



PRESS RELEASE FROM: [Stretchers Youth Organisation]

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THE CURRENT NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY FORMULATION PROCESS IS A SHAM!!!!

As a youth organization in Mombasa County we are very much disappointed with the current formulation process of the National youth policy 2018. It is noted with concerns that the entire process is a sham. Organizers of the process led by the Cabinet secretary, Ministry of Public Service Youth and Gender Affairs is paying selected youths of this nation to rubber stamp their ideas to be put in the document. The participation process is found to be contravening law on formulation of the youth policy document.

After having a number of talks with the youths that participated on the meeting they state that they were invited through the sub county Youth officer. Some went to this meeting with no clear understating of their role in the meeting. Youths had to travel from Lamu, Taita Taveta, Tana River , Kwale , Kilifi to attend this meeting. Why couldn't the meeting be done at the county level to embrace devolution and have inclusive and meaningful participation?. Secondly it should be noted that public participation is not all about individuals subjected to groups the whole day but it a platform that both parties actively involve each other. Whatever happened at Mikindani Social Hall on 23rd April 2018 was just a Youths Get together dialogue but not a public participations towards formulation of national youth policy.

Youth policy document is a very serious and important guideline that all youths should be aware of it and actively participate on its formulation since this the only policy that gives direction on how both the national and county government engages with youths in programing. All the youths under different sector opt to be actively involved in this process without favour or discrimination.

Why we feel the participation was not meaningful in Coast region:

Information on date of participation was circulated in social media to be 20th April 2018, however:

- i. Venue for coast region participation was said to be Mombasa but no specific venue was given.
- ii. Event was postponed without proper circulation of the information on the day of participation against article 35 of Kenyan constitution. From 20th April to 23rd April 2018.
- iii. Only specific Participants from other counties were invited to the event.
- iv. The invited participants were paid to participate.

Therefore, we ask ourselves these questions;

- i. Why do you pay a youth to participate in a process that benefits him or her?
- ii. Why did the organizers decide to bring young people from far counties rather than meaningfully encourage participation at county level?

- iii. How can a population of over 5million young people be represented by a group of less than 300 youths and call that meaningful participation?

Kenya being a signatory in the African Union, in the year 2006 signed the African Youth charter. It comprehensively explains that each state party shall develop a comprehensive and coherent national youth policy with the following clear guidelines¹

- a) The policy shall be cross-sectoral in nature considering the inter- relatedness of the challenges facing young people;
- b) ***The development of a national youth policy shall be informed by extensive consultation with young people and cater for their active participation in decision making at all levels of governance in issues concerning youth and society as a whole;***
- c) A youth perspective shall be integrated and mainstreamed into all planning and decision-making as well as programme development. The appointment of youth focal points in government structures shall enable this process;
- d) Mechanisms to address these youth challenges shall be framed within the national development framework of the country;
- e) The policy shall provide guidelines on the definition of youth adopted and specify subgroups that shall be targeted for development;
- f) The policy shall advocate equal opportunities for young men and for young women;
- h) The policy shall be adopted by parliament and enacted into law;
- i) A national youth coordinating mechanism shall be set up and shall provide a platform as well as serve as a linking agent for youth organizations to participate in youth policy development as well as the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related programmes;
- j) National programmes of action shall be developed that are time bound and that are connected to an implementation and evaluation strategy for which indicators shall be outlined;

OUR DEMANDS

- i. The process must be repeated in at least each county in Coast region namely Mombasa, Kilifi, Tana River, Taita Taveta, Kwale and Lamu respectively.
- ii. Notice for date and venue of participation must be communicated at least 7 days prior.
- iii. The event must be open to every young person without any form of discrimination.



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