



Council of Governors



Youth empowerment through sports infrastructure and talent development in Nairobi City County

County:	Nairobi City County		
Sector:	Talent, Skill Development, and Care	Sub-sector/Theme:	Youth, Talent, and Sports
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Target Audience:	Nairobi City County Residents, Other counties		
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Context and Challenge

According to a 2019 survey carried out by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the youth contribute to 42.8% of 4.397 million of the population in Nairobi County. The large population of youth in the city has led to high competition for the available but inadequate opportunities. As a result, the youth face various challenges due to unemployment and lack of income-generating opportunities, hence end up being idle and engaging in illegal activities like crime and drug and substance use.

Unemployed youths end up engaging in illegal activities because they lack a constructive way to spend their free time like participating in leisure activities. For example, the youths do not have fields to engage in various sports activities like football, volleyball and basketball. Likewise, they do not have adequate facilitation to participate in activities that can help them generate income, like engaging in league sports where they can get a monthly stipend to sustain their lives.

Although basketball is a very common sport, it has not been given the attention it requires. For instance, in many urban communities, there are both football and volleyball pitches that people can access for free. However, this is not the case with basketball, especially in informal areas. As a result, youths with basketball skills end up being disadvantaged because they do not have the facilities to sharpen their skills and also make an income from them. This called for a need to facilitate unemployed youths to spend their leisure time constructively, and also create a way for some youths to earn a monthly stipend from sports.

Response and Actions (Solution Path)

The initiative focused on the use of sports and capacity enhancement to achieve meaningful youth engagement. The County used two major strategies to engage the youth. One of them was through the development of basketball infrastructure. Despite many youths having the skills of basketball, they lacked the infrastructure to practice and enhance their abilities. For instance, there were no adequate basketball courts that the youths could easily and freely access.

The County partnered with Hennessy to construct a FIBA-standard basketball court. One court was constructed in Jericho, in Makadara Sub-county, while two other courts were constructed on Umama grounds in Komarock by different stakeholders. The construction of the three courts was to provide the youths in the targeted areas with adequate infrastructure to spend their free time.

Another strategy which was used to solve the problem was capacity enhancement of the youths. In most of the affected areas, the youth have skills, but cannot use them to make income to finance their livelihood. The County mainly targeted the basketball teams at the grassroots level. The main aim was to facilitate four basketball teams to ascend to the Street League level. This was achieved through continuous training of the teams and subjecting them to tournaments to select the best.

The top four teams were then promoted to the Street League and the subscription fee was paid by the County. This created a way for the team members to make an income from basketball, and also constructively spend their free time.

The County partnered with stakeholders to create Yakazi (<https://www.yakazi.com/>), an online platform, where youths can upload their

certificates to be located by employers. Linking qualified but unemployed youths with potential employers has also helped to reduce idleness and unemployment among the youths.

Sustainability Measures for the Sports Development Initiative

1. The winning teams after tournaments qualify to join the Street League through subscriptions for further growth and support.
2. Podcast content for the youth is available for further engagement by dialling *384*585# for free (no internet required).
3. The Yakazi online platform continues to be available for free for job placement.
4. The County Government is in charge of the maintenance and repair of the basketball courts.
5. Growing more teams to join the street league going forward.
6. Monetizing the talent through the Governor's tournaments.
7. Aligned subsequent sports activities with the County Integrated Development Plan and Annual Development Plan (CIDP/ADP) for sustainability.
8. Seeking stakeholders and signing MoU's to construct more courts, fund tournaments, and other youth engagement activities

Outcomes and Results

First, 3 basketball courts were constructed in Jericho and 2 in Umama, to provide a safe place for youth engagement. This has led to an increase in the number of youths participating in basketball sports, especially on weekends, and has significantly reduced youth engagement in drug and substance abuse. Kids' clinics were also introduced in the courts, where young children get to showcase their talents and skills. Other activities like modern dance also take place in the courts when not in use. Thirty (30) teams were trained, which led to enhancement in basketball skills, and the promotion of 4 teams to the Street League. Some of the trained youths have also been able to secure scholarships through sports. Basketball junior academies were also formed to nurture the skills of young kids as they grow up. Some 1,082 youths also underwent capacity building on various topical issues like drug abuse.

Tournaments were organized to select the best teams to be promoted to the street league. Various awards were given to teams including cash, kits, medals and trophies. The champions got KSh 100,000, while the 1st and 2nd runners-up got KSh 60,000 and KSh 40,000 respectively. During the tournaments, other talents were also identified and got cash rewards of KSh 100,000. The cash awards were given to help the youths come up with an avenue for generating income.

[Yakazi](#) was created, where youths can link with potential employers for free. This has helped many youths to secure opportunities. Additionally, youths can also

access free podcasts on work readiness and other topical issues. Podcast content is also available for further offline engagement by dialling *384*585# for free.

Lessons Learned

Most youths have skills which they can utilize to keep themselves busy and also generate income but they lack support to help them realize their dreams. There is a need for counties to come up with strategies to empower youths in both rural and urban areas. In addition to sporting activities, youths can be trained on low-capital enterprises for them to start sustaining themselves from earned income, rather than waiting for formal employment.

Engagement in sports activities helps to deal with mental and physical health issues, hence should be encouraged.

Public-private partnerships are critical in service delivery and solving perennial issues. Thus, counties should work together with stakeholders for greater impact. The Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) approach had a huge impact on the provision of services. It assists in effectively and expeditiously resolving strategic challenges because it prioritizes results, has a deadline, and fosters stakeholder participation—all critical elements for the successful completion of projects.

Recommendations

Counties should initiate programmes aimed at helping the youths to sustain their lives even without formal employment. Additionally, initiatives should also be put in place to reduce cases of drug abuse and crimes through meaningful engagements. Counties should work closely with different stakeholders from both the private and public sectors on such initiatives, and consider institutionalizing a rapid results initiative approach to optimize service delivery.

Photo Gallery



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Maarifa Centre
Sharing Kenya's Devolution Solutions



Basketball Ball Court in Jericho, Nairobi



Court 2 in Umama Grounds, with some youth engaging in sports activities



Court 2 in Umama Grounds



The two adjacent Courts in Umama Grounds



Youths socializing and practising dance moves when no teams are practicing basketball