

KENYA DIASPORA POLICY 2014

Tabitha Weru

Introduction

- This Diaspora Policy is a response to the urgent need for mainstreaming the Kenyan Diaspora into national development process in line with the aspirations and goals of the Kenya Vision 2030 development blue print. The Kenya Vision 2030 recognizes Diaspora contribution as a critical component to the growth of our economy and in the achievement of the vision of making Kenya a globally competitive and prosperous country by the year 2030. It is in recognition of this imperative that development of a Diaspora Policy was identified as one of the Kenya Vision 2030 flagship projects.
- Kenyans have been migrating in large numbers to different parts of the world since the 1960s to acquire better training, education, job opportunities and for political reasons. The Kenyan Diaspora consists of people of Kenya origin and non-resident Kenyans residing outside the country.
- The importance of Kenyans abroad has been fully recognised in the Constitution of Kenya.
- Diaspora account for significant share of the Kenyan GDP. Similarly, the contribution of the Diaspora in terms of skills, expertise and transfer of knowledge to Kenya is invaluable though this potential is not yet fully developed or harnessed.
- The broad objective of this policy is to empower Kenyans abroad to effectively make greater contribution to the development of the country.

Challenges to the effective contribution of the Kenyan Diaspora in national development

- In-adequate capacity constraints in terms of both budgetary allocation and personnel at the diplomatic missions abroad
- Unsuitable working conditions due to lack of a national labour migration legal framework
- Inadequate mechanisms of protecting Kenyans in the Diaspora
- The high cost of remitting money leading to the use of informal channels.
- Inadequate capacity to offer consular services
- Weak structures to inform Kenyans in the Diaspora of investment opportunities
- untapped skills and expertise
- Lack of an integrated database on Kenyans abroad
- Low uptake of Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) by government
- Kenya continues to face many challenges in harnessing their potential due to lack of a comprehensive framework to fully integrate them in national development

Objectives of the Policy

1. Develop and implement strategies to engage, empower and mainstream Kenyans Abroad into national development process
2. Mobilize Kenyans Abroad to form town, city or country specific umbrella associations which have a national outlook as well as regional and global umbrella associations for effective engagement and representation.
3. Develop measures to enhance protection of Kenyans Abroad
4. Develop mechanisms for dialogue and partnership with Kenyans Abroad.
5. Establish the necessary institutional mechanism for co-ordination and administration of issues affecting Kenyans Abroad.

Strategies to be Implemented

1. Promote continuous dialogue with Kenyans Abroad
2. Enhance capacity to offer Consular Services
3. Develop mechanisms of reducing the high cost of remitting money
4. Develop an incentive framework to promote Diaspora participation in national development
5. Enhance mechanisms for protecting Kenyans abroad
6. Develop an integrated database on Kenyans Abroad
7. Develop an up to date inventory of Diaspora expertise and skills
8. Leverage on the use of Information and Communication Technology (*I.C.T*) Enabled Services

Strategies continued...

9. Develop reintegration mechanisms for returnees
10. Harmonize and conduct pre-departure training
11. Promote participation in democratic processes by Kenyans Abroad
12. Promotion of Philanthropic Initiatives
13. Develop mechanism of engagement with the Diaspora Youth
14. Develop Legislative Framework

Institutional And Implementation Framework

The successful implementation of this policy will require the involvement and active participation of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Kenyans Diaspora Associations, Development Partners, Private Sector, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs).

A National Diaspora Council of Kenya (NADICOK) will be established to promote consistency and better coordination as well as strengthen support for the role of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade which has been mandated to manage the affairs of Kenyans Abroad. The Ministry will remain the apex institution charged with the overall responsibility of coordinating issues of Kenyans Abroad and in particular overseeing the successful implementation of this policy.

KNBS jointly with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Department of Immigration and Registration of Persons will set up, maintain and update a database on Kenyans Abroad as part of the Integrated Diaspora Information System.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of this Policy will be undertaken within the framework of the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES). The Framework will provide for regular consultation and feedback between Agencies entrusted with the implementation of this Policy.

End

Thank you

