



# Work for Youth (Kazi kwa Vijana) Kenya

A short-term, labor-intensive direct employment and job training program implemented during a period of social unrest and economic crisis

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## Summary

This program, a subset of the Kenya Youth Empowerment Program, provided short-term training and employment opportunities to young people in the private and public sectors through labor-intensive programs that focused on the challenges of local communities. This program was launched in response to social unrest in 2007-2008 and extremely high levels of unemployment. While corruption and nepotism in recruitment and administration has been reported, surveys found that most participants “would recommend the KKV to other youths,” (1).

## Rationale

Youth public employment program to improve outcomes for youth facing staggering joblessness (38%) (2). The majority of Kenya’s population are youth. The program sought to provide Labor-intensive and rapid employment opportunities to youth after the 2008 financial crisis and unrest in previous years.

## Defining Principles

Policymakers believe that the program should operate with the principles that youth should be involved in environmental conservation, be involved in income generating activities that empower them economically, and that the program should improve food security and poverty reduction (3).

## Dates of Operation

April 2009 - 2011 (4).

## Number of Program Participants

200,000 – 300,000 participants (5).

## Criteria for Participation

Targeted at urban and rural youth (18-35) (6).

## Pay and Benefits

Daily pay of Ksh 250 (=USD.3.1) (7).



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## Financing

“Ksh 3.4 billion (USD 43 million) in 2008/2009 fiscal year to Ksh 6.6 billion (USD 84 million) in the 2009/2010 financial year,” (8).

## Implementation

The program is administered in a tiered fashion from national (Nation Steering Committee, chaired by the Prime minister, National Management Committee, Provincial Management committee) to local (Provincial, District, and Project management committees), however the manual notes that “actual implementation of KKV programme will be undertaken at the local levels with coordination being done at the following levels,” (9).

## Types of Work

Labor intensive public works projects: road maintenance sub-projects, small-scale water supply and sanitation, water harvesting, afforestation, and waste collection (10)(11).

## Notable Features

30-50 percent quota for employing women (12).

## Challenges

Program earnings were insufficient due to low wage and the short timeframe (on average about 3 weeks in Kasarani) (13). Stakeholders were not fully aware of the objectives at the program’s start, leading to unrealistic expectations among youth (14). Youth with greater access to education were excluded due to program targeting of unskilled labor (15).



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## Citations

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