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Business School
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA



INNOVATION FOR AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES (IAU) PROGRAMME

CO-PRODUCTION FOR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN KENYA (CoPYEK) PROJECT

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The IAU Programme

The Innovation for African Universities (IAU) Programme is a British- Council funded programme designed to support the development of Africa – UK University Partnerships that build institutional capacity for higher education engagement in entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems in selected African countries. The programme is designed with the context that the fundamental purpose of universities is to create an environment where students are encouraged to pursue and embrace opportunities, explore new ideas, take intellectual risks, and begin the process of becoming researchers and innovators of tomorrow.

In this regard, the British Council developed and designed the programme to foster the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and facilitate the development of skills required to build industries, companies and products.

The overarching objective of the IAU programme is to strengthen the capacity of Higher Education Institutions and increase their capability to participate and provide meaningful contributions as key players within the entrepreneurship ecosystems. The programme's specific objectives are to:

- i. Increase the employability of students and their capacity to create jobs.
- ii. Strengthen HEIs with the knowledge, skills and capability to support students learning and employability ambitions and improve their outcomes.
- iii. Bridge the existing gap between HEIs and industry, foster the development of relationships which will ensure that future institutional outputs (research and skills) will be tailored more in line with workplace and community needs.
- iv. Support the development of long-term partnerships centered on entrepreneurship and innovation between UK and SSA Institutions established with ongoing exchanges of knowledge, know-how and practice.

Currently, the programme brings together 89 partner organizations from Kenya, the UK, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa under 24 distinct projects.

The Kenya partnership network is made up of a total of 14 partners representing 7 projects that include 7 private and public universities in Kenya. A Centre of Excellence comprising tripartite partners, City University of London, University of Nairobi, and the Change School provides support to the network. This includes building a community of practice, promoting the exchange of knowledge, and strengthening institutional capability.

1.2 The COPYEK Project and Partners

The Co-production for youth Entrepreneurship in Kenya (CoPYEK) project is one of the seven projects under the IAU programme in Kenya. This project is a creation of three partner agencies namely:

1. The University of Nottingham. This is a UK University and in the IAU context, University of Nottingham is the UK Higher Education Institution.
2. KCA University- This is a Kenyan University. In the IAU Context, KCA University is the Sub-Saharan Higher Education Institution.
3. Youth Enterprise Development Fund. The Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) is a Kenya Government agency tasked with the responsibility of socio-economically empowering Kenyan youth. In the IAU context, YEDF is the Sub-Saharan Entrepreneurship Ecosystem partner.

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

2.1 Problem Statement

The Kenyan government's Vision 2030 singles out competitive education, research, and innovation as the vehicle that will drive Kenya into becoming a middle-income economy. However, the enterprise-focused policies and interventions are developed *for the youth rather than with the youth*. Moreover, entrepreneurial training programs are hardly informed by evidence-based research as Kenyan universities are hardly a part of the

holistic youth entrepreneurship ecosystem and often create their own silos and designed entrepreneurship programmes. This has resulted in graduates of entrepreneurship who can hardly create a start-up, and faculty having limited knowledge of the practice. Most studies are devoid of needed methodological sophistication and are not participatory nor creative in nature. The dearth of collaboration implies that programs intended to support youth entrepreneurship are poorly designed and disjointed in nature.

2.2 Partnership objectives

The CoPYEK project sought to bridge the above lacuna by creating a partnership between Kenya's Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF), KCA University and University of Nottingham. Working together in this project the partnership adopted the following partnership objectives:

- i. Develop creative, participatory research methodologies to capture lived experience of youth entrepreneurs to ascertain supply and demand gaps for their enterprises.
- ii. Design teaching methods to integrate creativity processes within entrepreneurial training of youth through divergent and convergent futures thinking.
- iii. Undertake horizon scan for futures of youth-led enterprises in Kenya, gathering collective intelligence on the thematic entrepreneurship priorities.
- iv. Open wider conversations and thinking of how universities and practitioners of entrepreneurship can unlock existing silos and collaborate to create a youth-friendly entrepreneurship ecosystem.
- v. Strengthen capacity and capability of YEDF to support youth entrepreneurship.
- vi. Build an international network to facilitate knowledge sharing and transfer through joint research, article co-authorship, seminars, and conferences.
- vii. Establish in the long term a lasting collaboration beyond the IAU funding to enable student and faculty exchange in Kenya and UK.

3.0 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Research problem.

From the general problem statement, the partners set out to investigate why the existence of youth entrepreneurship training and education programmes in Kenya have not achieved the expected outcome of enabling the youth to create, innovate and sustain their enterprises.

3.2 Research objectives.

In line with the overall aspirations of the tri-partite partnership, the project adopted the following research objectives:

- i. To capture lived experiences of youth-led enterprises to ascertain their points of pain and potential gains
- ii. To identify gaps in current entrepreneurship training programs offered by universities and business development service providers
- iii. Deepening understanding and mapping the range of entrepreneurship education and programs the youth are exposed to.

3.3 Research questions

To meet the above objectives, the following research questions were adopted by the project:

- i) What kind of entrepreneurship education and training programs are youth entrepreneurs exposed to?
- ii) How effective are entrepreneurship education and training programs in impacting the practice of entrepreneurship for young entrepreneurs?
- iii) How can the entrepreneurship curricula be improved?

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used participatory research methodology to capture the lived experiences of youth-led enterprises to ascertain their points of pain and potential gains. Primarily, photo elicitation method was used to collect the relevant data from the entrepreneurs. In this regard, participants used photography to capture such information as their start-up journey and the support accessed; the things they enjoy and the challenges they face; and how

they have utilised their formal/informal education and training opportunities for future growth.

Furthermore, self-reflection workshops were used to collect additional data. In this regard, participants:

- i) Narrated their entrepreneurship journey.
- ii) Discussed how effective entrepreneurship education and training programs has had on their enterprises.
- iii) Identified the education/training gaps.
- iv) Made proposals towards redesigning entrepreneurship education/training.

4.1 Sampling

This study targeted young college and university graduates who were engaged in entrepreneurial activities and under the Youth Enterprise Development Fund financing support program. The youth were drawn from four purposively selected counties, namely, Nairobi, Mombasa, Garissa, Bungoma, Makueni. From each county twenty (20) young entrepreneurs, who were required to have access to a smart phone or a camera, were identified. The requirement of having a smart phone was necessary since they had to take photos that told their stories.

4.2 Data collection

Prior to starting the data collection process, the selected young entrepreneurs were briefed about their right to participate voluntarily and those who consented were asked to sign the informed consent form. Those who consented were then trained on the photo elicitation method and how to use the photos to capture their experiences. They used photography to capture their start-up journey, things they enjoyed, the challenges they faced, and how they had utilized education. They were given one week period to take photos and later invited to workshops to discuss their stories as captured by their photos. The workshops were moderated by the researchers with discussions and participants' narrations being recorded and later transcribed for content analysis.

5.0 FINDINGS

5.1 The Participants

The participants, numbering 68, were drawn from four counties, among whom 26 were female and 42 were male. Majority of them (45) were university graduates, 10 were diploma holders, while 13 had qualifications of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) or Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). Figure 1 below captures the distribution of the respondents according to their sampled counties and business sectors.

Figure 1: Distribution of the respondents by counties and business sectors



5.2 Findings

From the research, the main findings were that the youth are inspired to venture into business through intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors, some of which include the creation of own employment as a result of job losses, unsuccessful search for jobs after college/school, financial hardship and extreme poverty, the need to earn a livelihood (business as a source of income), desire to be financially independent, to feel engaged/busy, inspiration through business-oriented parents and mentors, and some get into business to exploit their talent or their passion and hobbies, finding a solution to a market and community problem, by a group of friends/college mates needing to support one another financially, socially, emotionally and psychologically, the need to protect the environment, and some could be inspired after going through an entrepreneurship course.

Most of the youth under study had gone through some form of entrepreneurship education/training either at college level, or during their practice. The researchers established that some of the skills gained from the training such as business management

skills, economics, accounting, procurement, marketing, and budgeting helped the youth in understanding how to run, manage, grow a business, and maximize use of resources. Some ICT related training skills also helped to develop business systems that helped monitor business orders and conduct business research via the internet.

It was however evident that the college entrepreneurship training was more theoretical rather than reflecting the practical ways of starting, running, and growing business. The youth therefore recommended a more practically oriented curricula that is offered using online platforms, that gives room for continuous self-growth and development, and embraces new technology like online marketing and YouTube channels. The curricula should also accommodate an element of peer-to-peer mentorship and apprenticeship. It was also established from the research findings that the entrepreneurship ecosystem players were operating in silos, thus were unable to leverage on synergies for enhanced impact in youth entrepreneurship support and development. This has led to disjointed and uncoordinated knowledge, entrepreneurship and skills development programmes that lead to unsustainable and unstable youth owned enterprises-businesses.

Fig.2: Challenges related to skills and competencies.

Short-term courses	University and colleges courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More practical and less theoretical • Offered piecemeal depending business interest of provider • Fragmented and uncoordinated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical and less practical • No holistic focus (business, technical, entrepreneurship) • Important for general knowledge

Finally, the research also observed that the youth had difficulties linking knowledge acquired in the classroom with the practice, which pointed to a mismatch between entrepreneurship learning in class and practice.

6.0 RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

From research findings in Phase One of the Project, recommendations were drafted. These recommendations formed the basis for the projects Phase Two proposals and activities. The recommendations and proposals were clustered thus:

6.1 Training content development and global knowledge exchange

The research concluded in Phase 1 recommended a thorough review of the entrepreneurship learning curricula being rolled through KCA University and YEDF. It was thus proposed that this be undertaken and that stakeholders would be invited to curriculum review workshops to identify learning pathways for the revised practice-based curriculum. Faculty at the Haydn Greene Institute would also be invited to support and share best practice on curriculum development across entrepreneurship topics and different levels including their experiences of cross-disciplinary partnership with other disciplines. A validation workshop would then be held with young entrepreneurs on the content and delivery plans. Teaching and learning tools would be designed including three short courses on thematic priorities identified in Phase 1.

Local context-based case studies would also be developed. The revised curriculum and learning tools would be rolled out in a pilot at KCA University and YEDF. Ecosystem partners in Kenya and partners of Haydn Green Institute (HGI) at the University of Nottingham (UK) would be invited to deliver TED-style talks and podcasts. The UK-Kenya co-operation would be further strengthened through online structured dialogues and connecting classroom series between NUBS, KCA and YEDF fellows.

Mentoring would be provided through webinars and digital access to entrepreneurship learning content. The Kenya young entrepreneurs, KCA and YEDF will benefit from access to the HGI's bank of Ingenuity competition training videos.

6.2 Capacity building

Building capacity of training providers and other ecosystem players was a key enabler identified in Phase 1 research. Hence, it was proposed that an Entrepreneurship Movers Facilitation Program (EMFP) would be developed which would be rolled out to train the

trainers scheme for YEDF trainers and university partners. It was proposed that the trainers would be provided training on the revised curriculum and peer mentorship opportunities for movers and facilitators by a highly experienced HGI faculty.

An appreciative inquiry research would be undertaken to inform design of a youth entrepreneurship resource hub (YERH)) through which needs, tools and resources for the hub would be identified. This would further inform the design of student-led hackathon where students would be invited to co-design site interface and content.

It was further proposed that the resource hub (YERH) would be complemented with a Youth Entrepreneurship Mentorship (YEM) programme which would invite industry partners and business leaders to hold mentorship sessions. Drawing from their wealth of experience from running the Witty Scholarships, HGI would train ecosystem partners and mentors on entrepreneurship focused mentoring and upskilling.

6.3 Communication and dissemination

It was proposed that the project would reach out to young entrepreneurs and aspirants through social media channels including a YouTube channel which would house videos of young entrepreneurs and mentors sharing their lived experiences of entrepreneurship. Other content would focus on local business technologies and methods. Knowledge dissemination through publications in mainstream media would also be ensured.

6.3 Partnership and public engagement

It was also proposed that an advocacy brief would be developed followed by a peer-reviewed journal article on project findings. Furthermore, three blogs for the resource website and a final project research report would be written and disseminated to internal and external partners and stakeholders.

7.0 OVERALL PROJECT OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Following the recommendations made from Phase One research findings and the subsequent proposals made for Phase two, the project has been on course implementing

the various planned activities. In this regard, below is a summary of the overall outcomes and achievements.

7.1 Project outcomes

Below is a highlight of the CoPYEK Project’s outcomes

Project Outcomes	Explanatory Notes
Improved understanding of young entrepreneurs of the localised, practice-based business development and management in Kenya	YEDF developed a new Entrepreneurship Curriculum. YEDF Trainers and Facilitators were also trained on the new curriculum and equipped with training and facilitation skills as well business mentorship, coaching and mentorship skills. Further to this, young entrepreneurs are already receiving training on a pilot basis using YEDF’s new entrepreneurship curriculum. KCA University has also developed Three (3) short courses training manuals for bookkeeping, finance management for SMEs, and tax. Faculty has revised training guides to accommodate this change.
Improved access and reach of young students and entrepreneurs to diverse entrepreneurial learning tools, resources and experiences that will enhance their aspiration and experience of doing entrepreneurship.	Students and entrepreneurs are already using the Youth Entrepreneurship Resource Hub (YERH) and the dedicated project social media platforms to access entrepreneurial content. Entrepreneurs are already receiving entrepreneurship training, mentorship and coaching through the reviewed YEDF Entrepreneurship Curriculum.

Project Outcomes	Explanatory Notes
Availability of localised, context-based content and course materials	Reviewed YEDF entrepreneurship curriculum and training manuals are available and accessible to youth entrepreneurs. Three short courses and training manuals on Bookkeeping, Finance Management and Taxation for SMEs are also available to students at KCA University. Online resources available to students and entrepreneurs through the YERH platform.
Improved entrepreneurship ecosystem and lived experiences as trainers and mentors provide meaningful and effective mentorship and guidance	Entrepreneurship Movers and Facilitators were equipped with training and facilitation skills as well as entrepreneurship training, mentorship and coaching skills. Furthermore, application of learned skills is already ongoing
Increased UK-Kenya cooperation in engaging with academia and policy spheres	UK and Kenyan students and entrepreneurs were engaged in international/ cross cultural learning and experience sharing especially through the SCALE programme. In this regard, five weekly learning sessions for YEDF and KCAU young entrepreneurs between were successfully conducted between Tuesday 5th July and 2nd August 2022. Online structured dialogues and webinars on key entrepreneurship issues were also successfully conducted. KCA University and YEDF have provided entrepreneurship training resources to students and entrepreneurs.

Increased willingness of young students and entrepreneurs to explore entrepreneurship as career choice	Students, entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs are actively engaging with social media content and online resources from the project. The success of the project in so far as measuring the willingness of individuals to explore career choices will however be evident in the next academic year and as individuals continue interacting with the YERH platform.
Improved, high quality project management and service provision	Periodic recommendations were incorporated in in the course of project implementation

7.2 Project achievements

The project had the following key achievements:

Phase 2 activities were based on the Phase 1 research recommendations. Each partner played a significant role in the implementation phase, which led to the following achievements:

- i) A dissemination workshop was held to share the findings from phase 1 research/inquiry. Participants in the workshop included youth entrepreneurs, government officials, academicians whose input was incorporated into the design of interventions in phase II.
- ii) Conducted a gap analysis of the KCAU and YEDF entrepreneurship curriculums against Phase 1 findings, review of literature, and feedback from the dissemination workshop participants.
- iii) Held curriculum review workshops at KCA and YEDF that adopted an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach to help participants discover, dream, design, and develop an ideal curriculum. 13 members of KCAU academic staff were trained on the use of AI methodology to design a curriculum and 28 members of academic staff participated in a case writing workshop facilitated by the Haydn Green Institute (HGI) of University of Nottingham
- iv) Applied AI methodology to re-design and revamp training curriculums for KCA University and the YEDF

- v) Held capacity building workshops through the Entrepreneurship Movers Facilitation Program (EMFP). 35 YEDF officers from 35 counties were trained on how to deliver the new curriculum to the youth entrepreneurs in a manner that will be more practical, to ensure translation of learning to practice.
- vi) Re-designed KCA University entrepreneurship curriculum and developed a training manual to accompany it
- vii) Developed three (3) short courses for KCA University's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship to train upcoming student entrepreneurs
- viii) Launched and successfully completed a student-led hackathon for developing designs for the Youth Entrepreneurship Resource Hub (YERH) web application. The winning students participated in development of the YERH web application under the tutelage of a professional web developer.
- ix) The Kenya partners now have digital access to UoN's Haydn Green Institute (HGI) bank of Ingenuity competition training videos and other entrepreneurship related learning material through the Ingenuity develop platform.
- x) Participated in the University of Nairobi innovation week and showcased our project achievements and expected deliverables.
- xi) Developed YERH website, which is now available here <https://yerh-kenya.com/>
- xii) Held a 5-week Scale program run by HGI Ingenuity Lab where at least 41 young entrepreneurs from YEDF participated over the 5 weeks and three (3) of them were selected because of their scale potential for a one-year sponsorship at the lab.
- xiii) Published one (1) article in the business daily featuring our project (<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/corporate/enterprise/will-new-curriculum-boost-knowledge-transition-3910036>)
- xiv) Held three (3) stakeholder engagement and dissemination workshops to share the project's research findings.
- xv) Shortlisted to develop a proposal for testing the efficacy of YEDF entrepreneurship training for the youth entrepreneurs using the revamped curriculum. The proposal has already been submitted.

8.0 DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

The project utilized the following strategies to disseminate learnings and results:

Information Shared and Method of Dissemination
<p>https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/corporate/enterprise/will-new-curriculum-boost-knowledge-transition-3910036).</p> <p>Published an overview of the CoPYEK Project, the IAU Programme and an outline of the Reviewed YEDF Entrepreneurship Curriculum</p>
<p>Produced and shared short videos and Blogs by youth entrepreneurs on their lived experiences. Produced and shared short videos by entrepreneurship mentors and facilitators on business development, technology etc.</p> <p>Videos and blogs shared on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) YERH Website: http://yerh-kenya.comii) Twitter @ProjectCopyekiii) Instagram: @ProjectCoPYEKiv) YouTube: @Project CoPYEKv) Facebook: Project COPYEK
<p>Shared Reviewed YEDF Entrepreneurship Curriculum in a Stakeholders Curriculum Validation Workshop. The workshop brought together representatives from the government, academia, entrepreneurship support organizations, practising entrepreneurs and students.</p>
<p>Presented Phase 1 findings and Phase 2 highlights/achievements in a poster session at university of Livingstone. Also showcased the project at the Nairobi innovation week at the University of Nairobi in April 2022.</p>
<p>Sharing of advocacy briefs to internal and external partners and stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem</p>