

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA



YOUTH POLICY

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUNND TO VIHIGA COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

1. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) defines a ‘youth’¹ as a person aged between 18-35 years. Apart from age characterization, the term ‘youth’ has varied meanings according to community social context such as marital status and if one has children of their own. In some instances, community perception of a youth may include an unmarried person beyond 35 years and exclude a 15-year old person from being a youth simply because they have a child of their own regardless of their marital status. This broad definition of the youth requires interventionists that specifically target programmes that benefit different categories of youth: those with disabilities, youth in violent conflicts, unemployed youth, street youth, in and out of school youth and youth infected and affected by HIV&AIDS.

2. Youth are an invaluable resource for the advancement of Vihiga County, often acting as key agents for social change, economic expansion and technological innovation. Their vision and energies are essential for the continued development of society in which they live, requiring the policy to ensure long-term solutions for the youth to participate in and take advantage of opportunities available in the County.

3. The Youth Policy of the County Government of Vihiga has been developed within the context of the changing needs and aspirations of the youth. It defines the vision of the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Culture and Social Services of the County Government of Vihiga, as a timely response to challenges and emerging needs of the youth. The policy lays emphasis on opportunities to empower young people to develop their resilience and is therefore an essential planning tool guiding the county in its approach to youth development focusing interventions and services that would ensure the rise of a vibrant youth by 2030.

4. Vihiga County Youth Policy provides a framework on which all programmes and sectoral policies will base their efforts to mainstream issues affecting the youth at all levels of governance in the county, including a mechanism for accountability. The policy encourages the use of an all-inclusive and participatory approach and joint action by relevant players in its implementation.

1.1 PROFILE OF YOUTH IN VIHIGA COUNTY

5. According to the 2009 National Population and Housing Census, the County had a population of 554,622. The county has one of the highest population densities in the country at 1,033 persons per square km compared to the national average of 66 persons per Km². Of this, 47.8% of the population are male while 52.2% are female. The county’s population is estimated to have grown to 637,877 persons in 2017 and is projected to grow to 694,819 persons in 2022. The county’s demographic profile depicts a youthful population comprising of 46% of persons aged between 15 -35 years.

Table 1: Population Projection by Age Cohort

Age group	Census 2009			2017			2020			2022		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
15-19	31384	31550	62934	37300	35633	72936	39008	37253	76261	39707	38218	77925
20-24	17840	23311	41151	23327	24323	47648	25315	25148	50463	26236	26092	52328
25-29	13551	18384	31935	16290	21082	37356	18583	21596	40179	19931	22185	42111
30-34	12051	15823	27874	13378	19313	32692	13713	19861	33574	15375	20223	35578

¹ Kenya National Youth Policy (2006) defines youth to be people between the ages of 15-30 years: **KNBS (2017)**, Vihiga county.

35-39	10575	13219	23794	12263	16852	29112	12786	18617	31403	13022	18991	32013
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1.2 CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH IN VIHIGA COUNTY

6. The Vihiga County Youth Policy identified some of the challenges facing young people as: access to employment, violent conflict and crime, erosion of support systems, drug abuse, vulnerability to HIV& AIDS and inadequate opportunities for youth participation and involvement. They also face challenges while participating in development including low level of skills in entrepreneurship and enterprise development, lack of ownership and control over land (factor of production) and a low resource base.

7. Youth are recognized as energetic, fast learners and innovative, yet they are not trusted by the community and perceived to want payment for everything. This results in low involvement in decision making in project activities, creates a gap that, if not addressed, threatens sustainable programming.

8. Increased school and college drop-out rates due to the high cost of education and increase in overall poverty levels, poor returns on investment in education, among other reasons.

9. Majority of youth have mismatched skills or lack of experience for employability. They also have inadequate training and skills to address all factors that impede success namely, poverty, vulnerable family environments and other social evils such as substance abuse and violence.

10. Inadequate opportunities unmatched by youth numerical superiority - least representation in political and economic spheres due to societal attitudes, socio-cultural and economic barriers.

11. Limited access to ICT- youth cannot exploit career, business and education opportunities available due to unavailability especially in rural areas and high costs.

12. Youth are vulnerable to certain health issues and risky behaviour that need targeted approach. Some of the health-related issues include vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases, failure to adopt healthy lifestyles and positive attitudes; the lack of exercise, alcohol consumption, smoking and depression. Since some health problems affecting the youth are behavioural in nature, the challenge is how to motivate young people to adopt healthy lifestyles in the face of strong negative peer pressure.

1.3 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUTH

13. The Policy recognizes the fundamental rights and liberties which are guaranteed by the Constitution of Kenya and which emanate from international and regional treaties on Human Rights that Kenya has signed or ratified, including: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966; International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights 1966; Convention against Discrimination in Education 1970; The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979; African Charter on Human and People's Rights 1981; Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1992; Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights 2003; African [Banjul] Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights 2003; International Conventions against Doping in Sports (UNESCO), 2006; African Youth Charter, 2006; and UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, 2015.

14. Acknowledging the above, this Policy recognizes that young persons, depending on their age and maturity, should not only exercise their rights and enjoy their youth but also responsibly participate in the development of the county, without discrimination due to place of origin, ethnicity or clan, political opinion, religion, sex or any other criterion.

Rights of youth	Responsibilities of youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to life and security of the person; • To live in an atmosphere of love and affection and to keep all family ties; • The freedom of opinion and expression; • The freedom of thought, conscience and religion; • The freedom of association; • To privacy and non-interference in personal matters; • To be protected from harassment, violence of any kind, cruel treatment or punishment, unlawful arrest or deprivation of liberty; • The right to access appropriate information; • The right to proper education and training; • The right to equal opportunities; • Participate in forums dealing with HIV&AIDS and other illnesses affecting society, • Acting as guardians of community peace by participating in efforts to curb violence and criminality in their communities • Be a role-model to other youth when in leadership positions within community and other structures such as learning institutions. • The right to leisure, cultural and sports activities; • The right to a safe, clean and healthy environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote peace, security and sustainable development; • To respect public property and the property of others; • To promote positive and dignified values, tolerance and great respect for ethics in all aspects of life; • To promote respect for other young persons, for adults and the elderly; • To undertake social and philanthropic work; • To promote gender equality and respect for the rights and dignity of girls and women; • To discourage acts of violence, crime, exploitation and oppression of vulnerable persons or groups; • To give value to learning and training for oneself and others; • To ensure environmental protection, management and stewardship; • To promote a healthy lifestyle free from disease, alcohol and drugs; • To seek information on health issues more specifically reproductive health; • To participate freely in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the country; • To be youth ambassadors and promote inter-county, national and international exchanges.
<p>County Government of Vihiga has the prime responsibility to ensure the youth enjoy these rights. It should also provide the necessary framework for young people to fulfil their responsibilities.</p>	
<p>Parents have a key role to play to ensure the proper development and well-being of the youth, and to respect and promote the rights of youth, more specifically: To ensure their child grows up in an environment of warmth and affection, security and stability; to promote his/her physical and psychological development; to embrace human rights, values and emphasize the need for greater social justice and gender equality to children; recognize the individuality of youngsters according to age and maturity and to allow them to make their choice of educational fields and career; give counsel, support, help and ensure parental guidance, depending on the particular needs of the child; be positive role models; treat young people with respect and give them opportunities to contribute positively to societal development.</p>	
<p>Private sector should safeguard the right of its workers and more specifically: respect gender equality and social justice for youth; recognise the right of youth with disabilities; respect labour laws and ensure the youth give their optimum; give relevant training to the youth for effective delivery; and</p>	

undertake youth -friendly initiatives that incorporate environmental sustainability and promote greater environmental responsibility.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUTH POLICY

15. Under the Constitution of Kenya (2010), Youth is a devolved function, with some organisations in the county having programmes and sectoral youth policies. The absence a County Youth policy and inadequate co-ordination mechanisms create a gap in policy anchorage and ultimately hamper effectiveness of these organizations.
16. The need for a youth-specific policy that focuses on increasing employment chances for young people to prevent the profound personal and social effects of unemployment. Young people who cannot earn their own living find it difficult to move out of their parents' homes and be self-reliant. They are often marginalised by their communities and unable to find a way to engage meaningfully with society.
17. Youth-targeted interventions are needed to enable young persons in Vihiga County to actively participate and engage in society and the economy. In a job-scarce environment, joining the world of work is particularly difficult for young people. This is not just a local problem – in 2013 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimated that, at a global level, 73.4 million young people who want to work and are actively looking for a job cannot find one. The view by the ILO (2017) has not changed, with an observation that the world is facing a worsening youth employment crisis, where young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults.
18. While devolution brought hope to the youth and community members, the youth in Vihiga county felt left out of key decisions that affect their lives. This policy provides guidelines and a coordinated approach for the youth to be actively involved in the entire policy cycle management of Vihiga County.
19. Since independence, Kenya government policy did not strongly emphasize on strategic issues affecting the youth, for example, leadership and employment. Instead the youth were often considered to be the 'Leaders of tomorrow' and that 'they should focus on education which will guarantee them good jobs'. This phrase was transformed into a song that featured in the media during key events and national days in Kenya. The jobs alluded to have not been forth coming and the youth in Vihiga remain some of the most highly unemployed and underemployed in the county. This policy emphasises that Youth are 'Leaders of today' and they have a vital role to play in Vihiga County, ultimately providing guidelines for meaningful engagement of the youth in the county's programmes and governance.
20. No country or county will ever industrialize without investing in the youth. The current structures and prevailing attitudes towards the youth in Vihiga County do not adequately provide an enabling environment for them to participate in decision-making, planning and implementation processes. This policy provides guidelines on mainstreaming youth issues in sectoral programming in Vihiga County.
21. Many diverse interventions have been implemented in Vihiga County, such as on youth entrepreneurship and development, but there is little evidence of those that targeted specific categories of youth. This youth policy addresses this gap by providing a space where different categories of youth can be mobilized and equipped with relevant skills and other support towards meaning engagement in the labour market.

22. The launching of the Vihiga county youth policy will bring into perspective the plight of the youth whose current image in the community and county is progressively negative and has often been linked to idleness, drug abuse and ethnic/clan conflict among other characteristics. This policy highlights challenges facing the youth in-county and promotes unity amongst all people residing therein.

1.5 THE VISION OF THE COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

23. A County with youth as the signature of excellence in all spheres of life.
This vision is anchored in the national goal of the policy of promoting youth participation in all processes and ensuring that youth programmes are youth-centred and involve them.

1.6 MISSION OF THE COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

24. To create a dynamic youth sector that responds systematically to the ever-changing needs and aspirations of young people in Vihiga County. This will be realized through consolidation of youth initiatives that enhance the capabilities of young people to positively transform Vihiga County in a holistic way. The policy provides a framework for ensuring attainment of youth equity and empowerment of youth in the county.

1.7 GOAL OF THE YOUTH POLICY

25. To have a vibrant and resilient youth for the County Government of Vihiga.
These will be youth who have equal opportunity, as other citizens in the county, to participate and contribute to realization of their full potential in all spheres of life.

1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

26. The following objectives will guide the implementation of this policy:
- a) Establish an institutional framework for implementation of the Vihiga County Youth Policy.
 - b) Promote skills training, entrepreneurship, employment and skills development in Vihiga County.
 - c) Create public awareness to on health and healthy lifestyle among the youth.
 - d) Maintain and provide sex - disaggregated data on youth to facilitate planning and programmes implementation at all levels and across sectors in Vihiga County.
 - e) Promote social values and community service as part of youth culture
 - f) Encourage youth competitions at Village, Ward, Sub-county and County level in Vihiga County
 - g) Encourage youth participation in politics and governance in Vihiga county
 - h) Ensure measures to prevent violence and unethical behaviour among the youth in Vihiga County.
 - i) Promote access to justice at all levels of governance in Vihiga County to leverage the youth against unjust social practices.
 - j) Promote coaching and mentorship across board among the youth in Vihiga.
 - k) Facilitate Youth empowerment standards and procedures.
 - l) Encourage Youth to embrace volunteerism and internships opportunities.

1.9 VALUES GUIDING DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUTH POLICY

27. The policy promotes the following values:
- Recognition of youth as worthy of respect and dignity;
 - Recognition of youth as partners for development;
 - Placing young people at the heart of development;

- Promoting ethical behaviour and transparency;
- Promoting excellence, innovation and creativity in actions;
- Voluntary participation and engagement of youth;
- Relationships based on mutual respect;
- Recognizing and valuing diversity;
- Social responsibility;
- Gender sensitivity recognizing the special needs of young women.
- Empowerment of young people
- Equality and inclusion
- Involvement of young people in decision-making

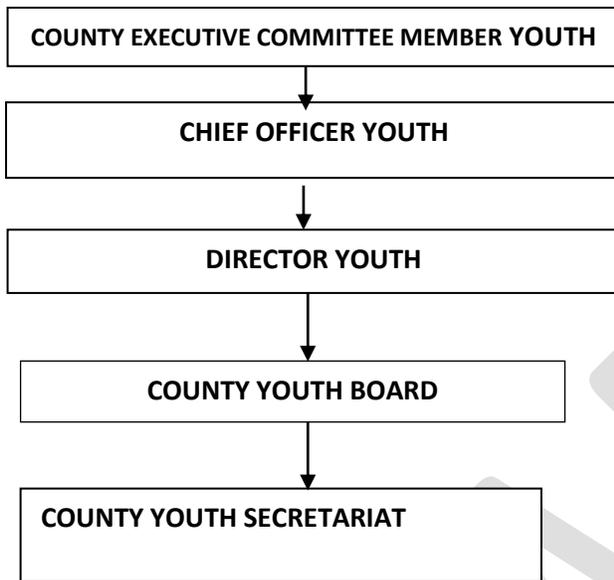
1.10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

28. The County Youth Policy will be guided by the following principles, derived from existing national and international frameworks, such as the African Youth Charter (AYC) and the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).

- **Non-discriminatory approach** - development initiatives should not discriminate against young people based on age, gender, race, disability or any other form, in accessing resources and services as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya.
- **Holistic perspective** which embraces all aspects of physical, emotional, social, economic, political and spiritual development of young people.
- **Transparency and accountability** incorporated in all actions undertaken by all organisations working towards the policy objectives.
- **Social cohesion and unity** – youth development interventions should promote the inclusion of young people as a strategic part of societal structures by involving them in democratic processes.
- **Civic engagement and participation** - include strategies and programmes for young people by sharing information, creating opportunities and involving them in decision-making leadership, economic empowerment initiatives and creating space for youth to voice their democratic ideals.
- **Sustainable development** - young people’s assets, potential, capacity and capability must be harnessed and maximised so that they can respond effectively and efficiently to challenges, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Diversity**- interventions to recognise and acknowledge the diverse backgrounds from which young people come and celebrate the roles played by different agents of socialisation, tradition, culture and spirituality in the development of young women and men.
- **Youth service**- young people should be involved in meaningful activities which benefit communities, while developing their sense of patriotism and their abilities through learning and services provided.

1.11 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE YOUTH POLICY

29. This involves clarity of roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the youth policy. The structure also describes the lines of authority, communication and responsibility – from the County Youth Board /Council, Sub-County Youth Committee, Youth Secretariat and community and how these interact with other youth stakeholders in the county.



1.12 METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

30. The development of the Vihiga County Youth Policy involved a mix data gathering methods, which were mainly qualitative but derived quantitative data from desk review and sociometrical analysis. The qualitative approach involved desk review of key documents and data on youth. Also reviewed were Vihiga County Integrated Development Plans (2013-2017) and zero draft CIDP (2018-2022), Medium-Term Plan (2018-2022) of Vision 2030 and the County’s Strategic Plan for the same period. The desk review identified some gaps in youth participation, which have been incorporated into this draft Youth Policy. An FGD guide helped to generate information on collective thinking of youth.

31. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were held with stakeholders from the public and private sector, county government departments and heads of civil society organizations - non-governmental and community based organizations focusing youth and development programming in the county. The draft youth policy will be subjected to a one-day stakeholder consultation and validation workshop.

CHAPTER TWO: SITUATION ANALYSIS AND STATUS OF YOUTH IN VIHIGA COUNTY

2.1 SITUATION ANALYSIS

32. August 12th is celebrated as the International Youth Day, world over. On this day in 1985, the United Nations recognized the youth as an integral part of the society. The UN also acknowledged that the energies of the youth need to be harnessed effectively in a productive manner. In 2016, for example, Kenya celebrated the day with Youth-to-Youth (Y2Y) network members in Nairobi conducting four days of activities building up to the International Youth Day, which included a football tournament, a beauty pageant, community outreach and a community cleanup event, that were held at the Githurai Youth Empowerment Centre and Kayole II sub district Hospital in Nairobi. The activities were designed to mobilize the youth so that peer educators can share sexual and reproductive health information.
33. In March 2009, the former President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister launched the Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV) ('Jobs or Work for Youth') programme. The KKV mandate was essentially to tackle poverty/hunger and unemployment among the youth by creating employment through government-related projects. As originally conceived, the KKV was intended to afford – during a period of the triple 'F' crisis (food, fuel, and financial) – immediate relief to young people by way of providing them with income support through employment in public works. Its objective was to employ 200,000–300,000 young people who are at risk of hunger and starvation. Some of the projects, especially those providing irrigation and water supply, were also intended to enhance food production in the areas most affected by drought.
34. A total of 20,384 (47% female) youth benefited from training and 13,289 (49% female) youth were successfully placed in internships against the target of 15,000 and 10,000 planned for Training and Internships respectively between 2010 and 2016. This resulted from a joint initiative by Kenya Private Sector Alliance with the Government of Kenya to implement the Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP), funded by the World Bank. KYEP involved Training and Internship component which provided the selected youth with relevant work experience and skills through training and work placements in the formal and informal sectors. Specifically, the project aimed at ensuring that at least 50% of youth completing the internship programme secure employment 6 months post internship completion. The pilot program was offered in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu and entailed two months of training and four months of work experience per cycle. It targeted vulnerable youth between 15 to 29 years of age with at least eight years of schooling and who were not in school or working at the time of entry into the program. The project run for a total of six cycles and was implemented between 2010-2016.
35. The government of Kenya launched National Youth Empowerment Strategic Plan 2016-2021 to guide the implementation of policies, activities, projects and programmes towards youth empowerment in the country. The strategy strives to integrate and mainstream youth interventions in sectoral and macro policies at county and national levels; provide strategic direction and a framework for coordinating and leveraging investments targeted at youth empowerment. The strategy is centred on eight key Focus Areas including the policy and legal framework that provides for collaboration with county governments and stakeholders to develop, review and implement relevant policies and regulatory frameworks to ensure smooth and efficient participatory approach in youth programs and activities. Others are Leadership and Participation, Skills Development and Employment, Talent Identification and Development, Information Communication and Technology Development; Agriculture, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development; Health,

Crime and Security, Drug and Substance Abuse and Coordination, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

2.2 STATUS OF YOUTH IN VIHIGA COUNTY

36. Vihiga County boasts of Kaimosi Friends University College, a Constituent college of Masinde Muliro University and several vocational training centres where the youth attend vocational skills training. These include Boyani Vocational Training Centre, Ebusiralo Vocational Training Centre, Friends College Kaimosi Institute of Technology, Givigoi Vocational Training Centre, Keveye Vocational Training Centre, Maseno Youth Polytechnic, Muhudu Vocational Training and Nzalwa Vocational Training Centres.
37. Youth development in Vihiga is characterized by lack of talent centres, limited life skills and inaccessibility to credit. The policy provides guidelines to enhance youth and gender empowerment and mainstreaming for sustainable development in the County. Talent centres will be established, youth empowerment and mainstreaming in governance and youth training and mentorship will be undertaken. Capacity strengthening will also be undertaken using the savings and internal lending communities approach to help the youth access money to start and grow own enterprises to contribute to employment and wealth creation in the county.
38. Vihiga County has many active youth groups, having high literacy level among them. However, there is little evidence to show that they undertake a regular process of self-evaluation and self -exploration. This explains the low uptake of new initiatives that could have otherwise contributed to their personal and social growth as well as foster in them sensitivity towards problems in the society. The policy provides guides to promote research in youth work.
39. Since the inauguration of the first County Government of Vihiga in 2013, the County attempted economic empowerment as the key to youth development but this approach failed. The situation was not different for youth development initiatives by non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, youth groups and other civil society organisations, as these initiatives were not implemented within a clear framework with specific goals on youth development. Most projects were poorly coordinated and realized limited impact and gave room for duplication of effort and activities.
40. The absence of a County Youth Institution / Platform where young people's capacities could be built to engage in governance was identified as a key gap for the county. Even though young people are represented on some county leadership positions and committees, practical challenges exist that hamper effective participation and delivery of services.
41. The County Government has set aside funds for the Youth willing to join TIVETS to learn life skills. The TIVETS are in the process of being equipped to enable the Youth gain more knowledge in different fields and build a more thorough human resource capital. There are also fund set aside within the Trade and Enterprise Fund to ensure that the Youth are able to access start-up capital for their ventures.

- 42.** The County has also embraced partnership with the private sector to ensure that annually there shall be an Annual Youth Governor’s Round Table Forum that will give the Youth and opportunity to interact with the Executive on the implementation of Youth Programmes. This shall be taking place during the International Youth week in August and shall culminate into an Awards ceremony for the Top 30 Under 30 Entrepreneurs’ who shall have gone through mentorship programmes before then.

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CHAPTER THREE: THE LEGAL CONTEXT AND APPROACHES FOR DEVELOPING THE YOUTH POLICY

3.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON YOUTH POLICY

43. The Commonwealth Youth Charter (2005) provides the parameters within which youth policies in all Commonwealth countries should be developed. It aims to empower young people to develop their creativity, skills and potential as productive and dynamic members of society. The charter highlights the importance of full participation of young women and men at every level of decision-making and development.
44. The Vihiga County Policy on Youth is anchored in the Constitution of Kenya, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1992 on Small Scale and Jua Kali Enterprises, the 1997-2001 Development Plan, the National Poverty Eradication Plan 1999-2015 and the National Youth Empowerment Strategic Plan (2016-2021).
45. The Vihiga County Policy is also located within the United Nations World Programme of Action for the Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (United Nations Department of Public Information 1997) and the United Nations World Programme of Action for the Youth to the Year (United Nations Department of Public Information 2005).
46. The Policy is also informed by the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
- End poverty in all its forms everywhere (SDG 1)
 - End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (SDG 2)
 - Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (SDG 3)
 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG 4)
 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG 5)
47. These provisions broadly relate to oversight authority on youth initiatives in the county and specifically on planning, formulating, reviewing and implementing the youth policy; developing, coordinating and promoting youth at all levels; coordinating inter-sectoral programmes among stakeholders of youth development; and mobilizing the people of Vihiga to participate in youth-related activities and interventions.

3.2 APPROACHES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

48. The following cross cutting approaches will ensure increased participation, contribution and benefits for young women and young men in the youth sector and at all levels of the county:
- (i) Institutional capacity strengthening of the youth machineries and key players in the implementation of the county youth policy;
 - (ii) Inculcating and promotion of a youth culture in Vihiga County.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: INTERVENTIONS FOR THE VIHIGA COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

4.1 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ENTREPRENEUR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

49. It is essential for the youth to have access to the right set of tools and opportunities to make a sustainable contribution to their county. This includes access to high quality education and development of skills that are required by the labour market to ensure that they are gainfully employed. Given that a large proportion of the workforce is self-employed, entrepreneurship must be encouraged amongst the youth and be supported through the process of idea generation, incubation and financing.

50. Since the youth have inadequate work experience which constrains them from finding jobs, they should be exposed to on-the-job training and internship and volunteer opportunities. In the short term, decisive interventions will provide unemployed and poor young people with incomes and opportunities for community service and engagement. In the medium to long term, economic measures will be used to encourage growth in sustainable employment for the young people.

Objective 1: Create a youth workforce that can make sustainable contribution to Vihiga County.

Strategies

- (i) Undertake a baseline survey and skills audit of the youth in Vihiga county
- (ii) Enact a legislation guide capacity strengthening /training of youth in Vihiga County.
- (iii) Establish a mechanism of financing training and skills development of youth.
- (iv) Undertake targeted youth outreach and awareness programmes.
- (v) Build linkages across stakeholders such as training /skills institutions and employers.
- (vi) Define the role of the county government and other stakeholders in the empowerment of youth
- (vii) Identify facilitators from sub-county to moderate discussions on youth development issues
- (viii) Implement an elaborate monitoring and evaluation system for youth-related programmes

Objective 2: Support existing youth enterprises and cooperatives

Strategies:

- (i) Conduct a comprehensive baseline survey of existing youth enterprise support programmes in Vihiga County to determine type and their impact on promoting youth entrepreneurship, challenges faced by young entrepreneurs and profile success stories.
- (ii) Undertake a mapping of youth-owned and controlled businesses in Vihiga County.
- (iii) Create customized training programmes for young entrepreneurs, for example, skills relevant to agriculture and the agricultural value chain will attract young people to the sector and promote agriculture and agro-processing.
- (iv) Encourage the youth to engage in Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs)
- (v) Link youth enterprises to funding opportunities provided by finance institutions and private sector
- (vi) Hold road shows to provide information to young people on opportunities available for enterprise development. This event will connect youth with government agencies and the private sector.

Objective 3: Provide work exposure for youth

Strategies:

- (i) Ensure all Vihiga County Ministries have an Internship programme for youth. Government departments should be required to link the internship programme to their human resource development strategies to create a talent pool from which to recruit when vacancies are available.
- (ii) Engage private sector to set clear commitments for opening the workplace for young people who require internships, apprenticeships and work-integrated learning opportunities.
- (iii) Review career guidance and life-skills training to guide targeted and more effective career guidance and life skills training programmes.

Objective 4: Support youth absorption into employment

Strategies:

- (i) Undertake staff audit of government departments to determine the status of youth unemployment in Vihiga county
- (ii) Identify sectors with the highest potential to absorb young people; and measures developed to support industries that create jobs and a monitoring and evaluation framework put in place.
- (iii) The county Ministries of Youth, Sports, Culture and Social Services to collaborate with Trade, Tourism, Industrialization and Entrepreneurship to develop strategies for youth participation in the creative industries, tourism and youth and recreation.

4.2 ENTRENCHING HEALTH AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

51. It is in the best interests of Vihiga County to have youth who are in good health and can make healthy and balanced lifestyle choices. This policy provides guides to promote a healthy youth culture among youth where specific health issues must be addressed through targeted programmes, information sharing on balanced diet and healthy lifestyle such as engaging in sports and recreation to ensure physical well-being.

Objective: Ensure a strong and healthy generation

Strategies

- (i) Improve service delivery for young persons in the county
- (ii) Create public awareness about health, nutrition and preventive care
- (iii) Undertake targeted disease control programmes for youth
- (iv) Increase access to sports facilities and training
- (v) Promotion of sports culture among youth
- (vi) Ensure support and development for talented sports persons

4.3 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Youth empowerment is about facilitating the youth to forge partnerships with other groups in society; instilling a sense of ownership in the efforts to improve their well-being; and building their capacity to realize their aspirations and boost self-motivation. Involving the youth in planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes that affect them gives them a sense of belonging and ownership. This results in sustainability and success of such programmes.

OBJECTIVE: he services also aim at supporting young people's growth towards independence and active participation.

Strategies

- i. Involving the youth at all levels of governance and in decision-making processes.
- ii. Ensure that affirmative action for youth participation is in place at every level.
- iii. Encourage the youth to engage in debate on economic, political and social issues;
- iv. Establish micro-finance programmes to cater for the financial needs of the youth.
- v. Encourage the youth to take up leadership positions.
- vi. Provide training in entrepreneurial, leadership and management skills for the youth and their organizations.
- vii. Encourage the youth to stand up against all forms of injustice and discrimination.

4.4 YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM

Youths bring a different level of energy to the organization – they possess a broad range of skills and interests, especially with regards to technology. Many receive practical training at their schools and are capable of incredible things. Volunteering can provide valuable work experience - something potential employers will take notice of

OBJECTIVES: To foster and develop increased learning and development opportunities for young people by encouraging and supporting them to contribute, steer initiatives and lead their own youth-led projects.

To identify the nature and focus of youth volunteer engagement.

To determine the conditions for the success of and the barrier to youth volunteers engagement.

To determine the conditions for the success and the barriers to youth volunteers recruitment; and

To determine the conditions fir the success of and the barriers to youth volunteers

Strategies.

- i. Recognize youth resources and acknowledge that they have [perspective you don't but you need.
- ii. Ask them to make world a better place, ask then what they think, ask them what they think; ask them to get involved to help and share their gifts.
- iii. Look for and engage youth from their interest and talents.
- iv. Involve youth volunteers in a variety of opportunities. Expose them to different community needs and ways to contribute.

- v. Let the youth work side by side with adults. This expands youth's perspective and feeds into their own sense of purpose as they hear what adults are giving of their time.

4.5 YOUTH INTERNSHIP

This is a programme established to provide unemployed graduates with opportunities for hands-on training for skills acquisition to enhance future employability and fulfill the legal requirement for professional registration

Objectives; provide a framework and standards applicable to all interns, ensure effectiveness and efficiency in implementation and management of internship programme; and provide a framework for monitoring, evaluating

Strategies

- I. declare internship opportunities to the PSC on an annual basis;
- II. identify and communicate available internship opportunities through advertising in newspapers with wide national circulation;
- III. conduct regular induction programmes for supervisors, mentors and line managers involved with internship programmes;
- IV. provide the necessary facilities to enable interns to acquire the required skills and knowledge;
- V. pay the prescribed stipend to interns in accordance with the guidelines;
- VI. appoint supervisors and trainers/mentors for the interns;
- VII. ensure that interns are properly engaged in relevant work assignments; monitor and evaluate the progress of internship programmes in their organizations;
- VIII. report to the Public Service Commission, on a quarterly and annual basis, on internship 12 programmes undertaken in their organizations and any challenges experienced; and
- IX. Issue a letter of completion of internship to interns upon successful completion of the programme.

4.6 YOUTH SERVICE

Youth Service works to provide all young people with a range of enjoyable opportunities, challenging experiences and effective support that will enhance their personal, social and educative development and sense of identity during the transition to adulthood youth service is to network and liaise with appropriate local agencies, educational institutions, community groups and through partnerships to inform, support and encourage the empowerment of young people and advocate on their behalf when appropriate in order to ensure the best possible outcome for young people.

Objective: To guide the planning, operation, and evaluation of Youth Services.

Strategies

- (i) Establish a shared sector-wide database of youth services.
- (ii) Investigate and implement youth friendly service integration and collaboration models that use positive youth development.
- (iii) Grow the capacity of agencies to operate within the positive youth development model through shared training across agencies.
- (iv) Provide opportunities for youth participation and leadership

4.7 PROMOTING SOCIAL VALUES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

52. This focuses primarily on community engagement and social entrepreneurship as a strategy of involving the youth in programmes that give them opportunities to engage and contribute to the grassroots development of their communities and county. Youth must be encouraged to participate in community service and development activities, especially in the most rural areas. They should also fulfil their duties as citizens to create an environment in which they enjoy the rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

Objective: Instill social values and promote community service

Strategies

- (i) Initiate projects that support entrenchment of appropriate youth culture in Vihiga county
- (ii) Encourage NGOs and private sector organisations to support youth culture and harmony
- (iii) Strengthen participation and engagement programmes for youth
- (iv) Leverage existing community development organisations to support voluntarism in the community
- (v) Promote social entrepreneurship

4.8 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

53. It is important that youth participate in politics at all levels, from the grassroots to the national level. Strategies must be put in place to combat any negative perception that the youth might have about politics. They also should be provided with relevant training and tools to become effective and to be able to implement both County government and other programmes by youth stakeholders. The Policy promotes social accountability and monitoring the effectiveness of youth development initiatives, including creation of a platform for the youth to engage with governance at different levels.

Objective: Facilitate youth participation and engagement at all levels of governance

Strategies:

- (i) Create governance mechanisms that youth can leverage
- (ii) Promote youth engagement in urban governance
- (iii) Create a platform for engagement of youth with political aspirations
- (iv) Measure and monitor effectiveness of youth effectiveness in development initiatives.

4.9 INCLUSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

54. The focus is access to justice at all levels, particularly leveraging the youth to eliminate unjust social practices. Young people living in rural areas struggle to participate in the economy due to a lack of access to or availability of land and poor economic and social infrastructure. Interventions to promote and support youth participation in the agricultural sector should address issues such as access to land, farm implements and inputs, business skills, access to information, opportunities and markets.

Objective 5: Support youth at risk towards equal opportunity in all spheres of life.

Strategies:

- (i) Create awareness and opportunities to prevent youth from being put at risk.
- (ii) Establish a multi-pronged approach to supporting youth with disability
- (iii) Leveraging youth to eliminate unjust social practices such as child marriage, bride price.
- (iv) Strengthening access to justice at all levels, including land reforms that benefit the youth.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX FOR THE COUNTY YOUTH POLICY

5.1 KEY PLAYERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

55. The Chief Officer (CO) in charge of Youth, Culture and Social Services is the office responsible for the implementation of the Youth Policy. This will involve other stakeholders in the County including all County departments and non –state actors, private sector and community. The team will establish and nominate members to the County Youth Board and oversee implementation of the policy.

Key players	Role / Key institutional processes
Office the Governor –County Executive Committee Member and Chief Officer for Youth, Culture and Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice the Governor on needs and priorities of the youth in the county • Brief the Governor on status of the youth by category- across urban, peri-urban and rural level; • Fundraise for youth projects and activities at county and sub-county level; • Represent the Governor in Youth forums. • Preparation and implementation of the Youth policy, bill and its regulations.
County Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass the Youth policy for launching; • Pass the budget for implementation of the policy; • Enactment of the County Youth Bill.
County Executive Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed challenges facing the youth in all processes, decisions, actions pertaining to young people in Vihiga county; • Support implementation of the youth policy
Department of youth (Youth machinery designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop County Youth Action Plans; • Develop a Youth Strategic Plan to operationalize implementation of this policy • Provide overall leadership, monitoring and reporting on the youth policy; • Mobilize resources /funds for implementation of the youth policy; • Establish a County Coordination Committee for Youth policy implementation; • Establish a monitoring, reporting and evaluation unit to fast track youth policy implementation.
Focal persons on youth programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the establishment of partnerships between the county government departments, private sector and communities on youth facility usage and maintenance • Creation of awareness to schools and communities on maintenance of facilities utilized by the youth.
Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of data on health status of youth, for example, their zero-status
Private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing youth training and entrepreneurship programmes;

Civil Society Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and provision of civic education on good citizenship, national and cultural values; • Implementation of programmes provided in the youth policy • Create awareness on the youth policy at community level;
Faith Based Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of awareness on programmes for youth through scriptures /sermons; • Dissemination of the youth policy in relevant forums
International Organizations with presence in Vihiga county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead advocacy on implementation of the youth policy in Vihiga County. • Mainstream youth activities in all development projects of the county, including resourcing through partnerships.
Development partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing of the youth policy implementation; • Providing technical support to key state and non- state actors for the dissemination and implementation of the youth policy in the county
Individuals and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation in youth programmes /activities at all levels in the county
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profiling youth programmes and initiatives in the media • Youth policy dissemination.
Education institutions (e.g. Technical & Vocational Colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant training courses that add value to youth development • Policy dissemination

5.2 FRAMEWORK FOR COORDINATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YOUTH POLICY

56. This will be the responsibility of the County Chief Officer in charge of Youth, Sports, Culture and Social Services. Working closely with other key stakeholders, the Chief Officer shall:

- (i) Ensure regular research to obtain sex-disaggregated data on youth to guide responsive programming;
- (ii) Ensure the resourcing of youth policy implementation;

5.3 THE COUNTY YOUTH COORDINATION SECRETARIAT

57. The Secretariat shall be the link between the County government, all other sectors in the county and the community:

5.4 COUNTY YOUTH BOARD

58. The County Youth Board shall facilitate the establishment of Sub-County Youth Executive Committee that will serve as the watchdog of the youth programmes in their regions. The Committee shall monitor and provide reports on the status of youth, disseminate the policy and be responsible for the identification of Champions for Sub-County Youth Annual Awards. i.e. Top 30 under 30 such Awards will be competitive and will be given to any innovative youth initiative that will have created employment and increased incomes in their sector.

5.5 OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTY MACHINERY ON YOUTH

59. This will County Government structure set up to promote initiatives and development programmes for the youth in Vihiga County. It will have a department to monitor implementation of the policy.

5.6 REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH POLICY

60. The Youth policy will be reviewed every two years to determine progress on implementation. This is important to guide development of the next County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP).

6.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGIES

A youth: Any person between the ages of 18-35 years (Constitution of Kenya, 2010) regardless of marital status and number of children they biologically have;

Youth agencies: Includes the youth institutions and youth organizations in the county;

Youth empowerment - “the circumstances and factors which enhance the development of citizenship and productivity of young people as they move into adulthood. It is concerned with the adaptation of government structures and institutions to protect and deliver children’s, youths” and human rights, including the right to participation”². The word 'empowerment' means giving power.

Youth event: Any contest, competition, tournament or game open to participation and attendance by persons regarded to be youth;

Youth club: An organization or association dedicated to youth initiatives and programmes.

Directorate of Youth Affairs: The Directorate of Youth in Vihiga County Department of Youth, Sports, Culture and Social Services.

Stakeholders: Individuals, community, organizations or firms that have an interest in youth activities.

Private sector

Part of the national economy that is not under direct government control.

² The United Nations Human Settlements Program (UNCHS-Habitat)

7.0 REFERENCES

1. The Constitution of Kenya 2010;
2. Kenya's Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan 2013-2018
3. County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP, 2013 -2017; 2018- 2022) for Vihiga County
4. Integrated Strategic Regional Development Plan for Vihiga County (2012-2030)
5. Responses from interviews with Vihiga County Youth Policy stakeholders.

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