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**SECURING THE FUTURE FOR YOUTH: FACILITATING MULTIPLE  
EARNING STRATEGIES**

**Enhancing Skills Development Through Competency-Based Education And Training And  
Harmonized National Qualifications Framework**

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## **1.0 Abstract**

This paper argues that multiple earning strategies should be adopted in skills training among youth for it is critical in enhancing youth access to income, participation in the national economy, reducing unemployment, and meeting their needs. Employment among youth in Kenya has continued to decline tremendously in recent years, including in the wake of high graduation levels. Young people especially those from low-income families, high school dropouts, orphans, and those living with disabilities face barriers in completing school and entering the workforce.

Contemporary economic context in Kenya demands that youth possess dynamic skills, knowledge, and great attitude and character to advance their chances of securing and sustaining economic opportunities. CAP Youth Empowerment Institute (CAP YEI), a Kenyan NGO in collaboration with MasterCard Foundation, has for the past five years been implementing Basic Employability skills Training (BEST) model for vulnerable youth. We draw from data of a longitudinal project evaluation of a learning partner, summative evaluation, and internal program monitoring and evaluation to analyze how multiple earning strategies is becoming useful for youth livelihood.

This paper provides an overview of current challenges faced by youth in Kenya in securing opportunities in the workforce and how CAP YEI is responding to these challenges. The paper then illuminate how multiple earning strategies for youth is facilitated and sustained through (1) situated program factors as well as (2) critical ‘unwrittennon-negotiable’ factors. It goes on to discuss the multiple earning strategies that youth employ to increase and sustain their economic potential in a challenging employment context. The paper concludes by calling on other researchers, evaluators, and practitioners to explore how multiple earning strategies can further be integrated and scaled up in skills training sector.

### **Key Words**

Youth, skills, labor market, employment

## **2.0 Introduction**

The new Constitution defines youth as all individuals in the republic of Kenya who have attained the age of 18 years but have not attained the age of 35 years (GoK, 2010). On the other hand, cultural responsibilities such as marriage are more important in defining the category in which one belongs, adult or youth. Biological age has been used to define policies and laws of inclusion and exclusion in factors such as obligatory schooling, right to vote, obtaining identity cards and driving license among others (Hansen, Karen, 2008).

Youth transition is presented as a linear, psychosocial development process starting in late childhood: leaving the parental home and establishing new living arrangements; completing full time education; forming close stable personal relationships outside the family; and testing the labor market, finding work and possibly settling into a career, and achieving a more or less stable livelihood. These transitions are interconnected. For instance, leaving parental home and setting up a personal home requires an independent source of income. To reach this stage, a young person generally must have acquired qualifications and to have succeeded in demonstrating his or her skills in the labor market or some equivalent subsection of the society (United Nations, 2007).

The exclusionary tendencies of policies targeting youth have denied them opportunities to contribute in the development of the economy and exposed them to tight regulations. Rather than promote young people's well-being and development, certain policies have helped to constrain and deny them rights which are integral to their transition process. The transition model assumes a predictable linear progression to mainstream endpoint-adulthood (Barry, Monica 2005).

Ironically, the transition between home and work has become less discontinuous with many young people delineating the course of their lives (Leccardi, 2005 cited in Hansen Karen, 2008). The uncertainty of the process compels young people to draw on diverse resources (economic, social cultural and political), depending on where and who they are in gender and class terms, as they negotiate their everyday lives and orient themselves toward the future (Hansen Karen, 2008).

According to Government of Kenya (2006), Kenya's population is largely youthful—75% of the country's population is made up of persons aged 1 to 30 years. Youth number 10.1 million, accounting for 32% of the country's population. Of these, 51.7% are female and 48.3% male. Youth form about 60% of the total labor force in the country, but a majority, about 65% is unemployed. Out of 750,000 youth who graduate from various tertiary institutions in the country, only 25% access employment. The rest, 75% have to bear the burden of unemployment. Furthermore, some of those absorbed in the labor market have jobs that do not match their qualifications and personal development goals (GoK, 2006). A high level of youth unemployment is associated with lack of adequate education and marketable skills, fluctuating demand for labor, demand for experience by potential employers and the relatively high youth population.

Statistics show that Kenya is facing a serious unemployment rates among youth. This has prompted NGOs in Kenya and the Kenyan government to introduce programs and projects to improve youth employability and increase self-employment rates. These initiatives often focus on the development of technical skills and knowledge or capital loans. The Kenyan government for example established The Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) in 2006 with the sole purpose of reducing unemployment among the youth between 18 and 35 years of age who account for over 61% of the unemployed in the country (Kimando et.Al., 2012). The fund was then transformed into a State Corporation in 2007.

In June 2010, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) was mandated by the Government of Kenya to implement the Kenya Youth Empowerment Project (KYEP), a Training and Internship component which aimed at providing youth with relevant work experience and skills through training and work placements in the formal and informal sectors. The training and internships were eventually delivered in six cycles (six different intake rounds) to 13,305 youth in which 78% of youth (83% for men and 74% for women) who completed internships were immediately employed with their internship employer, a different employer, or self-employed (EG Review Team; IEG Review Team, 2017). CAP Youth Empowerment Institute (CAP YEI) on the other hand has been implementing a similar program as KYEP and this is the subject of this paper.

### **3.0 How CAP YEI Responded to These Challenges**

CAP Youth Empowerment Institute, a Kenyan NGO was introduced in 2011 in Kenya from India to train 10,000 vulnerable youth with job entry skills and entrepreneurship. CAP YEI's Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) model revolves around a nine-step framework of activities guided by objectives including to:

- (1) ensure that disadvantaged youth learn and acquire life skills, job market relevant skills, savings education, and small business development training.
- (2) facilitate disadvantaged youth access to internships and job opportunities.
- (3) ensure youth receive vital pre and post job placement counseling support.

Successful implementation of these nine activities - market scan, curriculum development, conducting road shows, induction, classroom training, fieldwork assignments, work readiness modules, placements, and program reviews lead to successful attainment of program objectives.

Market scans identify job market skills demanded in particular area and likely to lead to large rates of employment. In addition, it identifies the specific skills demanded by potential employers. Furthermore, market scans help in designing appropriate curricular. Curriculum development gears towards developing the training guidelines and content vis-à-vis skills needed in the job market. The curriculum developed not only demand relevance but it also ensures better training of much needed skills among the trainees for their potential employers.

Student recruitment for the program is very strategic; it targets those individuals from very vulnerable backgrounds and who may not have any chance of further education. These individuals are identified in road shows - involving community, youth, religious leaders, and local administrators and village elders. Students are taken through induction process and life skills training. This allows students to rediscover their potential and build sense of self-identity and to believe in themselves through self-confidence building.

Skills training is contextual; students are trained in hospitality, floriculture, electrical and electronic, automobile skills, customer relations and sales, air conditioning and refrigeration, clearing and forwarding, security and guarding, hair dressing and beauty, building and construction, and industrial garment manufacturing. This takes three months of rigorous training before students are sent out on sector industry exposure and field visits where they meet and experience the realities of work.

After exposure and field visits, work preparedness process is conducted in which students are trained to prepare their resumes, conduct mock interviews, and practice work ethics. Later, students are linked to internship or job placement. Program review is conducted after batch training to identify strong and weak areas for adaptations before new batch of training. This process has seen such great success in youth employment and entrepreneurship that CAP YEI decided to transfer some of these program aspects through capacity building to youth polytechnics, currently rebranded to Vocational Training Centers (VTCs). VTCs in Kenya have suffered significant effects from negative perception as centers of training for people who failed in the mainstream education system and also have poor transition from training to employment.

#### **4.0 Findings**

This section demonstrates how multiple earning strategies for youth are facilitated and sustained through program factors. The idea is to broaden the possibilities for youth to benefit from social capital, broad skill capacities, and taking advantage of every available income opportunity. It is through the access of entry income earning opportunities that set up the youth for advanced opportunities, whether through further education from savings they make from the entry level jobs or through on-the-job training. This research identified program factors that played a critical role in preparing youth for multiple earning strategies. These include partnerships, life skills training, work preparedness, employers' demand driven curricular, peer networking, and support for entrepreneurship startups.

##### ***a. Partnership with Industry Stakeholders***

The model engages stakeholders especially employers, in a direct and purposeful manner during various steps. During the Market Scan research, potential employers are asked to contribute data on employment possibilities and relevant skills set required for each job. As the curriculum is being developed or revised, they are consulted to ensure relevant skills are included in the instructional content.

Some employers and local institutional representatives including those from financial institutions become mentors during the training. The instructors keep in touch with employers, mentors, and financial institutions' representatives with an aim of having them mentor trainees, provide exposure and internship experiences, and to confirm job opportunities. This direct and purposeful engagement leads to a form of social capital for CAPYEI trainees and later as graduates of the program. Partnership with employers favors their access to opportunities against their competitors from other institutions without this privilege. Our study indicates that these partnerships are critical contributors to short and midterm term outcomes. The intra and inter-personal characteristics of the youth that enhance their interaction with partners is nurtured in life skills training.

### *b. Life Skills Training*

Providing a set of life skills at the start of the training enhances self esteem, confidence, and a sense of worth. Life skills prepare students for the technical skills by:

- instilling confidence
- teaching them how to accept and face challenges
- teaching them how to believe in themselves
- introducing students to the culture of learning and relating to other people
- helping to shape up behavior of the students to that of acceptable working ethics

When asked what aspects from the program are related to their ability to earn income, youth highlighted aspects of life skills as critical. Specifically, they attributed their ability to communicate with people of diverse backgrounds, increased self-confidence, and an improved perspective on their potential for the future to the training at CAP-YEI. One youth described the change in how he viewed himself by saying:

*“It is not only being trustworthy, it is believing in yourself. One thing that I got from the CAP-YEI program was how to be me - how to make sure that I have achieved the best out of me. Before I came to CAP I was just like any other youth out there. I used to think I have to wait for someone to get me the opportunity – not doing it myself. But I realized that when I came to CAP it is like it opened my mind, I knew I had so much potential that was in me. One thing that captured me is to be the best that I can be. It is trust that’s a virtue – that is earned, by doing things right, but waking up early, making sure that you are groomed well, dress-up well, people can see a good picture.”*

Affirming the youth quoted above, stakeholders also indicated that youth who trained at CAP-YEI were trustworthy and possessed personal attributes that made them desirable employees, even though they did not have all the technical skills that youth from other programs had.

***c. Ensuring the curriculum is grounded in the local needs of employers***

CAP-YEI is providing youth with relevant and in-demand skills in specific industry sectors, and it is equipping youth with cross cutting skills. These skills include intra-personal and inter-personal work attitudes, work etiquette, as well as self-confidence and hard skills to enhance competency in the areas they train to work in.

The step-by-step summary of the BEST model curriculum demonstrates its holistic nature. It is embedded in the local context and builds social capital through successive interactions with employers, local leadership, and community based organizations. The social capital built is reflected in how employers and financial organization representatives become mentors and contribute to in-class training and internships.

The effort to provide a curriculum that responds to the local employment needs provides a service to both employers and graduates. The curriculum takes an approach that connects, responds, and delivers the skills demanded as well as the capacities that enable youth to succeed. Towards the end of training the curriculum provide specific guidelines to help to link youth to internships, gainful job opportunities, small business start-ups, and financial inclusion of youth through opening of bank accounts and saving money. This approach decreased the vulnerability



of youth after they secured jobs and earned money. It also increased the respect they received from friends, family, leaders, and communities. This progress in turn meant a decrease in the burden to parents and elder siblings in providing for poor youth in their families.

*d. Offering course duration that meets the needs of many disadvantaged youth*

CAP YEI precisely targets the most vulnerable youth in their communities - those from very poor families, neighborhoods, and that have been out of school for at least one year. The youth demonstrated they had no chance accessing higher education or work skills training. They are part of the 2009 Census Report for Kenya indicating that out of about 11 million youth and only 39% are absorbed in the job market, leaving 61% jobless and under extreme poverty. Several research data indicate about 92% of these youth lacked the vocational or professional skills demanded by the economy. They need quick and effective intervention to get them out of poverty and vulnerabilities by engaging them in economic activities that can provide for their needs.

CAP YEI provides youth with short period relevant and in-demand skills training in specific industry sectors, and it is equipping youth with cross-cutting skills, intra-personal and inter-personal work attitudes, work etiquette, as well as self-confidence. It further goes to link youth with internships and gainful job opportunities, and facilitate the financial inclusion of youth through the opening of bank accounts and saving money. This approach has decreased the vulnerability of youth participants after they secured jobs, earned money and increased the respect they receive from friends, family, community leaders and community members. This progress in turn has meant a decrease in the burden to parents and elder siblings in providing for poor youth in their families.

*e. Managing Students' Expectations*

Through exposure and field visits, mentorship, as well as through internships (or attachments), trainees can get a direct feel of the real work in their respective career lines, understand the requirements for each job, meet and interact with experienced work force, meet with mentors and potential employers, and sometimes shadow or get on-the-job training opportunities. These

opportunities demystify the often ‘mythical’ conversations and advice that orient youth to work as easy experiences. By the time that youth complete the training, they already know what they would like to do with their careers as employees or small business owners. This managing of youth expectations does not exclude the process of getting the actual jobs through work readiness.

Work readiness is done a week prior to the end of the batch training and is used to get the trainees ready to apply for job opportunities, participate in job interviews, and to work in normal work environments where there is interaction between them and employers as well as other employees. It includes practicing of CVs/resumes writing, conducting mock interviews, training in safety precautions while at work, external assessment of students, and practicing professional grooming. Assessment of this aspect is done by both an external resource person and the respective course facilitator. It ensures youth also have the knowledge of expected income in a whole range of job positions or from businesses once they start those jobs or businesses.

#### *f. Work preparedness modules*

To make sure the trainees succeed in transitioning to work, considering the tough competition for jobs from other trained youth from elsewhere, there is need to prepare them with extra skills other than the technical work skills. The need for work readiness comes from the understanding that many young people graduate or drop out from college or from high school without basic job search skills, doing job interviews, and working with other people. Some of the issues addressed during work readiness module include:

- i. Preparing CV and cover letters
- ii. Conducting mock interviews – using sample interview questions and interview scenarios to familiarize youth to real interview processes and events
- iii. Participating in on-the-job training – connecting trainees to work places to work along experienced workers as well as taking the roles of the experienced workers under supervision and instructions
- iv. Subjecting trainees to external assessment – industry experts are invited to conduct both oral and practical assessment of the trainees and to make recommendations for areas needing improvement before they finally go out to look for work

- v. Guiding and counseling students about industry expectations – is done through industry mentors or through discussions of the findings from trainees’ experiences during exposure, field visits, and on-the-job training experiences
- vi. Conducting real job application – is done the last week of the training when youth have identified the contacts and made informal discussions with potential employers. Later after training, youth will have the skills and knowledge of job applications
- vii. Advising on good grooming and proper work etiquette
- viii. Discussions about relating well with people at different levels (their seniors e.g. managers and supervisors as well as their work mates) and working under rules
- ix. An opportunity to practice internet job searching
- x. Familiarizing with safety precautions at work places and responding to safety incidents
- xi. Signing up for emails and sending application letters online
- xii. Preparing personal case studies – involves writing a personal profile to answer three key questions; who am I? where am I now? Where do I want to go/be, and how do I get there? This part is very helpful in guiding the youth post the training program

*g. Providing advice and support as young entrepreneurs take the leap towards starting their own businesses*

CAP YEI increased its emphasis on entrepreneurship in a manner that is comparable to job placement for two primary reasons. First, in urban areas this was implemented because of the post-program movement of many CAP YEI youth toward self-employment strategies, as well as a broader economic context in which many individuals pursue self-employment or multiple earning strategies. Second, as CAP YEI expanded into new rural areas, jobs were harder to come by and entrepreneurial training, particularly agri-business chain sector was seen as necessary for success in these areas.

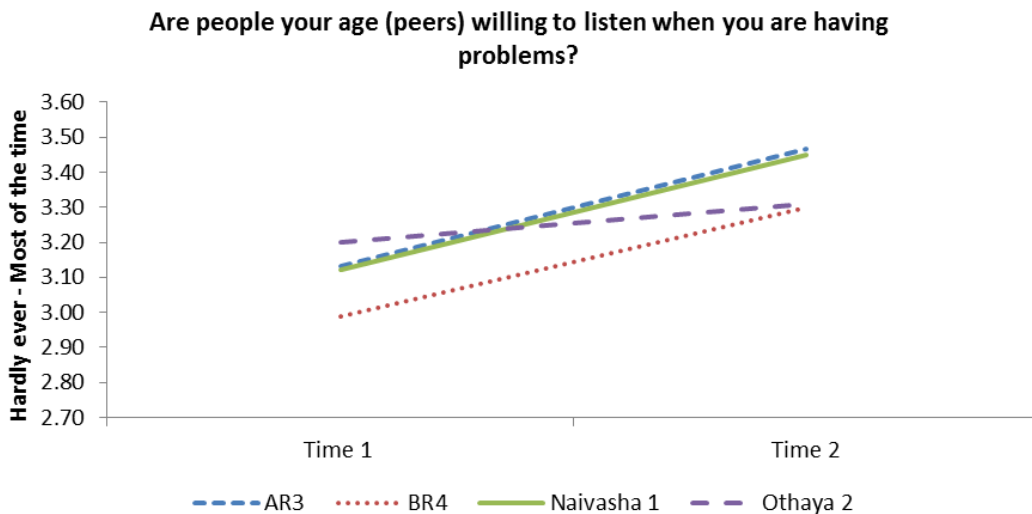
To address these emerging contexts, CAP YEI endeavored to strengthen the entrepreneurship training component by introducing a common curriculum across all 16 sites for all youths since 2012. CAP YEI also hired an entrepreneurship coordinator, whose responsibilities include helping site coordinators identify youth who are interested in pursuing self-employment, facilitating youth acquisition of start-up capital, and highlighting successful alumni.

Additionally, CAP YEI determined to select youth identified through aptitude/interest testing at the beginning of the program to follow a “vocational track.” As a result, all program participants learn basic entrepreneurship skills, while those youth who choose the entrepreneurship track receive more in-depth training.

***g. Peer connections/networking***

Under the CAP-YEI program, peer networking and group formations are encouraged during the course training. They begin as savings groups which allow youth to pull resources to start small income generation activities while in the training. Saving groups grow into entrepreneurship groups with their groups getting registered with the department of social services. These connections build up into future connections post training and were reported to be useful in terms of alerting peers of employment opportunities, further training, and partnership in businesses.

Youth reported that there were changes in their peer relationships during the course of the program - over the course of the CAP-YEI program, youth saw significant and meaningful increases in the availability of peer support when they had problems. Furthermore, youth also reported significant increases in the availability of practical adult support, helping them by loaning money, meals or clothes as shown in the figure below.



The next section discusses aspects that we found to be very important in determining the success of the youth in accessing opportunities for earning, be they jobs, running businesses, or engaging in mixed livelihoods and yet these factors are not in the program design. We call them ‘unwritten non-negotiable’ factors because, however they are not part of the training curriculum, these factors are very important in determining the success or failure of the youth in securing opportunities. The youth as well as the trainers creatively deploy these resources to succeed in their interactions and dealing with daily challenges at work or in businesses. Both the written program elements discussed above and unwritten non-negotiable factors described below are inseparable. CAP YEI is constantly integrating some of these unwritten non-negotiable into its program.

## **6.0 ‘Unwritten non-negotiable’ Factors**

These factors have a significant impact on the attitude a person brings to interactions with clients, customers, colleagues, supervisors, and other stakeholders in and around training spaces or work places. From the longitudinal study of the program alumni, we found that the more positive someone's attitude is the better that person's relationships with other people is and helps enhance performance at work, in businesses, or in social interactions and networking. These are discussed in detail below and include communication, team work and collaboration, problem solving, and critical observation.

**6.1 Communication:** Communication was reported to be a key aspect in the program success and it was useful from the time of engaging various stakeholders in the community to:

- helping in mobilizing youth to enroll in the training
- engaging different people to come and mentor youth or conduct guest lectures
- when seeking on-the-job training, internship, and job placement

**6.2 Teamwork and collaboration:** This begins from the time the youth are in the training program - they collaborate to make learning charts, doing classroom activities, engaging in small income generation activities, forming saving groups, and when participating in exposure and field visits. At the end of the training, trainees are encouraged to enroll into CAP YEI alumni to serve as a network and platform to help them to connect one another to opportunities. Team

work and collaboration are very useful in solving problems including job searches, accessing government youth fund and contracts, and starting business partnerships.

**6.3 Problem solving:** While life skills' training provides a lot on which to build self-confidence and how to cope with challenges, the full-scale training on problem solving is not structured in to the training. There is evidence from evaluation showing not only the complexity of challenges at work places, but also in their homes and in their life as a whole. The youth apply multiple strategies and tools to solve these problems. For example, sexual harassment issues at work places by patrons, customers and from supervisors in the hospitality sector were reported to be rampant. Youth were able to deal with these problems without yielding into such advances or quitting their jobs. Others demonstrated a great deal of resilience in overcoming challenges relating to balancing work, studies, and their small businesses popularly known as 'side hustles.' The youth reported they are able to deal with these challenges by constantly seeking advice and support from their trainers who maintain open communication and willingness to help the youth to succeed.

**6.4 Critical observation:** This is often discussed when trainees bring in scenarios of the places they visit in their exposure and field visits as well as on-the-job training experiences. It attracts a wealth of insights on how to deal with these scenarios when in the real world post their training. It was reported that the environment in which youth work requires them to multi-task and coordinate separate activities. This requires them to not only think fast, but to also analyze information to enable them act favorably and accurately for better outcomes. Critical thinking and observation is not structured in the the CAP YEI training program, but has since been deployed by youth and trainers in ways that have served the youth well and needs to be reinforced. There is an opportunity to integrate this aspect for the youth to experience situations that provoke these skills.

Our research found that the youth apply both the written non-negotiable (life skills and technical skills) and the 'unwritten non-negotiable' factors to succeed in securing job opportunities, initiating self-employment engagements, and other side 'hustles'. Majority of the youth who

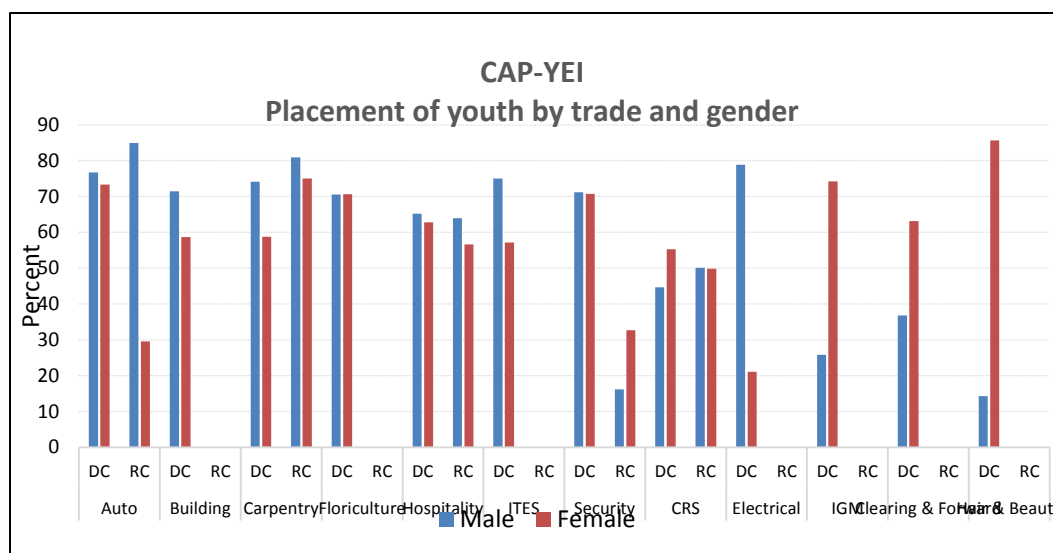
went through the CAP YEI training practice what we call mixed livelihoods in which they earn money through multiple strategies.

## **7.0 Multiple Earning Strategies**

### ***Employment by others (paid jobs)***

In a longitudinal study done by University of Minnesota (CAP YEI learning partner) in the last 5 years, it revealed very impressive success of the youth in accessing employment. The rate of employment among sample program alumni for year 2 of operations was 80.2% for the Replication training centers and 80.1% for Demonstration training centers. For the other two years (Year 3 and Year 4), the employment rate at the Demonstration centers had remained consistent over the ones achieved by the Replication centers.

The graph below shows the distribution of youth placements based on the trade they completed as well as by gender. As can be seen from the graph, the placement rate is higher for males (in six trades - Auto, Building, Carpentry, Hospitality, Electrical, and ITES), and higher for females in three trades (IGM, Clearing & Forwarding and Hair & Beauty). The youth that completed the Floriculture training had the highest level of confidence in being able to find a job on their own (with 100%), followed by those completing the CRS course (with 80.7%), and Security (with 80%).



### Self-Employment (entrepreneurships)

It is important to note that youth used a variety of methods to get job placement. These included help from the course facilitator, recommendations from friends, advertisements, etc. The majority of both males and females got their jobs as the result of referrals, often by their trainers (close to 70% of males and 80% of females). The complete breakdown of data showing the overall performance of the youth, including in entrepreneurship and further education post training in the first 5 years of phase one is indicated in the table below. Overall job placement for all the youth who completed training at CAP YEI was 76% while those who decided to do business was 7%. This increases successful transition of youth from training to income earning at over 83%.

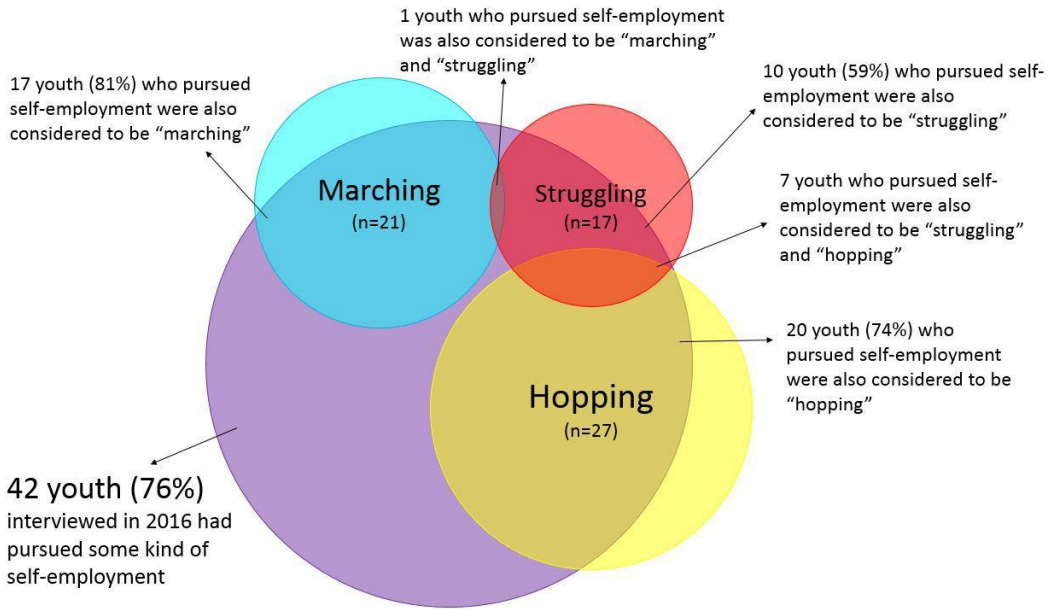
CAPYEI OVERALL STATISTICS SUMMARY AS PER SEPTEMBER 2016 -END PHASE I																	
Sn No	Center Status	Best Center Name	Bathes Enrolled	Enrolled	Drop Outs	Trained	Under Training	Intern ship	Further Studies	Others	OR/D OE	Entrepreneurs	Placed	Placed %	Entrepreneurs %	Placed + Entrepreneurs	Placed + Entrepreneurs %
1	Demo	Buru Buru	14	1246	22	1224	0	0	73	125	16	80	930	75.98	6.54	1010	82.52
2	Demo	Athi River	13	860	25	835	0	0	43	82	6	75	629	75.33	8.98	704	84.31
3	Replica	Nyeri South	10	672	8	664	0	0	33	103	7	35	486	73.19	5.27	521	78.46
4	Demo	Naivasha	11	706	24	682	0	0	10	110	5	20	537	78.74	2.93	557	81.67
5	Replica	Mombasa	10	721	30	691	0	0	31	84	12	52	512	74.10	7.53	564	81.62
6	Replica	Thika	10	656	4	652	0	0	30	36	9	73	504	77.30	11.20	577	88.50
7	Replica	Eldoret	8	531	28	503	0	0	44	27	44	45	343	68.19	8.95	388	77.14
8	Demo	Kisumu	9	635	16	619	0	0	22	88	1	46	462	74.64	7.43	508	82.07
9	Demo	Nakuru	8	679	9	670	0	0	13	101	8	39	509	75.97	5.82	548	81.79
10	Replica	Dagoretti	8	542	25	517	0	0	17	64	17	23	396	76.60	4.45	419	81.04
11	Replica	Kakamega	7	440	10	430	0	0	16	52	3	29	330	76.74	6.74	359	83.49
12	Demo	Mikindani	8	540	26	514	0	0	28	26	7	58	395	76.85	11.28	453	88.13
13	Replica	Machakos	5	333	1	332	0	0	2	10	0	18	302	90.96	5.42	320	96.39
14	Replica	Nyahururu	3	200	6	194	0	0	12	0	0	34	148	76.29	17.53	182	93.81
15	Replica	Meru	2	150	14	136	0	0	3	15	0	7	111	81.62	5.15	118	86.76
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>126</b>	<b>8911</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>8663</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>6594</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>7.32</b>	<b>7110</b>	<b>83.44</b>



The initial intention of the CAP YEI program was to have 10% - 20% of participants start businesses. CAP YEI provides all students skills in financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, but those interested or who demonstrate better performance in business are identified and supported. The table above shows that 7.32% percent of total trained youth in 5 years of the program was full time engaged in small businesses.

In the summative or end of project evaluation, it was found that the average number of entrepreneurs has been 6.1% with the second year of operations having the lowest percentage (4.2%). When asked about their plans for starting a business, the percentage of both males and female students was almost the same. The youth who completed the Floriculture training had the highest percentage of youth planning to start a business in the future (with 95.7%), followed by those who completed the security training (with 2%), and those who completed the Customer Relations and Sales training (with 90 %).

In a longitudinal project evaluation by a learning partner where sample youth were classified as ‘marchers’, ‘hoppers’, or ‘strugglers’, entrepreneurship engagement is identified as an important opportunity for youth as shown below. ‘Marchers’ are the youth who were very successful in finding jobs and sustaining them over a long period of time. ‘Strugglers’ are the youth who had difficult time getting jobs and it took them long time to find sustainable jobs. ‘Hoppers’ on the other hand are the youth who struggled to find a job at some point but moved to the ‘marchers’ and other point or they started with a job in some point but lost the job, pushing them to the ‘struggling’ category. It is important to indicate that most of the youth who engage in these opportunities are pushed by necessity rather than by choice—when most of them do not find jobs, they try to engage in small businesses as means of getting income



In another study targeting youth six months after graduation from the program, close to 27% of males and almost 40% of females had started their own businesses. Of the youth who had started a new business and close to 43% of males had their business operation for less than six months. Among the female business owners, close to half had been in operation for less than six months.

Of the youth who had started their own business, three quarter of them had employed one additional person, 15% had employed two people, 5% had employed three people and 5% had employed more than five people at their businesses.

### ***Mixed Livelihoods***

These are multiple earning strategies youth employ to increase and sustain their economic potentials in a context of challenging youth unemployment. These involve (1) having a paid job as well as running a business; (2) having a full time job and a side, including part time jobs, and (3) having a job, running a main business, and side temporary businesses – selling small items often or occasionally when the opportunity present itself. For example, one youth was employed in a local electrical store to sell parts. While he worked in the shop, he secured himself a few opportunities to install electrical wiring in new buildings in the city. With income increasing for him, he saved the money with the intention of opening his own electrical shop. After saving, he

had enough to enable him bid for a subcontract to supply electrical equipment and electrical wiring new buildings. This particular youth continued to maintain the job at the electrical shop, opened his own electrical shop and employed another person to run for him from where he supplied materials to buildings he managed to subcontract electrical installations, and also did little electrical wire installations for individuals.

Another scenario is when youth engage in several casual jobs called *vibarua* jobs that include helping out friends and family at their businesses, and/or selling goods at the market or in less formal venues. Youth were found to engage in several of these activities even when they had a main job—working for others in casual basis as well as selling items and they explain that these multiple streams helped to fill income gaps when their main jobs ended or when faced by increased and unanticipated expenses.

The major impetus for mixed livelihoods is necessity and an expectation that they do what they need to do. The longitudinal as well as the summative evaluation explain youth engaging in mixed livelihoods as a matter of necessity either because they can't make enough in their jobs or because there is always additional need within their families. Programmatically, there are a couple areas that help youth do this—engage in mixed livelihood streams. One is life skills training—youth talk about developing persistence and not giving up - pushing through until they succeed.

A second one youth talked about is that the entrepreneurship training they received helped them realize that they could do or engage in small pieces of income generating activities - even on the side when their jobs were insufficient or unpredictable. For most youth, the entrepreneurial activities are not their sole source of income but help to supplement the work they do for others.

The third one is the financial literacy and learning in which they learn both the importance of and mechanisms for saving. Youth realized through the program that they would need to start saving if they wanted to start even small business activities. Finally, the fact that youth are able to get their foot in the door with employers is a first step and contributes to the multiple earning strategies. However, since youth are in entry level jobs, it is often the low wages that leads them to needing multiple streams of income. This multiple earning strategies look a potential of widening youth livelihoods if it can be integrated and nurtured in youth empowerment sector.

Overall, youth are better off in this scenario than when they were just idling at home, leading so many of them wasted in drugs and other illicit activities. There are several indicators of improved wellbeing among the youth by engaging in paid jobs, running small businesses, or engaging in multiple earning streams facilitate in the CAP YEI basic employability skills training model.

### **7.1 Indicators of youth well-being as a result of earning Opportunities**

- i. Youth from impoverished background and high states of vulnerability who participated got empowered with skills for work, business, as well as higher education
- ii. Equipping youth with cross cutting skills, including intra-personal and inter-personal work attitudes and work etiquette, self-confidence and hope for the future, and the capacity to target or goal set, and exercise self-discipline
- iii. Linking youth into internships and gainful job opportunities
- iv. Facilitating the financial inclusion of youth through opening of bank accounts and saving money
- v. Providing post placement counseling and support through follow-up
- vi. Increased overall job placement from 2% to 76.97 % for all the youth it trained for the last two years
- vii. More youth (both employed and unemployed) engaged in business enterprises
- viii. Increased earning by trained youth through employment and entrepreneurship
- ix. More savings and increased regularity of saving by youth
- x. Decrease in vulnerability among youth after securing jobs and earning money
- xi. Increased respect and positive attitudes towards youth from friends, family, leaders, and communities
- xii. Decrease in the burden of parents and elder siblings to provide for poor youth in their families
- xiii.

### **8.0 Conclusion and Recommendation**

Youth unemployment is a great challenge facing Kenya and continues to grow in spite of many programmes by both government and international development (NGOs). This is exacerbated by

large number of youth population, great graduation rates (from secondary and college education and yet these levels of education do not provide adequate work skills), and few white collar jobs.

While government programs such as YEDF, KYEP, and VTCs training were put in place to try to help ease unemployment among the youth, these have not been sufficient enough to cater for the huge population of youth seeking income opportunities. CAP YEI basic employability skills training model is a unique approach to youth unemployment. Its holistic approach in developing technical and life skills among the trainees facilitated multiple earning strategies. The attitude, character, and work skills' competency among the youth from the BEST model enabled them to get jobs, start business and engage in mixed livelihoods.

The abilities and flexibilities for youth to use multiple earning strategies is facilitated by both the written 'non-negotiable' program factors (essentially the 9-steps) as well as the 'unwritten negotiable' factors. Youth from CAP YEI are able to earn money through employment by others (paid jobs), self employment, and mixed livelihoods. While many youth attribute their ability to use multiple earning strategies to the program training, there is also evidence that youth resort to these to supplement their little income from a main job or business, as well as try to get by when they don't have any job or business. This is very important idea that can be borrowed and formally nurtured in CAP YEI, other youth empowerment NGOs, as well as in government TVET system.

There is a great opportunity for CAP YEI and other youth empowerment programs to formally integrate multiple earning strategies for youth in their programs, particularly in work skills training among youth. This can be enhanced by a comprehensive study to establish what factors in youth training programs, especially in government VTC institutions and how they can be integrated to facilitate multiple earning strategies.

## 9.0 References

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