



# SEED FOR YOUTH

Africa is the world's youngest continent, with 60% of its population under the age of 25. Many economies struggle to accommodate the influx of youth into the workforce, leaving 10-12 million young people to compete for only 3.1 million jobs each year. In Kenya, despite overall economic growth, almost 40% of young people, or 5.3 million youths, remain unemployed.

BOMA is addressing this crisis by adapting REAP to address the needs of vulnerable youth in rural areas of Marsabit and Isiolo. In both counties, over 50% of young people are unemployed, and the lack of economic opportunity has led to an increase in radicalization.

The 12-month Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (SEED) Project for Vulnerable and Marginalized Youth program involves the same six steps as REAP, with certain adaptations tailored to the youth participants. While the classic REAP model enrolls 100 percent women, SEED is enrolling an equal number of men and women, ages 18-34.

The overall timeline is condensed, with participants spending 12 months enrolled from business launch to exit. BOMA is partnering with **Smart Regional Consultants (SRC)** to provide enhanced business training, coaching, and business development services.

## KEY IMPACTS



### Youth Employment

SEED aims to create sustainable youth employment through the establishment and maintenance of profitable enterprises.



### Community Lift

By running a business, receiving steady income, and gaining access to credit, loans and savings, enrolled youth will be able to support more than 7,200 other household members.



### Opportunity Growth

Their success within the program will also help youth perceptions and expectations of what is possible for themselves and will allow them to act as role models.

BOMA is tackling the root cause of unemployment and radicalization through Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (SEED) for Vulnerable and Marginalized Youth. The steps of this approach include:



#### LISTEN

To community priorities & youth needs



#### LAUNCH

Initiatives with start-up capital



#### TRAIN

Youth in business skills & climate adaptation



#### MENTOR

Entrepreneurs & conservation groups



#### SAVE

Profits and access credit



#### CONNECT

Communities to green markets and value chains

# THE PROBLEM

According to a UN report, Africa is the world's youngest continent, with 60% of its population under the age of 25. However, many economies struggle to accommodate the influx of young individuals entering the workforce, leaving 10-12 million youths to compete for only 3.1 million jobs created each year. In Kenya, despite overall economic growth, almost 40% of young people, or 5.3 million youths, remain unemployed. Youth unemployment thus represents a significant factor in the persistence of extreme poverty and puts millions at risk of radicalization.

SEED will address four key challenges that hinder youth participation in markets: limited access to seed capital and low risk-taking culture, lack of affordable and relevant business support services that help the youth grow their enterprises and raise finances, and a lack of market and financial linkages to help the youth navigate through the market effectively and expand their enterprises. To address these challenges, BOMA will provide training and mentorship on basic entrepreneurship, seed capital and assets to launch viable startup enterprises, and a range of business services and training. Additionally, BOMA will facilitate access to market and financial products. SEED will utilize a robust Participatory Targeting Approach, market analysis and opportunity assessments, and seed capital of KES 50,000 (USD \$500) to each business group.

The BOMA Project (BOMA) is a Kenyan NGO and US nonprofit working at the intersection of youth unemployment, climate change, and extreme poverty. BOMA's goal is to support 3 million people living in the last mile communities of the ASALs of Africa in graduating from extreme poverty by becoming self-sufficient through sustainable enterprise and achieving resilience to shifts in both economy and climate.



## PROGRAM IMPACTS

**29%** increase in household income

**1400%** increase in savings

**80%** of businesses operational five years later

**21%** increase in girls going to school

**361,890** total women, youth, and refugees (and their dependents) impacted since 2009

**19,964** businesses launched since 2009

**3,900+** Savings Groups established since 2009

## OUR APPROACH

The BOMA Project's Rural Entrepreneur Access Project (REAP) is one of the most successful, sustainable, and cost-effective poverty graduation approaches in the world. It was designed for and has been tested and refined in the uniquely challenging context of the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) of northern Kenya.

REAP entails 12 to 24 months of sequenced interventions with a clear exit strategy and rigorous criteria for success. Communities nominate their poorest, most vulnerable members, who then form small business groups, learn how to draft a business plan, and receive a cash grant to immediately start a small business. New entrepreneurs receive financial and life skills training and are mentored for two years to manage and grow their business. They also contribute to a savings pool, which they can access as needed to cope with shocks or to invest in expanding their business.

Participants have "graduated" from poverty when they meet their benchmarks for food security, sustainable livelihoods, shock preparedness, and human and social capital.

## BOMA'S MISSION

BOMA is working to lift 3 million people out of extreme poverty — defined as living on less than \$1.90 per day — by 2027. Our mission is to provide the people and governments of Africa's drylands with economic inclusion programs that increase resilience to multiple crises.

## Contact Us

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