

## **Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in the Agricultural Sector in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

The study aimed to assess the challenges hindering Kenyan youth from participation in the agricultural sector. In this study, qualitative analysis was used as a basic research tool. Youth unemployment in Kenya is higher than the overall national unemployment rate. Kenya's economy is not creating enough jobs to increase the number of young people entering the labor market. Despite the increasing youth unemployment, the number of young people in the agricultural sector has been declining. In contrast, the service and manufacturing sectors are growing significantly but are far from creating enough jobs for Kenya's young workforce. This can have negative implications as it increases unemployment and underemployment rates in Kenya and also undermines government efforts to drive economic growth through agriculture. Therefore, the agricultural sector is critical in creating employment and raising the living standards of Kenyan youth. The agricultural sector offers excellent opportunities to employ young people and to ensure food security. However, the sector has not yet fully utilized the potential of the young workforce and remains largely unattractive to them. Young people have a negative perception of agriculture, they perceive working in the agricultural sector as a last resort, as an activity for the elderly, and they do not see farming as a profitable business, which makes the situation even worse. The paper also highlights the employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, policies, strategies, and other initiatives to help position youths at the forefront of agricultural growth and transformation to achieving sustainable food systems.

**Keywords:** Agricultural policy, Youths, Employment, Rural labor, Rural development

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*Research article*

*Received Date: 2 December 2021*

*Accepted Date: 28 December 2021*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The global population is expected to grow from 7 billion to 9 billion by 2050. The United Nations population estimates in 2020 indicated that there were 1.3 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24; referred to as youths by the World Bank's definition of youth. By 2030, the target date for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world's youth population is estimated to increase by 7% to 1.4 billion youths (United Nations 2020).

With the rapidly increasing population, there is an increase in the demand for foodstuffs in an already food insecure world thus the global food insecurity is getting worse, especially in developing countries. Agriculture is an important sector in every country that plays a key role in providing food, employment opportunities and also contributes to economic growth and development.

By 2030, the world aims at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and agriculture is a key sector to achieving these goals for instance Goal 1 - Ending poverty in all its forms and Goal 2 - Ending hunger to ensure food and nutrition security. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, young people need to be actively involved in the agricultural sector. Globally, the agricultural sector accounts for 32% of total employment (ILO, 2019). It is important to focus on youth as the critical group to help address the future of agriculture and food insecurity and other related issues in the agricultural sector. The global youth population growth is not proportional to the employment and entrepreneurship opportunities available, especially for young people living in developing countries (Yami et al., 2019). In most African countries, youth unemployment is reported to be more than double that of adult unemployment.” (World Bank, 2020). The agricultural sector plays a vital role in Africa's economic growth and social development. Agricultural labor is the highest percentage of the total population mostly in Africa (Africa Agricultural Situation Report, 2019). Rural population, young people and employment are important dynamics for economic and rural development. Young people leaving or losing interest in farming can result in a loss of productive workforce for the rural economy (Başaranoglu and Yılmaz, 2020). Also, young people can bring new skills and energy, and a more professional management to the agriculture sector. Against the context of an ageing agricultural workforce, the future of the farmers’ profession must be ensured (Redigor, 2012).

Kenya is a developing country with a GDP of \$95.5 billion. The agricultural sector plays a key role in the Kenyan economy, contributing 51 percent to the total GDP (World Bank, 2019). 60% of the total workforce in Kenya is employed in the agricultural sector. According to the 2019 census data of the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), 35.7 million Kenyans (75.1%) are under the age of 35. It is estimated that 64% of unemployed Kenyans are young, with the majority moving from the agricultural sector to urban areas to look for better opportunities as they still view agriculture as an activity for the elderly and can't make a good living from it. In urban areas, there are limited job opportunities for the youths thus rural-to-urban migration has increased the youth unemployment rate in Kenya. The shifting of young people from the agricultural sector to other sectors is largely attributed to the strength of various push and pull factors based on global economic trends that favor the non-agricultural sector over the agricultural sector, thus shifting the workforce from agriculture (Njeru, 2017). To solve youth unemployment in Kenya, the agricultural sector possess the highest potential, and youths need to be brought to the discussion table, get involved, and be made part of the food systems if Kenya is to increase youth employment and achieve food security by 2030 (Himaja, 2020).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In this work, qualitative analysis was used as a basic research tool. The study used data to assess Kenya's youth engagement in the agricultural sector, factors hindering youths' participation and employment in the agricultural sector, and also different ways to promote youths' participation in the agricultural sector. Research data were collected by reviewing policy documents, journals, articles, and other relevant materials.

In addition, data were obtained from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, the Ministry of Planning and National Development, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The average, the absolute and relative distributions were calculated in the analysis of the data. The obtained findings were interpreted with tables and graphics and recommendations have been developed.

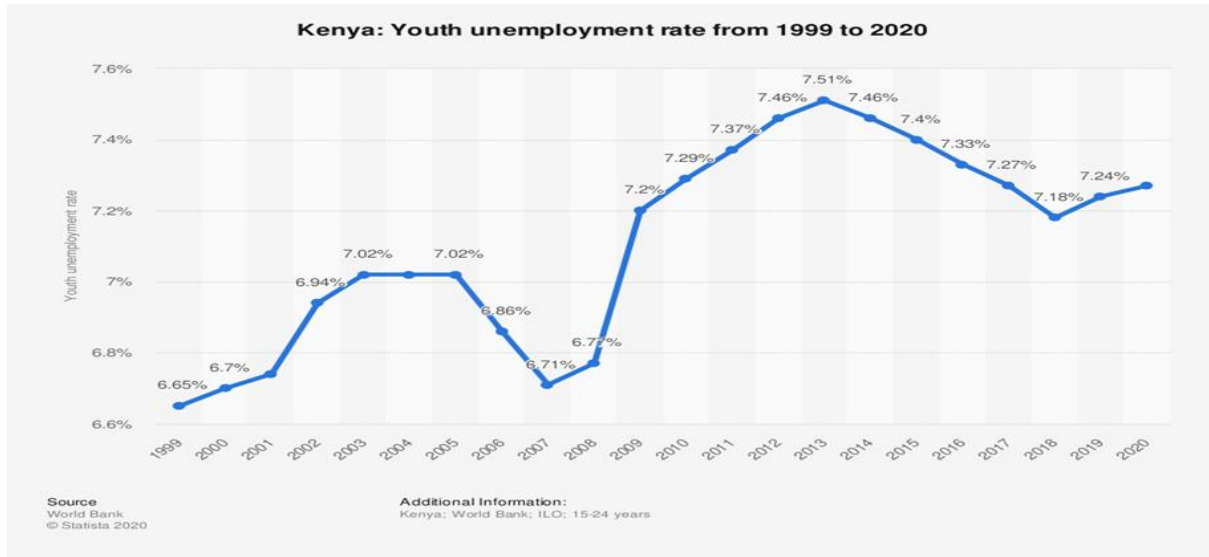
## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Youth Unemployment Situation in Kenya**

Kenya's 2010 National Constitution defines youth as "all individuals who have attained the age of 18 years but below the age of 35 years". Kenya has a young population, according to the most recent data from the 2019 census by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) revealed that 35.7 million Kenyans (75.1%) are under the age of 35. The growing number of young people has created a labor supply that is far greater than the job market can accommodate. Currently, around 1 million young people enter the job market either having dropped out of school or having completed high school, college, or university (Kenya Youth Employment Report, 2020). To meet the country's job demand, a total of more than 1 million new jobs need to be created annually. It is also stated that the skills acquired by college and university graduates often do not meet the expectations of employers (Kenya Youth Employment Report, 2020).

The unemployment rate in Kenya is very high and an estimated 64% of the unemployed in the country are youth. It is recognized that the average age of farmers in the country is over 50 years old despite the country having a young population. According to Kenya Youth Employment Report (2020), few young people see a future for themselves in the agricultural sector. This has led to many young people shifting from the agricultural sector despite its high potential to provide good livelihoods, employment, income generation activities, and wealth creation opportunities. Despite government and private sector interventions, the agricultural sector has not yet fully utilized the potential of youths. Working in the agricultural sector is largely unattractive for young people and most have a negative perception of anything to do with farming. Among the main problems affecting youth participation in agriculture, including but are not limited to; inadequate access to land, difficulties in accessing agricultural financing and insurance, insufficient information, skills, and extension services, and poor technologies and accessibility to markets.

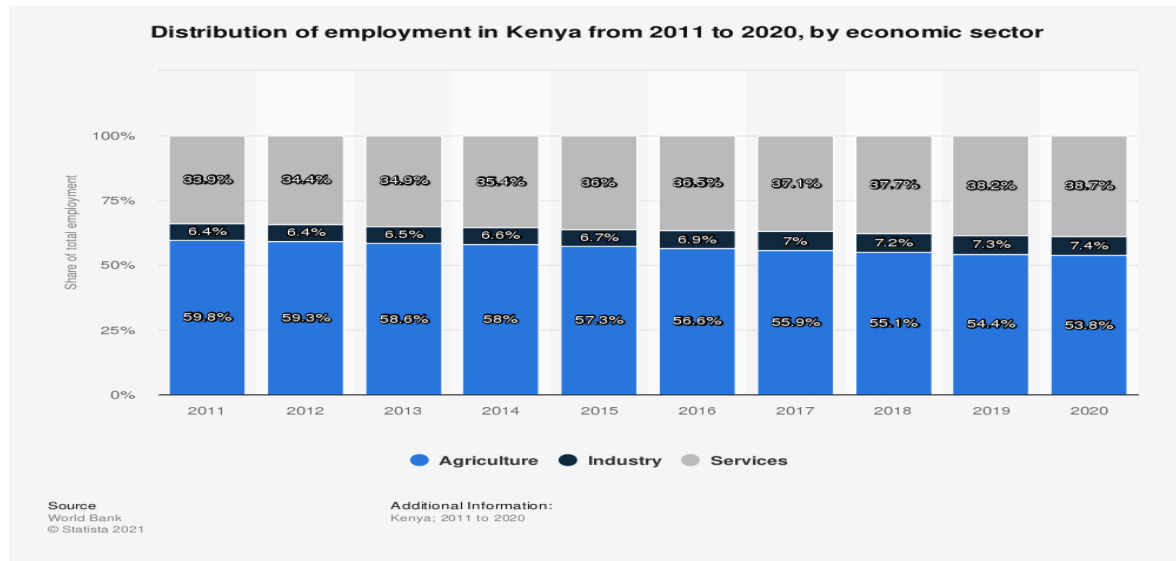
According to World Bank (2020), the estimated youth unemployment rate in Kenya was 7.27 percent. Data provided by the World Bank shows that the youth unemployment rate in Kenya is on the rise. Compared to 2019, 2020 recorded a higher youth unemployment rate (Figure 1). However, it is important to note that the figure below only captures individuals between the age of 15-24 years that's why the unemployment is low. As indicated earlier, Kenya considers a youth to be between 18-35 years.



**Figure 1.** Kenya youth unemployment rate from 1990 to 2020  
 Source: World Bank @ Statista, 2020

### Distribution of Employment in Kenya by Economic Sector

Agriculture is the main source of employment in Kenya. However, labor participation in agricultural activities has been decreasing in the country. As of 2020, employment in agriculture corresponded to 53.8 percent of the total employment in Kenya. In comparison, the share was at 59.8 percent in 2010. By contrast, the employment in manufacturing and services sectors has been following an upward tendency. Despite the growth of the manufacturing and services sectors' growth, the agricultural sector still remains the backbone of Kenya's economy, contributing 51 percent to the total GDP; 26% directly and around 26% indirectly (World Bank, 2019).



**Figure 2.** Distribution of employment in Kenya from 2011 to 2020, by economic sector  
 Source: World Bank @ Statista, 2021.

## **Kenya Population and Labor Force**

Table 1 shows the population trend of Kenya from 1990 to 2020. The population has been increasing since 1990 with a population difference of 30,046,717. According to the data provided in the table, the rural population in 2020 was 72.15% of the total population whereas in 1990 it was 83.48%. On the other hand, considering Kenya's youth population, it has been in an increasing trend with only 44.06% of the total population in 1990 and 72.15% of the total population in 2020. Despite the rise of the young population, the rural young population has been decreasing due to high migration from rural to urban areas (KNBS 2020). While 75.78% of young people lived in rural areas in 1990, there were 53.41% young people living in rural areas in 2020, and the number is estimated to continue declining (KNBS 2020). From these data, the high rate of migration from rural to urban has led to the shift of agricultural labor to urban areas. However, most youths in urban areas are underemployed while others are unemployed. Agriculture provides great opportunities for the unemployed and underemployed youths if proper measures, strategies, and policies are implemented.

**Table 1.** Kenya Population Trend

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Rural Population</b>	<b>Rural Population (%)</b>	<b>Youth Population</b>	<b>Youth Population (%)</b>	<b>Rural Youth Population</b>	<b>Rural Youth Population (%)</b>
2020	53,771,296	38,796,237	72.15	37,903,312	70.49	20,243,289	53.41
2019	52,573,973	38,211,135	72.68	35,702,232	67.91	19,468,298	54.53
2018	51,392,565	37,620,760	73.20	32,468,768	63.18	18,098,666	55.74
2017	50,221,142	37,019,795	73.71	29,645,622	59.03	16,148,606	54.47
2016	49,051,534	36,400,700	74.20	28,589,675	58.28	15,876,918	55.53
2015	47,878,336	35,758,580	74.69	27,230,652	56.87	14,898,987	54.71
2010	42,030,676	32,284,007	76.81	23,670,789	56.31	13,245,768	55.96
2005	36,624,895	28,811,441	78.66	17,760,642	48.49	11,886,618	66.92
2000	31,964,557	25,708,372	80.43	14,576,844	45.60	10,99,672	75.41
1995	27,768,296	22,773,997	82.01	12,650,642	45.56	9,563,292	75.60
1990	23,724,579	19,805,142	83.48	10,452,600	44.06	7,920,782	75.78

*Source: Worldometer ([www.Worldometers.info](http://www.Worldometers.info)), KNBS 2020.*

Table 2 indicates Kenya's total labor force, active labor force, and also the workforce in the agricultural sector. The data provided by KNBS 2020, ILOSTAT 2020, Kenya Labor Force Participation Report, 2018, shows that the labor force in the agricultural sector has been in a declining trend since 1990. In 1990, the total workforce in the agricultural sector was 63.35 % of the total workforce whereas in 2020 it was at 53.26% of the total labor force. As the country has been developing, the growth of manufacturing and service industries continues to take in a share of the agriculture workforce. However, not all labor force moving away from the agricultural sector has been absorbed in the manufacturing and service industries, others remain unemployed when they could be working in the agricultural sector and making a good living for themselves (Himaja N. 2020).

**Table 2.** Kenya Labor force in the Agricultural Sector

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>Active Labor Force</b>	<b>Labor Force in Agriculture</b>	<b>Labor Force in Agriculture (%)</b>
1990	8,748,266	6,457,969	4,090,930	63.35
1995	10,651,520	7,862,952	4,909,201	62.43
2000	12,386,820	9,143,950	5,154,092	56.37
2001	12,566,730	9,276,760	5,202,176	56.08
2002	12,762,440	9,421,233	5,312,908	56.39
2003	12,959,670	9,566,828	5,301,231	55.41
2004	13,139,010	9,699,217	5,392,679	55.60
2005	13,292,860	9,812,789	5,440,926	55.45
2006	13,751,770	10,151,556	5,399,991	53.19
2007	14,218,330	10,495,971	5,916,154	56.37
2008	14,705,700	10,855,747	6,010,462	55.37
2009	15,205,210	11,224,486	6,120,432	54.53
2010	15,716,370	11,601,824	6,268,098	54.03
2011	16,248,100	11,994,347	6,590,913	54.95
2012	16,808,700	12,208,182	6,823,981	55.90
2013	17,388,330	12,436,065	6,921,824	55.66
2014	17,984,680	13,276,290	7,321,212	55.15
2015	18,592,920	13,725,293	7,320,219	53.33
2016	19,221,460	14,289,281	7,141,321	49.98
2017	19,864,850	14,064,232	7,345,011	52.22
2018	20,518,670	15,146,882	7,878,713	52.02
2019	21,190,310	15,942,686	8,145,167	51.09
2020	23,738,797	17,123,979	9,120,910	53.26

*Source: KNBS 2020, ILOSTAT 2020, Kenya Labor Force Participation Report, 2018.*

Kenya's youth labor force has been increasing since 1990 due to the high population growth rate of young people. As indicated in table 3, the youth labor force in the agricultural sector has been declining and currently stands at 28.47% of the total youth labor force (KNBS 2020, ILOSTAT 2020, Kenya Labor Force Participation Report, 2018). Though it may seem high, unemployment increases because the remaining 72% of the youth labor force cannot be absorbed in the manufacturing and service sectors. In comparison with other sectors, agriculture has the highest potential to create employment opportunities and increase food security in Kenya thus calling for more promotion of youth engagement and employment in the agriculture food systems (Julia Faria, 2021).

**Table 3.** Youth Labor Force Engaged in Agriculture

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Youth Population</b>	<b>Total Youth Labor Force</b>	<b>Youth Labor Force in Agriculture</b>	<b>Youth Labor Force in Agriculture (%)</b>
2020	37,903,312	27,669,418	10,791,073	28.47
2019	35,702,232	28,561,786	11,710,332	32.80
2018	30,468,768	23,765,639	9,743,912	31.98
2017	30,645,622	24,822,954	10,922,100	35.64
2016	28,989,675	23,191,740	10,668,200	36.80
2015	27,900,652	22,878,535	10,981,697	39.36
2010	24,670,789	19,489,923	9,628,022	39.03
2005	15,760,642	12,923,726	6,591,100	41.82
2000	14,576,844	12,536,086	6,769,486	46.44
1995	12,650,642	11,638,591	7,681,470	60.72
1990	11,452,600	10,536,392	6,743,291	58.88

Source: KNBS 2020, ILOSTAT 2020, Kenya Labor Force Participation Report, 2018.

### **Challenges Hindering Kenyan Youths from Engaging in the Agricultural Sector**

Many factors contribute to the transition of youths from agriculture to non-farm jobs. In addition, many factors discourage young people from participating in any part of the agricultural sector despite availability of limited job opportunities in Kenya. Some of the most common challenges hindering youth participation in agriculture and related activities include:

#### **Negative Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Agriculture and Agricultural Enterprises**

Many young people in Kenya find agriculture unattractive because of the drudgery, low yields, and lack of market-oriented agricultural approaches. Additionally, many jobs in the agricultural sector have a strong seasonal component and are categorized as vulnerable, while young people need end-to-end income-generating jobs. There are many reasons why young people have a negative perception and attitude towards agriculture. According to Sambo, W. (2016), the absence of successful agricultural businesses not only drives young people away from the agricultural sector but also causes them to believe more that agriculture is not a profession a person can be proud of. It is also important to note that it negatively affects young people's view of agriculture (Masłoń-O., Wahome & Njiraini, 2021).

The negative image created around agricultural activities as a source of livelihood and the fact that the elderly, who are still engaged in traditional agricultural practices with little success, dominate agricultural production keep young people away from the sector. Young people have been found to like activities that are generating income at a faster rate while agriculture production takes some time. This has pushed youths to seek other income-generating activities away from agriculture (Wahome and Njiraini, 2021).

### **Limited Agricultural Innovation, Insufficient Research and Technology Development**

Young people in Kenya do not find agriculture attractive because of the high use of traditional farming techniques. There is limited support for the development and acquisition of appropriate technologies to modernize agriculture. While the technology used in agricultural production in the world is developing, young people in Kenya still do not want to participate in agricultural food systems using traditional farming techniques. Some of the barriers to technology uptake are: inadequate agricultural research and technology development, insufficient awareness of current and improved technologies, low funding for youth-specific research, poor research-expansion linkage leading to low adoption of technologies, and the high cost of some technologies hinder most young people's access to important technology that could have made it easier for them to get involved in food systems (Sitawa et al., 2016). Also, they have less knowledge of the different ways they can be involved in the agricultural value chain.

### **Low Productivity**

The agricultural sector in Kenya is characterized by declining soil fertility, low adoption of modern technologies, production inefficiencies due to low adoption of mechanization, high post-harvest losses, pest and disease outbreaks, limited access to relevant inputs and services, poor management, and inadequate skills (Njeru, Lucy & Gichimu, Bernard. 2014). Large farmland in Arid and Semi-Arid Soils (ASALs) continues to be underutilized due to over-reliance on rain-fed agriculture and limited use of modern technologies to unlock the potential. The subsistence farming approach to agriculture, in contrast to the commercialization approach and limited capital investment in the sector, exacerbates the problem (Cynthiah P. 2020). All of the above issues hinder the meaningful and sustainable participation of young people in the agricultural sector.

### **Limited Value Addition in the Agro-Processing Industry**

The agro-processing industry in Kenya is yet to realize its full potential. It is still in its developing stage which limits job creation capacity that could have been created if there is effective and sustainable value addition on agricultural products. Most agricultural products are sold either in their raw form without further processing or in any other form of added value, such as packaging. This results in limited jobs and income for young people (FAO, 2020).

Factors hindering value addition in the agricultural sector in Kenya;

- i. Limited knowledge and skills on how to add value to agricultural products.
- ii. Limited knowledge of value-adding technologies.



- iii. Insufficient capacity to meet customers' greater demands and expectations in terms of quality, standards, quantity, and consistency.
- iv. High capital investment requirement, e.g. refrigeration and cold storage installation is expensive.

### **Limited Access to Markets**

Access to agricultural markets in Kenya especially for small-scale farmers remains a big challenge. Young people face greater difficulties in accessing agricultural markets due to the following constraints: Limited access to marketing information, Non-compliance with the agricultural product and product standards, insufficient markets and marketing infrastructure, Poor post-harvest management, and insufficient skills in marketing and entrepreneurship. All these restrictions limit young people involved in the agricultural sector. Inconsistent quality and high input costs, and low product prices reduce agricultural profitability compared to other sectors. According to Maurice S., et al. (2019), inefficiencies and high transaction costs involved in the food value chain, weak farmers' organizations across, and unstructured markets also play an important role in driving youths away from the agricultural activities.

### **Inadequate Policies to Support Youth in Agribusiness**

Implemented policies do not adequately address youth issues in agriculture and agribusinesses. According to FAO (2020), young people are not sufficiently engaged in policy dialogue, which makes the strategies developed less sensitive to the unique needs of youth. There have been policies and projects that have been implemented over time such as Youth Funds, Kazi Mtaani, National Youth Service, AjiraDigital Projects and many more projects, youths were not involved during decision making to present their interests and what can work for them and what can't work for them. Also, there have been no major policies supporting youth engagement in agriculture and agri-enterprises (Himaja N. (2020).

### **Climate Change**

Climate change is a global threat that imposes many constraints on the agricultural sector. Increases in temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, changes in extreme weather events, and reductions in water availability result in reduced agricultural productivity. Climate change has been disrupting food systems in terms of production, availability, accessibility, and also affecting food quality. Putting climate change's effects on agriculture into consideration lowers profitability which discourages youths from engaging in agricultural-related activities (Ndungu, 2016). There is insufficient use of technologies and innovations that increase the resistance of young people to the negative effects of climate change on agriculture. Moreover, there is limited development and upscaling of skills and knowledge to match the dynamics of climate change for practitioners in agriculture (JC, U. 2019).

## **Strategic Issues, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Interventions to Increase Youth Participation and Employment in the Agriculture Sector.**

This section identifies key strategic issues, with associated objectives and strategies designed to address challenges that prevent young people from participating effectively in the agricultural sector and its associated value chains. According to Kenya Youth Agribusiness Strategy 2017-2021, various objectives and interventions have been developed for each strategic issue.

*Strategic issue 1: Negative perception and attitude towards agriculture*

*Strategic goal 1: Transforming the mindset and perception of youth to agriculture (Maurice S., et al. 2019).*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. To create innovative information and knowledge sharing networks and platforms on agriculture
- ii. To ensure the integration of agriculture as a subject in the education curriculum to enlighten the youth about the opportunities in the agricultural sector.
- iii. Revitalizing and rebranding farming clubs in schools
- iv. Establish a mechanism for industry players to provide feedback to learning institutions on performance and demand-based training .
- v. Establishing campaign platforms to sensitize the general public on the urgent need for youth to participate in the agricultural sector.
- vi. Establishing an awards scheme that rewards young champions in the agribusiness, ambassadors, and agro-journalism celebrities

*Strategic issue 2: Insufficient agricultural knowledge and skills*

*Strategic objective 2: Equipping young people with appropriate agricultural business skills and knowledge*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Implementing youth agribusiness internships and mentoring programs
- ii. Building youth capacity on existing and new technical and innovative agribusiness skills.
- iii. Developing and operating district agricultural information sharing centers that will focus on youths
- iv. Supporting education and research institutions to use the latest technologies, innovations, and emerging trends in the agricultural sector
- v. Developing and supporting a modern youth-inclusive agricultural advisory service model
- vi. Equipping young people with knowledge, skills, and knowledge on Good Agricultural Practices (GPA). This will help in improving agricultural productivity in returns high profitability in the sector.
- vii. Supporting youth education through sponsorships of agricultural programs in higher education institutions

*Strategic issue 3: Limited access to affordable financial Services*

*Strategic goal 3: Increase access to affordable and youth-friendly financial services for agricultural activities.*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Developing youth-specific financial models for agricultural enterprises
- ii. Developing youth-friendly finance and insurance models to support young agribusinesses
- iii. Making use of existing positive funds, such as the Youth fund, the Women's Enterprise Development Fund, and the Uwezo Fund, to support the participation of youths in agriculture
- iv. Developing a participatory framework for contract farming, including the creation of cooperatives and groups to support youths to access agriculture financing easily.
- v. Building the capacity of young agriculturists in resource mobilization and financial management skills for agricultural enterprises

*Strategic issue 4: Limited access to agricultural land*

*Strategic goal 4: Increasing youth access, ownership, and effective use of agricultural lands*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Building and implementing alternative unique land lease models in partnership with county governments and other stakeholders
- ii. Promoting innovative farming practices that optimize land use
- iii. Supporting the development and implementation of policy initiatives that review land use and promote agricultural land consolidation
- iv. Raising awareness of land use rights and build trust for young people to own farmland

*Strategic issue 5: Limited agricultural innovations and research development*

*Strategic goal 5: Engaging youths in the research development, and use of innovative agricultural technologies (Maurice S., et al. 2019).*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Promoting and disseminating cost-effective and affordable agricultural technologies to youths
- ii. Promoting the participation of young people in the mass production of modern agricultural machinery to make agricultural activities easier and to reduce post-harvest losses (Cynthiah P. 2020).
- iii. Promote and provide sustainable incentives for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Agricultural Research and Development
- iv. Developing, disseminating, and involving young people in the use of agricultural technologies that meet the needs of young people hence encouraging them to engage in agricultural activities.

- v. To introduce Tech-labs and ICT centers in districts connected to mobile applications to facilitate access to information such as weather conditions, markets availability, product prices, and extension services available.

*Strategic issue 6: Low Productivity*

*Strategic objective 6: Increasing access to production factors, use of modern technologies, and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. To promote access and use of modern agricultural technologies and mechanization to increase productivity along selected value chains
- ii. Supporting access to water, subsidized agricultural inputs, and services
- iii. Promoting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), including irrigation systems and soil testing, among others
- iv. Improved pest and disease monitoring, surveillance, and control methods to help prevent crop destructions and food loss
- v. Developing and implementing sustainable subsidy programs for youth in agriculture

*Strategic issue 7: Low-value addition*

*Strategic goal 7: Empowering youth to participate effectively in agricultural value chain*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Conducting agricultural value chain analysis to identify potential products and value-adding processes that young people can easily get involved in
- ii. Developing the capacity of young people to start agro-processing companies for value addition
- iii. Establishing agricultural processing pilot units targeting youth in different counties
- iv. Developing and scaling appropriate technologies that will help youths in processing agricultural raw materials, packaging, and transportation hence increasing profit margin (JC, U. 2019).
- v. To provide value-added supportive services, incentives, and infrastructure services
- vi. Supporting the establishment of youth-led Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to help to access affordable technologies that will increase agricultural produce value addition (Cynthiah P. 2020).

*Strategic issue 8: Limited access to market information, insufficient market infrastructure, and entrepreneurial skills*

*Strategic goal 8: To improve young people's access to markets and market information.*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Developing and implementing sustainable market incentive programs for youth in agribusiness through Public-Private Partnerships

- ii. Developing links/networks for young people to access good agricultural markets
- iii. Support the creation and strengthening of structured market platforms where young people will be well promoted (Maurice S., et al. 2019).
- iv. Supporting group formation by youths to increasing their purchasing and bargaining power and opportunities
- v. Developing the capacities of young people in market-driven agricultural enterprises
- vi. Support development and access to market infrastructure and information
- vii. Collaborative review and integration of agricultural output information platforms
- viii. Facilitate registration, standardization, and traceability of agricultural products to improve market efficiency.

*Strategic issue 9: Adverse effects of climate change and poor environmental governance*

*Strategic goal 9: Promote youth adaption of climate-smart agriculture technologies and effective use of resources*

*Strategic interventions:*

- i. Raising youth awareness on climate change and global warming effects
- ii. Developing and associating youth with coping strategies with climate change
- iii. Promoting climate-smart technologies in the agricultural sector
- iv. Building youth capacity on advocacy and environmental protection measures
- v. Promote the dissemination of real-time information on weather-related issues and their impact on agribusiness.

## **CONCLUSION**

Although a significant proportion of young people still earn their living from agriculture, the rate of youth withdrawal from agriculture to other sectors is very high. The workforce withdrawn from agriculture has gravitated towards the service sector, which is more evident among educated youth though it's not enough to accommodate all the workforce hence leading to high unemployment rates. Research findings reveal that youth should be targeted based on their aspirations and resource availability to increase their capacities and participation in the agricultural sector. A large number of young people are likely to stay on the family estate, such a category has access to land, but needs skills and capital to invest in high-value agricultural enterprises. Young people are disenfranchised in the ownership and management of critical assets in agricultural production, particularly land. The majority of young people use land without exclusive property rights. This not only limits their investment in the land but may also limit their access to loans that are secured against title deeds. The agricultural value chain can provide opportunities to empower youth in agriculture. A range of policies can be used to make the sector more attractive to young people, including farming and agribusiness based education, infrastructure improvements, mechanization programs, advanced storage to prevent post-harvest losses, financing and input subsidies, and export promotion programs that help young people to participate more in international agricultural markets. Digital technology is another important empowerment tool that can enable greater participation of youth in agriculture and increase agricultural productivity.

While digital innovation in agriculture will offer opportunities for young skilled people, technologies such as mobile money that expand financial service delivery are helping to bridge the gap in access to finance. The development of the agricultural sector will have positive effects on reducing the youth unemployment rate, increasing economic development, reducing migration from rural to urban areas, and strengthening peace and national security not only for Kenya but also for other African countries. However, to tap into these potentials, stakeholders must think beyond understanding youth as units of the workforce to be placed in jobs. Effective youth empowerment and participation in agriculture requires the industry's ability to meet the expectations, and aspirations of young people, and to incorporate technology and engage them at all stages of the agricultural value chain and agricultural policies development processes.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There was no funding involved. Both authors contributed substantially to the research design, data collection, data analysis, write-up and editing of the manuscript. The submitted version is checked and approved by both authors. The authors confirm that there are no conflicts of interest.

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