



MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES AND MICRO,  
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs)  
DEVELOPMENT

State Department for Micro, Small and Medium  
Enterprises (MSMEs) Development

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



## PRESS STATEMENT

Teusday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

### UPDATE ON THE NYOTA PROJECT NATION-WIDE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

1. The NYOTA Project Business Support Component has been undertaking the Nationwide mentorship program since 4th March 2026, across all the 1450 wards in Kenya. The mentorship program includes site visits, business guide talks, experience sharing moments, cross-peer mentorship and networking sessions to enable beneficiaries to start and grow their businesses.
2. The mandatory mentorship program follows the nationwide disbursement of the first tranche of NYOTA Business Support startup capital to 121,800 beneficiaries, as part of the 3-pronged pathway for enterprise development: business skills training, funding and mentorship.
3. To date, **94 % of the beneficiaries** who received the first tranche of startup capital have been taken through the mentorship program, and 98% of them have already started their businesses. The remaining **2% are in the process of starting their business.**
4. The mentorship program has revealed that **65%** of the mentees are first-time entrepreneurs, while **19%** have less than one year of business experience. A further **13%** have between one and three years of experience, while only **3%** have been in business for more than three years. This shows that the NYOTA Business Support is largely supporting emerging entrepreneurs who are at the early stages of building their enterprises.
5. In terms of gender distribution, **51%** of the NYOTA business support beneficiaries who have undergone mentorship are female, while **49%** are male, reflecting a near-equal gender parity in the NYOTA Project.

6. Agriculture, livestock, forestry, and fisheries value chains have emerged as the most popular sectors, accounting for **41%** of the enterprises, closely followed by the wholesale and retail sector at **26%**, Fashion and design at 11%, and beauty and cosmetics 7%. Other significant sectors include ICT, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality and transportation and storage.
7. The nationwide mentorship program was scheduled to end today, **31st March 2026**. We have, however, extended the deadline to **Wednesday, 8th April 2026** to give the remaining 6% of the beneficiaries who are yet to turn up an opportunity for mentorship. The mentorship is a **mandatory requirement** for the 2nd business skills classroom training. Beneficiaries who have not engaged with their mentors are urged to contact their constituency NYOTA Project coordinators immediately.
8. The conclusion of the mentorship program will be followed by the 2nd mandatory business skills classroom training scheduled to commence on **15th April 2026** in all constituencies across the country.
9. Upon completion of the business skills classroom training, the beneficiaries will receive their 2nd tranche of the NYOTA Business Support startup capital of Ksh. 25,000 (with Ksh. 3,000 being savings under the Haba Haba scheme by NSSF), bringing the total disbursement to Ksh. 50,000 per beneficiary as per project design.
10. The disbursement of the 2nd tranche of the business start-up capital is earmarked to take place before the **end of April 2026, after the completion of the 2nd business skills classroom training**, paving the way for the 2nd mentorship period that will introduce the beneficiaries to the MSME ecosystem for enhanced business support.
11. The beneficiaries from Daadab and Kakuma Refugee camps are scheduled to undertake their classroom business skills training in April and May 2026 in the respective regions, alongside the beneficiaries from the host communities.
12. The Nyota project has also extended economic engagement opportunities to graduate-level youth. participating in training and mentorship. Over 3600 trainers and 5500 mentors have been engaged to support the NYOTA entrepreneurs

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