

REMARKS BY NELSON MARWA, EBS, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR DEVOLUTION DURING A YOUTH AND DEVOLUTION SYMPOSIUM AT THE KENYA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT ON 20TH JUNE, 2018 AT 10.00 AM

1. It is my pleasure to join you today as we discuss ways on how to encompass the youth in all facets of devolution. I believe in the participation of the youth in all matters relating to devolution. Those youths in this hall, whom I have interacted with, can attest to this.
2. Since the advent of devolution, the Ministry in collaboration with the Council of Governors has held five devolution conferences. Out of this five conferences, it was only this year when we incorporated the youth voices in the conference. The Ministry of Devolution sponsored over 300 youths from the 290 constituencies plus special interest groups to the conference. We hope to continue this collaboration in the future.
3. I note with appreciation that the emerging leaders' foundation is involved in supporting the youth to engage with the counties effectively. This is in line with the work of the State Department of Devolution. The Department has been at the forefront of advocating for citizens' participation in the affairs of the government both at the national and county levels as provided for by the constitution. That is why we developed the public participation guidelines. It is important to note that any engagement with the government at any level has to be done in an orderly and structured manner. I urge the youths to go through this document.
4. The State Department of Devolution is one of the two State Departments in the Ministry of Devolution and ASALS. It is in charge of the overall coordination of the implementation of Devolution in the Country. Executive Order no. 1 of June 2018 gives the Mandate of the State Department as:
 - Devolution Policy
 - Inter- Governmental Relations
 - Capacity Building and Technical assistance to the County Governments
 - Management, Monitoring and Evaluation of Devolution Affairs
 - Special Programmes
 - Strategic Food Reserve
 - Food Relief Management and Humanitarian Emergency Response
5. In line with our mandate, the Ministry finalized the development of the devolution policy which outlines how both levels of government will continue to strengthen the gains of devolution. The policy is currently being disseminated to the Counties. The Policy sets out inter alia:
 - Structures of assumption for office of county governments
 - Alternative dispute resolution framework
 - Structures for enhancing public participation
 - Enhancing intergovernmental relations
6. The Ministry has also developed a framework for civic education which will enable Kenyans better understand the devolution process, planning and public financial management processes amongst others. The framework will also ensure that they can effectively participate in these governance processes and make meaningful contributions,

which in turn will lead to increased citizen participation at the local level thereby better aligning national resources and development to local needs.

7. On matters civic education, we have developed public participation guidelines, civic education curriculum, trained 320 county civic education officers and worked with the counties to establish civic education units in all counties
8. We have also trained 19,624 community leaders and members of grass root committees on leadership, project management, and monitoring and evaluation. A number of youths who were identified through the laid down community systems were also trained. However, there is need to train more youths in this area and as we embark on the next phase of civic education training in the next financial year, we will give more priority to the youth.
9. The Ministry has also developed and implemented a National Capacity Building Framework for County Governments. Through this framework there is a coordinated, structured and demand driven support to counties to address their specific capacity needs.
10. Some of the specific achievements in this area are:
 - 51 County Model Laws developed and disseminated to counties and county officials trained on the same with a view to improving quality of legislation for all the devolved functions
 - County officials at various levels have undergone continuous training and induction delivered by experts from national government agencies.
 - We have also facilitated trainings on human resource management, legislative drafting, dissemination of county model laws and public finance management.
11. To manage the relationship between the two levels of government the Ministry has established an elaborate intergovernmental framework. This framework has provided a platform for constructive dialogue on sector policy matters to strengthen devolution and enhance harmony between the various stakeholders. Examples are:
 - National and County Government Coordinating Summit,
 - Council of Governors,
 - Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee and
 - Intersectoral forums and inter-ministerial forums.
12. Since 2013, the youth have had an opportunity to work with government agencies through Access to Government Procurement Activities (AGPO). For those youths who have been keen to take up this opening, they have learnt valuable lessons which they can share with their colleagues. At the Ministry of Devolution, we have even surpassed the 30 percent threshold for government procurement to the youth, women and persons with disabilities. We will continue to support the youth even in the future and we will collaborate with County governments to ensure they meet the 30 percent threshold. However, those who want our support must ensure that their dealings are above board as we value transparency and accountability.
13. I want to urge the youth to take advantage of all the opportunities the government is availing to Kenyans and especially through the big four agenda. As the Government works to enhance food and nutrition security, boost manufacturing, support the construction of 500,000 affordable houses in the next five years and ensure universal health coverage, many opportunities will be available.

14. However, for the youth to fully benefit from these opportunities, they have to change their perception of work. White collar jobs are no longer available and therefore it is time that the youth embraced manual work. In addition, they have to imbue both their creativity and innovation to get ahead.
15. You will all agree with me that there is need to incorporate more youth in devolution as they represent the future of our nation. This calls for more collaboration between the youth, state and non-state actors. That's why this meeting today is important. Let us come up with a framework on how this can be done. We at the Ministry of Devolution and ASALS are ready to work with you to make this a reality.

NELSON MARWA SOSPETER, EBS

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

20TH JUNE, 2018