



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING**

**OPENING REMARKS BY MR. JAMES MUHATI, CBS, PRINCIPAL  
SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING,  
DELIVERED DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE KENYA  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE, TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH 2025 AT THE CHANDARIA AUDITORIUM OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**March 2025**

**Chief Guest, Hon. FCPA John Mbadu Ngóngo, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for The National Treasury and Economic Planning;**

Cabinet Secretaries Present;

Principal Secretaries present;

UNFPA Country Representative, Mr. Anders Thomsen;

Board Chair, National Council for Population and Development;

Board Members, National Council for Population and Development;

Other Board Chairs present;

Director General NCPD, Dr. Mohamed Sheikh;

Executive Director Population Council - Kenya, Dr. Beth Kangwana;

Other Chief Executive Officers present;

Distinguished guests;

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good afternoon!**

I am greatly honoured and privileged to join you today at this important conference, the 2025 Kenya Population and Development Conference. This is the first scientific conference on population and development whose theme is "***Navigating the Future: Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development in Kenya***".

The conference provides an opportunity to reflect on past achievements on population and development; as well as take stock of the substantial work which is still required to reposition the country for the future.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

One of the mandates of the State Department for Economic Planning as stipulated in the Executive Order No. 2 of 2023 is Population Policy Management which involves providing policy guidance and oversight on population and development matters; as well as provision of technical support and quality assurance on population programmes. In this regard, Kenya has over the years, developed population policies and programmes that have assisted in steering the national population agenda.

Population dynamics play a crucial role in shaping the development of policies and programmes aimed at improving citizen's wellbeing and quality of life. Integrating population into development planning is therefore important as it allows policymakers to understand and address the significant impact of changing population size, age structure, and distribution on a country's social, economic, and environmental development trajectory.

For instance, as you are aware, Kenya's growing youth population presents a unique demographic opportunity as well as a challenge. According to the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, the youth (aged 18–34) constituted 29% of the national population and was projected at 31.4% in 2024 thus Kenya, like other developing countries has been experiencing a youth bulge since independence.

Youth unemployment continues to be a persistent issue in Kenya, with unemployment rates for those aged 15-34 frequently exceeding 20%. Therefore, productive engagement of the youthful population is required to increase economic growth and thus translate the youth bulge into a demographic dividend.

Further, over the years, Kenya has witnessed increase in life expectancy resulting into increase in old age dependency. This therefore call of inclusive population planning, with all the population cohorts in mind.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In order to assist NCPD undertake its role of population management, the State Department is currently reengineering its existing procedures, processes and policies to ensure that the national planning function is efficient, effective and impactful. The reengineering process entails strengthening the human resource capacity; and reviewing policy and legal framework.

In strengthening the human resource capacity, SDEP has established a Population and Statistics Unit within the headquarters to further collaborate with NCPD and KNBS in provision and utilization of quality population data to inform evidence-based decision making and programming.

The review of SDEP policies and legal frameworks is geared towards developing the Economic Planning Policy and Bill which is expected to strengthen the economic planning function; ensure integration between

National and County Government planning; and create a link between existing policies for example the Session Paper No. 1 of 2023 on Kenya National Population Policy for Sustainable Development.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Sustaining the population programme requires multi-sectoral collaboration between government agencies, civil society, private sector players, development partners and other players. In this regard, I extend my gratitude to all the stakeholders who have made this conference possible and all those who have supported the population programme over the years.

As I conclude, it is my sincere hope that this conference will facilitate technical networking, knowledge-sharing and lay the foundation for future collaboration between researchers and policy makers on population and development.

It is now my humble duty to invite our Chief Guest - **Hon. FCPA John Mbadi Ng'ongo, EGH**, Cabinet Secretary for The National Treasury and Economic Planning, to come and officially open the conference.

**THANK YOU**  
**ASANTENI SANA**