

Skills Development



PROJECT: Promoting Life Skills and Livelihoods – Skills 4 Life (S4L)
REGION: Central, East & Southern Africa
COUNTRY: Kenya
PROJECT PHASE: July 2016 – June 2019
FUNDING: Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)



RATIONALE

Turkana County, where the Skills 4 Life Project is being implemented, is the largest county in Kenya and one of the most impoverished and marginalized regions with 90% of the population living below the poverty line. The county has an estimated population of 1,427,797 with youth aged between 15 and 29 years accounting for about 31.78%. It accommodates the Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement which is home to approximately 185,449 registered refugees and asylum-seekers comprising 21 nationalities. Of this, the Somali and South Sudanese account for 31.7% and 49.2% respectively.

Established in 1992 to mainly accommodate refugees fleeing the Sudan civil war, Kakuma Refugee Camp hosts majority of the population, while Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement, which was established in 2014 is mainly populated by South Sudanese refugees following the recent conflict.

With an economic system mainly dependent on land, the county faces various challenges brought about by recurrent drought, rapid growth of the local population and continued influx of refugees. This has exacerbated the vulnerability of the local livelihood systems and weakened the local economy. Youth from the host and refugee communities are the most affected as they lack productive resources and face limited livelihood options.

Phone repair training session in Kakuma II refugee camp



A beneficiary concentrates during a tailoring training session

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Skills 4 Life Project seeks to catalyze systemic change in skills development and employment creation by facilitating flexible, low-cost, market-oriented and competency-based skills training, which serve to create pathways to decent employment for the youth.

The project uses the Learning Group (LG) model to deliver non-formal technical skills training which is complemented by structured apprenticeships, life skills and business development support. This provides youth with well-rounded skills that improve their competitiveness as they transition into the local labor market. The Learning Groups are homogenous, self-selected, self-managed and comprise of people with similar interests.

The project is implemented in partnership with other stakeholders. These are private sector businesses, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and government agencies who are provided with short-term technical and financial support to deliver various aspects of the project.

EXPECTED PROJECT IMPACT



Increased access to market-driven skills for 2,500 youths.



Increased financial and business management capabilities for 2,000 youths.



Enhanced resilience and livelihood coping for 3,000 members.



Formation of a replicable and scaleable skills development model for fragile contexts.

TESTIMONIAL

"I completed my secondary education but didn't have an opportunity to further pursue my studies. As I searched for odd jobs to do, I underwent a four-month computer training course offered by a development organization in Kakuma. I found out about the Skills 4 Life Project through a friend who told me that Swisscontact was mobilizing and registering youth for skills training in Kakuma town. I decided to register for the electrical wiring and installation course because I had heard that the Rural Electrification Program was going to be rolled out in the town soon. I felt that having the right skills in electrical wiring and installation would put me in the right place to make money. Before the training, I worked at a cybercafé and earned CHF 12 per month. I struggled to pay my rent and take care of my basic needs. Once I completed the three-month training, I joined a business group and got start-up materials to run the business. Eight months later, I landed a job with a road construction company but later quit to focus on my electrical wiring and installation skill. I opened a shop and have been able to network and get recognition for what I do. I have even secured one-off contracts with some international organizations based in the camp. I now make CHF 150 a month which helps me comfortably cater to my basic needs. I plan to expand my electrical shop in future. Unlike the four-month computer training course I initially undertook, the Skills 4 Life training was very practical, and I was provided with appropriate materials which served as a start-up kit."

Fred Lokabuk | 31-year-old Beneficiary from Nayanaemeyan Village, Kakuma.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Swisscontact, Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation
6th Floor, Victoria Plaza, Westlands
P.O Box 47996 00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 20 374 3927/4042
Kakuma Direct Line: +254 742 986 611

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