



MANIFESTO YETU CONSORTIUM

MANIFESTO YETU LAUNCH

THEME
MANIFESTO YETU BLUEPRINT DESIGNING INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY

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1 NATION
YOUTH
MANIFESTO

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Manifesto Yetu

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1st Edition of the Kenyan Youth Manifesto

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FOREWORD

This Manifesto is born from the collective wisdom of thousands of young Kenyans;; students in Kitui advocating for fair education funding, young innovators in Nakuru demanding digital infrastructure, pastoralists in Mandera seeking mental health services, young fisherfolk in Homabay calling for blue economy support, and creatives nationwide asserting that "the creative economy is not a hobby; it is an industry."

It reflects the pain of unemployment affecting 67% of our youth, the frustration with tokenistic political participation, the anger at police brutality, abductions and extrajudicial killings, and the hope that devolution can deliver tangible opportunities when properly harnessed. Most importantly, it transforms these experiences into actionable solutions developed by the youth themselves.

This is not merely a wish list. It is a political statement and a social contract between Kenya's youth and those who seek to lead them. It demands that political parties move beyond empty promises to binding commitments, that government transitions from rhetoric to delivery, and that Kenya's democratic institutions truly serve the majority they claim to represent.

As we approach the 2027 general elections, this Manifesto will serve as our measuring stick, our accountability tool, and our rallying cry. We call upon all political actors, county governments, national institutions, civil society, and our fellow citizens to embrace these priorities and work alongside us to build the Kenya we deserve.

The future of Kenya is not tomorrow. It is now. It is with us the young people of Kenya.

PREFACE

The creation of Manifesto Yetu is a testament to the resilience, imagination, and courage of Kenya's young people. From the early stages of consultations to the finalization of this document, youth voices have been the engine driving this process. This Manifesto reflects not only the diverse realities of young Kenyans, but also their resolve to transform frustration into action, hope into policy, and vision into collective power.

This preface stands as an affirmation: young people are not spectators in Kenya's development. They are co-authors of its present and custodians of its future. Their contributions provide the foundation upon which this Manifesto rests, and their aspirations shape the commitments we boldly put forward. May this document serve as both a compass and a catalyst for generations determined to build a just, equitable, and thriving Kenya.

I would like to sincerely appreciate the dedication and hard work of two outstanding young people who invested their time, skills, and passion in the development of this document: Maureen Wanyonyi and Mbuki Mburu. Their commitment, insight, and teamwork were instrumental in shaping the quality and depth of this work. Manifesto Yetu is stronger because of their contribution.

*Kidi Mwaga,
Convener,
Manifesto Yetu*

ABOUT MANIFESTO YETU

Manifesto Yetu Coalition is an open consortium for young and progressive leaders from grassroots communities, CSOs, political parties, trade unions and private sector who are championing for social democracy, gender justice, good governance and accountability through a youth centric lens.

The Manifesto Yetu initiative is grounded in two foundational principles that give meaning and legitimacy to our collective aspirations as young people: Kenya's National Interest and the philosophy of Utu.

i. National Interest

Commitment to aligning youth priorities with Kenya's overarching National Interest: safeguarding sovereignty, dignity, livelihoods, prosperity, and the environment for present and future generations. Kenya's Constitution (2010) places all sovereign power in the people. The National Interest philosophy is therefore the protection and advancement of Kenya's sovereignty, dignity, and prosperity as an independent African nation.

For young people, this means that their aspirations for employment, education, health, inclusion, and climate justice are not just personal or generational concerns; they are matters of national survival and sovereignty.

The manifesto aligns with the core elements of Kenya's National Interest:

- Safeguarding the sanctity of life, human rights, and dignity of citizens.
- Securing Kenya's economic sovereignty, prosperity, and social advancement.
- Protecting the security of the people and the nation.
- Ensuring livelihoods, decent quality of life, and social welfare.
- Conserving and sustainably managing natural resources and the environment.
- Promoting rule of law, accountable governance, and devolution.

- Preserving Kenya's cultural heritage and history.

By framing priorities through the lens of National Interest, it emphasizes that empowering youth is central to Kenya's future security, economic growth, and democratic stability.

ii. Utu (Human Dignity and Interconnectedness)

Affirming the inherent dignity of every young person and recognizing our shared humanity. Our actions are guided by solidarity, compassion, and the principle that the wellbeing of one is bound to the wellbeing of all.

At the heart of Manifesto Yetu is the African philosophy of Utu, the recognition of our shared humanity, dignity, and interconnectedness. Utu reminds us that no individual thrives in isolation; our well-being is tied to that of our communities and nation.

Guided by Utu, this manifesto is committed to:

- Human dignity: ensuring every young person is treated with respect and value.
- Solidarity: building unity across ethnic, gender, regional, and socioeconomic divides.
- Justice and equity: advancing fairness in opportunities, resources, and representation.
- Collective progress: ensuring youth empowerment translates into stronger families, communities, and a united Kenya.

iii. Our Commitment

By embedding National Interest and Utu in Manifesto Yetu, we affirm that youth issues are national issues. We present this manifesto not only as a blueprint for addressing the challenges facing young people, but as a patriotic contribution to reclaiming Kenya's sovereignty, dignity, and future.

ACRONYMS

- **ASAL** – Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
- **CIDP** – County Integrated Development Plan
- **CSO** – Civil Society Organization
- **COTU** – Central Organization of Trade Unions
- **FKE** – Federation of Kenya Employers
- **GIS** – Geographic Information System
- **ILO** – International Labour Organization
- **IMF** – International Monetary Fund
- **IPYF** – Inter-Party Youth Forum
- **KNBS** – Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
- **KIPPRA** – Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis
- **MESPT** – Micro-Enterprise Support Programme Trust
- **NADCO** – National Dialogue Committee
- **NGO** – Non-Governmental Organization
- **NITA** – National Industrial Training Authority
- **NYS** – National Youth Service
- **TVET** – Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- **UNICEF** – United Nations Children's Fund
- **UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Manifesto Yetu, is a comprehensive and youth, driven policy framework grounded in rigorous research, broad, based consultations, and a strong philosophical foundation. It outlines paradox of youth powerlessness in Kenya where young people form the majority yet remain excluded from decision, making and highlights the Gen Z awakening that catalyzed a new era of civic engagement, developments that informed the creation of Manifesto Yetu, a declaration of youths' collective demands.

The Manifesto was developed through an inclusive, participatory methodology. It draws from national consultations, thematic expert dialogues, and multilevel data analysis. The manifesto emphasizes dignity, equity, and shared wellbeing to resolve unemployment, governance, climate adaptation, education central to Kenya's National Interest and long-term sovereignty. Youth are not beneficiaries; they are custodians of Kenya's future.

The report outlines the core purpose and objectives of the Manifesto, situating youth aspirations within Kenya's current political, socioeconomic, and demographic realities. It identifies key challenges and opportunities shaping the lives of young people today.

The thematic chapters provide detailed analyses and youth-driven demands across four major pillars: Education, Skills Development, and Innovation; Youth Livelihoods, Employment, and Entrepreneurship; Governance, Security, and Political Participation; and Agriculture, Technology, and Climate Change. Each thematic area includes current realities, statistical insights, challenges, priority demands, phased actions (short, medium, and long-term), and measurable outcomes.

The Manifesto sets out a clear agenda for action, immediate, medium-term, and long-term.

Year 1 (Immediate): Operationalize the Ksh 20 billion NYOTA Fund, create youth innovation hubs, ringfence 30% of county procurement for youth, end police brutality through independent oversight, reform university funding, and institutionalize youth accountability mechanisms such as WASH Parliaments.

Years 2–3: Implement Recognition of Prior Learning, establish county mental health and rehabilitation centers, ensure county-level skills and employment strategies, mandate 30% youth representation in sectoral committees, and roll out a National Youth Guarantee Scheme for collateral-free financing.

Years 4,5: Create elected County Youth Assemblies, lower retirement age to open space for younger professionals, implement a national digital inclusion strategy, establish green funds for youth-led climate innovation, and reform political party nominations.

The document concludes by reaffirming the role of Manifesto Yetu as both a roadmap and a social contract, designed to guide national transformation, amplify youth agency, and ensure that Kenya's leadership remains accountable to the country's largest demographic.

1. BACKGROUND

Kenya's youth live in a glaring contradiction: they are majority of the population yet remain largely economically marginalized and politically sidelined. Nearly 67% of young people work in the informal sector, often without social protection. Each year, around 800,000 young Kenyans enter the job market, yet only about 20% find formal employment. Politically, the picture is just stark. Though three quarters of the population is under 35, young people occupy less than 7% of elective offices. The promise of a youth democratic participation has too often become the reality of youth exclusion.

Even more disheartening is the cycle of broken promises. Ahead of the 2022 elections, major political coalitions Kenya Kwanza and Azimio made grand commitments to the youth of Kenya: millions of jobs, monthly stipends for vulnerable households, and transformative youth programs. Three years on, the gap between promise and reality has become a deep crater, felt in empty pockets, rising frustration, and growing distrust. The new higher education funding model has only worsened inequality, misclassifying vulnerable students into the wrong income bands and denying many the support they urgently need.

In the recent past young people have been marginalized in three important processes and development: the Building Bridges Initiative had nine points on the agenda¹. The youth of Kenya were marginal in the whole BBI endeavor. The COVID pandemic hit the youth hard but the post-COVID recovery plans did not articulate how the youth were to recover from the pandemic in all aspects of life. Then in the wake of the 2022 elections, a ground shift engagement with the national government in the streets and boardrooms birthed the NADCO process which once again was blind to the specific

needs of young people in the post-COVID and post-election period.

The Gen-Z Awakening: The June 2024 and June 2025 youth seismic movement was groundbreaking shattering decades of political ambivalence. Young Kenyans rose against the Finance Bill, mobilizing millions online and on the streets. What emerged was more than protest, it was a political awakening. A generation widely dismissed as disengaged proved instead that it would no longer accept corruption, exclusion, or economic sabotage. But energy alone was not enough; movements require structure, deep organizing and coordination.

1.1 The Birth of a Youth Manifesto

Manifesto Yetu provided structure: a unified, issue-based framework that cuts across political divides, regions, and identities. It rests on four pillars:

1. **Human Development & Social Well-Being** – equitable education, accessible healthcare including mental health services, robust social protection, and disability inclusion.
2. **Youth Livelihoods, Employment & Entrepreneurship** – decent jobs, digital integration, support for the creative sector, and pathways into green and emerging economies.
3. **Governance & Security** – meaningful youth participation, rights protection, an end to police brutality, and justice access.
4. **Agriculture Technology & Climate Change** – agro-innovation, sustainable resource management, climate adaptation, value addition, and blue/green economy opportunities.

¹ Kenya, Office of the President, & Office of the leader of the Opposition. (2018 March 9) Joint Communiqué of 'Building Bridges to a New Kenyan Nation'

How the Manifesto Was Built: Unlike political manifestos drafted in boardrooms, this one was born from the ground up. Youth from urban slums, rural villages, campuses, settlements, creative spaces, private sector associations, trade unions, and disability groups contributed to its creation. Regional forums were held across all eight economic blocs, county consultations reached diverse communities, and digital platforms ensured no voice was left out.

Accountability: The Promise Tracker

To ensure these commitments do not fade after elections, Manifesto Yetu includes a Promise Tracker, a digital platform monitoring implementation by county and national governments. Youth networks in every county will conduct quarterly social audits and publish public scorecards.

The Stakes for Kenya

Transforming Kenya hinges on whether the demographic dividend can become a development dividend. This requires replacing old systems with new values:

- From tokenism to power
- From rhetoric to resources
- From extraction to investment
- From fragmentation to unity

2. Approach & Methodology

As an early and foundational step in the process, Manifesto Yetu dialogues reached a consolidated total of approximately 1,200 youth representatives through structured, in person and virtual engagements drawn from organizations, networks, unions, and

key stakeholders whose cumulative membership exceeds 400,000 Kenyans. These actors were deliberately selected because their core mandates and daily work are directly anchored in addressing youth plights, rights, livelihoods, governance, creativity, and participation in public life.

The physical engagements were conducted across different regions, with each region represented by diverse youth drawn from grassroots youth groups, leadership circles, social movements, learning institutions, cultural spaces, and community-based organizations, ensuring inclusivity across geography, gender, and socio-economic realities.

This on the ground process was robustly complemented by sustained digital engagement through our various social media platforms and members' consortium platforms, which enabled continuous feedback, validation, and real time dialogue with young people beyond physical convenings. In parallel, the process was further strengthened through an extensive media tour spanning community and mainstream radio stations, national and local television interviews, and youth-centered podcasts, significantly broadening outreach, awareness, and participation. These layered engagement strategies ensured that youth voices were not only heard but actively shaped the discourse and content of the Youth Manifesto. By intentionally working through institutions and networks with large, active membership bases and clear youth-focused mandates, we were able to capture perspectives that are both deeply grounded in lived experience and broadly representative at the national level. This multi-platform, cross-sectoral approach provided a strong, credible, and inclusive national sample, affirming that the final Youth Manifesto is firmly rooted in the authentic aspirations, challenges, and visions of young people across Kenya.

2.1 Methodological Approach

The Manifesto development employed a mixed methods, participatory action research framework combining:

Phase 1: Desktop Review:

- Analysis of 2022 political party manifestos (Kenya Kwanza, Azimio la Umoja, and others)
- Review of existing youth policies (National Youth Policy 2019, County Youth Empowerment policies)
- Assessment of implementation gaps in previous youth manifestos (2017, 2022)
- Statistical analysis of youth demographics, employment, education, and health indicators

Phase 2: Regional Consultations

Eight Regional Forums were conducted across Kenya's economic blocs:

1. Central Region (Embu County): participants from Nyeri, Kiambu, Laikipia, Nyandarua, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Embu, Kirinyaga
2. Eastern Region (Kitui County): 40 participants (10 female, 30 male) from Kitui, Machakos, Makueni
3. North Eastern Region (Mandera County): 600 participants (231 women, 369 men) from Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit, Garissa
4. Nairobi Region: Multiple thematic convenings with over 200 participants
5. Nyanza Region (Homabay County): Representatives from Homabay, Kisumu, Siaya, Migori, Kisii, Nyamira
6. Rift Valley Region (Nakuru County): 40 participants from Nakuru, Kericho, Baringo, Nyandarua, Bomet, Kajiado
7. Western Region (Busia County): 43 participants from Busia, Bungoma, Kakamega
8. Coast Region: Forums integrated into Youth Devolution Festival

Each forum followed a structured agenda:

- **Opening:** Context setting on the state of youth in Kenya, purpose of Manifesto Yetu
- **Plenary Presentations:** Desktop review findings, expert inputs on governance/policy
- **Thematic Breakout Groups:** Parallel sessions on the four pillars with 8,¹² participants each
- **Evidence Collection:** Participants documented challenges using PESTEL analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal factors)
- **Solution Co-Creation:** Groups developed concrete recommendations through consensus building
- **Validation:** Plenary presentation and collective refinement of proposals

Demographic Tracking: Each forum collected data on:

- Gender distribution (Male/Female/Non binary)
- Disability inclusion (Yes/No, with type of disability)
- Age breakdown (18 to 24, 25 to 30, 31 to 35)
- Educational background
- Employment status
- County of origin

Example Breakdown (Central Forum):

- Total: 43 participants (30 male, 13 female, 1 person with disability)
- Average age: 27 years
- 60% had tertiary education, 40% secondary or vocational training

- 55% unemployed, 30% informally employed, 15% formally employed

Phase 3: Specialized Stakeholder Convenings

To ensure sectoral depth, targeted consultations were held with:

1. Trade Unions & Private Sector

- 40 participants from COTU, FKE, sector unions, HR professionals
- Focus: Decent work, ILO standards, skills alignment with labor market
- Key institutions: NITA, NYS, MESPT, Ajira Digital Program

2. CSOs & Special Interest Groups

- 50+ representatives from youth-serving organizations
- Focus: Social justice, human rights, climate justice, disability inclusion
- Organizations: CDPK, Mathare Social Justice Center, Mukuru Peace Initiative, Voice of Dagoreti, Protection International, Youth Parliament of Kenya

3. Student Leaders' Caucus

- 40 university and college student leaders
- Focus: Education funding, student welfare, transition to employment
- Representation: Public universities, private institutions, TVET colleges

4. Bloggers & Digital Advocates

- Digital content creators, online activists, civic tech developers
- Focus: Digital rights, online safety, information access, countering disinformation

5. Creatives Engagement Forum

- Artists from film, visual arts, design, music, performance, literature, photography
- Focus: Creative economy infrastructure, IP protection, fair pay,

cultural promotion

6. Political Party Youth Forums

Youth representatives from political parties both government and opposition

- Focus: Political participation, party reforms, manifesto accountability

Phase 4: National Convening, Youth Devolution Festival

The Youth Devolution Festival 2025 served as the primary national validation and consolidation platform:

- **Scale:** 2,000 total participants, including 1,200 official delegates from all 47 counties
- **Structure:** Three-day intensive engagement with:
 - Keynote addresses from national and county leaders (PS Youth Affairs, PS Devolution, PS Economic Planning, Governor Kajiado, MPs)
 - Panel discussions on employment, WASH governance, digital economy, agriculture
 - Innovation exhibitions showcasing youth-led solutions
 - Cultural performances celebrating creative economy
 - Breakout sessions developing the Youth Communiqué

• Thematic Working Groups:

1. Youth Employment, Employability & Skills Development
2. Agriculture, Value Addition & Blue Economy
3. Climate, Water & Green Jobs
4. The Gig & Digital Economy
5. Cultural Heritage & Creative Economy
6. Governance, Devolution & Active Citizenship

- **Outputs:**
 1. Youth Communiqué with six thematic pillars and specific county level actions
 2. Innovation Challenge proposals
 3. County Youth Action Plans
 4. Commitment declarations from government officials

Phase 5: Data Analysis

Qualitative Analysis:

We carefully reviewed and coded over 500 pages of forum reports, transcripts, and notes, looking for patterns that highlighted both shared challenges and unique priorities across different regions. Throughout this process, we also pulled out key quotes to make sure the real voices and experiences of young people came through clearly.

Quantitative Analysis:

We compiled and analyzed demographic data from all the forums, examining how often different issues were raised across the consultations. The analysis also compared perspectives across rural and urban areas, highlighted gender differences, and explored variations between regions to provide a fuller understanding of youth priorities.

Triangulation:

The findings were carefully cross checked against existing research, including KNBS data and other youth studies, and validated against relevant policy documents such

as County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and national strategies. Additionally, youth researchers and development practitioners reviewed the results to ensure accuracy and credibility.

Phase 6: Draft Development & Validation

The core writing team synthesized all inputs into a coherent policy framework, which was circulated for peer review to regional forum participants, representatives from specialized convenings, youth policy experts, and legal advisors to ensure constitutional alignment. A validation meeting followed, bringing together representatives from all forums to review and approve the draft.

Amendments were incorporated through consensus building, with the final framework receiving formal sign off from the National Technical Working Group.

2.2 Creative Implementation strategies

1. Youth WASH Parliaments as Model: The consultative process drew inspiration from Youth WASH Parliaments operating in Makueni, Kakamega, Kwale, Kajiado, Kisumu, and Bungoma. These parliaments demonstrated how youth can use evidence (GIS mapping of water points, social audits of county projects) to influence governance. Their methodology, community data collection, technical working groups, public accountability forums was adapted for the broader Manifesto process.

2. PESTEL Framework for Challenge Analysis: Rather than simply listing complaints, youth participants used PESTEL analysis to systematically identify root causes:

- **Political:** Youth exclusion from party structures, tokenism in appointments
- **Economic:** Unemployment, lack of access to capital, high taxation
- **Social:** Stigma around mental health, gender disparities, ethnic politicization
- **Technological:** Digital divide, inadequate infrastructure, cybersecurity threats
- **Environmental:** Climate change impacts, water scarcity, land degradation
- **Legal:** Restrictive laws (such as the Cybercrime Act), weak enforcement of youth protections

This structured approach ensured recommendations addressed systemic issues rather than symptoms.

3. Policy Translation Framework: In Mandera, facilitators used a three-stage process to help youth move from grievances to policy demands:

Table 1: Policy Translation Framework

Stage	Question	Example input	Example Output
Diagnosis	What is the problem?	"I lack capital to start a business"	Issue: Exclusion from formal financial services
Root cause	Why is it persisting?	"Youth Fund requires title deed collateral and committees are corrupt"	Systemic Failure: State financial support mechanisms structurally biased against youth without assets
Policy demand	What law/policy must change?	Establish National Youth Guarantee Scheme backed by partial guarantees for collateral-free loans	Measurable, implementable policy reform

This ensured the Manifesto contains actionable, not aspirational recommendations.

4. Digital Engagement & Accessibility:

- Digital Data Collection platforms; Civic Voices App
- Online surveys for youth unable to attend physical forums
- WhatsApp groups for ongoing input and validation
- Social media hashtags (#ManifestoYetu) for broader crowd-sourcing
- Translation of key documents into Kiswahili and simplified formats
- Sign language interpretation at major convenings
- Accessibility accommodations (ramps, braille materials) for persons with disabilities

2.3 Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent: All participants were informed about the purpose, use of their inputs, and their right to withdraw at any stage.

Confidentiality: Sensitive testimonials (particularly on mental health, police brutality, sexual violence) were anonymized unless participants explicitly consented to attribution.

Safety: In forums discussing contentious issues (Maslaha system in Mandera, police violence, political manipulation), facilitators created safe spaces and connected participants with support resources.

Inclusivity: Deliberate efforts to ensure marginalized voices were centered:

- Gender parity targets in delegate selection
- At least one person with disability per county delegation
- Rural youth quotas to balance urban representation
- Sessions in local languages where needed

Power Dynamics: The process acknowledged that even "youth spaces" can replicate hierarchies. Facilitators actively amplified quieter voices, rotated speaking opportunities, and used anonymous feedback mechanisms (sticky notes, digital polls) to capture perspectives that might not emerge in public discussion.

2.4 Limitations & Mitigation

The following were the significant limitations of the Manifesto Yetu process and the mitigation actions/strategies executed to ensure that the Manifesto was based on the authentic and undiluted views and voice of young people across Kenya;

1. Resource Constraints:

- *Challenge:* Limited funding restricted ability to conduct ward-level consultations in all counties
- *Mitigation:* Prioritized regional hubs with diverse county representation; supplemented with digital outreach

2. Time Limitations:

- *Challenge:* Compressed timeline (4 months) for national consultation
- *Mitigation:* Built on existing networks (IPYF, KYPA, YSO coalitions) for rapid mobilization; will continue post-launch refinement

3. Political Sensitivities:

- *Challenge:* Risk of politicization or co-option by partisan actors
- *Mitigation:* Maintained non-partisan stance; included youth from diverse political affiliations; transparent governance structure

4. Digital Divide:

- *Challenge:* Online engagement excluded youth without smartphones/internet
- *Mitigation:* Hybrid approach prioritizing face-to-face forums in marginalized areas; SMS-based feedback for basic phones

5. Representation Authenticity:

- *Challenge:* Ensuring delegates truly represented grassroots youth, not just elites
- *Mitigation:* Open calls through community organizations; demographic diversity requirements; validation through multiple touchpoints

2.5 Data Management

All consultation data is stored in a secure digital repository managed by the Manifesto Yetu Secretariat, including:

- Participant registration lists (anonymized for privacy)
- Audio/video recordings of proceedings (with consent)

- Transcripts and rapporteur reports
- Thematic analysis matrices
- Statistical databases

This archive will serve as:

- An accountability resource (tracking how inputs shaped final Manifesto)
- A research repository for scholars studying youth participation
- A knowledge base for future policy advocacy

The methodology employed represents one of the most comprehensive youth consultation processes in Kenya's history reaching more youth across more geographies and sectors than previous manifesto efforts. It demonstrates that when given structured platforms, resources, and genuine agency, youth can produce rigorous, evidence-based policy frameworks that rival those of professional consultants. This Manifesto is not what adults think youth need it is what youth themselves have determined they require to thrive.

3. INTRODUCTION

Our Vision:

A Kenya where young people are active architects of their own future

Our Mission: To translate youth voices into binding political commitments, ensuring that the electoral cycles produce leaders accountable to the lived realities and aspirations of young Kenyans.

Alternative Mission Statements:

To translate youth voices into binding political commitments that hold leaders accountable to the lived realities and aspiration of young people in Kenya

To amplify the voices of young people in Kenya by strengthening their leadership,

advancing their rights, and championing inclusive policies that enable them to influence and drive the future they envision.

3.1 Youth Values & Aspirations

Kenya's youth envision a nation where:

- Opportunity is universal, not reserved for the politically connected
- Merit trumps patronage in employment and public service
- Innovation drives prosperity, not just consumption of imports
- Voices shape policy, not just votes during elections
- Dignity and rights are guaranteed regardless of age, gender, disability, or socio-economic status

Our Core Values:

- Accountability and Transparency:** We believe that young people deserve spaces where leadership is open, honest, and responsible. We hold ourselves answerable to the young people we serve by openly sharing information, reporting on our progress, learning from our mistakes, and inviting feedback
- Diversity and Inclusivity:** We recognise that young people come from different backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and perspectives and that this diversity is a source of innovation, resilience, and strength. As a coalition, we are committed to creating spaces where every young person feels seen, respected, and able to contribute meaningfully.
- Innovation and Adaptability:** We recognize that the challenges facing Kenya's youth are constantly evolving, and that creative thinking, problem solving, and flexibility are crucial to responding effectively. By fostering a culture of innovation, we encourage young people to explore new ideas, embrace

technology, experiment with solutions, and challenge traditional approaches.

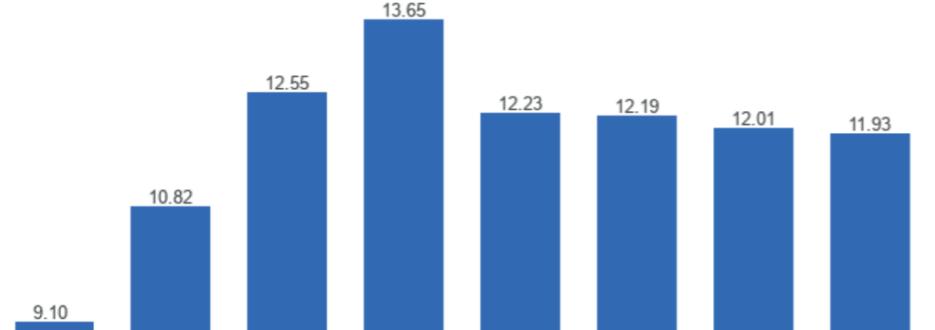
4. **Honesty and Integrity:** We believe that trust, credibility, and ethical behavior are essential for effective leadership and meaningful participation. We will intentionally foster a culture of accountability, trust and inspire young people to act ethically and responsibly.
5. **Democracy and Participation:** We believe that every young person has the right to have a voice, make decisions, and influence the policies and programs that affect their lives. We will establish and join inclusive platforms where all youth voices are heard, valued, and considered in decision making processes.

3.2 Contextual Background

Kenya stands at a demographic crossroads. With a median age of around 19 years and nearly four in five Kenyans under the age of 35, the country's future will be decided by how it treats its young people today. The same statistics that describe a "youthful nation" also underline a high-risk environment: slow school to work transitions, job precarity, persistent inequalities, and rising climate and digital vulnerabilities.

Figure 1: Kenya's Youth at a Glance; Youth unemployment, ages 15-24

In 2024, Kenya's youth unemployment was at 11.93 percent, a decline from 12.01 percent in 2023 as seen in the graph below. This can be attributed to stabilizing economy



Source: World Bank Data

Every year, hundreds of thousands of young Kenyans enter the labor market, but only a fraction secure stable, decent work. Official unemployment rates may seem modest, but they mask a deeper crisis of job quality, informality, and underemployment. Youth dominate the informal sector, surviving through low paid self-employment, casual work, and gig jobs with no social protection.

Figure 2 below showcases that: without systemic action on skills, investment, and labour protections, Kenya risks locking a whole generation into low productivity work.

^aKNBS Labour Force Surveys (2019–2024); KNBS Economic Survey job creation tables; YouthAgenda Employment Creation Potential for Youth report; KIPPRA youth labour transition analyses; World Bank employment and school-to-work transition reports; media analyses of formal job creation trends.

Figure 2: Youth Entering the Labor Market vs Formal Jobs (2019–2024)

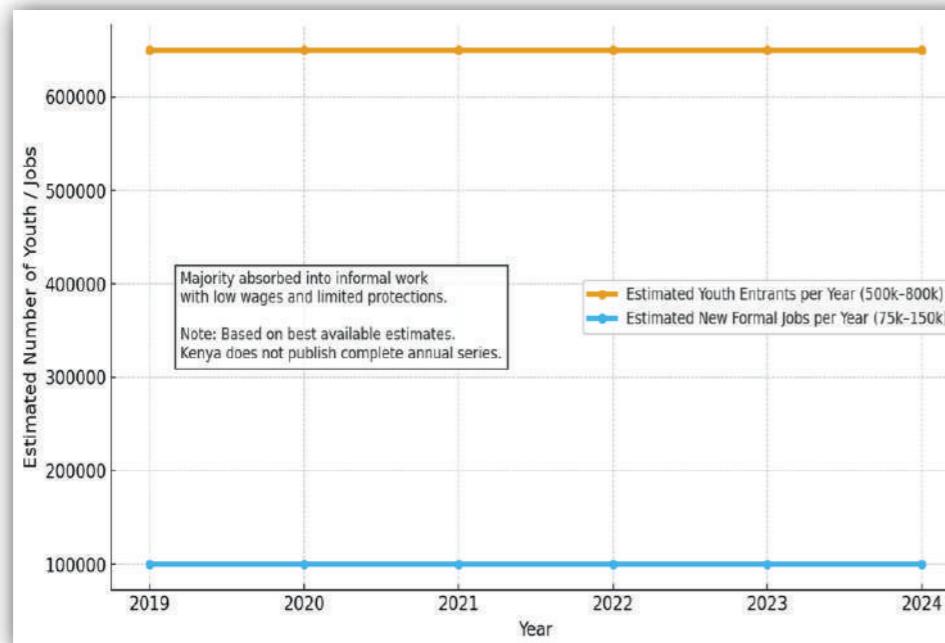
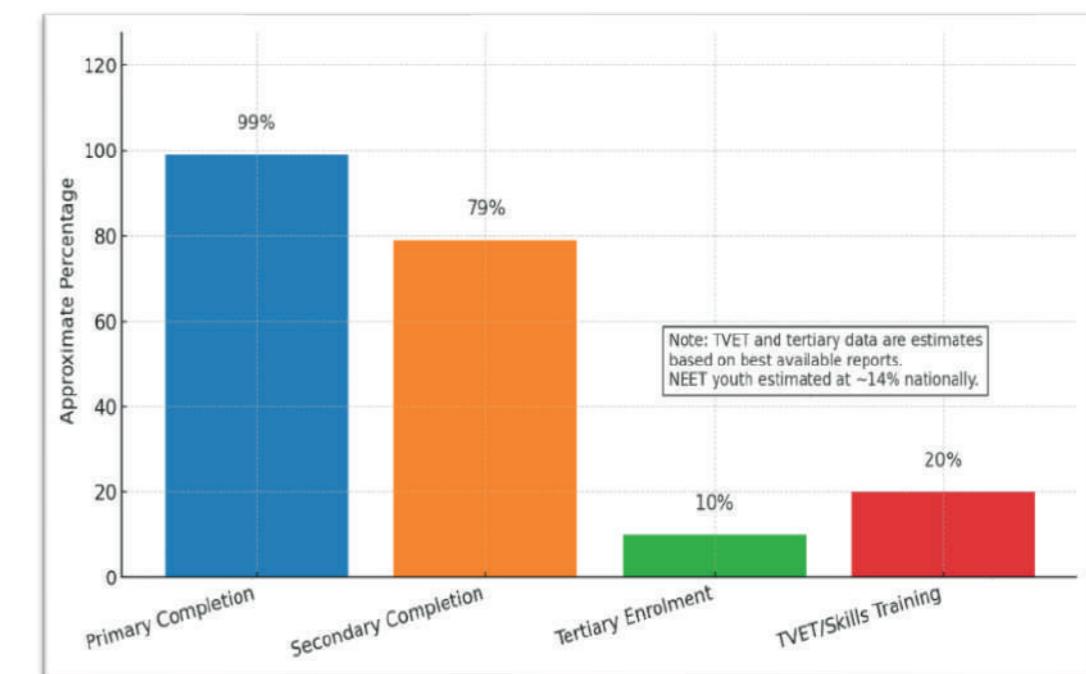


Figure 3: Education Pipeline Drop Off in Kenya



Kenya has made real gains in enrolment and completion, yet education often feels like a double-edged reality for youth. On one side, more young people are in school and TVETs than ever before. On the other, many graduate into unemployment or jobs that do not match their training, reinforcing frustration and debt.

Consultations highlighted:

- Overcrowded institutions and under resourced TVET centres.
- Weak links between universities/TVETs and industry.
- Limited support for learners with disabilities and those in remote areas.
- Insufficient focus on digital, entrepreneurial, and problem solving skills.

Source: Data based on best available estimates from KNBS Census Analytical Report (2019), UNESCO IICBA education profiles, UIS tertiary enrolment statistics (2019), UNESCO GEM TVET uptake analysis (2022), and KIPPRA-NYC NEET estimates (2023).

Without relevance, quality, and clear pathways to work, education can become a source of disappointment rather than mobility.

⁴ Data based on best-available estimates from KNBS Census Analytical Report (2019), UNESCO IICBA education profiles, UIS tertiary enrolment statistics (2019), UNESCO GEM TVET uptake analysis (2022), and KIPPRA-NYC NEET estimates (2023).

³ Ibid (Same data source)

3.2.1 Political Context

Kenya's political landscape continues to be shaped by deep rooted structural challenges. Politics is still driven more by ethnic mobilization than by genuine issue-based engagement, reinforcing division rather than unity. Young people remain largely sidelined, often included only symbolically through appointments to boards and committees that lack really budgetary or decision-making power. Despite bold promises from both Kenya Kwanza and Azimio la Umoja that included creating one million jobs annually, to offering a monthly Ksh 6,000 stipend among other lofty promises, three years on, most of these commitments remain unfulfilled. Barriers such as high nomination fees, clan networks, and weak internal party democracy continue to lock youth out of electoral participation.

Meanwhile, civic space is steadily shrinking, with online activists facing surveillance and intimidation, and peaceful protests frequently met with violence.

The June 2024 and June 2025 Gen Z protests against the Finance Bill exposed this crisis: a generation demanding accountability but met with police brutality, abductions, and extrajudicial killings that claimed over 60 young lives.

3.2.2 Socio-Economic Context

Employment Crisis and economic burden: Kenya's youth continue to face an economic landscape that offers limited opportunity and persistent structural barriers. Although nearly one million young people enter the workforce each year, most end up in informal and insecure jobs, with only a small fraction securing formal employment.

A major driver of this challenge is the deep skills mismatch, as the education system remains heavily theoretical and poorly aligned with market needs. This leads to

widespread underemployment, with graduates forced to take jobs far below their qualifications, while exploitative internships often unpaid or offering token stipends devalue their labor further.

The high cost of living, driven by heavy taxation and high cost of inputs such as electricity and imported inputs, suppresses youth entrepreneurship, while access to capital remains constrained; despite promises of a Ksh 100 billion Youth Enterprise Development Fund, disbursements have been minimal, politicized, and plagued by high default rates. At the macro level, Kenya's growing public debt continues to narrow fiscal space for youth focused programs, with more than 56% of national revenue now going toward debt servicing according to the IMF, Kenya Debt sustainability analysis 2024.

Social Challenges:

- Mental health crisis: Rising cases of depression, anxiety, and suicide linked to unemployment, debt, and societal pressure with little accessible mental health services.
- Drug and substance abuse: Particularly in border regions and urban informal settlements, fueled by idleness and despair.
- Gender based violence: Inadequate legal frameworks and enforcement; Maslaha systems in some regions bypass formal justice for sexual offenses.

⁵<https://www.knbs.or.ke/all-reports/>

3.2.3 Youth Demographics⁵

Indicator / Age group	Value / Estimate	Notes / Source
Population (total, mid, 2025)	53.3 million	From KNBS “top data site” population listing. (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics)
Share of population under 18 years	46% (21.9 million)	From 2024 “Situation of Adolescents in Kenya” (2024) report uses KNBS 2024 projections. (UNICEF)
Number of adolescents (ages 10–19, 2024 projection)	11,617,890 (22.2% of population)	Derived from KNBS projections for 2024. (NCPD)
Youth (broad, 18–34 or 15–34) share of population (per 2019 census)	29–36% of total	2019 census data: youth (depending on definition) remain a large share. (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics)

3.2.4 Challenges and Opportunities

Key Challenges:

1. Political marginalization: Excluded from substantive decision making despite being majority of the population
2. Economic exclusion: Limited access to finance, markets, and procurement opportunities
3. Systemic corruption: Nepotism in jobs, tenders, and youth fund allocation
4. Social injustice: Police brutality, gender inequity, disability discrimination
5. Climate vulnerability: Youth in ASAL and coastal regions bear the brunt of drought and flooding.
6. Digital divide: Urban-rural connectivity gap limits digital economy participation

Transformative Opportunities:

1. Demographic dividend: Largest youth population in history can drive economic growth if properly harnessed
2. Devolution: County governments offer localized opportunities for inclusion and accountability
3. Digital revolution: Kenya's tech ecosystem can be expanded beyond Nairobi
4. Creative economy: Music, arts, film, and culture increasingly viable income sources
5. Green economy: Climate action creates jobs in renewable energy, conservation, and climate smart agriculture
6. Gen Z awakening: Political consciousness and organization at unprecedented level

⁵<https://www.knbs.or.ke/all-reports/>

4. PURPOSE OF THE YOUTH MANIFESTO

4.1 Core Objectives

Manifesto Yetu serves five interconnected purposes that distinguish it from previous youth policy documents:

1. Amplify Youth Voices Structurally

The Problem: Kenya's political landscape is characterized by what participants called "voice without power" youth are occasionally invited to speak at government events or consulted in tokenistic ways, but their input rarely translates into policy or budget allocations. As one Nakuru participant noted:

"We are always asked to give our views during public participation, but we never see how those views influenced the final decision."

This Manifesto creates a structured, documented record of youth priorities that cannot be ignored or misinterpreted. By systematically gathering inputs across all 47 counties and multiple sectors, it establishes that these are not the demands of isolated activists but the collective will of Kenya's youth majority.

Ahead of the elections, political parties seeking youth support must engage directly with the Manifesto, clearly indicating which demands they accept, which they reject, and their reasons for doing so. This approach is modeled on the 2022 Mzalendo Trust Vote Compass study, which matched voters' priorities to party policies. Following the elections, accountability will be ensured through the Manifesto's digital

Promise Tracker, which will monitor the implementation of commitments and publish quarterly scorecards comparing what was promised with what has actually been delivered.

Success means that by the 2027 election cycle, political party manifestos measurably

incorporate priorities identified in this document, and youth voter decisions are informed by substantive policy positions rather than ethnicity or handouts.

2. Strengthen Youth Participation in Governance

Despite making up 75% of the population, young people hold less than 7% of elective positions, highlighting the gap between demographic weight and political representation. Even when appointed to boards or committees, youth often face tokenism, lacking real decision making power or control over budgets. Public participation forums frequently exclude them as well, being poorly advertised, held at inconvenient times, or conducted in ways that are intimidating or overly technical. Compounding this, many young people lack basic civic education about how county and national governance work, limiting their ability to participate meaningfully in shaping policies that affect their lives.

The Manifesto provides both a why (the case for youth inclusion) and a how (specific mechanisms to operationalize it).

Specific Mechanisms Proposed:

a) County Youth Assemblies: Legally recognized, elected youth bodies in all 47 counties with:

- Co-signing authority on youth fund disbursements above a defined threshold
- Mandatory consultation role in County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs)
- Quarterly public forums with County Executive and Assembly
- Dedicated secretariat funded through county budget

b) Youth Focal Point Officers: Appointment of Youth Liaison Officers in every county department (health, agriculture, infrastructure, etc.) to:

- Ensure youth perspectives inform sectoral planning
- Track youth specific budget allocations

- Coordinate internships and mentorship programs
- Report to the County Youth Assembly

c) Digital Civic Education Platform: Government supported, youth managed platform providing:

- Simplified explanations of governance processes (how budgets are made, what oversight mechanisms exist)
- Real time alerts on public participation opportunities
- Templates for citizen petitions and memoranda
- Online submission portals for feedback

d) Youth Quotas “with Teeth”: Moving beyond nominal representation to substantive power:

- 30% youth representation in County Sectoral Committees (agriculture, health, etc.) with voting rights
- Youth must chair or co-chair County Finance and Planning Committees
- Political party internal elections to reserve youth positions at national and county levels

Measurement: Success means that within two years:

- All 47 counties have operational Youth Assemblies
- Youth specific budget allocations are publicly trackable
- At least 50% of youth surveyed report feeling their inputs influenced a county decision

3. Influence Political Agendas Beyond Elections

Kenyan politics operates in cycles. Politicians pay attention to youth during campaigns, then ignore them until the next election. The 2022 promises to exemplify this: Kenya Kwanza pledged 1 million jobs annually but by 2025 only 20% of the 800,000 annual job market entrants were securing formal employment. The Hustler Fund,

promised at Ksh 50 billion for affordable loans, became a symbol of disappointment with Ksh 500 disbursements leading to Ksh 11 billion in defaults.

Manifesto Yetu shifts the framing from "youth as electoral assets" to "youth as permanent stakeholders." It provides a reference document that remains relevant throughout the entire political cycle, not just during campaigns.

How It Works:

a) Continuous Engagement Protocol: The Manifesto Secretariat will convene:

- Bi-annual Political Party Youth Forums where party leaders report on progress
- Mid-term Reviews (2029) assessing implementation halfway through the electoral cycle
- County level Manifesto Monitoring Committees that meet quarterly

b) Legislative Advocacy: Using the Manifesto as a basis for:

- Private Member Bills introduced by youth friendly legislators
- Parliamentary petitions from county youth groups
- Senate oversight hearings on youth program implementation
- Constitutional amendment proposals (e.g., lowering retirement age to create jobs)

c) Budget Advocacy: Linking Manifesto priorities to resource allocation:

- Shadow budgets developed by youth organizations showing how county/national budgets should align with Manifesto Yetu priorities.
- Participation in Budget and Appropriations Committee hearings
- Public expenditure tracking to ensure youth allocations are spent effectively

d) Alliance Building: Transcending partisan divides by:

- Creating cross party youth caucuses in Parliament and County Assemblies
- Building coalitions between youth serving organizations, trade unions, and private sector

- Engaging civil society for joint advocacy campaigns
- Measurement: Success means:
- At least 10 Private Member Bills based on Manifesto priorities introduced in Parliament by 2027
 - 50% increase in youth specific budget allocations across counties by 2029
 - Reduction in gap between campaign promises and actual delivery (tracked via Promise Tracker)

- Citizen feedback module allowing youth to report on ground realities
- Public dashboard accessible via web and mobile app

Technical Details:

- Hosted on open source platform (e.g., Ushahidi) for transparency
- Data verified by county level youth monitors trained in M&E
- API integration with government systems (e.g., IFMIS for budget tracking)
- Automated alerts when new relevant policies or budgets are published

b) Social Audits: Modeled on WASH Parliament methodology:

- Youth groups conduct community-based audits of specific projects (e.g., youth polytechnics, innovation hubs, employment programs)
- Use mobile data collection tools (ODK, KoboToolbox) to document findings
- Produce audit reports with evidence (photos, interviews, budget documents)
- Present findings at public forums ("Maji Forums" adapted to "Youth Accountability Forums")
- Demand responses from county officials

c) Annual Youth State of the Nation Report:

- Comprehensive assessment released each January tracking:
 - Youth employment statistics
 - Education funding and enrollment trends
 - Health outcomes (mental health service access, maternal mortality among young women)
 - Political participation metrics (youth voter registration, candidacy numbers)
 - Comparative county performance rankings
- Press conferences to publicize findings

4. Promote Accountability Through Evidence

Political accountability in Kenya remains weak for several reasons. Many promises made by leaders are vague and difficult to measure for example, statements like “we will empower youth” offer little clarity on actions or outcomes. Citizens often lack the tools to systematically track whether these commitments are being implemented. When shortcomings arise, politicians frequently deflect blame or take credit for intentions rather than actual results. Compounding this, media coverage tends to be episodic rather than consistent, allowing broken promises to fade from public memory.

The Solution: The Manifesto establishes a rigorous accountability infrastructure inspired by the Youth WASH Parliaments' social audit model.

Accountability Mechanisms:

a) The Promise Tracker (Digital Platform):

- Database of all 2027 election promises related to youth from all major parties and candidates
- Quarterly updates on implementation status (Not Started / In Progress / Partially Complete / Fully Implemented / Broken)
- Color coded scorecards (Green = Delivered, Yellow = Partial, Red = Failed)

- Submitted to Parliament as official record

d) Legal Accountability:

- Template for citizens' suits against governments that fail to meet constitutional obligations (Article 43 on economic and social rights)
- Pro bono legal clinics supporting youth to file petitions
- Engagement with oversight bodies (Commission on Administrative Justice, Auditor General, Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission)

Measurement: Success means:

- Promise Tracker has 100,000+ monthly users by 2027
- At least 5 successful legal challenges resulting in policy changes or fund disbursements
- 30% increase in media coverage of youth accountability issues (measured via media monitoring)

5. Foster Inclusion and Representation of Marginalized Groups

The Problem: Within the already marginalized youth demographic, certain groups face compounded exclusion:

- Young Women: Face patriarchal barriers to leadership ("it is not our culture for young women to lead"), sexual harassment when they do enter politics, lack of campaign financing, and gender-based violence. In the Nyanza forum, women participants noted that even women focused empowerment programs often bypass the most vulnerable.
- Persons with Disabilities (PWDs): Experience physical inaccessibility (no ramps, lack of sign language interpretation), discrimination in employment (despite 5% quota rarely enforced), exclusion from mainstream youth pro

grams, and stigma. At the Central Region forum, PWD representatives emphasized they want inclusion, not pity.

- Rural Youth: Concentrated in agriculture yet lack access to value addition infrastructure, extension services, land, and credit. Digital divide is most severe in rural areas, locking them out of gig economy opportunities. Pastoralist youth face unique challenges (livestock loss due to drought, insecurity from banditry, mobility barriers to education).
- Youth in Informal Settlements: Disproportionately affected by police brutality, lack of formal addresses limiting access to ID cards and services, exploitative housing, and inadequate infrastructure.
- Youth with Mental Health Challenges: Stigmatized and underserved; facilities are concentrated in urban areas and unaffordable for most. In Mandera, participants described mental health as an "invisible crisis" exacerbated by trauma, unemployment, and substance abuse.

The Solution: The Manifesto deliberately centers these voices and includes targeted interventions.

Specific Inclusion Strategies:

a) Gender Responsive Policies:

- 40% women requirement in all youth programs, committees, and funding allocations
- Safe spaces provisions in political party youth leagues (codes of conduct, sexual harassment policies)
- Financial support for women candidates (matching funds, campaign grants)
- Legal protections against exploitation (laws prohibiting sexual favors as precondition for opportunities)
- Reproductive health integration in all youth health programs (family plan

ning, maternal care, GBV services)

b) Disability Inclusion Mainstreaming:

- Universal design mandated in all youth infrastructure (hubs, polytechnics, sports facilities)
- Sign language as basic curriculum in schools to normalize communication
- Assistive technology support (screen readers, hearing aids) through county programs
- Disability sensitive entrepreneurship training (e.g., accessible trade courses)
- Enforcement of 5% employment quota with penalties for non-compliance
- PWD representation in county youth structures (not just token appointments)

c) Rural Youth Investment:

- Agribusiness value addition hubs in every agricultural county (processing facilities, storage, packaging equipment)
- Mobile extension services using motorcycles and digital advisories
- Land access programs (county allocation of public land for youth farming cooperatives)
- Rural digital infrastructure (community computer labs, subsidized internet)
- Scholarship/bursary priorities for rural youth in TVET

5. THEMATIC AREAS

THEMATIC AREA 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL WELL BEING

5.1 Education, Skills Development and Innovation

Current Reality:

The education sector faces a crisis of both access and quality. The introduction of the new university funding model in 2023 has been widely criticized as inequitable, with students wrongly categorized in income brackets, resulting in reduced or delayed financial support. Government intervention on the university funding model has been marked by legal challenges. In March 2025, the Court of Appeal overturned a previous High Court ruling that declared the Higher Education Funding Model unconstitutional.

The prolonged 2024 and 2025 lecturers' strike disrupted academic calendars, delaying exams and graduations. Higher education is increasingly becoming a privilege rather than a right, with many families unable to sustain their children's studies.

Key Statistics:⁶

- Literacy rates among adults (population aged 15+) rose slightly from 86% to 88%. (2015 and 2024)
- The top two regions with the fastest progress are Central and Southern Asia, where the adult literacy rate increased from 72% to 77%, and sub-Saharan Africa, with an increase from 65% to 69%.
- The global youth (population aged 15 to 24) literacy rate reached 93% in 2024, higher than for adults, reflecting the expansion of basic education from which the younger generations are benefiting.

Specific Challenges Identified:

1. Funding Crisis:

- o New Higher Education Funding Model lacks transparency and fairness
- o Delayed HELB disbursements force students to defer or drop out
- o Bursary schemes (CDF, County) are politicized and duplicative
- o Clearance requirements for job applications costly and burdensome

2. Curriculum-Market Misalignment:

- o CBC implementation hampered by inadequate infrastructure and teacher training
- o University curricula heavy on theory, light on practical skills
- o Insufficient integration of digital skills and entrepreneurship
- o Limited Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for informal skills

3. Infrastructure Gaps:

- o Marginalized and pastoralist communities lack proper school infrastructure
- o Labs and equipment inadequate or nonexistent in many institutions
- o TVETs underfunded despite being critical for technical skills
- o Inadequate resourcing for inclusive education

4. Access Barriers:

- o Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) lack inclusive learning environments
- o Kenyan Sign Language not part of basic curriculum
- o Schools for persons with disabilities perpetuate segregation rather than inclusion

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. The Review of the Universities Amendment Act to allow students' voices to be heard and acted upon by university authorities.

2. Conduct inclusive consultations involving students, parents, and education stakeholders

- o Establish transparent appeals mechanism for income band categorization
- o Consolidate all bursary and scholarship schemes into single, transparent platform
- o Guarantee timely HELB disbursement within 30 days of application approval

3. Simplify Graduate Clearance:

- o Waive clearance fees for first time job applicants
- o Digitize clearance process through integrated e-citizen platform
- o Provide one year grace period after graduation before penalties accrue

4. Emergency Infrastructure Investment:

- o Allocate Ksh 10 billion for TVET equipment and facilities upgrade
- o Prioritize schools in ASAL and marginalized regions
- o Equip all youth innovative and ICT hubs

Medium-Term Actions (Years 2,3):

4. Curriculum Reform:

- o Integrate mentorship and career guidance programs in all secondary schools
- o Introduce mandatory practical skills training and industrial attachment
- o Embed Kenyan Sign Language as compulsory subject from primary level
- o NYS resourcing of facilities and facilitation and training on specific job needs

⁶<https://www.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2025/09/ild-2025-factsheet.pdf>

5. TVET Transformation:
- o Increase TVET funding to 30% of education budget
 - o Establish county level TVET industry partnerships for demand driven training
 - o Expand modular, flexible learning programs for working youth
 - o Scale up Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) nationally
6. Inclusive Education:
- o Expedite the phasing out of special schools in favor of fully integrated inclusive education
 - o Train all teachers in special needs education and sign language
 - o Provide assistive devices and learning materials for person with disabilities
 - o Ensure all new education infrastructure meets accessibility standards
- Long Term Transformation (Years 4,5):**
7. Quality Assurance:
- o Publish detailed capitation reports for all public institutions (transparency)
 - o Strengthen education oversight and anti-corruption mechanisms
 - o Align academic calendars and prevent institutional strikes through dialogue frameworks
 - o Establish education trust fund ring fenced from political interference
8. Innovation and Entrepreneurship:
- o Create innovation hubs in all 47 counties linked to educational institutions
 - o Provide seed funding for student led startups and social enterprises
- o Integrate entrepreneurship education across all levels
- o Establish mentorship networks connecting students with industry professionals
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- 100% transition rate from secondary to tertiary education by 2027
 - 70% graduate employability within 6 months of completion by 2028
 - Zero clearance related job application barriers by 2026
 - 50% increase in TVET enrollment by 2029
 - Full disability inclusion in all educational institutions by 2030
- 5.2 Health and Wellness**
- Current Reality:**
- In Kenya, the government provides public health insurance through a state corporation known as the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF). Health service delivery remains inadequate, particularly for youth specific needs. The rollout of the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) replacing NHIF has been marred by uncertainty, with many young people finding the annual payment requirement not affordable to a majority especially for youth in disadvantaged homes. Public hospitals continue to face drug shortages and inadequate laboratory services. Mental health, the silent crisis among youth receives minimal attention despite rising cases of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide. Many young people face a heightened risk of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, with adolescent girls being particularly vulnerable due to limited access to SRHR information, social pressures, and economic hardship. Their increased exposure to coerced sex, transactional relationships, and other forms of

exploitation especially among those living at the bottom of the economic pyramid intensifies their susceptibility to HIV and undermines their overall sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Key Statistics:

- Only 1 psychiatrist per 500,000 people in Kenya
- 25% of youth report symptoms of depression (2024 survey)
- 80% of counties lack functional mental health services
- Drug and substance abuse affects an estimated 13% of youth population
- Maternal mortality among young mothers remains high at 342 per 100,000 live births
- Slightly more than half of young people (54% of women and 55% of men) aged 15-24 years know about HIV prevention methods (Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) 2022)

Specific Challenges Identified:

1. SHIF Implementation Issues:
 - o Annual payment burden for unemployed and informal sector youth
 - o Poor communication and irregular service delivery
 - o Concentration of benefits in urban areas
 - o Mistrust due to abrupt transition from NHIF
2. Mental Health Neglect:
 - o Stigma prevents youth from seeking help
 - o Severe shortage of counselors and psychologists in public facilities
 - o Mental health not integrated into primary healthcare
 - o No specialized services for trauma (violence exposure, unemployment stress)

3. Infrastructure and Supply Chain:

- o Persistent drug shortages in public hospitals
- o Non-functional laboratory equipment
- o Inadequate youth friendly health spaces
- o Lack of disability inclusive facilities

4. Preventive and Reproductive Health:

- o Limited Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) education and services
- o Youth friendly centers few and far between
- o High teenage pregnancy rates (19% of girls aged 15-19)

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. SHIF Reforms:

- o Introduce flexible, income-based payment models accommodating unemployed youth
- o Expand coverage to include comprehensive mental health and dental services
- o Guarantee service availability through consistent drug supply and functional equipment
- o Establish transparent public reporting on fund management and utilization

2. Emergency Mental Health Response:

- o Deploy mobile mental health units to all 47 counties
- o Recruit and train 1,000 community counselors within first year
- o Launch national mental health awareness campaign targeting schools and communities
- o Establish free, confidential 24/7 mental health helpline (expand current NACADA 119)

- 3. Youth Friendly Spaces:**
- o Mandate every sub-county hospital to establish youth friendly health corners
 - o Staff with trained counselors, reproductive health officers, and peer educators
 - o Provide confidential services without parental consent requirements (for 18+)
 - o Ensure disability inclusive design (ramps, sign language interpreters, accessible washrooms)
- Medium Term Actions (Years 2,3):**
- 4. Integrate Mental Health into Primary Healthcare:**
- o Train all community health workers in mental health first aid
 - o Equip all health centers (level 2,3) with basic counseling capabilities
 - o Integrate mental health screening in routine youth health check-ups
 - o Establish mental health education in school curriculum
- 5. Strengthen Service Delivery:**
- o Overhaul KEMSA supply chain to ensure timely, year-round medicine availability
 - o Rehabilitate and equip public hospital laboratories
 - o Recruit adequate healthcare personnel to reduce provider burnout
 - o Enforce ethical standards prohibiting dual public private practice undermining public service
- 6. Expand Preventive Programs:**
- o Scale up comprehensive SRHR education in schools and communities
 - o Subsidize contraceptives and maternal health services for young women
 - o Introduce targeted programs addressing drug and substance abuse
- o Establish peer led health education networks
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4,5):**
- 7. Universal Primary Healthcare:**
- o Make primary healthcare completely free and accessible to all youth
 - o Establish at least one fully equipped health center per ward
 - o Ensure 24/7 emergency services in all sub county hospitals
 - o Implement community health insurance schemes for informal sector workers
- 8. Mental Health Parity:**
- o Achieve 1 mental health professional per 50,000 population by 2030
 - o Establish mental health policies in all sectors (education, workplace, security)
 - o Build specialized rehabilitation centers in each county
 - o Eliminate stigma through sustained awareness and anti-discrimination laws
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- 100% drug availability in public hospitals by 2027
 - 70% reduction in mental health related suicides by 2029
 - Youth friendly services in all 290+ sub counties by 2026
 - Universal health coverage for all youth under 35 by 2028
 - Zero discrimination against PWDs in health service delivery by 2027
- 5.3 Social Protection**
- Current Reality:**
- Kenya's social protection framework does not adequately address youth vulnerabilities. While programs like the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) cash transfer

exist, they don't extend to the growing number of unemployed, underemployed, or economically distressed youth across the country. The Affordable Housing Program and associated levy have been implemented without adequate youth consultation, with unclear ownership models and urban centric focus excluding rural youth needs.

Key Challenges:

1. Limited Safety Nets:

- o Cash transfer programs exclude youth without dependents
- o NSSF contributions inaccessible until retirement (inflexible)
- o Informal sector workers lack social security coverage

2. Housing Accessibility:

- o Affordable Housing Program concentrated in urban centers
- o High costs still exclude most low-income youth
- o Unclear ownership and allocation criteria
- o Double taxation (housing levy + rent) burden
- o Non-compliant with disability accessibility standards

3. Vulnerable Groups:

- o Young mothers lack targeted support programs
- o Street connected youth and those in informal settlements ignored
- o Youth with disabilities face compounded exclusion

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Youth Social Protection Fund:

- o Establish targeted cash transfer for unemployed youth (Ksh 3,000/month for 6 months as job search support)
- o Provide stipends for youth in apprenticeships and unpaid internships

- o Create emergency fund for youth headed households

2. Housing Reforms:

- o Review Affordable Housing Program through inclusive public participation to establish who are the beneficiaries of the housing units financed by Kenyan tax payers
- o Expand projects to all 47 counties (not just urban centers)
- o Introduce rent to own programs with flexible payment plans
- o Reserve 40% of units for youth applicants
- o Ensure disability compliance in all housing projects
- o Clarify ownership terms and prevent double taxation

Medium Term Actions (Years 2,3):

3. Expand Coverage:

- o Integrate informal sector workers into NSSF with flexible contribution models
- o Allow partial NSSF withdrawals for education, medical emergencies, or home purchase
- o Extend social protection to gig economy workers (Uber/Bolt drivers, freelancers)
- o Create transition programs for youth aging out of OVC support

4. Strengthen Delivery:

- o Digitize social protection registry to reduce leakage and improve targeting
- o Establish one stop social welfare centers in each sub-county
- o Train social workers in youth specific needs and trauma informed care

Long Term Transformation (Years 4,5):

5. Universal Basic Services:

- o Pilot Universal Basic Income (UBI) in select counties for unemployed youth
- o Guarantee access to food security programs for vulnerable youth
- o Establish life skills and vocational training as entitlement for all youth

Measurable Outcomes:

- 500,000 youth accessing social protection programs by 2027
- 50% increase in affordable housing accessibility for youth by 2028
- Universal coverage of informal sector workers by 2030

5.4 Disability Inclusion

Current Reality:

Despite the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) and constitutional provisions (Article 54), youth with disabilities remain systematically excluded. Accessibility barriers persist in education, employment, healthcare, and public spaces. Stigma and cultural misconceptions compound legal exclusion.

Specific Challenges:

1. Systemic Barriers:

- o Limited implementation of 5% employment quota in public and private sectors
- o Inaccessible infrastructure (buildings, transport, digital platforms)
- o Segregated special schools rather than inclusive education
- o Lack of assistive devices and technologies
- o Under representation in leadership and governance

2. Healthcare Exclusion:

- o Absence of sign language interpreters in hospitals

- o Mental health services don't accommodate disability
- o Reproductive health services inaccessible
- o Disability assessment and certification processes cumbersome

3. Economic Marginalization:

- o Excluded from youth fund allocations and entrepreneurship programs
- o Procurement opportunities (AGPO) underutilized
- o Lack of specialized training and mentorship
- o Workplace discrimination and inaccessible work environments

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Enforce Legal Framework:

- o Conduct national audit of 5% employment quota compliance
- o Impose penalties on non-compliant public and private institutions
- o Fast track National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) registration
- o Provide tax incentives for employers hiring PWDs
- o Implementation of persons with disabilities act 2025

2. Universal Accessibility:

- o Mandate disability accessibility audits for all public buildings
- o Retrofit existing infrastructure within 2 years
- o Ensure all new construction meets accessibility standards
- o Make all digital government services (e-citizen) screen reader compatible

3. Inclusive Education:

- o Accelerate phase out of special schools in favor of inclusive education
- o Train all teachers in special needs education within 2 years
- o Continue to provide assistive devices (hearing aids, wheelchairs, Braille materials) to students

- o Make Kenyan Sign Language compulsory in basic education

Medium Term Actions (Years 2,3):

4. Economic Empowerment:

- o Reserve 10% of youth fund allocations specifically for PWD-led enterprises
- o Establish disability inclusive incubation centers in all counties
- o Provide specialized business development training
- o Enforce AGPO compliance with dedicated PWD procurement targets

5. Healthcare Access:

- o Recruit and deploy sign language interpreters in all hospitals
- o Train health workers in disability sensitive care
- o Subsidize assistive devices and rehabilitative services
- o Integrate disability into all health programs (SRHR, mental health, etc.)

Long Term Transformation (Years 4,5):

6. Cultural Transformation:

- o Sustained awareness campaigns to eliminate stigma
- o Integrate disability rights education in civic curricula
- o Promote positive representation of PWDs in media and public life
- o Celebrate PWD role models and champions

7. Independent Living:

- o Establish personal assistance programs for youth with severe disabilities
- o Create accessible public transport systems in all major towns
- o Guarantee housing with accessibility features in Affordable Housing Program

Measurable Outcomes:

- 100% public building accessibility by 2028
- 50% employment rate for PWDs by 2030
- Full integration of Persons With Disability (PWDs) in all youth programs by 2027
- Elimination of special schools by 2032

6. THEMATIC AREA 2: YOUTH LIVELIHOODS, EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

6.1 Access to Economic Opportunities & Employment

Current Reality:

Overall unemployment in Kenya according to the Federation of Kenyan Employers report is at 12.7 percent, Youth (15 – 34 year olds), who form 35 percent of the Kenyan population, have the highest unemployment rate of 67 percent. Over one million young people enter into the labour market annually without any skills some having either dropped out of school or completed school and not enrolled in any college.

The need to have experience to get a job but needing a job to gain experience locks out many young graduates. The Kenya Kwanza manifesto's 1 million jobs and Ksh 100 billion for youth empowerment is an ongoing process for the government. The Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) focuses on youth and jobs through programs that build skills, foster entrepreneurship, and create employment

Key Statistics:

- 800,000+ youth enter job market annually; only 160,000 absorbed formally
- Average job search period: 18 to 24 months for graduates
- 73% of youth report "knowing someone" is more important than qualifications for getting jobs
- Youth Enterprise Development Fund disbursement: less than 30% of allocation reached target beneficiaries (2022,2024)
- The unemployment rate is at 12.7% as at 2024 according to Kenya Federation of Kenya Employers (KFKE).

Specific Challenges:

1. Structural Unemployment:

- Slow economic growth insufficient to generate jobs at scale
- Over-reliance on public sector employment (saturated)
- Private sector preference for experienced workers
- Mismatch between skills taught and industry needs
- Job seeking process is expensive (Clearances and documentation required)
- Youth Profiling, As a result of the generational revolution, employers are stereotyping young people in job enrollment

2. Access to Capital:

- Youth funds (YEDF, Uwezo) politicized and marred by corruption
- Collateral requirements exclude youth without assets
- High interest rates and rigid repayment terms
- Information gaps: many youth are unaware of available programs

3. Systemic Corruption:

- Nepotism and tribalism in recruitment ("know someone")
- Public procurement (AGPO) underutilized or captured by brokers
- Internship and attachment opportunities allocated through patronage
- Youth representatives in county governments lack budgetary authority

4. Exploitative Practices:

- Unpaid or underpaid internships normalized
- Casual labor without benefits or job security
- Gig economy workers lack social protection
- Delayed payments for government interns (e.g., medical interns)

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Job Creation Guarantee:

- Government to create 300,000 direct jobs annually through infrastructure, climate action, and digital services
- County governments to implement 30% youth employment quota in all departments
- Expand programs like Kazi Mtaani with clear pathways to permanent employment
- Mandate all public projects to include a youth labor component
- Revamp of National Employment Authority to document intake and output of the job market with regards to youth employment.

⁷<https://www.fke-kenya.org/policy-issues/youth-employment>

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- 2. End Exploitation:**
- o Ban unpaid internships; mandate minimum stipend of Ksh 15,000/month for all attachments
 - o Enforce timely payment (within 30 days) for all government interns and contractors
 - o Extend labor protections to gig economy workers.
- 3. Transparent Recruitment:**
- o Digitize all public sector job advertisements on single transparent portal
 - o Publish shortlists, selection criteria, and panel composition before appointments
 - o Enforce merit-based hiring with severe penalties for corruption
 - o Require all recruitment panels to include youth representatives
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2,3):**
- 4. Access to Finance:**
- o Establish National Youth Guarantee Scheme: government backed partial guarantees for collateral-free youth business loans (up to Ksh 500,000)
 - o Depoliticize youth funds: transfer management to independent board with youth majority
 - o Simplify application processes through digital platforms
 - o Link funding to mandatory business mentorship and training
- 5. Procurement Reforms:**
- o Enforce 30% AGPO allocation strictly, with quarterly public reporting
 - o Simplify tendering processes and reduce documentation requirements with the onset of E-Government procurement system
 - o Create county level youth procurement databases
- 6. Skills-Employment Bridge:**
- o Fasttrack payments to youth contractors (within 30 days)
 - o Establish formal apprenticeship registry linking youth to industry placements through National Employment Authority
 - o Tax incentives for companies running structured internship programs.
 - o County governments to conduct annual skills audits and align training accordingly
 - o Create mentorship networks pairing experienced professionals with youthful job seekers.
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4,5):**
- 7. Structural Reforms:**
- o Support to the private sector through creation of an enabling environment for economic transformation (industrialization, value addition).
 - o Invest 5% of the overall national budget in job-rich sectors: agriculture, manufacturing, digital economy, green economy.
- 8. Entrepreneurship Ecosystem:**
- o Establish Youth Entrepreneurship Development Centers in all 47 counties
 - o Provide seed grants (Ksh 100,000,500,000) for youth-led startups
 - o Create incubation programs with free workspace, internet, and mentorship
 - o Link youth enterprises to markets through county and national supply chains

Measurable Outcomes:

- Reduce youth unemployment to 35% by 2030
- Create 1.5 million new jobs for youth by 2029
- 70% of youth accessing business capital within 90 days of application by 2028
- Zero unpaid internships in formal sector by 2028
- 50% increase in youth-owned businesses winning public tenders by 2029
- Lowering the age limit from 60 to 55 years by 2029.

6.2 Digital Transformation

Current Reality:

Kenya's digital economy offers transformative potential but remains inaccessible to most youth due to infrastructure gaps, high costs, and skills deficits. While programs like Ajira Digital have trained thousands, the digital divide between urban and rural youth, and between those with devices and those without, continues to widen inequality.

Key Statistics:

- Internet penetration: 45% nationally, but only 25% in rural areas
- Only 30% of youth own smartphones or computers
- Data costs among highest in region (1GB = Ksh 100)
- 2,000+ youth trained in AI and digital skills through KSG-Microsoft partnership (2024)
- Digital economy contributes 8.9% to GDP but employs less than 5% of youth

Specific Challenges:

1. Infrastructure Gaps:

- Poor internet connectivity in rural and ASAL regions
- Frequent power outages disrupt digital work

- Limited public Wi-Fi access points
- Few innovation hubs outside Nairobi

2. Cost Barriers:

- High cost of devices (smartphones, laptops)
- Expensive data bundles
- Software licensing fees prohibitive
- Lack of subsidies or financing for equipment

3. Skills Deficit:

- Digital literacy limited to social media use
- Few youth trained in coding, AI, data analytics, or cybersecurity
- Lack of career guidance on digital economy opportunities
- Scarcity of mentorship in online freelancing or e-commerce

4. Restrictive Policies:

- Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act (2018) used to intimidate online activists
- Taxation of digital services (e.g., content creators) without corresponding support
- Limited intellectual property protection for digital innovations
- Surveillance and online repression shrink civic space

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Universal Connectivity:

- Expand broadband infrastructure to all 290 sub-counties within 18 months
- Establish public Wi-Fi hotspots in markets, hospitals, and county head

- quarters
- o Subsidize internet for youth hubs, schools, and libraries
 - o Guarantee stable electricity supply (prioritize counties with frequent outages)
- 2. Device Accessibility:**
- o Introduce government subsidized laptops/tablets for TVET and university students
 - o Partner with private sector for affordable device financing schemes
 - o Establish device loan programs in innovation hubs
 - o Zero-rate import taxes on laptops and smartphones for educational use
- 3. Digital Skills Training:**
- o Scale up digital literacy programs to reach 500,000 youth annually
 - o Integrate coding, AI, and data analytics into secondary and TVET curricula
 - o Expand Ajira Digital to all counties with localized training centers
 - o Provide free online courses through partnerships (e.g., Coursera, Microsoft)
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2,3):**
- 4. Innovation Ecosystem:**
- o Establishment and support to innovation hubs per county with equipment, internet, and mentorship
 - o Provide budgets and resource for seed grants (Ksh 50,000,200,000) for tech startups
 - o Create county level tech competitions and innovation challenges
 - o Link youth innovators to investors through pitch events and accelerators
- 5. Digital Entrepreneurship:**
- o Train 100,000 youth in online freelancing (content writing, design, programming)
- o Support e-commerce platforms for youth businesses
 - o Provide business development services for digital entrepreneurs
 - o Create incentives for digital marketplaces connecting youth products to consumers
- 6. Policy Reforms:**
- o Review Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act to protect freedom of expression
 - o Strengthen intellectual property rights for digital creators
 - o Introduce tax incentives for tech startups (5 year tax holiday)
 - o Ensure transparent digital surveillance regulations
- Long- Term Transformation (Years 4,5):**
- 7. Digital Inclusion:**
- o Achieve universal internet access for all youth by 2030
 - o Ensure all government services fully accessible online
 - o Integrate persons with disabilities in digital economy through assistive technologies
 - o Promote responsible digital citizenship and online safety education
- 8. Tech Hub Kenya:**
- o Position Kenya as Africa's leading tech hub through sustained investment
 - o Attract international tech companies and investors
 - o Support homegrown tech giants (next Safaricom, M,Pesa)
 - o Export Kenyan digital talent and solutions regionally and globally
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- 80% internet penetration among youth by 2028

- 500,000 youth employed in digital economy by 2030
- Innovation hub in every county by 2027
- 50% reduction in data costs by 2026
- 100,000 youth-led tech startups launched by 2030

6.3 Creative & Cultural Economy

Current Reality:

Kenya's creative economy encompassing music, film, fashion, arts, literature, and cultural heritage has demonstrated immense potential but remains under supported. Creatives struggle with limited infrastructure, inadequate funding, piracy, intellectual property violations, and lack of business development support. Despite this, the sector has produced global stars and increasingly contributes to GDP and employment.

Key Statistics:

- Creative economy contributes Ksh 200 billion (~2.5% GDP) annually
- Employs over 1 million people, majority youth
- Music streaming royalties increased 300% (2019,2024) but most artists earn below poverty line
- Film industry potential valued at Ksh 50 billion but local content struggles for distribution
- 70% of creatives lack formal training in business management

Specific Challenges:

1. Infrastructure Deficits:

- o Limited recording studios, rehearsal spaces, and performance venues
- o Few public creative hubs or artist co-working spaces

- o Poor road and venue conditions limit cultural tourism
- o Marginalized regions completely underserved

2. Financial Exclusion:

- o Creatives excluded from most youth funding programs
- o Banks unwilling to lend without collateral
- o Grant programs rarely target arts
- o High upfront costs for equipment, production, and marketing

3. Exploitation and IP Violations:

- Rampant piracy and copyright infringement
- Exploitative contracts with producers and labels
- Lack of awareness of intellectual property rights
- Weak enforcement of copyright laws

4. Market Access:

- o Limited platforms to showcase and monetize work
- o Preference for foreign content on media and streaming platforms
- o Few festivals or cultural fairs especially at county level
- o Weak linkages between artists and commercial opportunities

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Infrastructure Investment:

- o Establish creative hubs with studios, rehearsal rooms, and equipment in all 47 counties
- o Renovate and equip existing cultural centers and social halls
- o Provide free or subsidized access to production equipment
- o Create public performance spaces and art galleries

2. Funding Stream

- o Dedicate 1% of the total national budget to creative projects.

- o Establish Creative Economy Grants (Ksh 50,000, to 500,000) for artists
 - o Partner with private sector for arts sponsorships and CSR programs
- 3. Intellectual Property Protection:**
- o Simplify copyright registration through online platforms (reduce cost and time)
 - o Launch national awareness campaign on IP rights for artists
 - o Strengthen enforcement against piracy with stiffer penalties
 - o Establish legal aid desk for creatives facing IP violations
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2,3):**
- 4. Business Support:**
- o Provide free business training for 50,000 creatives (contracts, marketing, finance)
 - o Create mentorship programs pairing established artists with emerging talent
 - o Develop model contracts to prevent exploitation
 - o Establish booking agencies and talent management platforms
- 5. Market Development:**
- o Mandate local content quotas on all media platforms (40% Kenyan music, 30% Kenyan films)
 - o Host annual county cultural festivals showcasing local talent
 - o Promote cultural tourism through heritage sites and performances
 - o Link artists to national and international markets through trade missions
- 6. Transparent Royalties:**
- o Reform Collective Management Organizations (CMOs) for timely, transparent payments
 - o Digitize royalty collection and distribution
- o Strengthen oversight and audit of CMOs
 - o Ensure artists receive fair share of streaming and broadcast revenues
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4,5):**
- 7. Cultural Preservation & Innovation:**
- o Document and promote indigenous knowledge, languages, and traditions
 - o Support fusion of traditional and contemporary arts
 - o Establish national archives and museums celebrating diverse cultures
 - o Integrate cultural education in school curriculum
- 8. Global Competitiveness:**
- o Position Kenya as East African creative hub
 - o Support international collaborations and co-productions
 - o Export Kenyan music, film, and fashion globally
 - o Attract film productions and cultural tourism to Kenya
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- Creative economy contribution to GDP increases to 5% by 2030
 - 2 million youth employed in creative sector by 2030
 - Creative hubs operational in all counties by 2027
 - 80% of artists earning above minimum wage by 2029
 - Kenyan content comprises 40% of media consumption by 2028
- 6.4 Youth in Emerging Sectors (Green Jobs, AI, Gig Economy)**
- Current Reality:**
- Emerging sectors offer Kenya's youth unprecedented opportunities but require

deliberate investment and policy support. Green jobs in renewable energy, conservation, and climate smart agriculture are expanding due to climate imperatives. AI and data analytics are revolutionizing industries. The gig economy from ride-hailing to freelancing has absorbed millions but lacks protections and benefits.

Specific Opportunities and Challenges:

Green Economy:

- **Opportunity:** Kenya's climate commitments require massive workforce in solar installation- tree planting- water conservation- waste management
- **Challenge:** Limited training- startup capital- and market linkages for green enterprises

AI and Tech Innovation:

- **Opportunity:** KSG-Microsoft partnership trained 2,000 youth in AI; demand for data analysts- AI developers- cybersecurity experts growing
- **Challenge:** Advanced skills gap- limited access to tools- few local AI applications to build on

Gig Economy:

- **Opportunity:** Uber- Bolt- Glovo- online freelancing platforms employ hundreds of thousands
- **Challenge:** No labor protections- irregular income- lack of social security- exploitation by platforms

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Green Jobs Training:

- Train 100,000 youth in climate-smart agriculture- solar installation- and conservation
- Provide starter kits for green enterprises (e.g.- solar panels for technicians- tree seedlings)
- Link youth to green projects

- (reforestation- river clean-ups- renewable energy installations)
- Establish green economy incubators in ASAL and climate-vulnerable counties

2. AI and Data Skills:

- Expand AI training to 50,000 youth through partnerships with tech companies
- Integrate basic AI literacy into TVET and university curricula
- Provide free access to AI tools and platforms for learning
- Host AI hackathons and innovation challenges

3. Gig Worker Protections:

- Recognize gig workers in labor law with minimum earnings guarantees
- Extend NSSF coverage to freelancers with flexible contribution options
- Establish gig worker cooperatives for collective bargaining
- Mandate platforms to provide insurance and safety equipment

Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):

4. Scale Green Economy:

- Allocate Ksh 10 billion annually for youth-led climate action projects
- Support waste-to-value enterprises (recycling- biogas- organic fertilizers)
- Promote eco-tourism and conservation enterprises
- Integrate green skills into all vocational training

5. Tech Ecosystem Growth:

- Establish AI research centers in universities
- Support Kenyan-developed AI solutions for local challenges (healthcare- agriculture)
- Create data science internships and placements in government and private sector
- Fund blockchain- fintech- and cybersecurity startups

6. Formalize Gig Economy:

- o Develop national gig economy policy balancing flexibility and protection
- o Provide business development support for freelancers
- o Create online platforms showcasing Kenyan freelance talent
- o Ensure fair taxation without stifling sector growth

Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):

7. Lead in Green Transition:

- o Position Kenya as regional leader in green technology and jobs
- o Export renewable energy expertise and products
- o Achieve 100% renewable energy and employ 500,000 youth in sector by 2030

8. AI Powerhouse:

- o Become African leader in AI innovation and application
- o Support emergence of Kenyan AI companies and products
- o Ensure ethical AI development respecting rights and privacy

Measurable Outcomes:

- 300,000 youth employed in green economy by 2028
- 100,000 youth skilled in AI and data analytics by 2029
- 500,000 gig workers with social protection coverage by 2027
- Kenya recognized as regional green and tech innovation hub by 2030

7. THEMATIC AREA 3: GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY

7.1 Youth Political Participation

Current Reality:

Despite being over 75% of the population- youth hold less than 7% of elective positions nationally. Political participation remains largely tokenistic- with youth appointed to boards and committees without budgetary authority or decision-making power. High nomination fees- clan-based patronage- and limited party democracy restrict youth candidature. Civic apathy and fear fueled by violence- corruption- and intimidation further suppress youth political engagement.

Inclusion of programming within Kenya's political landscape is the deliberate design of party and government programs that are people-centered- gender-responsive- youth-driven- and firmly rooted in communities. This approach ensures that citizens are not only mobilized as voters during campaign periods but are recognized as continuous shapers- implementers- and beneficiaries of development throughout the entire governance cycle.

Anchored in the transformative opportunities created by the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and the devolved system of government- inclusive programming opens up meaningful spaces for participation at national- county and grassroots levels. It strengthens political accountability- deepens public trust in institutions- and expands access to economic and social opportunities for groups that have historically been excluded- particularly young people and women. Devolution further enables political parties to move beyond centralized- top-down models and instead build issue-based- long-term programs that respond directly to community realities and local priorities. This includes critical areas such as climate action- youth employment- affordable housing- public health- culture and the creative economy- social protection- and urban transformation. By investing in

continuous-inclusive programming rather than short-term electoral promises-political actors can cultivate sustainable development pathways-responsive leadership-and a more engaged-informed-and empowered citizenry beyond election cycles.

Key Statistics:

- Only 47 MPs (out of 349) under 35 years (13%)
- Less than 5% of MCAs are youth
- Average nomination fee for parliamentary seat: Ksh 500,000-1,000,000 (prohibitive)
- 68% of youth report "politics is for the connected" (2024 survey)
- Voter turnout among 18-24-year-olds: 42% (2022), lowest cohort

Specific Challenges:

1. Structural Barriers:

- o High nomination and campaign costs
- o Ethnic and clan-based candidate selection
- o Party oligarchies dominated by older generation
- o Limited internal party democracy

2. Tokenism:

- o Youth representatives lack budgetary co-signing authority
- o Appointed to fulfill quotas without substantive roles
- o Excluded from executive and budget committee memberships
- o Accountability to appointing authority rather than youth constituency

3. Civic Disengagement:

- o Low civic literacy on governance and rights
- o Disillusionment with electoral politics
- o Fear of political violence and intimidation
- o Limited youth-focused civic education

4. Corruption and Patronage:

- o Vote-buying and handouts undermine issue-based politics
- o Youth used as political foot soldiers and abandoned post-election
- o Lack of accountability for unfulfilled manifesto promises

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Reduce Entry Barriers:

- o Cap nomination fees at 50% for youth (18-35) candidates
- o Provide campaign financing support through Political Parties Fund
- o Waive clearance fees (IEBC-EACC-CRB) for first-time youth candidates
- o Introduce public campaign financing to level playing field

2. Enforce Youth Quotas:

- o Mandate 30% youth representation in all political party structures
- o Reserve specific elective seats for youth (e.g.- youth-designated MCA seats per county)
- o Require all county sectoral committees to have youth membership
- o Impose penalties on parties failing to meet thresholds

3. Substantive Inclusion:

- o Grant youth representatives co-signing authority on youth fund disbursements
- o Mandate youth presence in Budget and Finance Committees
- o Establish democratically elected County Youth Assemblies with advisory powers

- o Require quarterly youth consultations on policy and budget matters

Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):

4. Civic Education Scale-Up:

- o Integrate civic education into secondary and tertiary curricula
- o Conduct county-level leadership training for 14-500 aspiring youth leaders annually
- o Establish voter education campaigns targeting youth in local languages
- o Use digital platforms for continuous civic engagement

5. Party Reforms:

- o Strengthen democracy within political parties through transparent primaries and by holding of statutory and policy meetings;
- o Enforce ORPP regulations on youth inclusion
- o Promote issue-based politics over ethnic mobilization
- o Support youth-led political movements and parties

6. Accountability Mechanisms:

- o Launch citizen-led manifesto tracking platform (promise tracker)
- o Conduct annual public scorecards on youth program delivery
- o Empower youth to participate in oversight and social audits
- o Create consequence frameworks for unfulfilled promises

Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):

7. Generational Transition:

- o Advocate for age limits on specific positions to encourage renewal
- o Promote mentorship where senior leaders groom young successors
- o Celebrate and amplify young leaders' success stories
- o Creation and promotion of a culture to support youthful leadership

8. Deepen Democracy:

- o Strengthen institutions (IEBC- ORPP- Ethics and Anti-Corruption) to ensure free and fair elections
- o Combat vote-buying and electoral violence through enforcement
- o Promote coalition-building around shared youth issues transcending ethnicity
- o Ensure safe civic space for youth organizing and activism

Measurable Outcomes:

- 30% of elected positions held by youth by 2032
- County Youth Assemblies operational in all 47 counties by 2027
- 80% youth voter turnout by 2027
- Implementation of the political party's act-to ensure reducing youth exclusion
- Issue-based campaigns replace ethnic politics by 2032

7.2 Youth in Governance and Devolution

Current Reality:

Devolution promised to bring governance closer to the people- creating opportunities for local participation. However- youth remain largely excluded from county planning- budgeting- and implementation processes. Where youth structures exist- they lack resources- authority- or meaningful engagement. County youth programs are often politicized- underfunded- and disconnected from actual youth needs.

Key Challenges:

1. Exclusion from County Processes:

- o Youth absent from County Development Committees
 - o Limited participation in budget-making and public forums
 - o No structured mechanisms for youth input into CIDPs
 - o County youth officers lack authority or resources
 - o Limited effective participation
- 2. Weak Oversight:**
- o MCAs and County Assemblies fail to monitor youth program implementation
 - o No public reporting on youth budget expenditures
 - o Corruption in youth fund allocation at county level
 - o Limited citizen-led audits or accountability mechanisms
- 3. Capacity Gaps:**
- o Youth lack understanding of devolution structures
 - o Limited training in social accountability tools
 - o Insufficient platforms for inter-county learning and collaboration
- Our Demands:**
- Immediate Actions (Year 1):**
- 1. Institutionalize Youth Participation:**
 - o Establish Youth Focal Point Officer in every county department
 - o Establish representative Governor's Youth Round Table forums in each County under the County Government's Act framework
 - o Mandate youth membership in all county planning and budget committees
 - o Create County Youth Advisory Councils with statutory recognition
 - o Require quarterly youth town halls with Governor and CECMs
 - 2. Transparent Budgeting:**
- o Ring-fence youth budgets across departments (not just Youth Affairs docket)
 - o Publish quarterly youth expenditure reports
 - o Grant youth oversight committees' access to budget documents
 - o Conduct annual public audits of youth programs
- 3. Strengthen County Youth Structures:**
- o Operationalize County Youth Policies in all 47 counties
 - o Provide adequate budget allocation for Youth Affairs departments
 - o Recruit qualified personnel and avoid political appointments
 - o Link county programs to national frameworks (NYOTA- NITA- MESPT)
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):**
- 4. Capacity Building:**
 - o Train 10,000 youth annually in social accountability and budget monitoring
 - o Equip youth with skills for public participation and policy advocacy
 - o Establish youth-led county watchdog groups
 - o Facilitate inter-county youth exchange programs for peer learning
 - 5. Data and Evidence:**
 - o Conduct annual county youth needs assessments
 - o Publish disaggregated youth data (employment- education- health)
 - o Use evidence to inform planning and resource allocation
 - o Track outcomes and impact of youth programs
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):**
- 6. Devolution That Works:**

- o Ensure all 47 counties have functional youth empowerment ecosystems
- o Achieve full implementation of constitutional youth inclusion provisions
- o Position youth as equal partners in county governance
- o Demonstrate devolution as vehicle for inclusive development

Measurable Outcomes:

- County Youth Councils operational in all 47 counties by 2027
- 100% transparency in youth budget allocations by 2028
- 50% of youth report meaningful participation in county governance by 2029
- Zero counties without operationalized youth policies by 2026

7.3 Peace- Security & Human Rights

Current Reality:

Young people are both victims and perceived perpetrators of insecurity. Unemployment- inequality- and political manipulation drive some youth into gangs- violence- or radicalization. Simultaneously- youth people face state-sponsored violence- abductions- and extrajudicial killings.

The June 2024 protests saw over 60 youth killed from the Kenya National Human Rights reports- with many more abducted or tortured. Police brutality- particularly targeting youth in informal settlements- remains widespread. Mental health crises- fueled by trauma and substance abuse- worsen security challenges. State's failure to address maternal healthcare properly condemns young women to devastating dehumanization and violence in childbirth.

Key Statistics:

- 61 documented deaths during June 2024 Gen Z protests
- Over 300 abductions since June 2024 (many unreported)
- 79% of youth report fear of police harassment
- Gang violence affects over 40 informal settlements nationally
- Banditry in Baringo- Turkana- Samburu displaces thousands of youths annually

Specific Challenges:

1. **State Violence and criminalization of rights and freedoms:**
 - o Police brutality and extrajudicial killings target youth
 - o Abductions and enforced disappearances
 - o Impunity for security forces violating rights
 - o Militarized response to peaceful protests
 - o Demonstrators being charged with terrorism charges
2. **Community Insecurity:**
 - o Gang violence in urban informal settlements
 - o Banditry and cattle rustling in pastoral regions
 - o Cross-border insecurity (e.g.- terrorism- illicit trade)
 - o Gender-based violence and femicide
3. **Mental Health and Substance Abuse:**
 - o Trauma from violence exposure
 - o Drug and substance abuse fueling crime
 - o Lack of rehabilitation centers
 - o Stigma preventing help-seeking
4. **Systemic Drivers:**
 - o Unemployment and idleness

- o Political manipulation and incitement
- o Poverty and inequality
- o Weak justice systems and impunity

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. End Police Brutality:

- o Immediate investigation and prosecution of officers involved in June 2024 killings and abductions
- o Establish independent police oversight with youth representation
- o Reform police training to emphasize human rights and de-escalation
- o Make reparations including compensating victims of police violence

2. Guarantee Rights:

- o Uphold freedom of assembly and expression without violent suppression
- o End arbitrary arrests- abductions- and enforced disappearances
- o Strengthen IPOA and ensure it has prosecutorial powers
- o Establish witness protection for youth reporting abuses

3. Community Policing:

- o Expand community policing models involving youth
- o Establish youth peace committees in all volatile areas
- o Train youth as mediators and conflict resolution agents
- o Build trust between police and communities through dialogue

Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):

4. Address Root Causes:

- o Expand employment programs to reduce idleness
- o Provide economic opportunities in high-crime areas
- o Strengthen education and mentorship to prevent radicalization
- o Invest in infrastructure and services in marginalized regions
- o Eliminate politically sponsored gangs supported by politicians at all levels

5. Combat Drug Abuse:

- o Establish rehabilitation centers in each county
- o Conduct awareness campaigns on dangers of substance abuse
- o Prosecute drug traffickers and corrupt officials facilitating trade
- o Provide alternative livelihoods for youth involved in illicit economies

6. Mental Health Support:

- o Integrate trauma counseling in schools and communities
- o Train youth peer counselors in mental health first aid
- o Establish free- confidential helplines
- o Reduce stigma through awareness campaigns

Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):

7. Justice and Reconciliation:

- o Establish truth and justice mechanisms for violence victims
- o Promote restorative justice models
- o Ensure accountability for historical and current injustices
- o Build national cohesion through inter-community dialogues

8. Peace Infrastructure:

- o Strengthen National Cohesion and Integration Commission

- o Empower county peace forums with youth inclusion
- o Invest in peace education and conflict resolution training
- o Promote sports- arts- and cultural exchange for social cohesion

Measurable Outcomes:

- Zero extrajudicial killings and abductions by 2027
- 50% reduction in gang violence by 2029
- Rehabilitation centers in all 47 counties by 2028
- Youth peace clubs in all schools and communities by 2030
- Independent police oversight fully operational by 2026

7.4 Rule of Law and Access to Justice

Current Reality:

Kenya's justice system remains inaccessible- slow- and often biased against youth and marginalized communities. Legal representation is unaffordable for most. In regions like Mandera- traditional systems like Maslaha bypass formal justice in serious crimes (e.g.- SGBV)- perpetuating impunity. Youth accused of crimes face harsh penalties while youth victims struggle to get justice. Corruption within the judiciary and police undermines trust.

Key Challenges:

1. Access Barriers:

- o High cost of legal representation
- o Distance to courts (especially in rural areas)
- o Slow case resolution (average 3-5 years)
- o Limited legal literacy among youth

2. Systemic Bias:

- o Youth profiled and presumed guilty
- o Harsh sentences for petty offenses
- o Overcrowded prisons; many youth in pre-trial detention
- o Limited diversion programs for first-time offenders

3. Traditional Justice Systems:

- o Maslaha and other systems bypass formal law in serious crimes (rape- defilement)
- o Victims pressured to accept compensation instead of prosecution
- o Perpetrators escape accountability
- o Women and girls disproportionately harmed

4. Corruption:

- o Bribes required to access justice
- o Evidence tampering and case fixing
- o Political interference in high-profile cases
- o Impunity for powerful offenders

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Free Legal Aid:

- o Expand National Legal Aid Service to all counties with youth desks
- o Provide free legal representation for youth defendants and victims
- o Establish mobile legal clinics in remote areas
- o Train paralegals in youth rights and justice issues
- o Strengthening the role of Youth in Court Users Committees across the country

2. Fast-Track Youth Cases:

- o Prioritize cases involving youth (victims or accused)

- o Establish youth courts with specialized judges
 - o Reduce pre-trial detention through bail reforms
 - o Implement alternative dispute resolution for minor offenses
- 3. End Maslaha for Serious Crimes:**
- o Issue legal directive: SGBV and defilement cases must go through formal justice
 - o Train chiefs and local administrators on mandatory reporting
 - o Provide safe reporting mechanisms and witness protection
 - o Prosecute elders or officials obstructing justice
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):**
- 4. Legal Literacy:**
- o Integrate basic legal education in schools
 - o Conduct community legal awareness campaigns
 - o Use digital platforms for legal information dissemination
 - o Train youth paralegals in each ward
- 5. Diversion and Rehabilitation:**
- o Expand diversion programs for first-time offenders
 - o Introduce community service and counseling instead of incarceration
 - o Establish youth rehabilitation centers separate from adult prisons
 - o Provide post-release reintegration support
- 6. Accountability:**
- o Strengthen Judicial Service Commission oversight
 - o Fast-track corruption cases against judicial officers
 - o Publish court performance data (case backlogs- resolution times)
 - o Ensure judicial independence free from political interference

Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):

7. Efficient Justice System:

- o Reduce average case resolution time to under 1 year
- o Achieve 100% access to legal aid for indigent youth
- o Clear case backlogs through additional judges and digitization
- o Ensure fair- impartial justice regardless of status

8. Restorative Justice:

- o Promote victim-offender mediation programs
- o Focus on rehabilitation over punishment
- o Address root causes of crime (poverty- unemployment)
- o Build community trust in justice system

Measurable Outcomes:

- 100% of youth accessing free legal aid by 2028
- Zero SGBV cases resolved through Maslaha by 2027
- 50% reduction in pre-trial detention for youth by 2029
- Average case resolution time reduced to 12 months by 2030
- Zero judicial corruption cases by 2032

8. THEMATIC AREA 4: AGRICULTURE- TECHNOLOGY & CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 Agro-Innovation and Value Addition

Current Reality:

Agriculture employs over 40% of youth- yet remains synonymous with poverty and back-breaking labor. Low productivity- limited access to modern inputs- poor infrastructure- and lack of value addition keep youth farmers poor despite their hard work. Yet- agriculture holds immense potential: with technology- mechanization- and

value chains- it can become profitable and attractive to youth.

Agriculture- land- water- forests- oceans- and the climate are shared lifelines- woven into the fabric of our humanity. Guided by Utu- this pillar affirms that protecting these resources and ensuring fair- equitable access to them is an act of collective dignity. Kenya's long-term national interest- food sovereignty- and climate resilience depend on empowering youth as innovators- custodians- and producers within agricultural and environmental systems. Across the country- young people face diverse climate and livelihood challenges: from recurrent droughts in ASAL counties- to aquaculture pressures in Nyanza- marine resource degradation along the Coast- horticultural vulnerabilities around Mt. Kenya- and the growing demands of urban farming in Nairobi. Addressing these realities is essential for unlocking youth potential and securing Kenya's sustainable future.

Key Statistics:

- 70% of Kenyan youth in rural areas depend on agriculture
- Post-harvest losses exceed 30% of production due to poor storage
- Only 20% of agricultural produce is processed locally
- Youth farmers earn average Ksh 5,000/month (below poverty line)
- Less than 15% of youth farmers use modern technology

Specific Challenges:

1. Low Productivity:

- Reliance on rain-fed agriculture (droughts devastate yields)
- Limited access to quality seeds- fertilizers- and pesticides
- Small land sizes and fragmentation
- Poor soil health and degradation

2. Market Access:

- Exploitative middlemen capture profits
- Lack of storage and cold chain infrastructure
- No direct linkage to processors or retailers
- Price volatility and unfair pricing

3. Value Addition Deficit:

- Most produce sold raw (low margins)
- Limited processing facilities (mills- dryers- packagers)
- Lack of skills in agro-processing
- Branding and marketing challenges

4. Capital and Technology:

- Unaffordable inputs (fertilizer- irrigation systems)
- Limited mechanization (tractors- harvesters)
- Inadequate extension services
- Climate-smart agriculture knowledge gap

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. Input Subsidies:

- Provide subsidized fertilizer- seeds- and pesticides to youth farmers
- Distribute irrigation equipment (drip systems- solar pumps)
- Offer mechanization services (tractor hire at subsidized rates)
- Establish input distribution points in each ward

2. Market Linkages:

- Create county-level e-marketplaces connecting farmers to buyers
- Eliminate exploitative middlemen through direct procurement

- o Guarantee government purchase of youth agricultural produce
 - o Establish farmer cooperatives for collective bargaining
- 3. Storage and Value Addition:**
- o Build shared cold storage facilities in agricultural zones
 - o Establish community milling- drying- and packaging centers
 - o Provide startup capital for agro-processing enterprises
 - o Train 50-000 youth in value addition techniques
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):**
- 4. Climate-Smart Agriculture:**
- o Train youth in drought-resistant crops- hydroponics- and agroforestry
 - o Promote conservation farming and organic agriculture
 - o Expand irrigation infrastructure in ASAL regions
 - o Integrate weather information systems for planning
- 5. Technology Adoption:**
- o Subsidize smartphones and apps for farm management
 - o Use drones for pest monitoring and precision agriculture
 - o Promote aquaponics- greenhouse farming- and vertical farming
 - o Link youth to agritech innovators and solutions
- 6. Finance:**
- o Provide youth-friendly agricultural loans (low interest- flexible terms)
 - o Establish crop insurance schemes to mitigate risks
 - o Support contract farming arrangements
 - o Guarantee land tenure for youth farmers
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):**
- 7. Industrialization:**
- o Green Jobs Training:
 - o Train 100000 youth as solar technicians- tree nursery managers- conservation officers
 - o Provide starter kits for renewable energy technicians
 - o Support waste-to-energy enterprises (biogas- briquettes)
- Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):**
- 4. Renewable Energy Enterprises:**
- o Fund youth-led solar- wind- and biogas businesses
 - o Establish green enterprise incubators in each county
 - o Link youth to renewable energy supply chains
 - o Promote energy cooperatives
- 5. Strengthen Conservation:**
- o Establish youth-led community conservancies
 - o Promote eco-tourism and community-based conservation
 - o Enforce penalties for environmental crimes (illegal logging- poaching)
 - o Protect endangered species and habitats
- Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):**
- 6. 100% Renewable Energy:**
- o Achieve universal clean energy access by 2030
 - o Transition entirely to renewable energy sources
 - o Export renewable energy expertise regionally
 - o Create 500-000 green jobs for youth
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- Universal electricity access by 2028

- o Establish agro-processing industries in every county
 - o Produce finished goods (flour- juice- canned products) for export
 - o Create brands for Kenyan agricultural products
 - o Employ hundreds of thousands in processing sector
- 8. Make Agriculture Attractive:**
- o Showcase successful young agripreneurs as role models
 - o Promote agriculture as profitable- modern enterprise
 - o Integrate agribusiness education into schools
 - o Ensure youth farmers earn decent incomes
- Measurable Outcomes:**
- Youth farmer incomes double to Ksh 10,000+/month by 2028
 - Post-harvest losses reduced to 10% by 2029
 - 60% of agricultural produce processed locally by 2030
 - 500,000 youth employed in agribusiness by 2030
 - Kenya achieves food security with youth-led production by 2032
- 8.2 Energy- Natural Resource Conservation**
- Current Reality:**
- Energy access remains a challenge- particularly in rural areas where youth rely on expensive- polluting kerosene and charcoal. Deforestation- driven by charcoal production and logging- threatens ecosystems and water sources. Yet Kenya has abundant renewable energy potential (solar- wind- geothermal) that can create green jobs while addressing energy poverty and environmental degradation.
- Key Challenges:**
- 1. Energy Access:**
- o 40% of rural households lack electricity
 - o High electricity costs suppress productivity
 - o Reliance on biomass fuels (charcoal- firewood) harms health and environment
 - o Limited access to clean cooking solutions
- 2. Environmental Degradation:**
- o Deforestation rate: 5,000 hectares lost annually
 - o Water sources drying up due to catchment destruction
 - o Soil erosion and desertification in ASAL regions
 - o Wildlife-human conflict as habitats shrink
- 3. Limited Green Economy:**
- o Few youth engaged in renewable energy sector
 - o Lack of training in solar installation- biogas- wind technology
 - o Limited capital for green enterprises
 - o Weak enforcement of environmental laws
- Our Demands:**
- Immediate Actions (Year 1):**
- 1. Expand Energy Access:**
- o Fast-track last-mile electricity connectivity to all wards
 - o Subsidize solar home systems for rural youth
 - o Provide clean cookstoves to replace charcoal use
 - o Reduce electricity tariffs for youth enterprises
- 2. Massive Reforestation:**
- o Sustain national tree-planting campaign: 1 billion trees by 2027
 - o Youth groups paid for planting and tending trees
 - o Protect water catchments and riparian zones
 - o Ban logging in critical forests

- 1 billion trees planted by 2027
- 300,000 youth employed in green energy sector by 2029
- Forest cover increased from 7% to 10% by 2030
- 100% renewable energy by 2030

8.3 Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation

Current Reality:

Kenya is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries- with youth in ASAL- coastal- and flood-prone regions bearing the brunt. Droughts- floods- and unpredictable weather patterns devastate livelihoods- displace communities- and heighten insecurity. Yet youth are not passive victims. Movements like Youth WASH Parliaments demonstrate their capacity to lead climate action.

Key Impacts:

- Droughts: Livestock deaths- crop failure- water scarcity in Turkana- Marsabit- Garissa- Wajir- Mandera
- Floods: Displacement and destruction in Tana River, Kisumu, Budalangi- Nairobi informal settlements
- Rising Temperatures: Heat stress affecting health and productivity
- Food Insecurity: 3.5 million Kenyans face hunger during climate shocks

Youth-Led Initiatives:

Youth WASH Parliaments in Makueni- Kwale- Kakamega- Kajiado- Kisumu- Bungoma are:

- Mapping water sources using GIS
- Conducting social audits of climate funds (e.g.- World Bank FLOCA)
- Promoting rainwater harvesting and water conservation

- Holding county governments accountable

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions (Year 1):

1. **Recognize and Fund Youth Climate Action:**
 - o Officially adopt Youth WASH Parliaments in all 47 counties
 - o Allocate Ksh 50 million per county annually for youth climate projects
 - o Support youth participation in climate planning and budgeting
2. **Emergency Response:**
 - o Establish early warning systems for droughts and floods
 - o Pre-position relief supplies in vulnerable areas
 - o Provide drought-resistant seeds and livestock insurance
3. **Climate Education:**
 - o Integrate climate change education into all levels of schooling
 - o Train 200,000 youth as community climate educators
 - o Use digital platforms for climate awareness

Medium-Term Actions (Years 2-3):

4. **Adaptation Investments:**
 - o Expand irrigation in ASAL regions (dams- boreholes- drip systems)
 - o Build flood control infrastructure in prone areas
 - o Promote climate-smart agriculture and livestock breeds
 - o Relocate communities from high-risk zones
5. **Youth Innovation Challenges:**
 - o Fund youth-designed climate solutions (water harvesting- drought- resistant crops- renewable energy)
 - o Provide seed grants of Ksh 100,000 to 500,000 for climate enterprises

- o Scale successful pilots nationally

Long-Term Transformation (Years 4-5):

6. Climate Resilience:

- o Achieve climate-resilient food systems
- o Guarantee water security for all communities
- o Eliminate climate-related displacement by 2030
- o Position youth as climate leaders regionally and globally

Measurable Outcomes:

- Youth WASH Parliaments in all 47 counties by 2026
- Zero climate-related deaths by 2030
- 500,000 youth employed in climate adaptation sector by 2029
- 100% climate resilience in ASAL regions by 2032

8.4 Green Economy Pathways

Current Reality:

The green economy encompassing renewable energy- sustainable agriculture- waste management- conservation- and eco-tourism offers vast employment potential. With proper investment and training- millions of youths can earn livelihoods while addressing environmental challenges.

Our Demands:

1. National Green Economy Fund: Allocate Ksh 10 billion annually for youth green enterprises
2. Training and Certification: Certify 500,000 youth in green skills by 2028
3. Market Creation: Government procurement of green products and services

- from youth enterprises

4. Innovation Support: Fund green tech startups and scale solutions

Measurable Outcomes:

- 1 million youth employed in green economy by 2030
- Kenya recognized as African green economy leader

8.5 Disaster Preparedness

Current Reality:

Kenya faces recurrent disasters (droughts- floods- fires- disease outbreaks) yet preparedness remains weak. Youth are rarely integrated into disaster response despite being most affected and most able to respond quickly.

Our Demands:

1. Youth Disaster Response Teams: Establish trained teams in all 47 counties
2. Early Warning Systems: Invest in technology for timely alerts
3. Community Preparedness: Train communities in first aid- search and rescue
4. Rapid Response Funding: Pre-allocate disaster funds to avoid delays

Measurable Outcomes:

- Response time reduced from days to hours by 2028
- Zero preventable disaster deaths by 2030

8.6 Blue Economy

Current Reality:

Kenya's blue economy fisheries aquaculture, marine tourism-shipping) is underdeveloped despite 600km coastline and major lakes (such as Lake Victoria and Lake Turkana). Youth can benefit from fishing (fish farming, marine conservation) and tourism enterprises.

Key Challenges:

- Overfishing and illegal fishing depleting stocks
- Limited cold storage and processing facilities
- Youth lack capital and training for aquaculture
- Pollution threatens marine ecosystems

Our Demands:

Immediate Actions:

1. Aquaculture Support:

- o Train 50,000 youth in fish farming techniques
- o Provide startup kits (fingerlings- feed- ponds)
- o Establish fish hatcheries in every lakeside county
- o Subsidize fish feeds and equipment

2. Market Access:

- o Build fish processing and cold storage facilities
- o Link youth fishers/farmers to export markets
- o Support value addition (smoked- canned fish)

3. Marine Conservation:

- o Employ youth in marine protected area management
- o Promote eco-tourism enterprises
- o Enforce fishing regulations (ban illegal methods- protect breeding grounds)

Long-Term Transformation:

4. Thriving Blue Economy:

- o 300,000 youth employed in fisheries and aquaculture by 2030
- o Sustainable fish stocks ensuring long-term livelihoods
- o Kenya becomes regional blue economy hub

Measurable Outcomes:

- Fish production doubles by 2029
- 200,000 youth in aquaculture by 2028
- Zero illegal fishing by 2030

9. CONCLUSION

This Manifesto Yetu is not a wish list it is a political contract. It represents the collective voice of Kenya's youth across all 47 counties- diverse backgrounds- and political divides. It demands that political parties- presidential candidates- gubernatorial aspirants- and all seeking public office in 2027 adopt these priorities as their own.

Our Call to Action:

To Political Parties: Integrate this manifesto into your 2027 platforms. Demonstrate

commitment through clear timelines, budgets and accountability mechanisms. Youth votes will go to those who take us seriously.

To Presidential and Gubernatorial Candidates: Sign a public pledge committing to these priorities. We will track your promises and hold you accountable.

To Parliament and County Assemblies: Enact legislation translating these demands into law. Budget adequately for youth programs. Exercise oversight to ensure implementation.

To Fellow Youth: This manifesto is ours. Organize, mobilize and demand for its implementation. Register to vote. Support leaders who champion our cause. Hold everyone accountable.

To Development Partners and Civil Society: Support youth-led accountability mechanisms. Fund civic education and youth organizing. Stand with us in demanding justice and inclusion.

The Promise:

If Kenya's leaders embrace this manifesto and deliver on its commitments- they will unlock the demographic dividend. A nation where over 20 million young people are economically empowered- politically included- and socially protected will be unstoppable. It will innovate- grow- and prosper. The Choice is Clear. The Time is Now.

#ManifestoYetu #OneNation #OneYouth #OneManifest

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ANNEXES

- Annex A: Advocacy Strategies

Multi-Level Engagement:

1. Grassroots Mobilization: County-level youth assemblies- ward forums- community dialogues
2. Digital Campaigns: Social media advocacy- online promise trackers- viral challenges
3. Media Engagement: Press conferences- op-eds- TV/radio interviews
4. Parliamentary Lobbying: Engagement with MPs- senators- MCAs to champion legislation
5. Party Negotiations: Direct dialogue with political parties to integrate manifesto

Accountability Tools:

1. Promise Tracker: Digital platform monitoring manifesto commitments
2. Citizen Scorecards: Quarterly public ratings of government performance
3. Social Audits: Youth-led audits of budgets and projects
4. Legal Action: Strategic litigation for rights violations or non-implementation

Employment Rates by Region:

- Mt. Kenya: Youth unemployment 65%
- Nyanza: Youth unemployment 70%
- Rift Valley: Youth unemployment 68%
- Eastern: Youth unemployment 72%
- North Eastern: Youth unemployment 75%
- Coastal: Youth unemployment 69%

Priority Issues by Region:

- Mt. Kenya: Mental health- boy-child empowerment- TVET expansion
- Nyanza: Devolution accountability- aquaculture- healthcare access
- Rift Valley: Land rights- pastoralist livelihoods- peace and security
- Eastern: Water governance- mining rights- infrastructure
- North Eastern: Insecurity- marginalization- education access
- Coastal: Blue economy- drug abuse- tourism opportunities

Annex B: County-Specific Data

(Summarized from regional reports)

Annex C: Manifesto Implementation Timeline

- Year 1 (2027-2028): Emergency interventions- legal reforms- immediate relief

- Year 2-3 (2028-2030): Institutional building- capacity development- program scale-up
- Year 4-5 (2030-2032): Transformation- sustainability- impact measurement

Annex D: Recognition of Contributing Partners

Lead Organizations:

- Manifesto Yetu Coalition
- Siasa Place
- Emerging Leaders Foundation-Africa (ELF-Africa)
- Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA)
- Interparty Youth Forum (IPYF)
- Ustawi-Ke

Regional Partners:

- Mandera County Students' Association (MACSA)
- Coalition of Youth for Devolution
- Social Justice Centers Working Group
- Kenya Water and Sanitation Network (KEWASNET)

This manifesto is a living document. It will be updated through continuous youth engagement and adapted to emerging realities. Our commitment is unwavering: Kenya's youth will no longer be sidelined. We are the architects of our own future. For Youth- By Youth- With Youth.