



# Kenya Youth Employment and Skills Program (K-YES)



*Youth entrepreneur Asa Tendet outside his shop.*

**Funding Level:**  
\$21.9 million

**Duration:**  
September 2015 – September 2020

**Activity Goals:**

- Enhance the employability of Kenyan youth
- Increase wages and self-employment for underemployed youth who have not completed secondary school
- Increase youth workforce competitiveness
- Increase private sector engagement in and development of youth employment programming and job placement

**Geographic Focus:**

Five counties: Kericho, Bungoma, Garissa, Kwale, and Nairobi

In 2017, the project will be expanded to four additional counties: Nyeri, Migori, Kisii, and West Pokot

**ACTIVITY OVERVIEW**

The majority of Kenya’s population is under the age of 17 and struggling to find meaningful jobs. The youth employment challenge presents a clear set of opportunities as the vast youth bulge moves into its productive working years. The K-YES Program will give motivated but disenfranchised youth the skills and support they need to compete and succeed in the workplace. Skills and vocational training that are designed in coordination with local industry and the private sector will create pathways to employment and turn the youth bulge into a demographic dividend.

K-YES overarching goal is to foster a partnership between young people and the private sector to design and develop vocational training for increased economic competitiveness and better jobs. K-YES will provide young Kenyans with access to youth-friendly services (e.g., information, capacity building, and finance), allowing them to make informed and empowered decisions about education and business investments. K-YES focuses on building local relationships and capacity to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of education and employment outcomes.

**ACTIVITY AREAS**

K-YES targets under or unemployed youth (ages 18-35) who have had primary or some secondary education. Objectives include:

1. Improved technical and vocational skills of youth participants
2. Increased business skills
3. Improved effectiveness of market/employment information, career counseling, mentoring, and job placement
4. Youth awareness and utilization of financial services
5. Gender equity
6. Sustainability through partnership

**Key Partners:**

- International Rescue Committee
- McKinsey & Co.
- Land O'Lakes International
- Mobile Accord
- SSG Advisor

**Implementing Partner:**

Research Triangle Institute

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**ACTIVITY IMPACT**

K-YES has set ambitious goals. By the end of program, 30,000 young people in the nine target counties will have improved market-relevant job and business skills. Fifty-four workforce service providers will have increased capacity to provide sector-specific trainings in response to market demands.

Seventy percent of participants will be employed within the first six months after completing the vocational training program. More than 300,000 youth will gain access to youth-friendly financial services, up-to-date youth labor market information, and youth mentorship networks.

Finally, over 100 new public-private partnerships in key sectors will be established in the nine target counties to accelerate the goals and overall impact of the program.