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ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RIGHTS REPORT
KENYA

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Summary

Decent work is an integral part of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which the Kenyan Government is committed. Nevertheless, poor compliance with laws jeopardizes Kenyan workers' rights. The country's youth remains vulnerable to exploitation. In health, Kenya lacks a comprehensive strategy to address the various dimensions of universal health coverage. And in education, the major challenge is quality.

Public participation in policymaking is enshrined in law, but it has not been given a concerted definition, something that undermines the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the policymaking process. The space for human rights defenders has been shrinking, and the right to freedom of association is only partially respected.

How can the European Union (EU) better contribute to the development of enabling spaces for CSOs in Kenya?

How can the EU support the progressive realization of economic and social rights, namely decent work and social protection for all, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
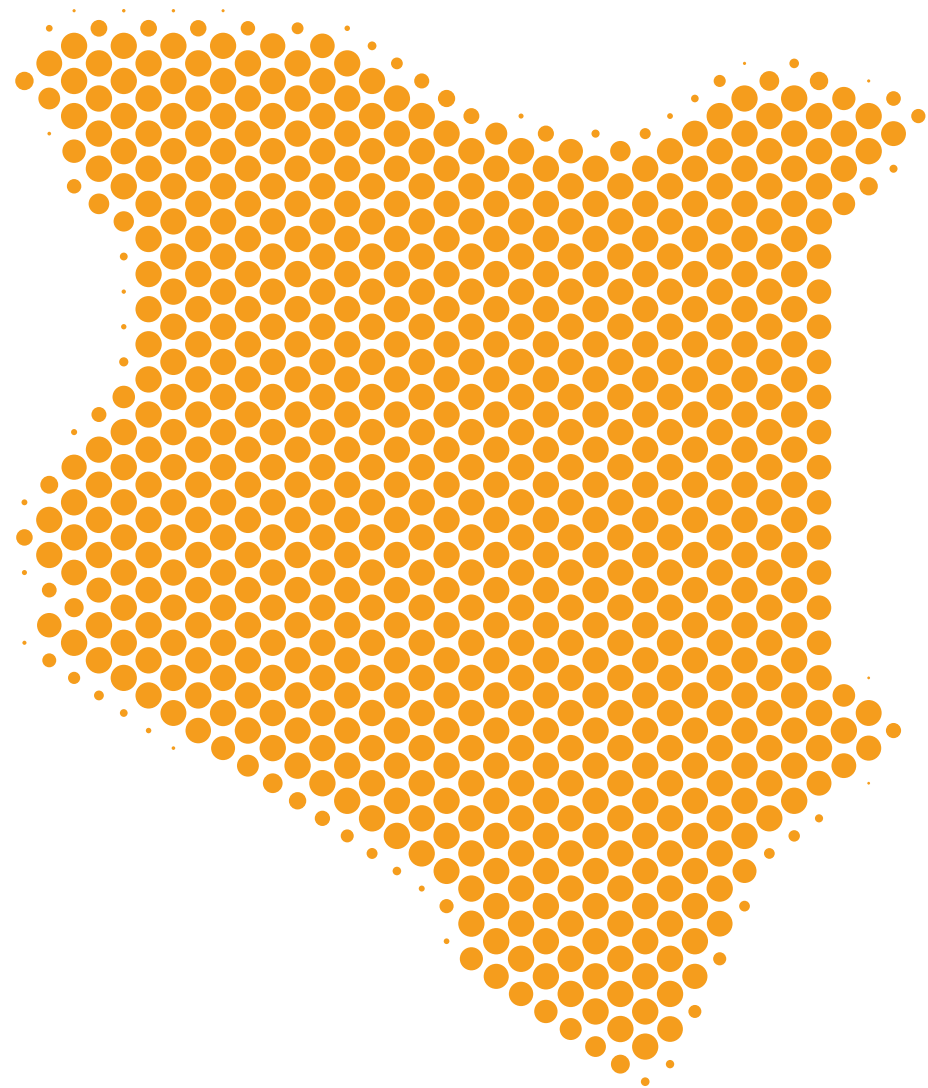
FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Led by the Forum for International Cooperation (FIC), this Economic and Social Rights Monitor (ESRM)[1] summarizes the views of the SOLIDAR network in Kenya on how respond to these challenges.

OUTLINE

Source: Unsplash

1. ABOUT THE SOLIDAR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS MONITOR

How can the European Union (EU) better contribute to the development of enabling spaces for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)? How can the EU support the progressive realization of economic and social rights, namely decent work and social protection for all, in line with the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? The SOLIDAR Economic and Social Rights Monitor (ESRM)[2] summarizes the views of SOLIDAR members and partners in 26 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America on how these goals can be achieved.

The ESRM is based on a questionnaire that uses two main benchmarks: an enabling environment for CSOs and decent work and social protection for all. It also uses three sub-benchmarks – access to the policymaking process, support for human rights defenders and freedom of association; and three indicators – fundamental labour rights, universal access to healthcare and universal access to education. The questionnaire plays a central role in in-country consultations facilitated by SOLIDAR members.

SOLIDAR's Country Monitoring Reports are the main output of this consultation process. They provide a tool for CSOs in the field to engage in a structured dialogue with the EU over the progressive realization of economic and social rights and to participate in the definition of the EU's cooperation priorities.

2 The SOLIDAR Economic and Social Rights Monitor has been developed in the framework of the EU funded programme "Organising International Solidarity": https://prezi.com/view/9zuxuivoqUSD3w1pGJSz/.

2. INTRODUCTION

The EU's development cooperation with Kenya is defined in the National Indicative Programme 2014-2020 (NIP). In line with the priorities outlined in the Kenya Vision 2030,[10] the NIP[11] defines three sectors as strategic objectives for the EU's relationship with Kenya:

1) Food security and resilience to climate shocks;
2) Sustainable infrastructure;
3) Accountability of public institutions.

TABLE 1. KENYA AT A GLANCE

Population[3]	51.393,010 million (2018)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)[4]	USD 87.91 billion
Human Development Index (HDI) and ranking[5]	0.579 (147 out of 189 countries)
Total social protection expenditure including health (percentage of GDP)[6]	2.3% of GDP (2012)
Percentage of population covered by at least one social protection benefit (effective coverage), 2015 or latest available year[7] (SDG indicator 1.3.1)	10.4%
Total envelope of National Indicative Programme (NIP)[8]	EUR 435 million
Sustainable Development Dashboard Global Index Score[9]	57.0 (125th out of 162 countries)

3 https://data.worldbank.org/country/kenya.
4 Ibidem
5 Source : http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/KEN
6 The expenditure on social protection and health refers only to the central government sector. https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.action?id=594#tabs-3
7 Table B.3 Social protection effective coverage (SDG indicator 1.3.1). The proportion of the population protected in at least one area (SDG indicator 1.3.1 (a): Proportion of the total population receiving benefits at least under one of the contingencies (contributory or non-contributory benefit) or actively contributing to at least one social security scheme. https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.action?id=594#tabs-3
8 https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/nip-kenya-20140619_en.pdf
9 https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/#/KEN [Regional average score 53.8]
10 The Kenya Vision 2030 "aims 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". http://vision2030.go.ke/.
11 https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/nip-kenya-20140619_en.pdf

Kenya Vision 2030 is the long-term national blueprint guiding the country's development towards middle-income status by 2030, when all citizens should have access to a high quality of life in a clean and secure environment. The Vision rests on three main pillars: economic, social and political.

By implementing Vision 2030, Kenya aims to cope with socio-economic regional inequalities and to meet the goals of inclusive growth; higher living standards; better education and health; job creation, especially for youth; and value-addition in agriculture, fisheries and livestock.[12]

Kenya's new constitution, which was promulgated in 2010, includes core development responsibilities such as the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of health, which translated into provisions targeting county hospitals in the Medium Term Plan (MTP). Social protection, as asserted by the Constitution's Art. 43 on Economic and Social Rights, is hence recognized as a human right. Its importance is upheld by the National Social Protection Policy of 2011[13] through the establishment of a consolidated Social Protection Fund.

The Second Medium Term Plan (MTP) in Vision 2030 was also linked to Agenda 2030 and ensured that Kenya's development framework and its implementation were directly linked to the achievement of both Vision 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[14] Kenya has been implementing policies and strategies geared towards advancing implementation of the SDGs,[15] and its performance – as measured by SDG score – has been above the average for the Sub-Saharan Africa region.[16]

12 http://vision2030.go.ke/inc/uploads/2019/01/THIRD-MEDIUM-TERM-PLAN-2018-2022.pdf
13 https://www.socialprotection.or.ke/images/downloads/kenya-national-social-protection-policy.pdf
14 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/kenya
15 https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/#/KEN
16 https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/#/KEN

Based on the SOLIDAR network's field consultation led by FIC, this report highlights the following main issues to be tackled:

1. Enabling Environments for CSOs

- Even though public participation is enshrined in law, the lack of a concerted definition of it undermines the role of CSOs in the policymaking process. It also exposes public participation to manipulation and pre-determined narratives and outcomes;
- Support for human rights defenders (HRDs) has been shrinking in the recent years. Notably, in the aftermath of the 2017 elections there were reports of intimidation and harassment of HRDs and journalists, extra-judicial killings, disappearances and unlawful detentions;
- The right to Freedom of Association (FoA) is only partially respected. Unregistered organisations are not legally permitted, and the government has wide discretion in imposing conditions on NGOs' activities;

2. Decent Work and Social Protection for all

- The current economic environment, in which there is a lack of quality jobs, has made workers susceptible to exploitation. Poor compliance with laws also jeopardizes workers' rights;
- The main challenge in health is the lack of a comprehensive strategy addressing all dimensions of universal coverage. Consequently, citizens suffer from poor health service delivery and poor access to facilities. In addition, healthcare costs are unaffordable for a large part of the population;
- In education, quality is a major, persistent challenge. Facilities are overstretched, and there is an insufficient number of teachers, leading to a high pupil-teacher ratio. Many teachers are not trained to teach the new curricula. The rate of early school leaving is high because of early pregnancies and marriages . Funding is often inadequate and its effectiveness is often reduced by embezzlement.

3. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs)

The EU considers civil society a crucial part of any democratic system. It plays an important role in fostering inclusive development and peace. The EU's commitment to strategic engagement with civil society organisations was made official in 2012 with the communication, "The Roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in external relations".[17] This paved the way for EU Country Roadmaps for Engagement with Civil Society. The EU Country Roadmap for Kenya[18] set out to promote an enabling environment for CSOs and their participation in policymaking both at national and county level, including sector-specific policies.

The rights to freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly are guaranteed under Kenya's 2010 Constitution. The Public Benefit Organisations Act[19] (PBO Act) came into effect in September 2016 and offered a legal framework, aligned with the Constitution of 2010, for civil society groups to build broad partnerships and for promoting vibrant enabling spaces for CSOs.[20] However, according to CIVICUS, "these rights (rights to freedom of association, expression, and peaceful assembly) are only partially respected in practice. Peaceful assemblies – and especially those organised by opposition political parties – are routinely met with excessive, and occasionally lethal, force by state security officers. […] Human rights NGOs are routinely subject to public vilification, harassment, and attempts to undermine their operations. Journalists and human rights defenders reporting on sensitive topics have been subject to harassment, intimidation, prosecution and extra-judicial killings." [21]

3.1 Access to the Policy-making Process

In accordance with the obligation to respect the freedoms of association and assembly, and with the support of an EU special committee, the 2013 Public Benefits Organization Act (PBO)[22] recognized the crucial role played by CSOs in supporting social cohesion, promoting democracy and improving governance. During the formulation of the PBO Act, public participation was encouraged and CSOs were invited to give their views. Similarly, Kenya Vision 2030 arose from the government's acknowledgment of the importance of CSOs' access to policymaking and it was the product of a highly participatory and inclusive process. By improving the Non-Governmental Organizations Coordination Board Act of 1990, the PBO Act has i) helped CSOs improve their accountability and governance structures by requiring them to post annual financial statements; and ii) promoted the development of self-regulation among public benefit organizations. However, the PBO Act is at risk of abuse by the government as it can be manipulated to reduce democratic space for CSOs, for example in the name of countering extremism.

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17 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM%3A2012%3A0492%3AFIN%3AEN%3APDF
18 https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/public-governance-civilsociety/document/kenya-roadmap-engagement-civil-society
19 http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Kenya/pbo2013.pdf
20 http://news.trust.org/item/20160918161021-or05t/
21 https://monitor.civicus.org/newsfeed/2016/09/01/kenya-overview/
22 http://www.kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/PublicBenefitsOrganisationNo18of2013.PDF

The Kenya-EU Country Roadmap identifies three priorities that are intended to foster CSOs' access to policymaking processes: i) supporting an enabling policy and legal environment for national-level CSOs in Kenya; ii) consolidating the institutional environment and leadership for CSO participation in national decision making; iii) supporting partnerships between different types of CSO to increase evidence-based advocacy and the role of CSOs in sector policies. While the National Indicative Program 2014-2020 does not foresee any specific financial allocation to support civil society, it says that "civil society organizations will be among the potential implementing partners and beneficiaries of the activities of the sectors of *Food Security and Resilience and Accountability of Public Institutions".[23]*

The European Union supported the implementation of the 2018 Public Participation Bill,[24] which was an act of parliament to provide a general framework for effective public participation and to give effect to the constitutional principles of democracy and participation by the people. Nevertheless, there is a need for a definition of public participation and of the **quality standards for a legitimate public-participation process.** So, on one hand a public participation framework is enshrined in law. But on the other, the lack of a concerted definition for it undermines the role of CSOs in the policymaking process and exposes public participation to manipulation and pre-determined narratives and outcomes.

The government has given support to CSO networking through invitations to different forums, as when in 2016 the government brought together CSOs to participate in and give input to the Nairobi Outcome Document.[25] However, there is limited government support, especially financial, for promoting partnerships between different types of CSO or for increasing their roles in sector policies. Hence,

Source: FIC

23 http://www.kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/PublicBenefitsOrganisationNo18of2013.PDF
24 http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/bills/2018/PublicParticipationBill_2018.pdf
25 http://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/OutcomeDocumentEnglish.pdf

a stronger effort from the EU is needed to promote CSOs, support partnerships between them and support their advocacy initiatives. To promote partnerships between different types of CSO – and so generate more evidence-based advocacy and increase their role in the policymaking process – the EU should define a more-strategic approach and a longer-term vision. Currently, the EU encourages CSOs to apply for projects as partners mainly on a needs basis.[26] In addition, the EU should create a robust mechanism for engagement between CSOs and other key stakeholders such as local governments. It should also promote CSO capacity building. Particular attention should be given to support networks and capacity building (both at national and grassroots level) that help CSOs to increase their accountability. Grassroots CSOs should be given the opportunity to fully participate in decision-making processes.

3.2 Support for Human Rights Defenders (Environmental and Labour)

Support for human rights defenders in Kenya has been shrinking in recent years. During the 2017 elections, the head of technology at the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC) was brutally murdered.[27] In the aftermath of the election, 2018 was a year of political unrest, with crackdowns on opposition protests and the intimidation and harassment of human rights defenders (HRDs) and journalists. CSOs reported human rights abuses including extra-judicial killings, disappearances and unlawful detentions.[28]

The Bill of Rights in the Kenyan Constitution can be considered as progressive in protecting human rights. However, the government has been neglecting the bill's provisions and using punitive measures against human rights activists. This reveals that the real challenges lie in the enforcement of the constitution and the government's compliance with it.

The media has become a weak advocate for human rights. The government is among the top sources of revenue for Kenya's traditional media, through advertising. This is especially salient in the runup to elections, when government-sponsored adverts, showcasing the achievements during its term in office, are a common feature.

During the last election period, it was common for bloggers from the opposition to be arrested for writing or commenting on political events.

The key priorities of the NIP are both consistent with and complementary to the support that Kenya will be able to receive under the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO).[29] The main objective of the RIP for Eastern Africa is to support peace, security and regional stability. Among other objectives, the RIP aims to support regional projects promoting democratization, good governance, the rule of law and human rights.

The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015 – 2019 presented the European Union's commitment to promote and protect human rights and to support democracy worldwide. As part of the EU's bilateral political engagement, the EU Delegation in Kenya continues to coordinate with human rights organisations, such as the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), Amnesty International and Peace Brigades International. It also coordinates with EU member states active in human rights and organizes thematic festivals, events and other initiatives related to human rights.

26 A good example of this is the International Conference on Population and Development 2019 where several CSOs were brought together to participate specifically for the purposes of the ICPD+25.
27 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40774938
28 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/complete_eu_country_updates_on_human_rights_and_democracy_in_the_world_2018_4.pdf
29 https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/rip-ea-sa-io-signed-20150604_en.pdf

Environmental human rights are also a major theme for civil society organisations. Combining economic growth with sustainable development was recognized as a priority by Agenda 2030 (SDG 12). In 2018, two HRDs, one from Kenya's coastal island of Lamu and one from Mombasa, were recognised for their work in raising local communities' awareness of the environmental impact of large infrastructure and energy projects.[30] Kenya faces growing environmental problems such as soil erosion, deforestation, water pollution and desertification, and these are being aggravated by global environmental concerns including climate change and the loss of biodiversity. Environmental conservation and effective natural resource management are crucial for a more effective implementation of policies on food security and disaster mitigation.[31]

Led by FIC, the SOLIDAR network in Kenya underlines the need to change the narrative about human rights defenders and to invest in widespread civic education. Up to now, activists have been generally perceived exclusively as anti-government protesters, exposing them to sometimes-brutal repression by the state. SOLIDAR also calls for the establishment of strong support mechanisms. Human rights activists are often threatened, violated and defamed, so there are only a few CSOs that strongly advocate and fight for human rights.

3.3 Freedom of Association
Art. 36 of Kenya's Constitution (2010) guarantees the right to freedom of association (FoA). However, Kenya has not yet ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention – International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 87 – and the right is only partially respected. Indeed, unregistered societies are not legally permitted, and the government has wide discretion in placing conditions on NGO activities. For instance, the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2012) has been misused in a way that entailed the neutralization

of the right of freedom of association. In 2015, Mombasa-based CSOs Muslims for Human Rights and Haki Africa were deregistered, and their accounts were frozen, after the government alleged that they had been aiding terrorists. However, the government failed to provide evidence to support that claim.

In another instance, the body mandated to regulate the non-government sector, the NGO Coordination Board, deregistered the Kenya National Human Rights Commission (KNHRC) after accusing it of tax evasion, illegal hiring of expatriates and having illegal bank accounts.[32] A court of law reversed this decision and instructed the government body to pay the NGO KES 2 million (EUR 18,000) in compensation for the unjustified deregistration.

In July 2019, protestors were harassed when picketing against Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC), a parastatal company accused of corruption. KPLC has a monopoly of Kenya's electricity supply market and had been accused of overcharging customers through irregular billings. The protestors launched a campaign with the slogan "Switch Off KPLC", of which the main objective was to dismantle the cartels behind the irregular billing activities, so as to make electricity affordable for Kenyans.[33]

The EU has made notable efforts to support FoA and should maintain its proactive stance. It should engage key stakeholders to strengthen policies and practices that promote FoA.

However, it sometimes appears as though foreign policy can be skewed by relations with an incumbent regime. The timing of EU actions is also noteworthy in terms of the EU's commitment in the country. Kenyan public opinion seems to believe that interventions by the international community have been exclusively linked to states of crisis, such as the one that followed the 2017 election violence.

32 https://www.nation.co.ke/news/kenya-Human-Rights-Commission-deregistered-/1056-4057174-10291od/index.html
33 https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ktnnews/video/2000179473/jerotich-seii-when-we-say-switch-off-kplc-we-are-not-joking-it-is-beyond-redemption-point-blank

4. DECENT WORK AND SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR ALL

The 2010 Constitution introduced a subsidiarity mechanism by devolving power and responsibility to 47 County Governments. The devolution process, which kicked off in 2013 with the election of Governors, aims to foster relations between the national and county-level governments based on consultation and cooperation. One objective is to enable reasonable access to services in all parts of the republic, while the national government continues to manage social protection policies.

The Social Pillar of Vision 2030 involves investing in people. The quality of life of Kenyans will be improved by a just, cohesive society with equitable socioeconomic development and a clean, secure environment. For this purpose, the Vision 2030 blueprint targets a cross section of human and social welfare projects and programmes[34] that will help to transform society. In particular, six key social sectors have been identified, including education and training; health; and environment, water and sanitation. Special provisions will be made for people with disabilities and marginalized communities.

4.1 Fundamental Rights at Work

Kenya has ratified the ILO National Conventions on Forced Labour (No. 29), Minimum Age (No. 138) and Discrimination (Employment and Occupation, No. 111). Strong national policies counter forced labour in the country. However, the current economic environment has put workers at risk of exploitation due to a lack of quality jobs. In addition, poor compliance with laws jeopardizes workers' rights. Major

34 http://vision2030.go.ke/inc/uploads/2019/01/THIRD-MEDIUM-TERM-PLAN-2018-2022.pdf

changes should be encouraged to support compliance against forced labour and human trafficking and to promote economic growth that will provide citizens with decent jobs and pay.

Youth is another group vulnerable to exploitation as long as unemployment remains high and the options for earning a decent livelihood are limited. CSOs, training institutions and the private sector have been working together to create jobs and encourage entrepreneurship. But the international community has not adequately prioritized interventions to create youth employment opportunities.

Based on the ILO National Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation, No. 111), the government introduced national policies against discrimination at work, including the Two-Thirds Gender Principle, the Ethnic Balance Rule, the Persons with Disabilities Act and the County Government Act. Yet these policies are not fully enforced, and discrimination still exists on the basis of ethnicity, gender, age and other factors. The EU has partnered with CSOs on programmes to support women's empowerment and discourage gender-based violence and workplace gender discrimination.

In order to effectively oppose forced labour and counter employment and occupational discrimination in Kenya, the EU should support government efforts to enforce laws. These could include increasing the frequency of inspections and strengthening the capacity of trade unions to represent domestic workers, a sector in which forced labour is high. The EU should also support initiatives and interventions that will empower women and youth. These include setting up incubation centres that train youngsters in new skills to link them with potential markets and offering financial support for training or for setting up their own company.

4.2 Universal Access to Healthcare

Evidence-based studies endorse the idea that increasing the involvement of the private sector in health services may contribute to violations of the right to universal access to high-quality healthcare. This is especially true when private actors are not adequately monitored and regulated by the state. The impact is particularly high on the most marginalised groups, who are too poor to pay for services or to choose adequate services.[35]

In Africa, a higher proportion of the population does not have access to social protection and adequate healthcare than on any other continent. It also has the greatest human needs.[36] The Kenya Health Policy 2014-2030 calls for the highest possible standards of healthcare to be delivered in a manner responsive to the needs of the population and in line with the 2010 Constitution, Vision 2030 and global commitments.

The national government, in partnership with county governments, has committed to efforts to provide universal access to preventive and primary healthcare and to clean water for all households. It has also committed to providing maternal and child healthcare. And it has committed to facilitating the implementation of programmes and projects that will lead to the attainment of SDG No. 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages – and of the aspirations in the African Agenda 2063.[37] Kenya has made major gains, especially in managing communicable diseases such as HIV-AIDs, tuberculosis and malaria. However, a lot still needs to be done in order to improve the overall healthcare system.[38]

In 2015, the implementation of Vision 2030's actions in the field of health and education started. The Managed Equipment Service was launched to provide Kenyans with nationwide access to healthcare services, by equipping two hospitals in each county and four referral hospitals with five recommended classes of equipment. 2015 also saw the introduction of the Digital Learning Programme and the launch of the Last Mile Connectivity Programme, which included the electrification of all public primary schools.[39]

35 https://www.gi-escr.org/private-actors-social-services/health
36 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_604882.pdf
37 https://vision2030.go.ke/publication/third-medium-term-plan-2018-2022/
38 http://vision2030.go.ke/inc/uploads/2018/06/Second-Medium-Term-Plan-2013-2017.pdf
39 https://vision2030.go.ke/

The main obstacle for the health sector is the lack of a comprehensive strategy to address all dimensions of universal health coverage.

Inadequate healthcare financing, inadequate levels of technology and problems with drugs, vaccines and equipment remain challenges to be overcome. Consequently, many people suffer from poor health service provision and poor access to facilities. In addition, health services remain unaffordable for a large part of the population. The poor system of remuneration also demotivates health practitioners.

Led by FIC, the SOLIDAR network in the country considers that a multi-sectorial approach, involving county governments and relevant ministries, is needed to address the challenges of universal access to health, such as a lack of human capital and inadequate structures.

4.3 Universal Access to Education

The major challenge that persists in education is quality. Facilities are overstretched, and there is an insufficient number of teachers, leading to a high pupil-teacher ratio. Many teachers are not able to structure new curricula. The rate of early school leaving is high because of early pregnancies and early marriages. Funding is often inadequate and its effectiveness is often reduced by embezzlement.

Over the years, there has been a strong discrepancy between the resources dedicated to infrastructure and the investment in human capital development. This gap also applies to funds from the EU. A multi-sectorial approach is urgently needed to carry out reforms, and a priority should be to strengthen the capabilities of teachers and other people working in the sector. To address these problems, the Third Medium Term Plan 2018-2022 aims to achieve "globally competitive quality education, training and research for sustainable development".[40]

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40 http://vision2030.go.ke/inc/uploads/2018/06/Second-Medium-Term-Plan-2013-2017.pdf

The Social Pillar of the Third MTP will focus on the following topics in education: i) actualization of the right to free, compulsory basic education; ii) improvement of education beyond the basic level; iii) improvement of the quality and relevance of education; iv) integration of information and communications technology into teaching and learning; v) better financing for education and training; vi) better governance. By providing the required skilled human resources and promoting research and development,[41] the education sector[42] will contribute to the "big four" development challenges: universal health coverage, food and nutrition security, manufacturing industry and affordable housing. This aim is in line with the previous MTP, from 2013 to 2017, which identified as a priority the matching of education and training with the labour market's demand for skills.

Based on in-country consultation among members and partners, the SOLIDAR network in Kenya makes the following suggestions:

• The international community should support the new competence-based curricula and infrastructural improvements in order to help relieve the pressure on overstretched facilities.

• Support innovative interventions in education, such as combining in-school curricula with mentorship from practicing professionals on the model of the Mentorthon Initiative, which started in Elgeyo Marakwet County.[43]

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41 https://vision2030.go.ke/publication/third-medium-term-plan-2018-2022/
42 The Education Sector, as established by the Third MTP 2018-2020, is composed by Basic Education; Vocational and Technical Training; Post Training and Skills Development and University Education sub-sectors and their respective agencies.
43 www.mentorthon.com

6. CONCLUSIONS

CSOs play a primary role in law enforcement and the support of governance reforms. A multi-sectorial approach and a long-term vision that includes CSO capacity building is essential for establishing broad partnerships with civil society groups and promoting vibrant enabling spaces for CSOs. This requires stronger support and a change of narrative on human rights defenders in line with the specific objectives of the Eastern Africa Regional Indicative Program (RIP) to promote democratization, good governance, the rule of law and human rights.

Decent work and the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda – employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue – are integral parts of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which the EU is committed. Nevertheless, poor compliance with laws jeopardizes workers' rights. That means it is of fundamental importance to increase inspections, projects strengthening CSOs and trade unions' capacity. This is especially important in sectors with high levels of forced labour, such as domestic work.

Youth remains vulnerable to exploitation as long as unemployment is high, and the EU should prioritize interventions in job creation that especially target youth. A higher proportion of the population in Africa than any other continent lacks access to social protection, adequate healthcare and high standards of education.

The main obstacle in the health sector is the lack of a comprehensive strategy addressing all the dimensions of universal health coverage. The major challenge in education is quality: Facilities are overstretched, skill levels are inadequate and there is an insufficient number of teachers. The SOLIDAR network strongly encourages the international community to support capacity building and infrastructure improvements that bring progress towards universal access to healthcare and education.

Enabling Environments for CSOs
The EU should **support CSOs' work to build capacity and networks.** To counter the general perception that activists are simply anti-government protesters, which trivializes their genuine concerns, it is critical to **promote a change of narrative over human rights defenders (HRDs) and to invest in civic education.** Finally, the EU should **engage proactively with key stakeholders** to strengthen policies and practices to **promote FoA.**

Decent Work and Social Protection for all
The challenge of universal access to health should be addressed through a **multi-sectorial approach,** working with county governments, the relevant ministries and other stakeholders to formulate integrated strategic healthcare policies. In education, the EU should make funds available for capacity building **to support reform in governance and human resources and to create innovative approaches that enhance quality and access.** The international community should **enhance the training of teachers** and build **new competence-based curricula.** It should also support **infrastructure improvements** to help decongest the already-overstretched facilities. Lastly, the EU should support government efforts to **enforce the law** and bolster **initiatives to empower women and youth.** There is a great need to support innovative

interventions to **create employment and boost incomes. Skills development** is especially important amid ongoing changes in the nature of work, as digitization and new media generate demand for a new range of skills. It is also essential to support interventions that enable students to make an optimal transition from school to the labour market and to encourage the **establishment and growth of sustainable enterprises.** The EU should also support the **capacity strengthening of trade unions.**

**ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED
IN THE PROJECT**
1. **Forum for International Cooperation (FIC)**
2. **International Solidarity Foundation**
3. **Africa Youth Trust**
4. **Youth Alive! Kenya**
5. **Action Aid**
6. **Institute of Public Finance**
7. **Blossoms Markets Development**
8. **Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International**
9. **Usitawi Africa**
10. **Micro Enterprise Support Program Trust (MESP)**
11. **Youth Agenda**
12. **League of Young Professionals**
13. **The Institute of Social Accountability**
14. **Association of Women in Agriculture Kenya**