reiterated that the government's commitment to create an enabling framework for youth development is anchored on the international framework of the United Nations system. He added that the Ministry recognizes that youth empowerment needs to be up-scaled by renewing and entrenching all systems and frameworks.

This, he said, is in tandem with the Commonwealth Plan of Action for young people to be able to participate and share ideas concerning their

socio-economic development. This will enable the youth in Kenya to execute their power and decisions within an enabling environment.

He shared some thoughts on what the Government is doing as appertains to;

- (i) Creating space for young people and,
- (ii) Creating policy for young people.

While observing that the government has a responsibility to create an enabling environment for all to operate and for youth empowerment, Mr Ombagi recognized that there are still a series of challenges presented by young people that the National Youth Policy is not working for their benefit. He noted that the National Youth Policy under review, though very rich in its proposals for youth development will be enhanced so that it can capture the current issues facing the youth and mainstream youth development in all other spheres of development.

Concerned that the youth were not taking advantage of the opportunities availed by the government, in displeasure, Mr Ombagi expressed the irony that young people in Kenya will always say that they want their space, yet, they are the majority within the population. Who takes your space? He posed.

He explained that on the voting day every Kenyan is given the time to go and vote, but there were complexities in understanding what young people do with that democratic opportunity to make the right choices on the Kenya that they want.

Concern was raised that young people still require resources to formulate their policies, the National Youth Council was detached from the ministry and that the National Youth Assembly

was disbanded by the government. Mr Ombagi pin-pointed that through the National Youth Policy, the National Youth Council and the National Youth Congress was constituted in order to enable young people to meet annually.

“The ministry is still putting measures to address concerns such as youth unemployment. But the response from young people is pathetic, he observed”. He said. As a ministry we can see a direct correlation between voting interest and uptake by facilities such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) by young people. He added

Key highlights by Cornelius Ombagi

- Young people are short of resources to push for their agenda to be heard.
- The government cannot control how young people think and what they want.
- Leaders must stretch and do more.
- There is need for the youth to take advantage of spaces like the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) and Uwezo Fund in order to experience real empowerment.
- There are genuine concerns from the youth, but within the same government there are solutions. The government is looking at ways to bring young people at the center of pro-

grams and decisions through a multi-stakeholder strategy.

- As the policy review takes place, youth still have not found an effective bottom up mechanism to inform and engage the government.

He challenged the 47 County governments to find mechanisms of harnessing the efforts of young people in addressing the Big Four Agenda of the government within their spaces and outside their spaces.

**Presentation by
Mr Raymond Ochieng,
CEO, National Youth Council**



Raymond Ochieng
CEO, National Youth Council

Mr Raymond Ochieng explained that youth inclusivity in decision-making was a major issue in solving the problems that young people in Kenya were faced with. He sent a call to the government to promote inclusivity: We are gathered here to put our facts right that the youth of Kenya have been marginalized for long enough and that they have to be empowered to be leaders and influencers in their niche areas. Mr Ochieng acknowledged the issues that bar the youth from executing their development projects includes:

- Structural issues
- Inadequate funds
- Extended promises by the government, and
- Limited access to decision makers, even elected government officials.

However, he encouraged young people to package their ideas well for better engagement in the societal development by the government. “There are opportunities for the youth in the youth policy under review”, Mr Ochieng observed.

“The Big Four Agenda presents opportunities that the youth in Kenya can conceptualize and tap into. Some doors cannot just open, you have to knock and seek out.”

Raymond Ochieng

Presentation by Dr Alex Awiti
Director, East Africa Institute (EAI)
of the Aga Khan University



Dr Alex Awiti.
Director, East Africa Institute (EAI)
of the Aga Khan University

“Youth should hack into the President’s Big Four. Now that he has defined the Big Four, can you assist him to achieve them? Be innovative and creative to help deliver the Big Four to our country. Innovate around the big four and provide the solutions.”

Dr Alex Awiti.

Dr Alex Awiti pointed out the gender imbalance that was represented among the first panel of speakers. There were no women, He wondered.

Dr Awiti first recognized that about 80 percent of Kenyans are aged 35 years and below, yet a team largely drawn from the remainder 20 per cent was leading them. He told the youth that they are the difference and they should not wait longer to make the difference. “Think about where you want to be and curve your path”, he posed.

Dr Awiti went ahead to share his life experience as a young person with determination, persistence and desire to curve his life path. He encouraged the participants to persist in positioning themselves where they want in life, while pointing out that there is nothing that stops anybody with determination. He called upon the youth to be the ultimate version of themselves by blazing their own trail and writing their path to those spaces where they would want to be.

But it was his message to the youth in Kenya to embrace the Big Four Agenda that carried the day. Dr Awiti challenged the youth to ‘hack’ into President Kenyatta’s Big Four Agenda, which focuses on affordable housing, food security, affordable healthcare and manufacturing. Dr Awiti told the youth that the Big Four Agenda was an opportunity for them. “You can find your space in the Big Four Agenda through innovations and new construction designs that save on time, costs and that are smart enough. You can show the president how he can attain food security when 70 per cent of the country is arid and semi-arid,” Dr Awiti observed.

He illustrated: “The president wants to build affordable housing, affordable healthcare, attain food security and spur the manufacturing sector in the Big Four Agenda. But the challenge is, how can he create opportunities for all of us gathered here? Young people can “hack” President Kenyatta’s Big Four Agenda by innovating around the idea.”

He explained that Kenya wants to leverage on an industrial economy, yet there is the danger of environmental pollution. He posed: “How can you develop an industrial strategy for a digital revolution? Be innovative”.

He called upon the youth to create innovative ways of placing themselves at the center of the Big Four Agenda and grow with it. “The government has got no jobs. How can young people create own jobs using the Big Four?” He mentioned the East Africa Institute of the Aga Khan University as one of the institutions that was ready to give opportunities to innovative young people to tap into the Big Four Agenda.

Key highlights by Dr Awiti

- About 80 percent of Kenyans are aged 35 years and below, yet they were being led by a team largely drawn from the remainder 20 per cent.
- Youth should fight hard to achieve their dreams and write their path to those spaces where they would want to be.
- Youth should innovate and ‘hack’ into President Kenyatta’s Big Four Agenda which focuses on housing, food security, affordable healthcare and manufacturing.

Session I: Question and Answer Discussions

Question 1:

Why did the government emasculate the National Youth Council?

Question 2:

Why can't the government create a stand-alone ministry for the youth?

Principles from Session I Presentations

Principle 1

Youth inclusion in Kenya is crucial for national development.

- There is an urgent need to address the soaring youth unemployment, nurture the next generation of youth leaders and promote positive ethnicity and human rights.
- There is an urgent need to integrate youth in all of government projects, objectives and targets. This will promote sustainable national development and cohesion.

Principle 2

Kenya is at the right strategic positioning for young people to grow.

- All the 47 counties have great economic potential for young people to tap into and develop themselves and their country.
- While devolution is taking away 35.2 per cent of national budget, there are barriers that prevent young people from to access employment and business opportunities at the counties.

Principle 3

National Youth Policy which is under review presents an opportunity to capture the dreams and aspirations of young people in Kenya.

- There is need for a multi-sectoral approaches that look at youth as influencers, not just numbers if Kenya is to achieve sustainable development.
- Success of Vision 2030 depends on empowering young people. Youth empowerment should be high up on the list of the priorities.

Principle 4

Investing in youth can bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in Kenya.

- The magnitude of the inequalities between the rich and the poor in the Kenyan society is a yawning gap with very visible disparities.
- Most of the youth in urban areas in Kenya jobless and suffered poverty.

Principle 5

Kenya's youth, over 70 per cent of the population is the first critical resource in the delivery of the Big Four Agenda and the government should tap into the creativity and innovation of this huge demographic dividend.

- The government should ensure that the Big Four delivers decent jobs for Kenya's youth, and addresses inequality.
- Youth can innovate around the Big Four Agenda thematic areas and create jobs for themselves.

Principle 6

The youth in Kenya are the villains and victims of political processes.

- It is important for the interests of the youth to be captured in the 'handshake' reconciliation process.
- The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) report should be dusted from the shelves and implemented to promote national healing and reconciliation.

Principle 7

Leaders have failed the integrity test and in governance.

- Most of the youth are already unhappy with some of the leaders that they elected six months ago.
- Having more young leaders in parliament will help to better articulate issues facing the youth and to push forward the youth development agenda.
- Young people can organize themselves into citizen accountability networks and groups if unhappy with elected leaders and put them into account.

Session II

Presentation and Panel Discussion

Presentation by Dr. Eric Nyanjom, Senior Research Associate, African Migration and Development Policy Center (AMADPOC)



Dr. Eric Nyanjom,
Senior Research Associate, African Migration
and Development Policy Center (AMADPOC)

Dr Eric Nyanjom opened this session by presenting the particular findings of a recent study by the Africa Migration and Development Policy Centre on the youth in Kenya. He pointed out that there was an increasing rate of youth migration in Kenya internally and across the border in search for employment opportunities.

Youth from Northern part of Kenya, which comprises most of the marginalized communities were increasingly migrating to other parts due to

high unemployment rates. He noted that focusing mainly on legislation, policy and regulatory improvements the government has an obligation to solve the problem.

Dr Nyanjom recognized that Kenya had a high youth bulge. The African Migration and Development Policy Center (AMADPOC) study established that given the high population rates, the numbers of young people were increasing by the day. In Kenya's population pyramid, the bottom is heavily overloaded, yet the number of people at top are very few. Currently, Kenya's life expectancy stands at 58 per cent. He pointed out opportunities for the country's development in its huge youth bulge:

1. If the government takes opportunities to drive economic development, the youth bulge can be a blessing.
2. The country can leverage on its youth bulge by creating opportunities for the youth in the Big Four agenda and tap into the creativity and innovation of this huge demographic dividend.

However, he noted that population control will also help the country to manage resources in the economy. Young people in Kenya have got high dependency rates, which has fueled a spending culture among young people who have got no savings. "An increase in opportunities for the youth to exploit will yield higher socio-economic gains which translates into more savings", said Dr

Nyanjom. This would see Kenya register a higher economic growth. He observed that entrepreneurship, if well supported by the government could create alternative employment for the youth to accommodate the high number of young people who graduate from universities and colleges every year.

“Another challenge that emerged from the study is that university and college graduates are being released into the labour market with degree certificates but no market-ready skills”, said Dr Nyanjom. In addition, the study found out that the lack of skills affects the ability of fresh graduates to do business in their area of study. Even more, those that are in business need further skills so that they can be able to manage their businesses well and meaningfully. He concluded: A result of this, a majority of the youth are stranded and the cure to this lies in the hands of the government.

The government can create an enabling environment for young people to do business and to create employment, but unfortunately, this is not happening. He said that there is an urgent need to open up the rest of Kenya so that young people do not have to move to Nairobi to look for employment opportunities. The study also established that even though women are many in numbers, their access to socio-economic opportunities such as government tenders and employment in both the public and private sectors is limited.

Key Highlights by Dr Eric Nyanjom

- Devolution is taking away 40 per cent of national budget, and it is changing face of Kenya’s rural areas. Devolution is creating opportunities but corruption has created barriers for young people to access these opportunities.
- Young women in Kenya are a marginalized lot. Therefore, opportunities for the youth in Kenya have to also be looked at from a gender perspective.
- The Access to business capital is very hard for young people, yet there are resources set aside by the government. But government information is not getting through to young people in the rural area, as the resources are said to be more accessible in Nairobi.
- Population control will also help the country to manage resources in the economy. Young people in Kenya have got high dependency rates, which has fueled a spending culture among young people who have got no savings.

Session II

Question and Answer

Questions to Dr. Eric Nyanjom, African Migration and Development Policy Center (AMADPOC)

Question 1:

How does AMADPOC convince Kenya’s youth to transcend cultural and other barriers to tap into opportunities outside the country?

Response:

Young people do not look at the barriers, but rather, the desire to tap into unexploited opportunities and the motivation to go fill a gap and form a niche in a new country. Already, before they even come to us they have identified untapped opportunities for their socio-economic development.

Question 2:

What happens to the data in the AMADPOC research?

Response:

The survey informs policy formulation in ministries, non-governmental organizations, foreign and national government, and academic institutions in Kenya and the East African region. Given the findings of the survey and the recommendations, the study is going to impact the youth and societies, going forward.

Principles from Amadpoc Presentation

Principle 1

Rapid population growth has hindered economic growth and stability of the youth due to over-dependence.

- Young people in Kenya have got high dependency rates, which has fueled a spending culture among young people who have got no savings.
- Population control will help the country to manage resources in the economy.

Principle 2

Devolution needs to be fast-tracked to create new opportunities for the youth.

- There is an urgent need to open up the rest of Kenya so that young people do not have to come to Nairobi to look for employment opportunities.
- County governments should incentivize investments that target young people as primary employees, suppliers, and solutions-providers at the counties.

Session II Plenary Discussion



Margaret Mliwa,
Programme Officer, Ford Foundation



Rachel Muthoga, Deputy CEO,
Kenya Private Sector Alliance.



Lucky Ogutu Okudo
CEO and Founder, Women in Energy
and Extractives Africa

The Panel:

- **Margaret Mliwa**, Programme Officer, Ford Foundation
- **Rachel Muthoga**, Deputy CEO, Kenya Private Sector Alliance.
- **Lucky Ogutu Okudo**, CEO & Founder, Women in Energy and Extractives Africa

The session chair, Mr. James Smart pointed out that 90 per cent of young people were disappointed with the political leaders that they elected into office six months ago. This set the tone for the plenary discussions.

Questions to the panel

Questions to Ms. Margaret Mliwa, Programme Officer, Ford Foundation

Question 1:

How do we get more youth into employment?

Response:

While dealing with the youth agency, you have to ask yourself, what is their passion and drive? What is their attitude to their issues? Youth would benefit more from having the right attitude towards work, personal development, leadership and community service. They should also demonstrate the right skills set for them to be able to fit into their passion.

But there is also the question of access to opportunities and different services that are within. For instance, is education preparing young people to access opportunities? Youth also need the legal framework and conducive environment to enhance access to these opportunities. Are the prevailing laws empowering or disempowering young people? For instance, in the Big Four Agenda, where are the opportunities? Who are the youth electing into leadership positions, even when they are a bulge in the population?

Kenya's youth have the opportunity even at the community level, but they are electing leaders with questionable values and character. These are some of the opportunities that young people have to get right if their numbers have to work for them.

Question 2:

How do we consolidate efforts in youth employment?

Response:

Youth have to understand skills, capabilities, value that they can add. Not a paper and a degree. Go for skills that

fit into the economy's needs. Private sector employs 70 per cent, but it is in the informal economy as it is the largest employer. It is therefore very critical for the youth to understand the skills needed in the market.

Question 3:

How can the youth participate fully in leadership and governance?

Response:

Let me start by saying that the Ford Foundation compliments efforts being made by the government. In leadership, youth have the numbers and thus they have the ability and the machinery. They thus need to interrogate those that they elect.

Youth also need continuous rigorous research and learning from their experiences with their leaders to know how best to change the status quo. They need to identify which spaces, how best to occupy these spaces. They also need to look at what has changed and to consider what the new trends are.

Questions to Rachel Muthoga, Deputy CEO, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

Question 1:

Youth in entrepreneurship in Kenya contributes 1 per cent of GDP, while women in entrepreneurship contribute 11 per cent. How do we spur youth entrepreneurship?

Response:

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) is working towards the creation of a good business environment to enable youth startups. At its very echelons, KEPSA has committees that look at the sectors. We have one on gender and youth to air youth issues. It has young people in its membership, young entrepreneurs and business owners. Since 2017, there is a startup and SME category to be a member of KEPSA for the youth in entrepreneurship to have their issues mainstreamed in development sectors in order to spur their growth. We are aware that the access to credit from banks has become a major challenge

with interest cap. KEPSA is lobbying to ensure the cap is lifted as it has not had the desired effect. This will enable small businesses and youth start-ups to access credit.

Question 2:

The youth empowerment program in Kenya is an opportunity for a few people to make money and becoming rich. For example there are so many organizations training youth on entrepreneurship so that they can access the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) and Uwezo Fund. How do you train someone for one week on business and you want them to venture into business within one month?

Response:

We have raised such issues with the government and it is going to put together the Biashara Bank. It is important to avoid mistakes with Uwezo fund and YEDF. Young people need to have training and be housed within a business so that they can gain those practical skills.

Question 3:

As youth we should ask ourselves do we need to be employed or do we need to be deployed? How are we packaging ourselves to stand out and also as players in government and private sector? How is KEPSA negotiating for young people?

Response:

Youth sit at KEPSA and have their views heard, but KEPSA cannot control the implementation by government.

Question 4:

Technical polytechnics around Kenya have been upgraded to Universities , we have forgotten technical schools. Where is the space for youth to pursue technical courses in tailoring, carpentry, electrical and mechanical works?

Response:

It is a mistake technical centers were turned into universities. There is a push to invest in technical and vocational training centers (TVET). Part of the reason why unemployment is spiraling is because employers are unable to get the right skills to match the

available jobs. TVET will help to give young people the right skills. Manufacturers will have a say on the skills that they desire to be tailor-made to suit the job market.

Question 5:

Access to government procurement opportunities (AGPO) is never implemented. It is very expensive for a youth to register a company in Kenya. To earn a tender costs much more. How can AGPO benefit the youth?

Response:

AGPO was established to allow opportunities to marginalized groups. But there are issues being looked into. For example if one is listed to the credit reference bureau (CRB),kills business.

Question 6:

How can KEPSA push for the youth to benefit from opportunities in the Big Four Agenda?

Response:

Big Four presents opportunities and challenges for the youth in Kenya. There is need to lobby a lot more to be heard loudly, against corruption and nepotism. KEPSA was involved in Kenya Youth Empowerment Project. In addition KEPSA participated in the recent Ajira Digital Program which offered some lessons that have to be implemented before it is expanded and mainstreamed to ensure youth have access to those opportunities.

Question 7:

Innovation hubs are mushrooming but in posh areas of Nairobi. What happens to youth in other areas of Nairobi? Can youth players act on the same to promote equity in innovation?

Response:

There is a big innovation hub in Dandora, Nairobi that is working with young people. Another one is being set up in Taita Taveta County by some young people. But they need support so that they can have the visibility.

Question 8:

We have been told in this conference that we should, as youth go out there, knock doors and seek opportunities.



Persons with disabilities, how can they go out there and get these opportunities, yet even buildings are not accessible?

Response:

We know that most of the buildings are not even friendly to persons with disabilities. Some of the ramps are unreasonable. There is more work to be done. The law has helped to enforce the requirements as it deals with stigma.

Unveiling Strategic Plan 2017-2020

The Youth Congress unveiled its Strategic Plan 2017-2020, which is the third 3-year strategic plan for The Youth Congress. It covers the period October 2017 to September 2020. The theme of the plan is: consolidating gains to position The Youth Congress as the premiere youth organisation in Kenya. The plan outlines the achievements, challenges and lessons learnt by The Youth Congress in the 2013-16 strategic period. It outlines key strengths and weaknesses then explores the anticipated environment of operation. Finally, the plan presents the programmes for the next three years, which include: Policy and Research, Youth and Leadership, Youth Entrepreneurship, Talent and Innovation, and Institutional Development.

In Policy and Research, The Youth Congress will seek to enhance meaningful participation of youth in policy-making and implementation. In Kenya, youth remain absent in policy and decision making processes, and many are not aware of existing policies that concern and affect them. Majority of youth are not able to access information that would ensure meaningful participation in policy and decision-making. This means that youth's issues are not adequately addressed. Additionally, absence of comprehensive research and data on the condition of youth in the country makes it hard for youth organizations and other key actors, including the government, to effectively address challenges affecting



Shamsa Mohamed Omar, Wajir County Assembly had the honors to unveil the The youth congress Strategic plan 2017- 2020



the youth. As a result, youth groups and organizations are not able to effectively advocate for young people's interests.

In Youth and leadership, The Youth Congress will promote meaningful youth participation in leadership and governance processes. The exclusion from leadership and governance in Kenya has, over the years, subjected youth to manipulation and socio-economic and political hardship leading to desperation and vulnerability. The Youth Congress will identify leadership and mentorship programmes for youth nationally and regionally, identify and link youth with mentorship programmes on leadership and governance and hold youth forums with strategic political parties to advocate for inclusion of youth in leadership.

In Youth Entrepreneurship, Talent and Innovation, The Youth Congress has a strategic objective to ensure that young people are empowered and benefit from available opportunities and utilizing its skills and talents for economic development. It seeks to achieve this by equipping young people with entrepreneurial skills, linking young people to financial opportunities and markets, helping youth to discover, nurture and explore talents, and having partnerships and alliances that advance youth economic development.

In Institutional Development, The Youth Congress has formulated a strategy to run an effectively governed and managed organization with adequate resources to deliver its programmes.

The Youth Congress celebrates its ten years of existence with this strategic plan. That it has survived the years attests to its resilience and relevance. However, it still has a long way to go in terms of institutional maturity. In the next period, it will consolidate gains on governance, management, programme coordination, human resources, communication and networking as it continues to position itself as the premiere youth organisation in the republic. In this regard, the organization will develop a sustainability strategy to ensure that it has adequate resources for smooth and effective implementation of activities, and a staff complement that is competent, passionate, determined and responsive to youth values and agenda. In addition, the organization will formulate functional partnerships and networks, and strengthen existing networks, promote inclusive, and participatory and gender responsive programmes. It will also develop operation plans and resource mobilization strategies through management systems, guideline and policies developed and implemented; and ensure that there are functional and inclusive management and governance systems.

To achieve this Strategic Plan 2017-2020, The Youth Congress will leverage on like-minded organizations as strategic partners with shared objectives to empower young people, alleviate poverty through youth entrepreneurship, reduce inequalities, promote leadership, governance and accountability, grow youth talent and innovation, and to develop sustainable youth-serving organizations going into the future.



Mr. Frank Ouma Uasin Gishu County Assembly cutting the ribbon and also giving out the TYC strategic plan



Session III

Working Group Session

In session, participants were divided voluntarily into three working groups:

1. Inclusive Economy: Youth Economic Empowerment
2. Leadership: New generation of leaders, and holding leaders accountable
3. Cohesion: Ethnicity, Security, Human Rights

The open discussion that followed revolved around five key themes:

- The existing problem and its current status
- The root causes of the problem;
- Interventions made by government and other stakeholders to address the issues
- The actors or stakeholders' matrix
- The recommendations including what can be done or done better.



Working Group 1				
Inclusive Economy: Youth Economic Empowerment				
Problems Identified	Root Causes	Actors	Interventions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employability rate is very low ● Underemployment ● Education mismatch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High level of illiteracy ● Limited space for youth to participate in key economic sectors ● Cartels in access to government tenders, YEDF, etc ● Leadership gaps ● Lack of Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The national and county governments ● Non-governmental organizations ● Faith based Organizations ● TVET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement 30% access to government procurement (AGPO) ● Hope that the newly-introduced education curriculum in Kenya will impart skills for the market ● Introduction of Youth Fund ● Public Private Partnerships 	<p><i>To be done:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishment of vocational training centers ● Introduction of mandatory National Youth Training Service program <p><i>To be improved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage into work-education program for schools

Creation of jobs for youth, through education reforms, skills development, empowerment programs and expansion of manufacturing, agriculture, entrepreneurship sectors.

Working Group 2				
Leadership: New generation of leaders, and holding leaders accountable				
Problems Identified	Root Causes	Actors	Interventions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incapable leaders ● Poor leadership ● Lack of goodwill to support the youth ● Poor capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High level of illiteracy ● Inability to influence and control ● Poor mentorship programs ● Leadership gaps ● Negative ethnicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The national and county governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harmonizing initiatives ● Civic education review to also target youth and children in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proper mentorship program to be implemented in communities, schools, churches, mosques and temples. ● Civic education policy review ● Enhanced public participation to hold leaders accountable ● Free and fair elections

Build the next generation of ethical leaders, and prepare youth to take up leadership positions at different levels.

Working Group 3				
Ethnicity, Security, Human Rights and Cohesion				
Problems Identified	Root Causes	Actors	Interventions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tribalism ● Poor infrastructure and social amenities ● Ethnic and clan-based political patronage ● Extrajudicial killings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social and economic exclusion of young people renders them vulnerable to manipulation by politicians to fuel violence ● Social media abuse ● Miscommunication between government and the people ● Lack of proper community policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The national and county governments ● Non-governmental organizations ● Faith Based Organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TJRC Report ● Peace committee 	<p><i>To be done:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement TJRC Report ● Court proceedings on historical injustices and quests on the killing of young people through ethnic-cleansing in political violence <p><i>To be improved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include youth in the leadership of peace committee and other intervention

Interventions that will promote positive ethnicity, security and cohesion, and ensure that Kenyans are assured of peace and Cohesion.

Session III Plenary Discussion

Short summaries on the discussions by each of the three groups were presented at the plenary session, while the participants noted down on the developments. A key question that was widely discussed between the plenary and the participants was whether electing more young people into political leadership would help place their issues at the decision making table and push forward the youth development agenda.

Views from the participants expressed that a good number of the few young leaders in parliament served their own interest and have let the youth down. There was thus a need to re-examine the role of leaders even before youth make a choice on who to elect. Some of the participants expressed that one does not need to be a youth to be a good leader, but they ought to be trustworthy with people's interest at heart. The participants noted that when an elected leader understands the institution well, they give better leadership especially of key development priority areas such as education.

Some of the youth leaders observed that there is a huge gap between research and policy makers in Kenya. Yet, it was impossible for good governance to operate without data, if progress is to be measurable and quantified. They lamented that there was so much researches done in Kenya on the plight of its youth and how the government could support youth to develop themselves and the country, but the implementers are not there. Mr Raphael Obonyo reminded the participants that power is not given, power is taken; and that they are their own limitation, because even without being elected into leadership positions each one of them is a leader. Know yourself, believe that you are a leader, not of yourself but of ideas, he concluded.

The Panel

- **Kevin Osido**, Executive Director, County Governance Watch
- **Raphael Obonyo**, Convener, The Youth Congress
- **Susan Mwongera**, Executive Director, Youth Agenda

Mr Kevin Osido, Executive Director County Governance Watch in his brief remarks stated that young people needed to participate more in governance so that they can have their voices heard and hold their elected leaders into account. He identified three public participation processes at the county level.

1. Review of the National Youth Policy to speak to issues affecting young people and to determine how government is going to engage with young people. Young people need to identify what opportunities accrue and how they can be part of those opportunities.
2. County integrated development plans (CIDPs). Young people need to read scrutinize these plans and question the processes, budgetary allocations and the implementation of these budgets.
3. There is room for young people to organize themselves into citizen accountability networks and groups of young people disadvantaged in services delivery due to rampant corruption at the county level. This will help over 90% of the youth who now say that they are already unhappy with leaders that they elected six months ago to put them into account. If done, the three would set the pace and set the tone in leadership, governance and accountability in Kenya.



Discussions and questions at the plenary

Questions to Susan Mwongera, Executive Director, Youth Agenda

Question 1:

Do we elect more young people in Kenya?

Response:

Yes, we should. There is a leadership crisis in Kenya and youth feel that they have the solutions. However, some of the young leaders disappoint. Currently, we have 43 young leaders who have made it in the 12th parliament. If we do not hold them accountable they will be like the former in the 11th parliament. In governance, we want prudent management of human and financial resources so that the youth can be empowered. Youth should look for opportunities to have their voices heard in spaces of dialogue for policymaking. It is not easy but it is doable.

Questions to Raphael Obonyo, Convener, The Youth Congress

Question 1:

Why should we have more young people in leadership and governance?

Response:

There is a need to open up the space for young people to participate in leadership and governance in Kenya so that the issues faced by young people can be brought closer to the decision-making table. This would ensure that the country moves forward as a whole and spur socio-economic development since 80 percent of Kenya's population is below the age of 35. This would give the country a competitive edge when it taps into the creativity, knowledge and zeal of its youthful population.

Question 2:

How can we ensure sustainable socio-economic development of the youth in Kenya?

Response:

Having more young people in leadership would foster civic engagement, election reforms, youth activism and youth development. In addition, sustainable youth development in Kenya would be achieved when leaders domesticate policies in their counties, roll out youth-targeted development programs to empower young people socio-economically and create youth-friendly centers that offer services to young people. Sustainable youth development will be unlocked when county executives open up the space for young people to access tenders and do business. County governments have to start looking at what young people can do for them by giving them more jobs and more business.

Questions to Kevin Osido, Executive Director, County Governance Watch

Question 1:

Why is the inclusivity of the youth in leadership important in the development of Kenya?

Response:

The history of youth in Kenya is that of marginalization. Youth are disenfranchised followed by narratives of hopelessness. Decisions are made at a certain table by people who are either elected or selected. To get to committees you have to be seen to add value.



Question 2:

How can youth change the leadership narrative in governance?

Response:

We can only achieve that threshold when we clamour for those positions. For youth-friendly processes in public boards, elections and policy-making, it is going to be effective when young people take the initiative to make change. Youth have to organize themselves effectively. Let us make meaning out of data in order for us to hold leaders into account at county and national level.

Principles from the Working Group Discussions

Principle 1

Youth must use elections to reconfigure the political landscape and midwife a new and better Kenya for all.

- Youth can unite as “Youth Tribe” and use their huge numbers as their machinery to deliver more young leaders into parliament and other governance positions to have their issues well addressed.
- “Youth Tribe” alliances can assist kill negative ethnicity and gather youth around conversations on politics about issues rather than tribal kingpins. This would disempower ethnic alliances which is the main cause for political feuds and tensions.
- Electing more young leaders is a sure way of youth channeling their concerns as young leaders will speak on behalf of the youth in tables where youth are not involved.



Principle 2

There is room for young people to organize themselves into citizen accountability networks and groups of young people disadvantaged in services delivery due to rampant corruption at the county level.

- Young people need to participate more in governance so that they can have their voices heard and hold their elected leaders into account, fight corruption and streamline services delivery at the county level.
- Enhanced youth participation in governance would ensure improved and targeted service delivery, and strategic leadership that adds value and socio-economic sustainability to the youth.

Principle 3

The National and Global development blue-print and agenda are great opportunities youth as stakeholder should take advantage of to spur their development and that of the nation and the globe.

- Youth are the greatest resource for the attainment of Kenya’s Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the delivery of the Big Four Agenda.
- For Kenya to prosper, youth must be included in every development sphere. Make no mistake, excluded and deprived youth are a threat to the country’s political stability, economic prosperity and social cohesion



Closing Remarks

The Youth Congress briefed the participants that resolutions of the convention will be captured in a report that will be presented to government, partner organizations and youth actors across Kenya. The report will be publicized through media to set the stage for a national conversation on opportunities for youth development in the deepening of devolution, Big Four Agenda and other socio-economic and political processes.



Mr Raphael Obonyo
Convener, The Youth Congress





The Youth Congress Celebrates it's 10th Anniversary

The Youth Congress is a registered, youth serving Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) providing young people in Kenya with a platform to articulate their issues, explore opportunities for youth participation and leadership to effectively address their interests and concerns and engage young people in social, economic and political development. Since its formation in 2007, The

Youth Congress has made tremendous progress in promoting progressive youth leadership, participation and collective action in the continuum of good governance, human rights, conflict management, transformation and youth's economic development. To exemplify and relate to the activity among others;



- The Youth Congress in partnership with the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Youth Affairs and other organizations spearheaded the establishment of National Youth Council.
- It conducted Civic education and mobilization to conducted audits and disseminated reports on Kazi Kwa Vijana (job for the youth) program, the report titled: Mobilization without Emancipation, Mapping of youth organization in Nairobi County and published a report titled: Locating the Youth and a survey on barrier to youth entrepreneurship, the report titled: Barrier to youth Entrepreneurship in the informal settlements of Kenya. Developed and disseminated other publications that included; Kenyan Youth in the Constitution and Youth Policy Guide-Kenya: Framework for Youth Participation in Policy-Making.
- Convened the National Youth Forum on Devolution-this brought youth leaders from all the 47 counties to engage with the duty bearers and other stakeholders that included; H.E Hon. Isaac Ruto-Chair Council of Governor and representatives from Transitional Authority-Chair Kinuthia Wamwangi, Constitution Implementation Commission-Prof. Peter Wanyande, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, National Youth Council, Kenya Private Sector Alliance among others.
- Convened the first and last Chief Justice Hon Dr. Willy Mutunga's community visit at Korochocho themed Taking Judiciary Back the People and Office of the Chief Justice Convening with the Youth ('The Last Argument') respectively. It created a platform for youth and community to engage the Chief Justice and the judiciary on injustices and reforms. The cases raised were followed up for further investigation and action. This was in partnership with the Kenya Television Network (KTN) which aired the event live.
- Published and distributed copies of Youth Policy-Kenya: Framework for Youth Participation in Policy-Making. The guide was unveiled by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, Ms. Anne Waiguru, at a forum attended by youth leaders representing about 20 youth-serving organisations, youth leaders from universities, the Chief Executive Officer of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF), and the Youth Advisor at the Ministry. From this, the Cabinet Secretary committed to working with the youth to align the National Youth



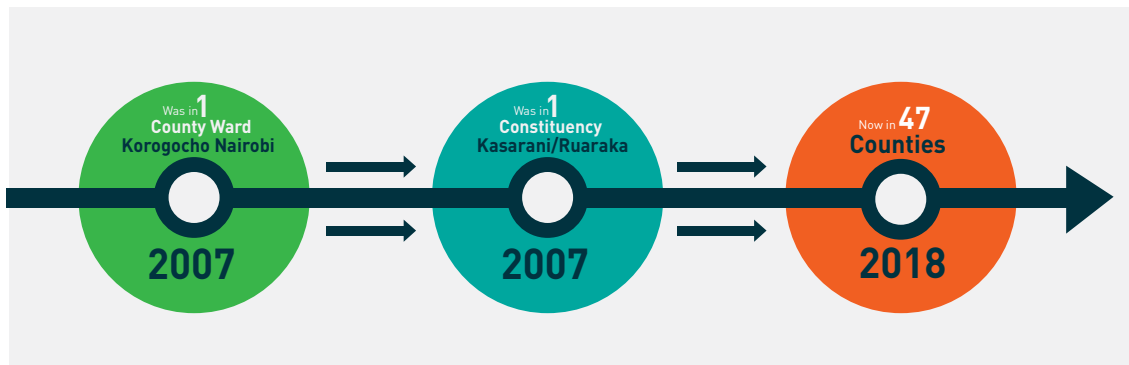
Policy (2007) with the Constitution. The presentation of the policy guide to the minister was covered by the “Star” newspaper. The guide has been presented to the new Cabinet Secretary, Mrs. Sicily Kariuki, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs that, among other processes, have informed the policy review. Copies were also distributed to each governor and all 47 county executive committees in charge of youth affairs.

- The youth leaders’ forum on International Youth Day 2015 convened by TYC in partnership with UN-Habitat on youth role in Habitat III and Policy making and formed a team of nine leaders to follow up on youth participation on the review of the National Youth Policy and Habitat III.
- Convened a National Youth Leaders Convention bringing youth leaders and networks from the 47 counties and the stakeholders including: Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs-represented by Mr. Simon Mwangi (Director), Members of County Assembly; private sector; National Youth Council;

cil; institutions of higher learning and development partners. It created a platform for youth to engage duty bearers and stakeholders on issues of policy and unemployment.

- TYC ran three main campaigns to enhance youth participation in electoral processes. These were: @VijanaTutokeleze, @Not2Young2Run and @Youth4PeaceKe. The purpose was to engage duty bearers (IEBC) and sensitize youth to exercise their civic duty by registering for identification and voter cards and maintain peace towards free, fair and credible elections.
- In partnership with International Youth Council-Kenya, under the Coalition for Kenya Youth Manifesto, TYC supported the development and launch of the Kenya Youth Manifesto: Agenda ni Vijana Sasa.
- In partnership with Aga Khan University: East Africa Institute, TYC convened the Nairobi Young Aspirants Forum to bring young aspirants to explore opportunities for youth to voice their concerns in the national and county assemblies.

Youth Congress growth in 10 years



Conclusion

The Rapporteurs independently observed that the open discussion forums brought to the fore issues that researchers have repeatedly raised concerning youth unemployment, but the government has not yet addressed them appropriately. For instance, it is evident from this report that the open discussion forum was a hard tackle for the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), which was flooded with questions touching on employability issues, innovation and incubation, youth entrepreneurship and the access to business financing.

These questions speak loud of the Kenya's unemployment challenge, which is almost drowning the youth and their future. It came out that even the access to government-run business financing such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) was a challenge to the youth. Rampant corruption and the discrimination of youth with various forms of disabilities, even when they were qualified for certain jobs contributed to the unemployment challenge. Young women were also seen as carrying a huge unemployment burden than men as they were less hired and it was common for those hired to be paid lesser than men. The private sector is the biggest employer, and therefore youth sought out to know more from them.

Such a scenario whereby a majority of educated youth being unemployed and hunting for jobs for prolonged periods while living in squalor has pushed young people to the confines of the city and urban areas where they live on the edges of marginalization. This makes them vulnerable targets for terror gangs such as Al-Shabaab, Mungiki and such others. With this, it is highly unlikely for Kenya to enjoy security, peace and national cohesion. In addition with such a high number of unemployed and highly educated youth, Kenya may not reap from the strategic advantage of a demographic dividend that may enhance the socio-economic competitive edge and positioning of the country. With such an increasing number of young people who are even struggling to pay rent and access basic necessities such as water, food and medical care in urban areas the gap between the rich and the poor will keep widening going into the future. This form of marginaliza-

tion has largely contributed to the proliferation of slums, and unsustainable development in Kenya where a majority of the population lags behind as the minority forge forward.

Therefore, the issues raised in this forum are in agreement with the findings of a 2012 Urbanization in Africa study by the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) which established that urban development in Africa has failed to bring about inclusive growth which, in turn, has resulted in proliferation of slums, urban poverty and rising inequality. Further, the study found that inequality in African cities remains the second highest in the world with an average Gini coefficient of about 0.58, well above the world average of 0.4. The study noted that rural-urban migration and population growth rates in cities are the major causes of the increasing rate of the proliferation of slums and informal settlements in Africa. Rapid population growth was also identified in the Third Annual Youth Leaders Convention, 2018 as one of the factors that is sending the youth into early poverty given their high dependency ratio which means that a majority of them have got no tangible savings.

This, calls for sustainable development models that address not only poverty alleviation, but also look at drastically eliminating the inequalities such as the in access to business financing, education and employment opportunities, challenges that further aggravate the cycle of poverty among the youth. Therefore, there is an urgent call for the government to rethink sustainable youth economic development models that avoid the mistakes of YEDF, Uwezo Fund and Kazi kwa Vijana, which have not yielded much gain. Strategic public private partnerships between the government, the private sector, Non-governmental organizations and development partners can provide a firm foundation in setting the youth at a momentum that can accelerate their economic development and that of their country. This will not only yield socio-economic gains, but also inclusivity, national cohesion, security and promote human rights for a just and equitable Kenya. When the future of the youth is secured, Kenya is secured.



Way Forward

The participants agreed on the following recommendations for future review.

The Youth Congress:

1. Submit the comprehensive report of the event, the discussion proceedings and most importantly; the Resolutions arrived at to the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs
2. Submit copies of the Comprehensive report of the event, the discussion proceedings and the Resolutions arrived at to be submitted to all partners, and youth actors across Kenya.
3. Submit copies of the comprehensive report of the event, the discussion proceedings and the Resolutions arrived at to be submitted to all the 47 county governments in Kenya.
4. Publicize the resolutions of the 3rd National Youth Leaders Convention, – “Create an Inclusive Society and Promote Cohesion: A call to action by youth” through local media stations in order to stir a national conversation around the issues raised in the report.

About The Youth Congress

The Youth Congress (TYC) is a youth serving Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) providing young people in Kenya with a platform to articulate their issues, explore opportunities for youth participation and leadership to effectively address their interests and concerns and engage young people in social, economic and political development. The organization has four main programmes:

1. Research, Policy and Advocacy

The programme aims to realise meaningful participation of youth in policy-making and implementation. Its expected outputs are: improved knowledge on existing policies and their effect on the youth; one stop information centre on the state of the youth in Kenya; coordinated advocacy initiatives on youth issues; and increased youth participation in policy making and advocacy.

2. Youth and Leadership

The programme aims to realise meaningful youth participation in leadership and governance processes, and to build next generation of youth leaders with vision and values. Its expected outputs are: youth in leadership positions and processes; increased awareness and capacity of youth to engage in leadership and governance processes; and youth actively promoting ethical leadership.

3. Youth Entrepreneurship, Talent and Innovation

The programme aims to realise an empowered youth population benefiting from available opportunities and utilizing their skills and talents for economic development. Its expected outputs are: young people equipped with entrepreneurial skills; young people linked to financial opportunities and markets; talent realization and utilization by the youth; and partnerships and alliances built to advance youth economic development.

4. Institutional Development

The programme aims to realise an effectively governed and managed organization with adequate resources to deliver its programmes. Its expected outputs are: adequate resources for smooth and effective implementation of activities; a staff complement that is competent, passionate, determined and responsive to youth values and agenda; functional partnerships and networks; and inclusive, participatory and gender responsive programmes, policies and strategies.



Appendix 1: Programme

Time	Topic and Expected Output						
8:00-8:30am	Registration and Exhibition						
8:30-8:40 am	Opening Remarks, welcoming remarks, National Anthem and Invocation Raphael Obonyo <i>Convener The Youth Congress</i>						
8:40-9:00am	Official Remarks George Kegoro Executive Director, Kenya Human Rights Commission Representatives Canadian High Commission and German Embassy Pats Hanson Representative UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator Cornelius Ombati Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs						
9:00-10:00am	State of Youth in Kenya <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raymond Ochieng, CEO National Youth Council ● Dr Alex Awiti, Director East African Institute of the Aga Khan University ● Dr Eric Nyanjom, Representative African Migration and Development Po Centre (AMADPOC) ● Susan Njau, Director Youth Development, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs Plenary Discussion						
10:00-10:30am	Presentations on Kenya's Youth Policy Review Mr. Waweru Kamau Chairman National Youth Policy Review Technical Committee						
10:30-11:00 am	Networking and Refreshment Break and Photo Session						
11:00-12:45pm	Panel Discussions Panel 1: Employment and Empowerment Panel Discussions Panel 1: Employment and Empowerment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raymond Ochieng CEO, National Youth Council ● Margaret Mliwa Programme Officer, Ford Foundation ● Rachel Muthonga Deputy CEO, KEPSA Youth Representatives Panel 2: Leadership and Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sora Katelo Ag. Commission Secretary/CEO will represent NGEK Representatives Council of governors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kevin Osido Executive Director, County Governors Watch Representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kenya Young Parliamentarian Association ● Youth Representatives Plenary session						
12:45-1:00pm	Unveiling of The Youth Congress strategic Plan 2017-2020						
1:00-2:00pm	Lunch Break and Photo Session						
	Creating Integration and promoting Inclusion and Cohesion						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Working Group 1</th> <th>Working Group 2</th> <th>Working Group 3</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Inclusive Economy: Youth Economic Empowerment</td> <td>Leadership: New generation of leaders holding leaders accountable, growing youth leaders</td> <td>Cohesion : Ethnicity, Security, Human Rights and Cohesion</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Working Group 1	Working Group 2	Working Group 3	Inclusive Economy: Youth Economic Empowerment	Leadership: New generation of leaders holding leaders accountable, growing youth leaders	Cohesion : Ethnicity, Security, Human Rights and Cohesion
Working Group 1	Working Group 2	Working Group 3					
Inclusive Economy: Youth Economic Empowerment	Leadership: New generation of leaders holding leaders accountable, growing youth leaders	Cohesion : Ethnicity, Security, Human Rights and Cohesion					
	Presentations of group discussion, plenary and adoption of resolutions						
4:30pm	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cutting the cake to mark the 10th Anniversary ● Introducing the Youth Congress County Representatives ● Vote of Thanks 						
	Tea Break and Photo Session						

Appendix 2: Working Group Discussion Guide

1. What is the problem and its current status (is there a problem?)
2. What are the root causes of the problem?
3. What are the interventions made by governments and other stakeholders to address the issues? (What is working)
4. Who are the actors or stakeholders-stakeholders-matrix?
5. What are the recommendations (What should be done or done better?)

Appendix 3: List of Participants

No	NAME	Gender	Organizations	County
1	Abdi Abdille	M	Kenya National Association of the Deaf	Nairobi
2	Abdimajid Ali	M	SERVE PA	Wajir
3	Achola Maxwel Otieno	M	Better Living Empowerment Program (BLEP)	Nairobi
4	Akovavi Tehongue	F	Marurui United Youth Organization (MUYOG)	Nairobi
5	Albashir Mohammed	M	Grand Synergy Development Initiative (GSDI)	Garissa
6	Alfred Ayoro	M	Peace Cop Kenya/Urban Creators	Nairobi
7	Allan Wochwa	M	National Youth Council/NGAAF	Bungoma
8	Ambrose Njeru	M	Embu Youth Empowerment Forum	Embu
9	Amese Angiy	M	Tarumbeta	Nairobi
10	Amina Juma	F	Kwale Community Development Consortium	Kwale
11	Amisi Oyunge	M	Armshield International Group	Kisii
12	Amunga Isaac Jacktone	M	New M.O.W Visionary Youth Group	Nairobi
13	Amy Wanday	F	African Sports Network	Nairobi
14	Andrine Muia	F	Mbooni CDF	Makueni
15	Anne Obure	F	Ogelea Masters Africa	Nairobi
16	Antony Nkuubi	M	Governance Pillar Organisation	Meru
17	Arnorld Gekonge	M	(SRHR Alliance)	Nairobi
18	Barchok Zephaniah	M	Elgeyo marakwet Youth Organisation	Elgeyo Marakwet
19	Ben Omillo	M	EACSOFF_Kenya	Nairobi
20	Benjamin Maina	M	Nyamira Youth Government and Infolink LTD	Nyamira
21	Benjamin Sulle	M	Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA)	Nairobi
22	Benson Karani	M	Mathare Youth for Development and Success (MYDS)	Nairobi
23	Bore Joshua	M	Kengasis Fm	Nairobi
24	Brian Kithinji	M	East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform	Meru
25	Bursuna Ejere	M	Rendille Professionals and University Students Association	Marsabit
26	Calvin Jidoi	M	ASANTI	Nairobi
27	Calvins Oriwa	M	Because I Count Group (BICG)	Nairobi
28	Caroline Chege	F	Sozo Kenya	Kajiado
29	Caroline Jones	F	Tarumbeta	Nairobi
30	Charity Barasa	F	Kenya Community Development Foundation	Nairobi
31	Chege Thande	M	Pro-Active Youth	Nairobi
32	Chepkwony Linda	F	Abraham Lincoln Youth Initiative	Nairobi
33	Christine Moraa	F	Sign Language Interpreter	Nairobi
34	Christine Osongo	F	The Youth Congress	Nairobi
35	Cliff Ahawo	M	H/V Sasa Kenya	Nairobi
36	Collins Oywaya	M		Trans Nzoia
37	Cornelius Ombagi	M	Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs	Nairobi
38	Cyrus Litswa	M	Violet Mbiti Foundation	Nairobi
39	Daniel Mala	M	Brotherhood foundation	Nairobi
40	Daniel Odhiambo	M	Straight Talk Foundation	Nairobi
41	Daniel Odhiambo	M	Tarumbeta	Nairobi
42	Daniel Toyo	M	Shtar Msmour	Nairobi
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64	Faith Lukosi	F	Youth Senate	Nairobi
65	Faith Tanui	F	Pendo Africa	Kericho
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69	Fatuma Makholo	F	Tarumbeta	Nairobi
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79	Gladwell Muthoni	F	St. Mary's Group	Nairobi
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81	Gloria Elizabeth	F	Mombasa Youth Assembly	Mombasa
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83	Halima Hanii	F	The Youth Congress	Nairobi
84	Hawa Ali	F	Kenya Muslims	Nairobi
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93	Jacob Otieno	M	CAP Youth Empowerment Institute	Nairobi
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108	Kennedy Wangari	M	The President's Award-Kenya	Kiambu
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110	Kevin Orido	M	CGW	Nairobi
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