

# SPORT FOR KENYAN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT (SKYE)

## The Challenge

Young Kenyans face major barriers to employment. There is a significant skills mismatch between what the education and training systems supply and that which the workforce demands. This mismatch is evident in the greater Nairobi Eastland's area, includes Mathare, the second largest slum in Kenya, with an estimated population between 600,000 and 800,000 people densely packed into an area roughly 5.3 square kilometers. Not unlike other slums in Kenya, the poverty level in Mathare is extremely high and is further compounded by the lack of formal employment opportunities. The vast majority of those living in Mathare earn their livelihood from informal sector jobs (e.g., garbage collection, roadside vending, and hairdressing) with wages slightly over USD 1 per day.

Kenya's Vision 2030 states that its goal is "to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment," and aims to achieve an average economic growth rate of 10 percent per annum and sustaining this growth through 2030. Critical to achieving these goals will be Kenya's rapidly growing construction sector, where there is a shortage of trained and certified artisans to meet its demand for skilled workers.

## The Initiative

SKYE delivered a sport-based work readiness curriculum and on-the-job training model that equipped youth with nationally recognized, market-driven skills and provided direct linkages to jobs. SKYE reached more than 3,100 Kenyan youth – targeting disadvantaged young women and men (18-25) who are out-of-school and unemployed, by integrating football into a dynamic training model that better prepared them for work, so that they could secure quality jobs in the construction sector.

Leveraging young people's passion for football, SKYE reached 527 youth using IYF's Passport to Success® life skills curriculum, which included adapted modules for the sports field to strengthen the competencies gained through sports participation (e.g., leadership, discipline, communication, teamwork, and responsibility). Intensive on-site technical training and national certification in a demand-driven construction trade (i.e., masonry, tiling, electrical) followed the work-readiness training to ensure youth emerged prepared to work on a construction site.

In addition to the employment component, 2,646 youth received essential financial skills training through events held in MYSA's 16 zones and four libraries. This component leveraged financial lessons from Barclays Bank's ReadytoWork curriculum to support youth as they transition from being dependents to managing their own finances.

Additionally and to ensure SKYE project sustainability, IYF strengthened the capacity of youth-serving implementing partners to deliver training while bolstering their linkages with the private sector and other training institutions. Equipping Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) staff and coaches to deliver quality services to youth will enable MYSA to improve the life and employment prospects for tens of thousands of young athletes they serve beyond the project timeline.

## Impact & Outcomes

The goal of SKYE was for young women and men living in Nairobi's Mathare slum and its surrounding communities to have market relevant work readiness and technical skills for improved livelihoods and employment.

After completing SKYE training and receiving trade certification, the project achieved the following key **outcomes**:

- 75% of SKYE youth either found work or continued their education/training
- 21% of SKYE graduates who were working received a pay raise and/or a promotion within six months after graduation, demonstrating a propensity for future success.
- \$25.93 average weekly income among working graduates, an increase from \$7.85 at the beginning of the project.
- 60% of SKYE youth with bank accounts, an increase from 26% at the beginning of the project.
- Increased youth responsibility and independence, with those who secured jobs saving and supporting family members.

## Partnerships

**Donor:** Barclays Bank PLC

**Implementing Partners:** Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) and Arc Skills

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