



## Yes Youth Can Nairobi

USAID/Kenya



A member of the Maisha Dhabiti bunge in Nairobi County cuts hair in their youth-run barbershop, just one of Maisha Dhabiti's many initiatives to earn money and contribute to their community.

### Funding Level:

\$ 2.19 million

### Duration:

February 2011 – August 2014

### Activity Goals:

- Empower youth to expand their economic opportunities and contribute to their communities
- Encourage youth leadership and a youth voice in local and national policy dialogue
- Increase youth participation in local development and peace initiatives

### Activity Accomplishments:

- 1,000 active *bunges*
- 30,000 *bunge* members
- Reached 18,870 youth in three months with messages of peace and community service

### Implementing Partner:

National Cooperative Business Association

### Key Partners:

Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development, Ministry of Planning and Devolution, Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government

### Activity Locations:

### ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Yes Youth Can is a national activity that has empowered 1,000,000 Kenyan youth to expand their economic opportunities, contribute to their communities and become responsible members of society. Through Yes Youth Can and the National Youth Bunge Association, young people aged 18-35 organize themselves into youth-run and youth-led village and county-level *bunges* (Kiswahili for “parliaments”) and democratically elect leaders to represent them at the national level.

The *bunges* provide a structure and a forum for young women and men to take action to improve their own lives and those of their neighbors, develop new leadership skills, promote transparent decision-making about their priorities, and empower themselves to be positive forces for change in their communities.

USAID has established Yes Youth Can in 30 of Kenya's 47 counties, focusing on those that have experienced high levels of violence or where threats of terrorism and extremism are prevalent.

### ACTIVITY AREAS

Yes Youth Can Nairobi prepares youth in Nairobi County to play an active, peaceful, and positive role in their communities by creating economic and social enterprises. It also promotes a youth voice in local and national policy dialogue and participation in inter-ethnic coalitions.

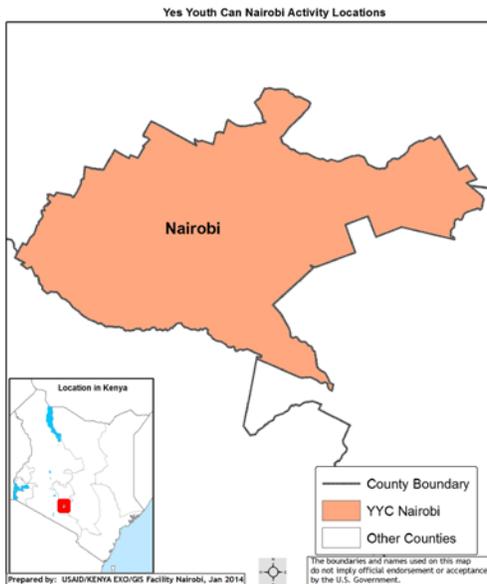
The activity encourages village *bunge* representatives to participate in USAID and partner education and awareness training in civics, gender-based violence, media engagement, financial literacy and book keeping, among others.

The activity also engages women and girls in capacity building efforts to promote equal access to leadership opportunities and improve their socio-economic status.

### ACTIVITY IMPACT

“Most groups think big, but they do not want to start small and act now. Let's rise beyond our challenges,” said Naashon Macharia, Maisha Dhabiti *bunge* president. “It's a world full of hopeful youths but most of them are impatient, we need to move forward because we are the leaders now.” Maisha Dhabiti youth *bunge* is one of the fastest growing youth groups in Nairobi County. It was formed and registered in November 2012 with the help of the Yes Youth Can Nairobi and Coast. The group has a membership of 16 youths, 10 men and six women.

## Nairobi County



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### Website:

<https://www.facebook.com/YesYouthCanNairobi>

To earn money and meet a community need, the group started collecting garbage and encouraging their neighbors to dispose of garbage in a cleaner, safer and healthier manner. At first it was a challenge to convince their community to pay a fee for proper garbage disposal, but with time, the *bunge* gained momentum.

They now collect garbage from 50 households in Mwanamke and Uumagara villages, charging fifty shillings per household twice a month. They are currently drafting a proposal on waste



management with a plan to recycle garbage into charcoal briquettes.

In addition to their garbage collection enterprise, the group runs a community entertainment center, a barbershop, and a hotel. They also rear rabbits, tend a kitchen garden, print t-shirts, produce washing detergents, and create art and beadwork.

They are in the process of rehabilitating a river in their community to preserve safe water for domestic consumption. They are planning to grow trees along the river and create a natural scenery and park that they will use to generate income for their group. They are collaborating with other youth *bunges* in the area to create environmental awareness in the community.

Yes Youth Can Nairobi and Coast selected Maisha Dhabiti youth *bunge* to attend the Nairobi International Trade Fair 2013. There, the group attended educational seminars and gained valuable connections to the Nairobi business community. The already motivated group now has even more tools to make their enterprises successful.