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Siasa Talks Report

Kwale County





Siasa Talks - Kwale

Introduction

The talk was held on 28th July 2018 at Red Cross Society of Kenya Kwale branch and attended by both individuals and youth group representatives from Msabweni Sub County. The youth groups included Catholic youth, Bongwe youth group, Ukunda youth CBO, Diani youth group, Kilolapwa youth group, Kwacodep, Agenda Kenya and Red Cross among others

Proceedings

The meeting started with a ward of prayer and thereafter a round of introduction. Participants were then introduced to Siasa Place and why the organization was focusing on The People, Participation and Policy.

To start the discussion, participants were asked what they understood by the word politics (Siasa) and here were some of the responses;

- Violence
- Free money from politicians
- Opposition Vs government (Raila vs Uhuru)
- Fake promises
- Money for youth as security for the politicians
- Tender
- Leadership

When asked if they knew how politics affected their lives, the following were the response:

- Politics only affect people in political parties or people who want to contest
- Politics affect policy formulation and implementation
- Politics does not affect non politician in any way
- Politicians influence development

It was then explained how politics affected the youth in terms of jobs, prices of the products and the entire development was relies on the decision made by the politicians.

Public Participation

The participants were asked what they understood by the term public participation and here were the response:

- People saying what they need to be included in the budget
- People coming together with government officials to talk development
- People being asked what they want done by the government
- People being contributing to policy formulation

After explaining what public participation entailed, participants were asked to discuss in groups public participation forums available within the county. Below were the responses

- Budget making
- Policy making forums
- Ward development committees
- Police reform initiative
- County youth participation forum

A part from the once that were already available, the meeting agreed to identify the once which the youth in Kwale can utilize in effort to contribute in the development of the county and below were identified

1. A platform that was being established by the County government to involve youth in decision making from the ward level. Many youth were still not aware of the initiative.
2. There is an established but dormant youth organ that was meant to promote youth participation and which the governor could listen to. The meeting proposed its awakening and Haki Yetu Organization accepted to support them.
3. The meeting also identifies the use of social media which majority of the youth were already using. Leaders agreed to add the others who were left out of the platforms
4. Majority of the youth indicated that they had not participated in any public participation forum for the last one year. In groups, they were asked to enumerate why and what they proposed could improve the situation. Below were the reasons:

Identified Issue	Proposed Solution
Lack of information	Strengthen youth networking skills and understanding on the constitution
Unemployment	Youth educating fellow youth on the rights Youth need to look for information that help to develop the county County government to create opportunities to enable youth participation
Ignorance or thinking that youth do not have to participate	Need for educating the youth to understand the importance of participating and how lack of their participation affect development

Identified Issue	Proposed Solution
Lack of youth friendly policies	Youth to push for youth friendly policies Petition the county to implement AGPO
Corruption/Discrimination	Youth to name and shame cases of corruption and discrimination
Sycophancy (Youth following politicians)	Need to create awareness on the need of development

Other issues affecting the youth were also identified as shown in the table below:

Identified Issue	Proposed Solution
Famine and drought	County to invest in Agriculture and provide favorite seeds which nature faster.
Forced disappearance and killing of the youth	Need for public engagement between the public and the police
Radicalization of the youth	Create job opportunities and recreational activities for the youth. Need for monitoring of the religious institutions.
Drug abuse	County to invest and promote sporting activities. Full implementation of AGPO to create job opportunities to the youth

Engaging the Authority

After discussing the opportunities provided by the constitution for the youth, it was observed that

- Majority of the youth did not understand the constitution and therefore only believes in what the politicians said or promised.
- Most of the youth did not know who/how to contact whenever they needed to participate in decision making or in ensuring value for money for the project being implemented by the County
- Youth who have the knowledge are either compromised with job at the county or threatened by politicians

Way Forward

After discussing the issues identified, the meeting agreed that

- Ward based platform for youth participation being created by the County government was to be popularized by the youth in all the wards within the county.
- The youth leaders agreed to start meeting regularly to discuss issues affecting the youth. Haki Yetu Organization agreed to support some of the meetings by booking the venue and providing water during the meeting.
- Youth to mobilize themselves to participate in meetings organized by the County or youth themselves.
- Youth leaders agreed to start networking by first including other leaders in the whatApp group to ease sharing of information. The same was to extend to other wards
- There is need to conduct more education on the constitution
- Need to train the youth leaders in organizing, communication and negotiation. They proposed negotiation because in some cases, they had met the governor and hardly share things which are very important to the youth
- Use social media to pass information for public participation through the youth platforms

Gallery



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