

## Supporting Entrepreneurship Education in East Africa

### Abstract:

The University of Nairobi School of Business and Plymouth University Business School were commissioned by the UK Department for International Development to assess the capacity of business schools and other institutions to support entrepreneurship through development of entrepreneurship education in East Africa. The research was carried out in three phases: • A literature review and desk research on entrepreneurship education and training in three case study countries: Kenya, Tanzania and South Sudan; • Semi-structured Interviews with 61 stakeholders and a survey of 420 stakeholders in the three case study countries which explored perceptions of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education and training; and • A workshop which further refined insights from the interviews and survey. The main conclusion from the literature review and desk research was that there is a gap between formal business education in East Africa and the needs of entrepreneurs, especially for women, young people and marginalised groups. It is essential, therefore, to develop a new paradigm for entrepreneurship education that is grounded in the economic and social context of the entrepreneurs. A major finding from the interviews, survey and workshop was the relative lack of interest among graduates and unemployed youth in pursuing self-employment compared to corporate or public sector employment. Other important findings included the importance of: • introducing entrepreneurship at all levels of education from primary to postgraduate; • social enablers such as trust building, communications and negotiation skills for the success of entrepreneurs; • experiential over theoretical learning; • mentoring, coaching and peer-peer learning over other forms of learning support; • context specific skills development for entrepreneurs; • a commonly held definition of entrepreneurship that embraces broader societal and developmental goals. - Stakeholders identified the need for: • integrated policy making between governments, the private sector, civil society organisations and educational institutions; • special consideration for disadvantaged groups in policy formulation; • social and cultural change eg through social mobilisation; • agreed conceptual frameworks for entrepreneurship promotion and entrepreneurship education (allowing for cultural and linguistic differences); • integrated interventions addressing all levels of education: primary, and secondary schools, colleges and vocational training schemes and universities/business schools; and • the development of curricula and resources appropriate for all levels of intervention. The need for experiential learning opportunities and mentoring, combined with relative disinterest in pursuing self-employment and entrepreneurship as a chosen career path means that significant levels of training and capacity building, supplemented by processes of behavioural and social change will need to be explored if 'systemic entrepreneurship' is to be realised in East Africa. Based on these findings, six cross cutting themes for future capacity building are identified: • Developing Shared Knowledge and Conceptual Frameworks • Enhancing National Education Policies and Practices • Developing Accessible Learning Materials • Training Trainers and Building Enterprise Educator Support Networks • Supporting Social Networks and the Informal Sector • Embedding Research and Continuous Improvement. Recommendations are made in six areas, based on the results of the research: • Presentation and dissemination of findings; • Convening conferences of interested parties; • Establishing country based networks of enterprise educators; • Establishing a system for learning object capture and distribution using various media; •

Developing integrative pilot projects in focal countries and elsewhere reflecting the analysis of this report and the need for both rural and urban entrepreneurship education initiatives focused on the young, women and disadvantaged groups; and • Developing mechanisms for sharing the results of pilot projects and publicizing outcomes.