

## Empowering 10,000 Riders through System Reform in Embu County

The boda boda sector is one of the largest sources of employment for young people in



Figure 1 Seed funding of KES 1million allocated to Manyatta Boda boda Transport Cooperative Society Ltd as part of supporting the rider Saccos

Embu County, supporting more than 10,000 registered riders and playing a critical role in transport and local economic activity. However, the sector has long faced challenges including limited access to healthcare, financial insecurity, weak organization, and road safety concerns.

To address these challenges, the County Government of Embu, through the Department of Youth Empowerment and in collaboration with the Boda Boda Association of Kenya (BAK) – Embu Chapter, developed the Embu County Boda Boda Strategic Plan (2024–2027). The initiative was informed by consultations with riders across the County, who identified healthcare, affordable financing, digital registration, and stronger sector organization as key priorities.

The Strategic Plan was officially launched in February 2025 during the inaugural Embu Boda Boda Summit, which brought together over 10,000 riders from all 20 wards, demonstrating strong sector-wide support for reform. To support implementation of the strategy, the County Government allocated KES 4 million in seed funding towards the establishment and operationalization of rider SACCOs across Sub-Counties, alongside partnerships with national MSME support programmes and other stakeholders.

The initiative is built around five key pillars:

- **Boda Afya na Karinda:** a co-contribution health insurance programme where both the County Government and riders contribute towards affordable healthcare cover for riders and their families, helping reduce vulnerability to medical emergencies and accidents.
- **Rider SACCOs:** to strengthen savings, improve access to affordable credit, and support riders to invest in their businesses through organized cooperative structures.

- **Embu Boda Boda Rider Information Management System (EBRIMS):** a digital rider registration and management platform designed to improve sector organization, enhance security, and support data-driven planning and service delivery.



*Figure 2 Boda boda riders during the official launch of the Embu County Boda Boda Strategic Plan (2024–2027) held in February 2025 in Embu County*

- **Boda Talanta Initiative:** a programme supporting riders' talents in sports and creative arts, while creating alternative income opportunities and promoting positive youth engagement.
- **Green Mobility Initiative:** an environmental sustainability programme promoting electric motorcycles and environmentally friendly infrastructure such as electric-powered car wash stations.

Early results from the programme show significant progress in sector organization and awareness creation. Approximately 70% of riders have been registered under the Embu Boda Boda Rider Information Management System (EBRIMS), improving rider identification, sector coordination, and access to targeted services. In addition, 5 rider SACCOs have been operationalized across Sub-Counties to strengthen financial inclusion and collective savings among riders. County monitoring further indicates that nearly 80% of riders report improved awareness of road safety, healthcare services, and ongoing sector modernization initiatives.

The Embu experience demonstrates how Counties can move beyond fragmented interventions toward structured, inclusive, and sustainable reforms that strengthen youth livelihoods, improve service delivery, and formalize the informal transport sector through collaboration, digital systems, and financial empowerment.

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