



**IMARA
AFRICA**

*Investing in Africa's
future policy leaders*

**Imara Africa Leadership Program
FINAL REPORT**





BACKGROUND

Imara Africa Leadership Development Program is a policy-oriented program hosted by Siasa Place (SP) in partnership with Africa Youth Leadership Forum (AYLF) and Mark Appeal Group (MA) with financial support by the Ford Foundation. These organizations share in the indelible mission of developing African young leaders grounded in values of integrity, social empathy, creativity and public participation. The program aims to contribute to the development of Kenya's public sector leaders and building skills necessary for public service as 'service' in both national and county governments.

The program was in response to existing data conducted by different organizations that youth were neither involved in decision making on issues affecting them nor do they understand the role played by county government leaders. They also did not understand how to engage government on issues such as public finance, budget making and accountability. Additionally, there was worrying evidence disseminated by Standard Newspaper on Wednesday, May 24th 2017, which illustrated that the country's public service sector is in a looming crisis as more than half of its work force is almost 50 years old and that 31% of the staff at both national and county levels are between 50-59 years old.

This program thus, brought together 24 young people from across the country, with the aim of imparting the necessary knowledge and skills required in public service as 'service.' It is expected that by the end of the program, these young leaders will champion the culture of meaningful public participation and responsive National and County Governments in policy formulation and any other decisions that affect the public. The first cohort is expected to run from September 2018 to July 2019 with focus on Kericho, Kisumu and Busia county governments where the trainees will be divided into three teams of 8 to handle county specific policy areas. The Kericho team focus is on Technical Training Institutions(TTI), Kisumu team on Youth Economic Empowerment whereas the team attached to Busia will specially focus on youth public participation in domesticating the National Internship Policy.

OUTCOMES

Partnership

The project established and promoted partnership in its implementation. The engagements during project implementation has made it easier for the youth organizations based in the counties to work together, share information, collect information and developed into reports to be used to participate in decision making processes. Kericho Youth Network adopted the report prepared by the Imara Fellows. They also organized for a meeting to discuss the issues identified and developed a method of follow-up to ensure that the recommendations are considered and implemented. The same has been noted in Kisumu where local organizations led by Jiwo Paro proposed to develop a local follow up mechanism that will help address the issues identified in the Youth Economic Empowerment report shared in Kisumu while Busia Youth steering committee supported the project by identifying venues for public participation within the wards and the organizations that could provide internship to the students within the county. The report was shared with the County government of Busia to help in the development of the Youth Internship Policy that the county was in the process of developing to help give youth experience which is a requirement for the job market.

Through the implementation period, the project was able to establish a working relationship with the county assembly of Kericho and the Kericho Youth Network. The positive relationship between Imara Africa leadership program and Kericho Youth Network inspired the confidence of the County assembly Kericho to share proposed 'Youth Economic Empowerment' bill that was being discussed at the Assembly with the Imara fellows to critic and present the youth view on the bill before it could be presented for approval in the Assembly.

The project was also able to develop partnerships with different Youth Serving Organizations. PAWA 254 and WOSWA collaboratively hosted the leadership cafes and the First Youth Baraza respectively in addition to mobilization of the youth and key stakeholders during these activities. The partnership thus reduced the project implementation cost.

Capacity Building

The project registered progress in building the capacity of the youth in two levels:

- I. Imara Fellows who were recruited to be trained in policy making process in partnership with the county government in various fields of their interest and careers. Notable cases include the promotion of Ms. Gladys Ndanu (Imara fellow) based on her improved ability to relate with clients on the Universal Health Care in Muranga County thus facilitating her promotion following the involvement of her supervisor in a panel discussion on Universal Health Care during the youth baraza held at the University of Nairobi Parklands campus and Mr. Shadrack Osero(Imara Fellow) was also admitted to the DAAD Helmut Schmidt Program to study Masters in Public Management (MPM) with a specialization in Environment, Sustainability, and Geosciences at the University of Potsdam. His application was based on the work done in partnership between Imara Africa and the county government of Kericho to identify policy gaps and recommend solutions within the Technical and Vocational Educational and Training(TVET) sector.

- II. Capacity improvement is exhibited among the community youth who were the local partners during the implementation where they are able to engage the members of the county assembly to push for the implementation of some of the recommendations that were highlighted in the project report. For instance, Kericho Youth Network were able to hold two meetings with the youthful members of the county assembly to push for the implementation of the report recommendations. The same was replicated in Busia where the steering committee managed to convince the youthful members of the county assembly to raise a motion on youth internship policy. The assembly will thus be discussing the bill with the recommendations from Imara team.

The Chief Officer recommended two fellows, Dr. Rono (Imara fellow and resident of Kericho) and Mr Brian Keter (Siasa Place community mobilizer and member of Kericho Youth Network) to the governor for appointment in the board of two different technical training institutions.

Developing Policy Recommendations

The project identified policy issues that Kericho County government was working on within the technical training institutions which included human resource and governance among other functions. Through our collaborative approach, the report was shared and received by both the Assembly and Executive through the Chief Executive Officer responsible for youth, sports and ICT. After engaging the county stakeholders including the county government, youth, instructors, former students of the technical training institutions and other civil societies working around technical training institutions, the report was annexed as part of evidence to persuade Kericho Public Service Board to hire more instructors during the financial year 2019/2020. Through the implementation period, the project was able to establish a working relationship in Kisumu County with the different youth led startups and foundations which led to partnerships and collaborative assisted projects for instance the report launch and youth baraza which took place in Kisumu. Some of the local partners involved JIWO PARO ,KONDELE SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTRE & TEAM-Transform Empowerment for Action initiative.

The engagement in Kisumu resulted to identification of new and undocumented sources of income for the youth including prostitution, filming pornographic movies (A tendency spreading to minors) which could closely be associated with the increase in new HIV/AIDs infection in the region(prevalence of new infections is high between age 19-24) and a contributor to the high level of people visiting pornographic sites in Kenya. Another emerging trend noted was the high level of youth dependance on betting which sometimes forces the youth to steal or sell family property to gain money for betting. Some of the recommendations like need for entrepreneurial training are already being implemented by Jiwo Paro our implementing partners within the county.

The engagements with the county government of Kisumu were key in understanding and deriving a baseline which would help in the policy formulation process as the infographics in the policy document depended on a lot of government representatives insights which helped in getting the final policy document some key government departments that assisted in the collection of data where the County Director Youth office ,Director Youth - Education, ICT ,

Development department, Chief Officer Industrialization & Enterprise Development, acting Director Industrialization in charge for training and liaison.

With the support and consistent follow up and engagement with Busia steering committee, the assembly was able to table a motion on youth internship policy on 6th August 2019. This is despite slow pace at which things were moving within the county and the political strain that the county has been faced with throughout the project period.

WORK CONDUCTED

The Academy: A five day physical training held at Convent International hotel, Nairobi, between the 23rd September and 28th September 2018. The training was aimed at introducing the concept to the first cohort of trainees in preparation for both online and county engagements. The training focused on capacity building of members both as individuals and collectively on their journey of leadership through topics like design thinking, The Kenyan Policy Process, Devolution and Chapter 6 of the Kenyan Constitution as well as team building in preparation for the year long process.

Online Training: Two online courses were conducted during the duration of the fellowship. The first one was a four months free course offered on the edx platform called "Making Governments work in hard places" by Princeton University between October and January. "Solving Public Policy Problems" was the second six weeks paid course offered by the University of California Berkeley to help in exposing the fellows and providing them with avenues for comparison from other jurisdiction that looked into ways to reduce delay, error, and diversion of funds in citizen services, using citizen monitoring and community-driven projects to improve services in rural areas, preventing conflicts of interest or self-dealing from blocking institutional reform; building trust and community and changing public expectations, overcoming capacity traps and facilitating coordination at the cabinet level and developing a strategy and the incentives to sustain change.

Collaborative workshops with leaders: Aimed at linking the Imara fellows with both the county officials and youth to work on a policy of priority to the youth. The program divided the 24 fellows into three groups of eight each and designated them to work with the respective counties on different policies of importance to youth. Kericho and Kisumu had three visits and were working on technical training institutions and youth economic empowerment policies respectively. Busia had two visits and were working on identifying gaps in their proposed youth internship policy. Community Radio: For the media, we had two local radio appearances in Radio Mikayi based in Kisumu and Emuria FM of Busia and two national television appearances on Switch TV and KU-TV. The aim of media appearance was to inform and engage stakeholders including but not limited to youth and county government on the status of the priority policies and how they could get involved towards improving the same in a language that they can easily understand and participate in.

Leadership Cafes: We held two leadership cafés on 7th March 2019 and was attended by 50 youth to discuss the role of youth and women in shaping political dialogue and on 11th May 2019 and was attended by 62 youth to discuss youth leadership in entrepreneurship. The

objectives of the discussion was to help youth understand how political leadership can affect or influence various aspects of day to day life whether in business or other forms of leadership. The discussions were championed by leaders who were already in the spaces to share their own experience and interact with young leaders who are either emerging or have an interest in the same fields.

Public Lectures (Youth Baraza): Initially structured to be public lectures, the program was overwhelmed by support from stakeholders and guests looking to engage with the youth and contribute to the themes selected; and hence the structure morphed to community barazas. In total, 681 participants were engaged and involved in the community barazas. At the end, three Youth barazas were held at the University of Nairobi Law School, American Space Kisumu and Marachi Busia where interactions were based on the themes of Youth Economic Empowerment, Public Participation and Universal Health Care in Kenya. They were delivered through informative panel discussions by experts on the thematic areas were held.

Commencement Ceremony: The Commencement celebration was held on the afternoon of the 18th July, 2019. It was designed to be a 3 hour meeting to share the experiences from the fellows and showcase the reports and achievements from the counties with different partners and industry players including Ford Foundation. It was also a chance for the fellows to network with different stakeholders that were invited and present at the meeting.

WHAT ALTERATIONS OCCURRED DURING PROGRAM PERIOD

There was change in implementation approach from public lecture as was proposed in the proposal to community baraza which was inspired by the need for more engagement between the people and thought leaders. The project planned for four public lectures that were to be held in Nairobi but changed to three barazas and moved to project counties to aid data collection and encourage engagements between the Imara fellows and the project counties. The project also changed from national intellectuals with scholarly opinion on the identified policy issues to local informants with better insight of the local issues and resonate with the problem at hand. This approach was aimed at bridging the information gap that was identified at the nascent stage of the project implementation. To make the process sustainable, the project opted for creating a platform for engagement between the duty bearers (Government) and right holders (Youth and other stakeholders) in the subject matter to discuss and develop ways through which they can solve the identified problems. The change involved the role of local stakeholders to be able to work towards working on the recommendations.

Regular reshuffle of chief officers affected our level of success in various ways. In Kericho, the county had its chief officers reshuffled regularly making it difficult to undertake agreed steps and in most cases the project had to be reintroduced to every new person that had been posted into the department. It thus created delay and fear associated with the new staff as they took time to learn the departments before they could actively work with partners.

Loyalty politics negatively affected our level of achievements in that both Kisumu and Busia counties where both the chief officers were in an acting capacity. As a result, their level of

commitment to the department was low because of fear of starting a program and leaving before its conclusion and the limited powers of an acting officer.

Lack of resources. In Kisumu, youth department did not have resource allocation for any activity and could only be funded through culture and sports or education and therefore the chief officer was limited

The project implementation embraced partnership both at the national and county level. Through the partnerships, local organizations mobilized stakeholders including the duty bearers (County officials), right holders (youth) and other parties involved to participate in the project by providing information and data needed, venues for the meetings where the project could not provide, adoption and following up on the implementation of the recommendations.

The proposal provided for local radio talk shows with the aim of informing stakeholders of the policy issues that were of concern to the stakeholders in the three project counties. Through the partnership with local organizations, the program was hosted at Radio Tayare of Kisumu region to discuss the findings and recommendations of the report on youth economic empowerment and Radio Emuria of Busia to discuss the importance of youth participation in making the internship policy but Kericho never had a radio talk show. However, one appearance in the two stations did not meet the project objectives as the cost of hosting a program was higher than it had been anticipated. To meet the set objectives, the project will need to allocate enough resources to sustain consistent hosting of the program during the project period.

Policy making, implementation and monitoring require involvement of several stakeholders. In our approach, we adopted partnerships with local organizations to help in follow-ups with the county, provide data and also mobilization during the county based activities.

LEARNING AND ADOPTING

The project had planned for less activities within the counties making contact with stakeholders at the grassroots minimal. In the process of implementation, we observed an information gap from both the county and the youth who are the main beneficiaries. As a result, the project changed implementation approach from more theory based to more grassroot focusing on creating awareness and consultation meetings which will help in both creating involve the people and data collection to help in decision making since policy formulation requires data. Moving forward, the project will need to allocate more resources to facilitate more county engagement meetings with all the stakeholders including but not limited to youth, county and others.

The youth and other stakeholders keenly follow and are influenced by radio/media. The project however allocated minimal resources which could not sustain the program in the target media stations. Because of the influence, the project noted the need to allocate more resources that can sustain a radio program for a longer period to enable the stakeholders to follow through and allow them to make a contribution in the process. The project architect planned for communication through various means including but not limited to local radio, activity reporting

and social media among others. However, the planning did not take care of the costs, making it difficult to achieve the expected outcome. Through the response we received during the radio talk shows, we noted the need for the program to schedule consistent radio talk show to ease follow up and encourage engagements during the project period. Additionally youth participation through social media has been immensely through the youth following program postings and engaging during the project activities. As such, the project will need to rework on the project communication by allocating enough resources to take care of the social media needs of the program and radio.

The project recruited Imara fellows nationally but realized the need for continuous follow ups which could best be done by local organizations working around the same issues. In the process we opted for local partnership despite the challenge in terms of their capacities. Moving forward, we therefore propose to consider the local organizations working on the same issues to be given the first priority in the recruitment process so that they acquire the necessary skills needed in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. As such, the project will need to allocate more resources towards facilitating follow up meetings with stakeholders like the county government among others.

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