



# KEPSA COVID-19 INITIATIVES

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2021-2022

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past two and a half years, the world has grappled with an unprecedented global health crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic that has resulted in the deaths of over 6 million people to date[1]. Nations worldwide sought a variety of measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The most notable measures included:

**I. Business closures** that saw a decline in working hours equivalent to ~400 million full-time jobs lost worldwide with workers in the informal sector and youth, women, and persons with disabilities being the worst affected[2].

**II. Rationed essential goods** due to major disruptions to food and other supply chains, emphasizing the pandemic's massive effect on global food security and livelihoods[3].

**III. School closures**, putting over one billion students out of school and further exacerbating the risk to women of adolescent pregnancy, child marriage, and violence[4].

As a result, extreme poverty has seen its largest spike in twenty years as the global economic recession, sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic, has disproportionately impacted low-to-middle income countries with infrastructures too weak to adequately respond to economic shocks compared to their wealthier counterparts[5]. Despite lockdown measures being relaxed in many countries, top-earning sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, remain damaged following the pandemic.

Furthermore, the negative impacts of the pandemic have disproportionately affected women[6], who not only constitute a significant proportion of workers in severely affected sectors, such as hospitality, food, health, and social care services, but have also had to take on a greater burden in childcare responsibilities following school closures.

Consequently, the pandemic has contributed to increased socioeconomic inequalities both locally and internationally, as well as increased gender inequality. **Overall, COVID-19 has drastically changed the global health, economic, and societal landscape, resulting in seismic shifts to our way of life.**

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[1] World Health Organization. "WHO COVID-19 Dashboard." World Health Organization, 2022, [covid19.who.int/](https://covid19.who.int/).

[2] "ILO Welcomes G20 Commitment to Inclusive, Employment-Focused Recovery from Covid-19 Crisis." International Labour Organization, 10 Sept. 2020, <https://www.ilo.org>.

[3] "Impacts of Covid-19 on Food Security and Nutrition..." Food and Agriculture Organization, Sept. 2020, <https://www.fao.org>.

[4] "From Equality to Global Poverty: How Covid-19 Is Affecting Societies and Economies." Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, 30 Sept. 2020, <https://www.gavi.org>.

[5] "2020 Goalkeepers Report: COVID-19, A Global Perspective." Goalkeepers | 2020 Report, Sept. 2020, <https://www.gatesfoundation.org>.

[6] "ILO Monitor: Covid-19 and the World of Work. Fifth Edition." International Labour Organization, 30 June 2020, <https://www.ilo.org>.

**In Kenya alone, over 5,500 people have died from the COVID-19 virus or COVID-related complications**[7]. For much of 2021, hospitals and care-giving facilities were at maximum capacity due to an influx in severe COVID-19 cases.

**The negative impact of COVID-19 on the private sector reduced job opportunities and lowered earnings.** Youth have also been negatively affected with revenues reduced for micro-enterprises run by young entrepreneurs[8]. Additionally, the curfew and public gathering restrictions severely affected the food and entertainment industries, resulting in further job cuts. Furthermore, inter-county travel restrictions drastically reduced national distribution of goods and supplies[9].

**Beyond this, Kenyan women and children have faced negative effects.** The job market plummeted leaving many new graduates jobless and the closure of schools left thousands of children without access to learning, particularly those in far-flung areas without resources for remote learning. This, in turn, required many women to assume greater childcare responsibilities at home. Additionally, domestic violence cases against women spiked as the lockdowns limited their movement and ability to access essential services[10].

**To address the COVID-19 outbreak, the Kenyan government enforced several containment measures.** Beyond social distancing and mask guidelines, these included restrictions on public gatherings, limited public transport capacity, curfews at night, and the closure of schools and businesses.

**While conducive to COVID-19 containment, these actions also contributed to severe income loss,** with the hardest hit being low-to-middle income households and the agriculture, tourism, and informal sectors. Private sector firms faced lower demand due to reduced consumption, a situation compounded by disruptions to supply chains. Local businesses also grappled with access to cash and credit.

**As such, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed considerable challenges to Kenyan public and private sector health, employment, income, and food security.**

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[7] "Kenya: WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard." Covid19.Who.int, [covid19.who.int/region/afro/country/ke](https://covid19.who.int/region/afro/country/ke).

[8] "Kenya Economic Update: COVID-19 Erodes Progress in Poverty Reduction in Kenya, Increases Number of Poor Citizens", World Bank, 25th November 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/>.

[9] "Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 in Kenya on Households." World Bank. 1 Jan. 2021, [openknowledge.worldbank.org](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/).

[10] Roy, Charlotte, et al. "Impact of COVID-19 on Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Services in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and South Africa: A Cross-Sectional Survey." Frontiers, Frontiers Global Women's Health, 27 Jan. 2022, [www.frontiersin.org](https://www.frontiersin.org).

**Globally, these challenges have typically been addressed by national governments without the help of the private sector. However, the Kenyan private sector sought to actively support the government in quickly bringing the economy back on its feet. This led to the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) taking the unprecedented step to provide assistance to the government in the form of financial, technical, and coordination support to address the challenges caused by COVID-19.**

KEPSA, through its member organizations, and in partnership with the Kenya Government, undertook various initiatives that sought to bridge the gap in medical preparedness, economic wellbeing, and women's safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout these engagements, KEPSA's strategic partnerships, its vast influence, regional reach, and ability to mobilize its members facilitated an invaluable environment of collaboration between the private and public sectors towards advocacy and initiative execution.

This report outlines KEPSA's initiatives, their impact within the unique context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the challenges and lessons learned.







**Sustaining the Economy**

# INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT: SUSTAINING THE ECONOMY

Since the start of the pandemic, KEPSA has worked closely with its members, the Government, and other partners to cushion Kenyans and businesses, particularly Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), against the adverse effects of the public health crisis. While the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented economic and business challenges, it also provided numerous opportunities to re-evaluate business processes. As a result of the economic recovery activities undertaken, Kenya's economy has shown considerable resilience to the pandemic. According to the World Bank[11], GDP growth is projected at 5.0% in 2022 and the poverty rate is on the decline.



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[11] "Overview." The World Bank in Kenya, The World Bank , 14 Apr. 2022, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kenya/overview#1>.

# INITIATIVES

## The 11th Presidential RoundTable

KEPSA held a Presidential Round Table in March 2020 with the theme *Measures to Catalyze Health and Economic Responses in the Wake of the COVID-19 Outbreak*. The private sector's measures and priorities to address COVID-19's impacts on the economy (as per the Economic Management Framework for COVID 19 Response) were presented to the President. Some of the proposals included the need for the President to declare COVID-19 as a national disaster to ensure that i) necessary actions could be taken; ii) that excess airline capacity could be utilized to deliver flowers, tea, coffee, and other critical exports to affected countries in Africa and Europe as a generous gift from Kenya; and ii) that the Ministry of Health would be able to provide the private sector with a consolidated 9-month forecast for required health products and technologies, among others. The President committed to working with the private sector to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on businesses and the economy.

### *The 11th Presidential RoundTable*



## KEPSA Sector Board Meetings and COVID-19 Action Platform

KEPSA held sector board meetings dedicated to assessing the impact of the pandemic and the various proposals that would inform short term and mid to long term interventions geared towards revitalizing the private sector and the economy at large. Each sector submitted the priority areas that would help industries back on their feet.

Consequently, the COVID-19 Action Platform was established to prioritize the interventions and engage the public sector. Fortnight early morning briefings were held to offer strategic direction on the actions and assess the progress and private sector measures that were undertaken to mitigate the challenges caused by COVID-19.



## Engagement with the Central Bank of Kenya

KEPSA worked with the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) Governor to develop a strategy to ensure that the Bank would create a conducive business environment amidst the pandemic. The private sector was particularly focused on supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through reduced interest rates, in addition to considering how commodity prices would be maintained at low and affordable rates through controls on inflation rates.

### *The Engagement with the Governor of the CBK*



## Media Briefing

KEPSA held a media briefing in March 2020 to discuss business perspectives on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Kenya. During the briefing, KEPSA shared the private sector perspective on the global pandemic and what businesses could do to ensure that Kenya was not adversely affected. Some of the identified areas that businesses could address to cushion the public and the economy from the pandemic included:

- Sensitization of staff and clients on preventive measures, e.g. washing hands regularly, avoiding gatherings, and covering mouths when sneezing or coughing
- Procurement of protective equipment—masks, hand sanitizers, etc.
- Exploring alternative markets within jurisdictions considered low risk or sourcing locally
- Cancellation or limitation of all travel to and from high risk COVID-19 outbreak areas
- Closely monitoring the situation and reviewing business preparedness
- Active communication with clients regarding expected delays and reviewing business terms and conditions to accommodate these delays

## Developing an Economic Management Framework for COVID-19

KEPSA developed the Economic Management Framework for COVID-19, an initiative focused on maintaining jobs and livelihoods by i) prioritizing the health and safety of employees, communities, and healthcare workers; ii) protecting SMEs and ensuring business and supply chain continuity; iii) mobilizing private sector capabilities and resources while maintaining the highest ethical standards; iv) avoiding moral hazard traps such as price spikes or producing and distributing lower quality products; v) disseminating clear, accurate, and frequent information and promoting social stability; vi) facilitating weekly meetings for business leaders to discuss the effects of the pandemic on all sectors of the economy; and vii) carrying out surveys to understand how businesses had been impacted by the pandemic and developing possible mitigation strategies.

## Surveys on the Effects of COVID-19 on Businesses

KEPSA conducted surveys in March, April, May/June, and September/October 2020 to understand how businesses had been impacted and what priority interventions should be pursued under the KEPSA Economic Management Framework for Covid-19 Response. The surveys gathered inputs on emerging and longstanding issues that could potentially exacerbate the challenges to businesses, such as pending bills and VAT refunds owed to businesses. These surveys enabled KEPSA to more effectively engage with the government regarding the necessary steps to resolve these adverse effects.

## Improving Ease of Business

Following roundtable discussions with the National Development Implementation and Communication Cabinet Committee (NDICCC) in May 2020, KEPSA embarked on developing private sector protocols for reopening the economy. The stimulus measures arising from these discussions took place for 10 months starting in April 2020 and featured the following recommendations:

- VAT reduction from 16 to 14 percent
- Corporation Tax from 30 to 25 percent
- PAYE from 30 to 25 percent and 100 percent waiver for those earning less than KES 24,000 per month
- Turn-Over Tax reduced from 3 to 1 percent
- CBR reduced from 8.25 to 7 percent
- The Cash Reserve Ratio reduced from 5.25 to 4.25 percent to ease liquidity
- Presidential orders for expedited payment of pending bills and VAT refunds to SMEs

## MSME Recovery and Resilience Program

In partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, the COVID-19 Recovery & Resilience Program supported women and youth-led or owned MSMEs whose operations were adversely affected by COVID-19. The program provided the following offerings:

- Emergency short-term interest and collateral free loans ranging between KES 100,000 and 1.5 million
- Capacity building with the support of the Mastercard Foundation, the Irish Embassy, and the UNDP in the form of free virtual business skills training and mentorship
- *Access to Finance and Business Coaching* course for investment-ready MSMEs

## MSME E-Commerce Booster Program

In 2021, KEPSA announced the E-Commerce Booster Program with the support of TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) and funded by the European Union and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

The program was implemented from February 2021 to July 2021 to equip MSMEs in the wholesale, retail, food services, and logistics sectors with access to e-commerce and digital marketing resources by onboarding them onto local and international digital marketplaces.

The program had the following objectives:

- To help MSMEs gain the digital skills necessary to engage in a digital economy and improve livelihoods during and after the COVID-19 period
- To help Kenyan MSMEs expand their local and cross-border e-commerce presence
- To build MSMEs' proficiency in implementing effective digital campaigns, and increase their brand awareness, value, and sales conversions across multiple digital channels
- To support KEPSA-led policy reforms in trade facilitation for e-commerce, data protection, and enable e-payments across the East African Community and the broader Africa region

### ***The Launch of the E-Commerce Booster Program and Portal on Feb. 25, 2021***



## Digital Resources and Training

During the pandemic, KEPSA implemented a three-month digital training in partnership with digital training provider Zydii, to offer various business skills to MSMEs. The three-month business empowerment course offered curated online classes in the following areas: i) Business Leadership, ii) Sales Management, iii) Customer Service, iv) Cashflow and Budgeting, v) Product and Services Management, vi) Understanding Tax and Statutories, vii) Digital Transformation, and viii) Intellectual Property management for businesses.

## Wezesha Youth Placement Project

In response to decreased youth employability with the onset of COVID-19, KEPSA and Education for All Children (EFAC) started the Wezesha Youth Placement Project. The initiative ran for one year with the goal of placing young graduates in organizations, companies, and programs with the purpose of building their skills, competencies, and experience to enable them to successfully navigate the job market. The following activities were carried out:

- KEPSA ran an in-depth survey to identify the current needs and challenges scholars faced regarding employment
- Program organizers sought out opportunities for scholars to volunteer, job shadow, and intern during their student years for a smoother transition from university into the job market
- As part of the mentorship component, KEPSA participated as a judge/mentor in the “Bridge to College Transition” workshop organized by EFAC. The workshop offered the scholars the opportunity to evaluate their preparedness and open their minds to what they needed to look out for as they prepared to enter the job market
- Through its Ajira Digital program, KEPSA invited EFAC scholars to a #JobHuntingSkills webinar focused on how to advance job hunting skills



## The Ajira Digital Program

The Ajira Digital Program was implemented by KEPSA in 2020 in collaboration with E-Mobilis, the Ministry of Information, Communications, and Technology (ICT), the MasterCard Foundation, and Dalberg Implement. The goal of the initiative was to train and link 2 million youth across Kenya to digital jobs and digitally-enabled work by 2022.

In the last year, a survey conducted by KEPSA showed that 1.2 million Kenyans accessed online jobs. Through KEPSA's private sector engagement under Ajira, a total of 39,590 youth have been linked to digital and digitally-enabled jobs through various partnerships established with different business process outsourcing companies (BPOs), online work platforms, the gig economy, e-commerce, as well as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The initiative also furthered the development of e-government by supporting the digitization of court records in three counties as a prerequisite for the roll-out of the e-filing system.



***Ajira youth at work***



***Kisumu judiciary data entry and scanning team***

## Flowers of Hope

In collaboration with members in the agriculture sector, KEPSA launched the “Flowers of Hope” Project under the aforementioned Economic Management Framework in March 2020 to spread a message of hope and compassion while marketing the country both locally and abroad. The initiative was carried out in partnership with the Kenya Flower Council (KFC), Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), Elgon Kenya, Kenya Airways and Jambojet with volunteer partners from Rotary Kenya and Women of Kenya Initiative. KEPSA sent flowers that would otherwise have gone to waste to Kenya’s existing and new markets in Europe and to frontline workers in local hospitals.

The initiative was supported by a public campaign undertaken by Kenyans and citizens of other countries who posted pictures of themselves holding a rose captioned with the campaign hashtag and a personalized message.

# IMPACT OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY INITIATIVES

## **I. The Engagement with the Central Bank of Kenya enabled the following outcomes:**

- **The CBK re-trained commercial banks** to address the credit crunch in the private sector
- **KEPSA worked on proposals** to stabilize the national fiscal positions.
- **The government committed to paying pending bills** to facilitate more investments in local content projects.
- **The private sector committed to continuing to support SMEs** beyond financing and ensuring that they facilitate capacity-building programs for SMEs.
- **The Bank reviewed existing cash reserve ratios for banks** in order to boost the financial system's liquidity.
- **The CBK and KEPSA committed to working on digital lending regulations** in order to address significant social problems resulting from lending apps.
- **The CBK committed to continued implementation of strong monetary policies** to ensure commodity prices, interest rates, and exchange rates are controlled and stable.
- **The Kenya Health Federation (KHF) and CBK collaborated** on the formulation of the Health Index.

**II. The Ease of Business protocols were adopted by the Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development** as part of the Guidelines for Business Operations in Kenya during COVID-19 period.

**III. KEPSA and NDICCC's interventions supported the government's allocation of a KES 56.6 billion budget** for different sectors under the President's Eight-Point Economic Stimulus Program.

**IV. On account of the aforementioned budget, the government began the phased reopening of the economy from July 2020**, including the resumption of domestic and international flights, and the reopening of schools, amongst other businesses.

**V. The government adopted several of the proposals** underpinned by the KEPSA Economic Management Framework for COVID-19 Response to ensure business continuity and incorporated these into various Presidential speeches.

**VI. KEPSA's members made a significant impact in mitigating the spread of COVID-19** through financial contributions of close to KES 3 billion towards the provision of water, soap, tanks, hand washing stations, thermal guns, ventilators, sanitizers, masks, and PPE, as well as digital resources and training.

**VII. The government extended support to the private sector to cushion businesses**, reenergize the economy, and protect jobs.

**VIII. As part of the Mastercard Foundation, the MSME Recovery and Resilience Program:**

- **106 MSMEs benefited** from loan financing amounting to over KES 42 million out of the 700+ applications received with 80 percent of the beneficiaries being female, out of whom 33 percent were youth-led businesses.
- **Over 8,000 businesses** from across the country in diverse economic sectors received free business training and mentorship delivered virtually every two weeks via Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube, including shared entrepreneurial experiences through peer-to-peer exchanges.
- **50 MSMEs** signed up for the three-month Access to Finance and Business Coaching, with one successfully securing investment funds during the program and another three successfully attracting investor interests.
- **The program has since been turned into an SME Support Revolving Fund** with an initial funding of KES 5 million by the Chandaria Foundation in September 2021 and KES 2.2 million from the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) in February 2022.

**IX. The MSME E-Commerce Booster Program successfully onboarded 1,605 businesses** with little to no e-commerce presence onto various digital platforms. The program also established invaluable partnerships with key e-commerce players that facilitated Friday Guest Webinars and offered various solutions to the beneficiary businesses). These included companies such as Jumia Kenya, DHL Express, Ajua, Google through Africa 118, Paytree Group, Anzili, Pesapal, and Adshop.

**X. The Digital Resource and Training initiative registered 1,076 business people (largely youth)** onto the project portal, surpassing the initial target of 1,000 trainees.

**XI. The Wezesha Youth placement program secured 144 organizations as employers and 449 placement opportunities**, resulting in 122 matches being made with 98 interested employers. The results from the survey program were used to write a proposal focused on restructuring the program to better meet the needs of scholars.



**XII. Through the Ajira Project, KEPSA has:**

- **Engaged over 100 platforms and businesses** to map out the digital work platform landscape and the type/volume of work outsourced.
- **Forged over 60 official Ajira partnerships:** KEPSA collaborated with these partners to co-create activities and campaigns to increase the visibility of local work platforms to workers and work providers. This included both blue-collar and white-collar platforms.
- **Provided technical assistance** to accelerate the growth of platforms including generating and analyzing users' feedback and bench-marking the feedback against international work platforms.
- **Led conversations around policy and regulations** within the digital economy space that include data protection and compliance by digital work platforms, as well as social protection for online workers.
- **Reached a total of 61 courts stations in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu** in its first phase to capture a total of 169,844 files in the case tracking system and scan and upload 148,182 court files. The project employed 707 youth, with 399 being female.

**XIII. The Flowers of Hope initiative** helped save thousands of farm jobs and successfully entrenched Kenyan flowers as a leading brand globally while spreading a message of compassion.



***Frontline workers in the U.K. receive flowers through the Flowers of Hope initiative***



***KEPSA CEO, Carole Kariuki, briefing the media******Improving Ease of Business NDICC Roundtable. May 23, 2022******A beneficiary of the KEPSA MSME Recovery and Resilience Program******Kenyan healthcare workers receive flowers through the Flowers of Hope initiative***



## Addressing Gender Concerns





Beyond the health and economic challenges experienced, women, and girls' vulnerability to gender-based violence (GBV) significantly increased during the peak of the pandemic. The situation was exacerbated by women's lack of access to critical healthcare and GBV response services. To address this 'silent pandemic', KEPSA, alongside **Bolt Digital Taxi Services** and the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, developed two initiatives aimed at supporting expectant mothers and increasing GBV prevention.



*Gender Sector Board members forum for a GBV-Free private sector*

# INITIATIVES

## Wheels for Life and Telehealth Initiative

KEPSA's Health Sector Board, the Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF), and Bolt Digital Taxi Services collaborated to support the **Wheels for Life Program, founded by Dr. Jemimah Kariuki**. The initiative launched on April 28th, 2020, and covered Nairobi, Uasin Gishu, Kiambu, Nyeri, Nakuru, and Machakos Counties to provide women with pregnancy-related medical emergencies access to the 1196 toll-free Telehealth hotline and free transport to the hospital at night during the curfew hours of 9pm-5am. The initiative aimed to ensure that pregnant women were able to access health services necessary for the prevention of maternal morbidity and mortality; additionally, the program served as a data collection forum that could potentially inform policymaking regarding women's health.



**Wheels for Life**

Are you in a pregnancy related emergency?  
**Call 1196 free** and talk to a doctor.

Need to get to a hospital during curfew hours? **Call 1196 free**

Free transport provided at NIGHT to Hospitals

This is applicable from 7pm to 5am

\*Terms and conditions apply

An initiative supported by:



**#WheelsforLife**

[www.khf.co.ke](http://www.khf.co.ke) | [wheelsforlife@khf.co.ke](mailto:wheelsforlife@khf.co.ke) | MCH Call Centre 719 | KEPSA Call Centre Line 1196





## Breaking the Silence on GBV

Under the **Generation Equality Forum Action Coalition for Gender-Based Violence**, the KEPSA Gender Sector Board, in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, initiated a response to the rise in GBV cases during the pandemic. This intervention advocated for the elimination of GBV, scaled up evidence-driven prevention programming, and provided accessible services for survivors. On December 1st, 2021, KEPSA Gender Sector Board members participated in a forum that focused on enhancing the capacity of Gender Sector Board members to effectively advocate for a GBV-free private sector. The discussion took place in conjunction with 16 days of activism against GBV across Kenya.



***Gender Sector Board members participate in the GBV-free Private Sector forum***

## IMPACT OF GENDER FOCUSED INITIATIVES

**I. 10,930 mothers were assisted** to access hospitals and other health services during curfew hours.

**II. 1,367 taxis were dispatched** and another **911 emergency ambulance trips made**.

**III. A total of 137,834 calls** regarding medical cases and emergencies were recorded on the Telehealth support line 1196.

**IV. KEPSA instituted a GBV and Mental Health subcommittee** in early 2021 responsible for coordinating and championing GBV and mental health management and response within the private sector. These actions ultimately improved the coordination and leadership of the GBV and Mental Health agenda within the private sector.

**V. In June 2021, KEPSA commissioned a baseline study** on the prevalence, trends, and impact of GBV on productivity in the private sector. The study's findings and recommendations are currently informing GBV advocacy efforts in the private sector.

**VI. KEPSA commissioned the Private Sector Position Paper on GBV and Economic Justice and Rights**, which encouraged increased private sector investment in GBV prevention and response initiatives. The paper includes recommendations for government action towards enabling a GBV advocacy-tied policy environment for the private sector such as the ratification of the International Labor Organizations (ILO) Convention No. 190, Recommendation No. 206, and the accompanying Resolution on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, among others.

**VII. KEPSA and the Shared Value Africa Initiative (SVAI) co-hosted an inaugural webinar** on June 24th, 2021, with the theme, 'Private Sector Taking Action on GBV'. This webinar paved the way for negotiating the prioritization of and investment in GBV programs as well as tackling the pain points that have constrained GBV response efforts in the workplace.

**VIII. KEPSA also partnered with Policare**, the National Police Service (NPS) integrated response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Kenya. This represents a strategic move towards enhancing reporting mechanisms and responses to GBV.

**IX. KEPSA held a series of trainings on GBV sensitization and awareness**, targeting 40 KEPSA staff, 94 Women on Boards Network members, and 30 Gender Sector Board members. This increased the capacity of KEPSA staff and members to effectively identify, report, and seek support for any form of GBV in the private sector community while sensitizing them regarding the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) aimed at raising awareness and collective action.



***Milicent Adhiambo, a mother who benefitted from the Wheels for Life program***



***Flagging off an ambulance as part of the Wheels for Life initiative***



***Dr. Jemimah Kariuki, founder of the Wheels for Life Program***

***Mercy Okiro, Vice Chair of the Gender Sector Board, speaking at an event supporting GBV awareness***







**Supporting the Health Sector**



# Initiative Spotlight: SUPPORTING THE HEALTH SECTOR

Between 2020 and 2021, Kenya experienced three waves of COVID-19 infections. The country's prevalence rate at the time was at its highest largely due to outbreaks of newly detected variants, with each strain being more transmissible and fatal than the one before it. This resulted in increased hospitalization and mortality rates across the nation. Throughout this public health crisis, KEPSA engaged in various initiatives and collaborations to support vaccine procurement and administration, address shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), and improve access to COVID-19-related information and support.



***A woman receiving the COVID-19 vaccine in Busia  
through the KEPSA-led initiative***

# INITIATIVES

## Hospital Equipment Donations

KEPSA's Health Sector Board, in partnership with the **Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF)** and through a donation from the **Chandaria Foundation**, provided PPE to the Kajiado, Machakos, and Mombasa County Governments. In addition, KHF mobilized an additional PPE donation sponsored by **Stanbic Bank Kenya Limited** to provide supplies for Nakuru and Kiambu Counties. Beyond this, the private sector fraternity continued to contribute to COVID-19 containment efforts by offering essential products (such as oxygen supplied by the **Devki Group** and **Tononoka Group**) to various health facilities.

## Manufacturing PPE in Kenya

Alongside local manufacturers through the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), KEPSA spurred local production of PPE and widespread distribution of hand sanitizers. This initiative enabled the production of over one million metres of polypropylene for PPE gear and the provision of over 240,000 litres of ethanol to produce hand sanitizers.

## Toll-Free COVID-19 Business and Non-Compliance Helpline

KEPSA established a COVID-19 Business Helpline (1196) in March 2020 as a 24-hour toll-free Call Centre and Information Portal to support members' access to COVID-19 related information and to facilitate linkages for business continuity. On July 22nd, 2020, KEPSA launched a campaign to receive complaints from the public regarding non-adherence to COVID-19 rules. Citizen TV and Radio joined the partnership on August 5th, 2020. KEPSA also onboarded the Okoa Maisha citizen initiative in partnership with the National Police Service, Citizen Television, and **Telesky** to report non-compliance of COVID-19 rules.

## Opening an mRNA Manufacturing Facility in Kenya

According to the World Health Organization, Africa currently relies on imports for about 99% of its vaccine needs. Supported by KEPSA, H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta and the Ministry of Health (MoH) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Moderna Inc. to establish the first mRNA manufacturing facility in Kenya and one of the first of its kind in Africa. Moderna is set to invest up to KES 60 billion in the new facility to increase drug substance manufacturing in Africa and potentially expand manufacturing to include packaging capabilities.

## KEPSA-led Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Program

The Delta variant outbreak resulted in a significant spike in COVID-19 cases across Kenya. Globally, the Delta variant outbreak heavily impacted the production of vaccines from India, causing challenges in the vaccines supply. KEPSA and its members took an active role in supporting the government to procure more vaccines through the Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative.

The goal of this initiative was for the private sector to take on the cost of vaccinating staff, their dependents, and members of the communities served by participating private sector companies as a way of doing their part in combatting the pandemic. Consequently, the private sector contributed USD 2.2 million towards the procurement of vaccines by the government. Under the guidance of the **Ministry of Health**, and in partnership with **Dalberg**, who provided project management support on a pro bono basis, the KEPSA vaccine initiative generated widespread engagement and buy-in from the private sector.

The initiative coordinated the fundraising efforts, vaccine procurement through government, rollout in conjunction with key stakeholders, and providing program management support. In Nairobi, vaccination exercises took place in locations such as the central business district, industrial area and along Mombasa Road and in communities in Baba Ndogo and Mkuru Kwa Njenga. Across the counties, the vaccination sites included larger cities such as Mombasa, Kisumu and Eldoret as well as smaller towns/locations such as Wote, Sotik, Sindo and Kapenguria.

Through this initiative, the following activities took place:

- Engagement with the private sector to secure buy-in, including i) leading the communication efforts to rally the private sector to participate in the initiative and ii) rallying the private sector to contribute USD 2.2M from participating private sector companies to procure 200,000 doses of Johnson and Johnson vaccines (which was deemed more efficient due to the fact that it was a single dose).
- Coordination of key stakeholders (MoH, country governments, health facilities) to ensure alignment on the roll out plans. This included i) engaging with the relevant government entities to facilitate coordination for the exercise ii) developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Financing Agreement for approval by Cabinet, the MoH, the Attorney General, the Treasury, and KEPSA.

- Engaging seven private sector hospitals, who undertook the process of ensuring that jabs were administered. The seven hospitals were:
  - Avenue Hospital
  - Gertrude's Hospital
  - Karen Hospital
  - Meridian Hospital
  - Metropolitan Hospital
  - MP Shah Hospital
  - Nairobi Women's Hospital
- Vaccine administration program management. This included i) mapping over 80 locations of participating organizations and health facilities, ii) ensuring coordination between mapped venues and numbers of persons to be vaccinated, iii) developing a vaccination schedule for all the vaccination locations.
- Support for end-to-end supply chain logistics to ensure timely rollout of vaccines across all counties. This included i) coordinating the aggregation of vaccine orders, reconciliation of payments and provision of invoices to participating organizations; ii) engaging over 50 approved health facilities to coordinate the vaccination exercise across the country; ii) working closely with county EPI (Expanded Program on Immunization) officers to ensure that vaccines had been delivered, coordinating the transfer of vaccines from the county depot to the sub-county locations and on to the vaccinating facilities and host locations; iii) liaising with companies to secure host venues; v) engaging county government health officials to coordinate vaccine deployment and tracking of the number of vaccines administered; and vi) ensuring that the information of those vaccinated was successfully uploaded to the Chanjo platform and vaccination certificates issued.

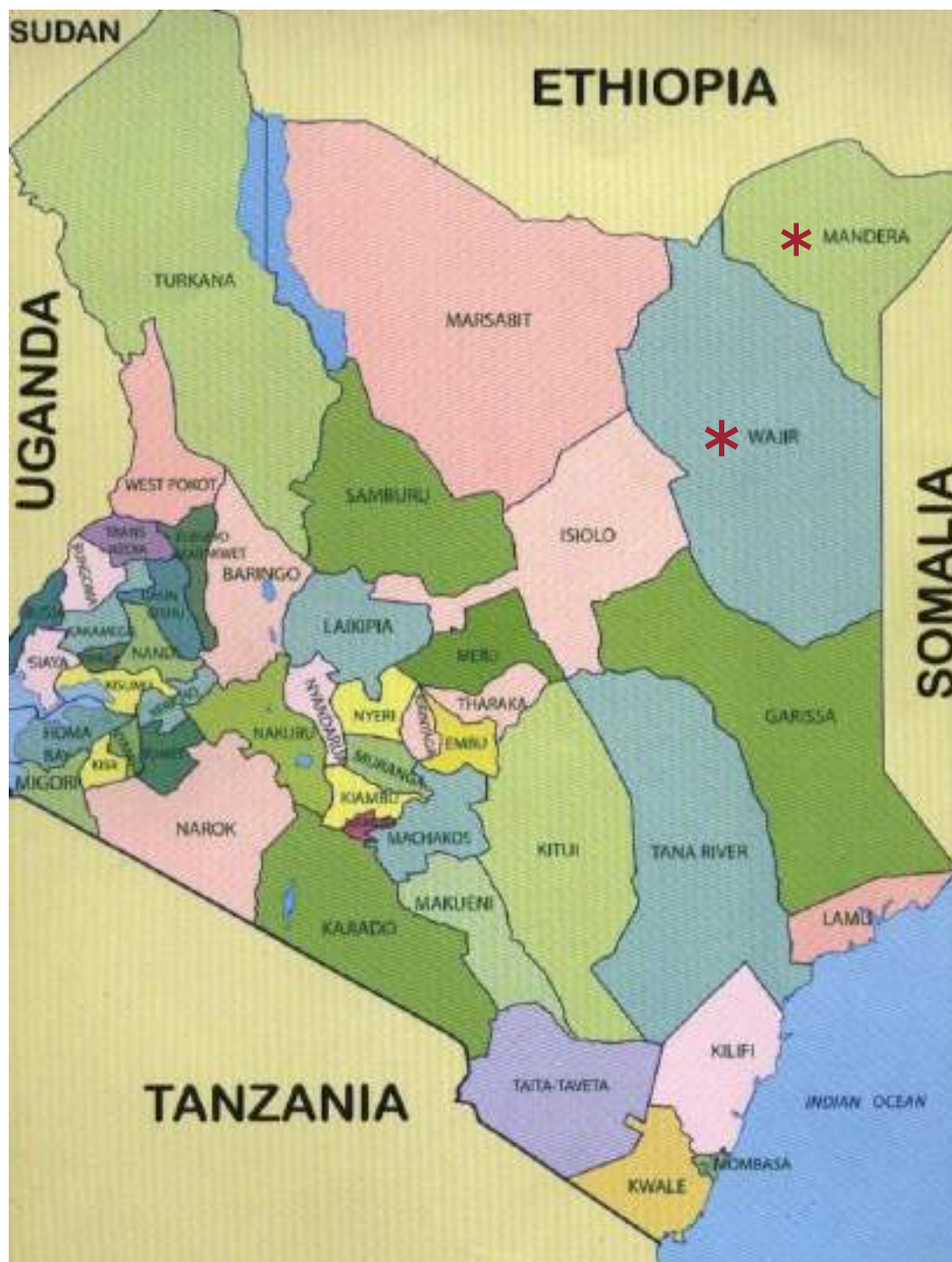
## **Facilitating Safe Trade (Under the Vaccine Rollout Program)**

As part of the Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative, KEPSA and TMEA partnered with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Dalberg, and the East Africa Community (EAC) on a vaccination drive aimed specifically at mitigating the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade within Eastern Africa and ensuring that livelihoods at the border posts were protected. This involved awareness creation among cross-border truck drivers and women traders along the Northern Corridor. The drive commenced within the Northern Corridor regions (Busia, Malaba, Isebania, and Taveta border posts) on November 8th, 2021, with sensitization campaigns kicking off in Busia on November 26th, 2021, and ending on December 24th, 2021, in Taveta.

Under this initiative, KEPSA and TMEA partnered to develop the SAFE COVID-19 advocacy project. The initiative supported COVID-19 sensitization activities, as well as other advocacy initiatives, to safeguard the wellbeing of border town communities and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).



### Counties reached by the KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative



Key:

\*Indicates counties that were not reached under the Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative

*The KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative by the numbers:*

Number vaccinated	~200,000 people vaccinated to date
County coverage	45 of 47 counties (except Wajir and Mandera) and across the country reached
Widespread reach	Over 80 locations country-wide, in urban centers, peri-urban and rural locations
Reach of marginalized communities	Marginalized communities especially women had access to vaccines
Private- public partnership	\$USD 2.2 million raised from over 260 companies; a first of its kind globally
Collaboration across health-care providers	Over 50 approved health care facilities – Both private and public participated in this exercise
Cross-government collaboration	National and county level engagement

## IMPACT OF HEALTH SECTOR SUPPORT INITIATIVES

**I. PPE worth KES 5 million was donated to Kajiado, Machakos, and Mombasa County Governments.** Additionally, PPE worth KES 2 million was donated to the Nakuru and Kiambu County Governments.

**II. PPE production:** over one million metres of polypropylene was produced for PPE gear and over 240,000 litres of ethanol manufactured for the production of hand sanitizers

**III. The COVID-19 Business Helpline received a total number of 137,420 calls, while the Non-Compliance Helpline recorded 3,715 reports** of non-compliance to COVID-19 rules from March 2020 to July 2021. These were then shared with the relevant government agencies to follow up and take corrective action.

**IV. The signing of the MOU on the establishment of the mRNA manufacturing facility** was a significant achievement that will substantially improve Kenya's, and overall, Africa's, ability to rapidly respond to future health crises and promote equitable global vaccine access. The facility has set a target of producing up to 500 million doses of vaccines each year.

**V. Through the private sector vaccine initiative, 260+ participating companies under the KEPSA umbrella raised USD 2.2 million** to procure (through the government) and administer vaccines for their employees, dependents, and members of the community countrywide. To date, over 200,000 people have been vaccinated across 45 of the 47 counties with the participation of over 50 approved health care facilities at over 80 locations countrywide, from urban centres to rural locations.

**VI. The cross-border trader vaccination campaign resulted in 12,736 vaccinations** being administered to traders, drivers, logistics workers, and various border community members.

**VII. The Safe COVID Advocacy project** (i) established and managed a revolving fund to finance COVID-19 testing of transit truck drivers worth USD 250,000 (ii) SMEs, traders, and truck drivers at Busia, Malaba and Namanga border points received training to increase COVID-19 awareness and safety protocols (iii) KEPSA partnered with border agencies, such as AMREF, KTA, and MoH, to increase testing, the capacity of testing centres, and turnaround time of test results that subsequently resulted in a significant reduction of long queues in Busia and Malaba border posts.



***KEPSA's KHF PPE  
donations to  
Kajiado County***



***Machakos County***



***Mombasa County***





***KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative exercise at KOKO in  
Baba Ndogo, Nairobi***



***KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative exercise at Burma Market in Nairobi***





***KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative exercise in Isibania***



***KEPSA Private Sector Vaccine Rollout Initiative exercise in Busia and Malaba******Vaccine exercise at KEPSA Offices******Vaccine exercise at EABL in Nairobi***



# PARTICIPATING COMPANIES IN THE VACCINE ROLLOUT INITIATIVE

1.	ABC Export	133.	International Procurement & Logistics Limited	38.	Stanfoot Enterprises Limited	172.	Mary Njoki
2.	Alcoa Kenya Plc	134.	IPSO Limited	39.	BRCK Limited	173.	MB Energy Ltd
3.	Access Bank Kenya Plc	137.	Iskida East Africa Limited	40.	Great Ventures Limited	174.	Metropolitan Hospitals Ltd
4.	AC Nielsen Kenya Limited	138.	James Finlay (Kenya) Limited	41.	British American Tobacco Kenya	175.	Milly Glassworks Ltd
5.	Acorn Youth Housing	139.	Jenge Credit Limited	42.	British Business Association of Kenya	176.	Miner Kenya Healthcare
6.	Aero Club of East Africa	140.	Joyce Wambui	43.	Brookside Dairy	177.	Mitchell Cotts Freight Kenya Ltd
7.	Africa Oil Turkana Limited	141.	Juhadi Kilimo Co Limited	44.	Bunson Travels Services Limited	178.	MMAN Advocates
8.	African Population and Health Research	135.	Kaplan and Stratton	45.	Bureau Veritas Kenya Limited	179.	Momentum Credit Limited
9.	Africa Practice East Africa Limited	143.	Karen Ropes Limited	46.	BXS Group Limited	180.	Morgan Air and Sea Freight Logistics
10.	Agri Experience Limited	144.	Keda (Kenya) Ceramics Company Limited	47.	Cemco Management Limited/Cemco Clean Energy	181.	Moringa School
11.	Agri Frontier East Africa Limited	145.	Kenton College Trust	48.	Caosule Limited/Rescue	182.	NCBA Bank
12.	Agricultural Employers Association	146.	Kenya Association of Manufacturers	49.	Capwell Industries Limited	183.	New Energies Fintech EA Limited
13.	Agriflora Kenya Limited	147.	Kenya Bankers Association	50.	Career Connections Limited	184.	Navacom Systems Limited
14.	AGS Worldwide	148.	Kenya Commercial Bank	51.	Carapay Limited	185.	Navistar Ventures
15.	Aliffence Limited	149.	KEPSA	52.	Carol Mueyoka Consulting Limited	186.	Nave Nordisk Kenya Ltd
16.	Alifio Limited	150.	Kipeto Energy Plc	53.	Cellulant Kenya Limited	187.	Navoni Centre For Innovation Research
17.	Airtel Networks Kenya Limited	151.	Koko Networks Limited	54.	Chamerson Limited	188.	Oil Dams Farm Timaru Limited
18.	Akazi Africa	152.	Koukuey Design Initiative Inc	55.	Cirrhine Odhiambo	189.	Old Kenya Propagation Ltd
19.	ALP Management Kenya Limited/Keoca	153.	KPHRD Advisory Services Ltd	56.	Cinnabar Green Limited	190.	Open Capital Advisors Limited
20.	Amos Mbugua	154.	Kirin Commodities Ltd	57.	Citibank	191.	Ocho Chemical Industries Ltd
21.	Andrew C Y Watt / Salma K. Abdulla M.	155.	Kronos Ltd Centre East Africa Limited	58.	Cleopatra Kama Mugenyi	192.	Pan African Research Services
22.	Anjerwella Khanna LLP	156.	Kusline + Nagel Limited	59.	Clivote Care	193.	Permed Ricard Kenya Ltd
23.	Bamburi Cement Limited	157.	Kurent Technologies Limited	60.	Cooper K-Brands Limited	194.	PG Bison Kenya Ltd
24.	Bank of Baroda	158.	Lady Akari Limited	61.	Cooperative Bank of Kenya	195.	PKF Foundation
25.	BAOP	159.	L'Oreal East Africa Limited	62.	Copia Kenya Limited	196.	PDA Internet Kenya Limited
26.	Bata Shoe Company Kenya Limited	160.	Learning Point Limited	63.	Coulson Hamay	197.	Popote
27.	Bayer East Africa Limited	161.	Lendtech Services Ltd	64.	Crossboundary Limited	198.	Population Council of Kenya
28.	BBQXX Capital	162.	Letshago Kenya Limited	65.	Daiberg Global Development Advisors	199.	Preferred Personnel Africa
29.	Beliersdorf East Africa Limited	163.	Lifecare International	66.	Daiberg Research Limited	200.	Premier Credit Limited
30.	Better Globe Forestry Limited	164.	Lions Head Africa Limited	67.	Daly Inambari Advocates	201.	PTS Africa Limited
31.	Biblica, Inc.	165.	Liquid Telecommunications Kenya Ltd	68.	Gaprolm Africa Ltd	202.	PTS Africa Limited
32.	Biju Mohandas	166.	Uttermore Limited	69.	De La Rue Kenya EPC Limited	203.	Purple Valley Ltd
33.	Bio Food Products Limited	167.	M-Gaz Limited	70.	De Ruiter East Africa Limited	204.	Rainforest Farmlands Kenya Limited
34.	Bloom + Wild Limited	168.	M-Kopa Kenya Limited	71.	Deloitte And Touche LLP	205.	Raino TechImpact Limited
35.	Bluewave International Services	169.	Masai Flowers Limited	72.	Diversity Eastern and Central Africa	206.	Rea Vipingo Plantations Limited
36.	Bolt Support Kenya Limited	170.	Mebati Rolling Mills Limited (MSRM) Safai Group	73.	OH Three Limited	207.	Radlands Roses Limited
37.	Boston Consulting Group	171.	Marketing and Social Research Association (MSRA)	74.	East African Breweries Limited	208.	Ragat Pharmaceuticals Limited
				75.	East African Chems Ltd	209.	Remworks East Africa Limited
				76.	East African Eagle Kenya Limited	210.	Roadtrainers Mombasa

# PARTICIPATING COMPANIES IN THE VACCINE ROLLOUT INITIATIVE

77. Eaton Electric Limited	211. Robert Booth E.A Ltd
78. Ecocrete Limited	212. RCM (Eastern Africa) Consulting
79. Ecobank	213. Run Beyond Limited
80. EDU Rho Africa Limited	214. Rural Focus Ltd
81. Eduvibe Kenya	215. Sanyal Investments East Africa Ltd
82. Eky Track Ltd	216. Sanyal Investments Limited
83. EFKEN Leasing Ltd	217. Seania East Africa Limited
84. Eldama Technologies Limited	218. Sende Services
85. Electricity Sector Association of Kenya	219. Sagal Family Foundation Inc
86. Elgon Kenya	220. Sandy Limited
87. Enza Education	221. Sentinel Safaris Limited
88. ENG Africa Kenya Limited	222. Simba Corporation Limited
89. Equator Planners Kenya Limited	223. Skanser Interlabels
90. Ernst and Young LLP	224. Solo Transformation Limited
91. Everett Aviation (Charter) Limited	225. Solidarity Cancer
92. Kwikoko's Stand Contractors Limited	226. Solette Kenya Limited
93. Explorer Kenya Tours and Travel	227. Spira Bank Limited
94. Farm Africa	228. Spring Valley Coffee Roasters Limited
95. Farm Input Promotions Africa Limited	229. Stanbic Bank
96. FROW Kenya Limited	230. Stanford University Global LLC
97. FIDES Kenya Limited	231. Summit Recruitment Search Limited
98. Financial Sector Deepening Africa	232. Suncof Kenya Limited
99. Flamingo Horticulture Kenya Limited	233. Sunda (Kenya) Industrial Company
100. Floco World Limited	234. Sunvivo Ltd
101. Florians Kenya Limited	235. Superior Homes (Kenya) Plc
102. Fourth Generation (4G) Capital Limited	236. Tantalus Ltd
103. Fresh Life Initiative Limited	237. Team Investment Concept Ltd
104. Freight Forwarders Kenya Limited	238. Thomas Shoba Douglas Horton Ombodare
105. Frontier Consulting Services Ltd	239. TIFA Research Limited
106. Frontier Investment Management Africa Ltd	240. Trademark East Africa
107. Gabriella Tenkelsennot WMI Africa	241. Transocean Kenya Limited
108. Fusion Capital Limited	242. Travel Affairs Ltd
109. Gemawatchers Safaris Ltd	243. Travleshoppe Co.Ltd
110. Genstra Plant & Equipment Limited	244. Tropical Power Kenya Limited
111. Gareth Wai	245. Tunes Limited
112. GE East Africa Services Limited	246. Twiga Chemical Industries Limited

113. Generics Africa Limited	247. Twiga Foods Limited
114. Ginger Ink Films EPZ Limited	248. Uhuru Flowers Limited
115. Glaxo Smith Kline Limited	249. Ultravetis E.A. Ltd
116. Globeleg Kenya Limited	250. Unilever Kenya Limited
117. Glow App Kenya Limited	251. Unilever Tea Kenya Limited
118. Grant Thornton Management Limited	252. Uphold Kenya Manufacturing Ltd
119. Groove Ltd	253. Van Den Berg (K) Limited
120. Gulf African Bank Ltd	254. Vehicle And Equipment Leasing
121. Habib Bank AG Zurich	255. Vardant Ventures
122. HACO Industries Kenya Limited	256. Victory Farms Limited
123. Halo intimates EPZ Limited	257. VITI Kenya Limited
124. H&H Management Services	258. Wabervale Investments Limited
125. Highlands Drinks Ltd	259. Weebbox East Africa Limited
126. HMI Clause Kenya Limited	260. Weston Africa (Kenya) Limited
127. Hudson Sandier Africa Limited	261. Wildfire Ltd
128. ICEA Lion General Insurance Co Limited	262. Williamson Tea Kenya Plc
129. I&M Bank Ltd	263. WIDCC Services Kenya Limited
130. Imany Energy	264. WRI Africa
131. Inchope Kenya Limited	265. Yusudi Limited
132. Infraco Africa Limited	266. Zep-Re (PTA Reinsurance Company)
133. Integrated Payment Services Limited	
134. International Center for Research on Women	



# CHALLENGES

The success of these initiatives was not without several challenges. These are detailed below to give a sufficient overview of issues that KEPSA overcame to achieve overall success.

**I. The COVID-19 pandemic caught everyone by surprise.** No systems or structures existed globally on how to manage a deadly pandemic at that scale. No prior frameworks existed for many of the initiatives undertaken, meaning that most were created from scratch, which entailed extensive stakeholder engagement through a reiterative process.

**II. In order to save lives, speed was prioritized over perfect processes.** This meant that delays were experienced due to the fact the proverbial plane was being flown while simultaneously being built.

**III. Limited healthcare workers and cold-chain capacity meant that the MoH opted to take a phased approach to the vaccine rollout,** starting with Nairobi and other urban centres. This phased approach resulted in companies, their employees, and dependents outside Nairobi having a longer waiting period.

**IV. During the KEPSA Vaccine Rollout Initiative, the team encountered numerous logistical issues the further away they got from urban centres.** The distance between county locations complicated the process of administering vaccines and resulted in their being fewer vaccination points in less populated counties than those with high population densities.

**V. Vaccinations at high traffic venues posed crowd control challenges.** Additionally, in areas of high turnout, this resulted in data entry and vaccine administration delays.

## CHALLENGES CONT'D.

**VI. In some instances, the Vaccine Rollout Initiative experienced lower-than-expected turnout** due to either vaccine hesitancy or staff and dependents already having received the vaccinations elsewhere.

**VII. Poor internet connection** for some of the beneficiaries caused interruptions during training and some beneficiaries expressed a preference for physical or hybrid training.

**VIII. Lack of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system** across several initiatives limited efficient communication.

“

Nothing happens overnight; life is not that easy, you have to build it one brick after the other. You have to build a foundation that is going to last.

-Manu Chandaria

”



A close-up photograph of a fountain pen tip, likely a Montblaster Meisterstück, hovering just above a circular diagram on a textured, possibly stone or wood, surface. The diagram consists of concentric circles and radial lines, resembling a compass rose or a technical drawing. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a sense of focus and precision.

# KEY LEARNINGS

The challenges encountered throughout enabled KEPSA to identify points of growth and factors to capitalize on in the future.

**I. KEPSA's involvement in reviving the economic and healthcare sectors during the pandemic made it clear that the private sector plays a pivotal role, on multiple fronts, in the nation's wellbeing.**

**II. Centralizing and automating the administrative functions and communication points of country-wide initiatives,** would have reduced the complexity of the task.

**III. Phased approaches for country-wide initiatives should be communicated in advance** with clear timelines set for the different phases.

**IV. Choosing strategic locations:** In counties with low densities and where there were significant distances between vaccination location points, consideration should have been given to carrying out vaccinations at individual company locations as opposed to grouping sites at hub locations with the highest number of people to be vaccinated.

**V. KEPSA should look to increase inclusive measures that facilitate digital participation for those from areas with little or no access to the internet and other technology.** Where training is involved, consideration can be given towards physical or hybrid classes that are compliant with COVID-19 protocols or other public health measures.

## KEY LEARNINGS CONT'D.

**VI. For any future e-commerce business programs, KEPSA can seek to provide follow-up courses** to allow for in-depth coverage and support for the areas already trained on, as well as look to include financial support. Furthermore, consideration can be made to widen the course catalogue and implement sector-specific trainings, as well as provide training on skilled digital talent such as content managers and social media managers. Lastly, KEPSA can look to provide mentorship, networking structures, and opportunities for the trainees within the program.

**VII. The findings of the GBV baseline study and advocacy trainings revealed the dire need for heightened sensitization and scaled-up interventions** on the private sector's responsibility to contribute towards GBV elimination efforts. Looking forward, KEPSA is seeking to establish a private sector GBV policy framework for the private sector to promote and provide guidance towards establishing a GBV-free work and community environment.

**VIII. The sensitization workshops KEPSA hosted received high attendance** during the Facilitating Safe Trade initiative and proved to be an effective means of disseminating messages and disbanding myths and misconceptions regarding the COVID-19 vaccine (i.e., confusion regarding demographics at higher risk of severe COVID-19 infection, how to get vaccinated, effects on male and female fertility, managing side effects, and more).

**IX. KEPSA saw vast improvement in relationships with various businesses** due to consistent follow-up with program beneficiaries; this paved the way for open communication and improved participation. KEPSA's interventions enabled businesses to find innovative ways to thrive through e-commerce and manage operations with limited financial resources, despite the difficult economic environment caused by the pandemic.



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