

KENYA URGENTLY NEEDS A NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

The revamped NYS strategy and implementation of the same in some areas like Kibera, is welcome and a move in the right direction. The increasing youth bulge, increased unemployment, increased levels of immorality and indiscipline among young people have far reaching future consequences in Kenya hence my total support for the well thought out NYS strategy.

Listening to the Cabinet Secretary Ministry for Devolution and Planning Ms Ann Waiguru on Cheche Citizen TV last week Wednesday 15th October 2014 on NYS and whose focus is on socialisation, promoting civic competencies and instilling discipline, it is evident that this new strategy will not only empower the youth but transform our society by 2030. The service men as she referred to them will have a great opportunity to be the pillars at the county level but only if they instil the same values and skills to those that they will be mentoring.

Well managed, this is a venture all tax payers should be happy about and support since it will contribute to Kenyans economic growth. If 6.7 Billion can be generated from NYS annually, the youth of Kenya will make a name in the history of Kenya. And yes they will do it.

As i further listened to the Cabinet Secretary, she also indicated that the National Leadership and Entrepreneurship Strategy will replace the National Youth Policy which was due for review in 2013. Having gone through the strategy, noting the need to have one policy strategy and guided by the governments priority in the 2013-2017 Medium Term Plan, i believe there are other key issues affecting young people that should be incorporated in a youth policy that are not necessarily a matter of leadership and entrepreneurship.

The success of any youth policy is the responsibility of the entire society and should be document that represents a holistic, integrated and coordinated approach to youth development which luckily was the President commitment in April 2013 when challenged by youth on why his government did not consider having an independent youth ministry. The government through the Ministry of Devolution and Planning should therefore unpack the leadership and entrepreneurship strategy through the public policy process that allows for extensive engagement with stakeholders between government, Kenya Young Parliamentarian Association, County Executives responsible for youth, youth organisation among other key individuals or organisation. The strategy for example does not state which approach will be used to address the alarming drug addictions, reproductive health issues such as early pregnancy among young women and rural to urban migration among others. Moreover, the policy should also clearly define the mainstreamed approach to achieving the youth agenda and similarly have clear affirmative action frameworks and programmes guaranteed in article 55 of the Kenyan Constitution. The national leadership and entrepreneurship strategy in its current state will not sufficiently serve as Kenya's National Youth Policy.

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