



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR LABOUR
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY**

**REMARKS BY ENG. PETER TUM, OGW
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY STATE DEPARTMENT FOR
LABOUR, MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION
DURING THE PROJECTS INSPECTION VISIT TO
NITA KISUMU**

THURSDAY, 6TH MAY, 2021

The Chairman, National Industrial Training Board (NITB), Dr. Kamau Gachigi

Members of the National Industrial Training Board (NITB) present

The Director General, National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), Mr. Stephen Ogenga

Staff of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, NITA Management present

Members of the Fourth Estate

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning?

I am pleased to be with you today during this inspection visit of the works undertaken at NITA Kisumu.

The projects in this Centre are part of the overall works being undertaken by the National Industrial Training Authority in all its training centres across the country. They are aimed at transforming the way skills development is delivered in the country to meet the demands of a rapidly industrializing economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Globally, industries endeavor to have a well-trained labour force for optimal productivity. Therefore, our country requires skilled workers

who are technologically innovative and proficient in order to compete globally.

Thus, I am pleased to note that the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) has embraced **a results-based vision of a globally competitive and adequate workforce for industrial development**. This is in fulfillment of the Authority's mandate of ensuring adequate supply of properly trained manpower at all levels of industry.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world of work has been profoundly affected by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Not only is the health of tens of millions of people at risk, their long-term livelihoods and wellbeing are also at stake.

Over the past several months, the Covid-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges to all types and levels of learning, including schooling, TVET training, apprenticeships and internships. At the same time, the pandemic has also stimulated discussions between governments, workers, employers and training providers on the need for accelerated adoption of technology in the delivery of TVET and skills training programmes.

Covid-19 will have far-reaching impacts on labour market outcomes. Beyond urgent concerns about the health of workers and their families, the virus and the subsequent economic shocks will impact the world of work across three key dimensions, namely:

- the quantity of jobs (through the effects of unemployment and underemployment on the labour market);

- the quality of work (as a result of the pandemic's effects on wages, working hours and access to social protection); and
- the medium to long-term adverse labour market outcomes on specific groups who are more vulnerable, coupled with the emergence of the 'newly vulnerable' segment of the population.

Industrial training can play a key role in addressing these effects through such strategies as: skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling of workers, especially those who may have lost jobs as a result of the pandemic; training to address new skills demand (as demonstrated by NITA's proactive training of workers in the production of PPEs); improved assessment and certification standards to allow for better wage negotiation; and strategic skills development for foreign labour demand to enable Kenyans access employment in the global labour market.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In Kenya, there is need for the entrenchment of a culture of lifelong learning, recognition of prior learning as well as the required infrastructure that can help make such continued learning and training feasible. This is particularly necessary due to the rapid technological developments taking place in the global labour market.

In response to this, Kenya has developed a National Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning which will provide candidates and learners with a fair and accessible process of evaluation, assessment, documentation and recognition of their acquired skills, knowledge and competencies, regardless of the nature of acquisition.

This means that Kenyans who have acquired certifiable skills – even without proper education backgrounds – will now be able to approach relevant training colleges or qualification awarding institutions (QAIs) and apply for recognition of their skills.

The RPL framework will enable such Kenyans, who have previously been 'locked out' of the existing education system, to acquire the highest levels of education and skilling, regardless of their start or previous nature of participation in education and training. This is a milestone that moves Kenya closer to world class education systems which allow for flexible and response education and training systems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Upgrading and expansion of existing Industrial Training Centres is one of the key projects in the Third Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-2022 of the Kenya Vision 2030. It is in line with this that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, through NITA, has embarked on upgrading and expansion works in all the training centres under the Authority.

I would like to take note of the following sub-projects which were undertaken during the 2019/20 Financial Year to upgrade NITA Kisumu. They are: refurbishment of classroom blocks; removal and disposal of asbestos roofing in the workshops, walkways and hostels; and rehabilitation of the kitchen and dining hall, including installation and commissioning of the cold room.

This is in addition to the procurement and installation of two new boilers which will further entrench NITA Kisumu as a centre of excellence in

boiler technology training. The Centre will therefore play a key role as a catalyst in the revival and growth of manufacturing sector in the region, including the sugar and tea industries.

I am also well aware of the projects that have been undertaken at the NITA Athi River mainly: the repair of the perimeter wall and rehabilitation of the storm water drainages; supply, installation, testing and commissioning of plumbing, drainage and water reticulation works in the student hostels; construction a modern of sports field; construction of a cold room; and the construction of a corporate gate.

In NITA Mombasa, we have witnessed the construction of a corporate gate, rehabilitation of drive ways, rehabilitation of the street lighting, rehabilitation of the dining hall and kitchen, upgrading of two blocks of hostels, relocation of the sewer line and construction of sports facilities.

The Authority also constructed temporary workshop at NITA Mombasa blocks to allow room for the new project for upgrading and expansion works at the Centre which is supported by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the country eases some of the Covid-19 containment measures and allows for activities such as the reopening of training institutions, I wish to challenge NITA to ensure the highest standards of preparedness for resumption of training in all its centres.

I am also aware that NITA will soon be rolling out assessment for the Government Trade Tests across the country. This is welcome news for

the thousands of trainees and workers, especially from the informal sector, who have registered but have been unable to be assessed and certified as a result on the postponement of the Trade Tests by NITA in response to the Government's Covid-19 measures.

I wish to urge the Board and management of the Authority to ensure that all training and skills development programmes, including the Government Trade Tests are conducted efficiently and in strict adherence to all Ministry of Health Covid-19 Guidelines.

In this regard, I wish to direct the management of NITA to prepare and submit to the Ministry protocols and measures to be put in place to ensure compliance with the Covid-19 Guidelines within all training and assessment centres. This will allow for regular monitoring of training and assessment and mitigation of any issues or cases that may arise.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude my remarks, I wish to assure the Board and Management of NITA of the Ministry's support in ensuring that industrial training takes its rightful place in transforming the employment landscape in Kenya.

The Ministry will continue with its open-door policy and proactive consultations to ensure that we address any challenges and emerging issues while exploiting opportunities in the industrial training environment to ensure that we realize the common goal of a highly skilled and adaptive workforce for Kenya and beyond.

Thank you!