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Poll

Do you support calls for the forced removal of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe from power?

- Yes
 No

Your Say

The independent struggle for Zimbabwe was

Empowering the youth through technology

Published on 08/12/2008

By Daniel Kamanga

Today, 75 per cent of Kenyans are below 30 years while 45 per cent of them are below 15 years old.

In the next two decades, the youth will have reached 24 million, resulting with what the Ministry of Youth has called "the youth bulge" challenge.

Sometimes, such statistics can be paralysing. Yet, it is necessary to break down possible solutions into actionable goals.



Experts say if Kenya is to meet Vision 2030 targets there's need to encourage the youth to embrace science and technology so that they can contribute effectively to nation building.

First, it is widely acknowledge that the explosive progress of science and technology has brought prosperity and enriched the quality of life for mankind.

The Ministry of Science and Technology's vision is to create "a national culture that prides in and actively promotes Science, Technology, Innovation and high quality higher education for prosperity and global competitiveness".

Second, depending on how it is managed, the youth bulge could, instead of being a curse (as it is often packaged), be Kenya's greatest blessing.

Third, given the entrepreneurial nature of our youth, how about seriously looking at the business of science and technology?

It seems obvious that the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Youth and all government departments charged with creating an entrepreneurial national culture should be talking more (assuming they are talking at all!).

Does the Ministry of Youth know that the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Sally Kosgei, lead delegations to four major world conferences this year?

Two of the meetings were in Japan, one of the super-power nations in science and technology.

The fifth Annual Meeting of the Science and Technology Society (STS) Forum include a Science and Technology Minister's round table meeting convened by the Japanese Minister for Science and Technology.

The other meeting, the Japan-Africa Science and Technology Minister's meeting was convened by the Government of Japan.

The STS Forum meeting was attended by several African Ministers of Science and Technology. STS has 66 Council Members from 23 countries and is fast becoming the World Economic Forum of Science and Technology.

Whichever way you look at Kenya's economic challenges, without effectively involving the youth, we are doomed to fail.

For example, Kenya is unlikely to meet her national targets or the Millennium Development Goals without addressing youth development.

Kenya should borrow the STS Forum's vision and provide mechanism for involving the youth in open discussions on an informal basis, and to build a network that will, in time, resolve the existing and new types challenges facing our country.

Some of these challenges are stemming from the application of science and technology; since the you are the ones likely to reap the benefits, or deal with potential problems, involving them today, is a great strategy.

It is a paradox that most scientists in Kenya, and Africa, do not represent the "youth bulge". The proposed dialogue mechanism will also explore the opportunities arising from science and technology, and address how to remove the barriers to using science and technology to solve challenges facing

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meant for good of the people of Zimbabwe. It was to bring and build democracy and wealth for all. Shame on him. Zimbabweans have demonstrated peace and godly patience and need the world to deliver them from this tyrant ...

Muchoki Stephen,
New Zealand

[Your Comments](#)

Kenya.

This is one of the ways that the Ministry of Youth Affairs (now Youth Affairs and Sports) can achieve its vision of "a responsible and empowered youth, building a better Kenya".

The African Union's 'Consolidated Science and Technology Plan of Action' articulates Africa's common objectives and states the continent's "commitment to collective actions to develop and use science and technology for the socio-economic".

The action-plan points out that without interrelated conceptual pillars that involve capacity building, knowledge production and technological innovation, the continent has a

The same is true for Kenya. Fortunately, Kenya is a regional powerhouse in science and technology. This means that the country has an excellent basis on which the youth can be integrated.

The missing link has been the commercialization of science and technology. The youth are likely to be attracted to science and technology if opportunities of applying business thinking are expanded.

Most developed countries have build their economies using science and technology, Kenya should not be left behind.

Daniel Kamanga is Director of Communications at Africa Harvest, www.africaharvest.org and a former editor with the Standard. Views expressed here are personal.

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Ethokon
Lumana
Engolon was relaxed and

enjoying herding his cattle and goats 500 meters away from his Manyatta in Kalimorock, Turkana South District, when his life was transformed. The day had began well and his mind occasionally wandered as he took pride of how his stock had doubled and fattened. He was excited that with the onset of short rains and maturing of new pasture, the long trek in search of water and pasture would temporarily be forgotten.



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