



SPEECH BY THE KENYA FILM CLASSIFICATION BOARD CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER DR. EZEKIEL MUTUA, MBS, DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE DEANS OF STUDENTS' WORKSHOP HELD AT THE KENYA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT - MATUGA CAMPUS ON 30TH APRIL, 2019

TOPIC: OPPORTUNITIES FOR KENYAN YOUTH IN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

I am delighted to welcome you to this important workshop this morning whose overall objective is to explore the opportunities available in the creative industry for job creation for the Kenyan youth.

This meeting gives us a chance to share and deliberate on an important program dubbed Sinema Mashinani which KFCB is rolling out and seeks the support of universities with an aim of opening up the new vistas of opportunities for job creation to ensure that the students in your custody graduate to become job creators and not job seekers.

Let me thank Prof. Ludeki Chweya and the Kenya School of Government (KSG) for coordinating this meeting and undertaking up the responsibility of bringing all of us together.

The KSG and our Board are collaborating on diverse programmes aimed at empowering the youth to explore ways in which they can use their talents to create wealth and become future employers thus contributing to the creation of jobs especially through the important Creative Economy.

We are also setting up research centers and partnering in programs whose main objective is to identify and nurture talent among the youth. This is the same collaboration we are seeking with you and the institutions that you represent.

The Creative economy is the mainstay of many leading economies of the world today. Talent driven ventures have contributed more to the world economy than probably any other sector.

The richest people in the world today are either in sports (the likes of Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Serena Williams and Tiger Woods) or are in the knowledge driven ventures such as the likes of Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates and singer Rihanna.

Knowledge economy and the entertainment industry are full of opportunities for the young people if they are well trained and exposed.

Opportunities in theatre and film can assist our youths to transit with ease from learning to earning, when they complete their university education.

As you all know, the primary mandate of the Kenya Film Classification Board is to regulate film and broadcast content to ensure that they conform to our culture, national aspirations and morality.

vital mandate, however, can not be executed in isolation or in a vacuum. To ensure that the Board realizes this important objective, the KFCB has embarked on several programs to open more opportunities for the youth to make money while embracing moral values.

The Board firmly believes that films and stage plays must be embedded in our culture and must promote the dominant values of the Kenyan society.

Every society in the world today has its own culture that defines the rules of human interactions. The ideological framework for marketing and entrepreneurship in most parts of the world is driven by media content, especially movies and computer games meant for children.

Impressionable minds are easily swayed by what they watch. Research has shown that children who watch violent content grown up to become violent adults. Vices such as violence, murder, rape, corruption, vulgarity and profanity are promoted through the media.

This is the reason why protection of children from exposure to harmful content is our major focus in film regulation. We are so keen on these things because at the heart of our challenges as a nation today is the moral breakdown of our society.

Kenya is in a moral crisis and the country can realize meaningful development as long as our software of morality is malfunctioning.

We need not only to fix the physical infrastructure for national development, but to urgently fix our moral compass and start programs that glorify positive social values such as honesty, hard work and perseverance.

We need to redefine the concept of success and help our youth to know that success in life is not measured in material things, rather by the values one holds dear.

Yet, this conversation cannot be complete without examining the role of media in agenda setting. We all know that the primary goal of the media is to inform, educate and entertain.

Within this core function is the issue of ideological persuasion and citizen mobilization towards national goals.

This is where Universities come in. We must find a framework for tapping the energies of our youths into creative ventures while shepherding them to use art as a tool for transmitting culture and moral values. They must see in this an opportunity to make money, be famous and powerful.

Hollywood, Bollywood and Nollywood are shining examples of how the Creative industry can create jobs and help in branding nations.

There can be no USA without Hollywood, no India without Bollywood and no Nigeria without Nollywood. Statistics have proved that the Creative industry is the among the highest contributors to the GDP of Nigeria, alongside Oil and Agriculture

It is in the above context that our Board thought of investing in the Sinema Mashinani concept – taking film to the communities and telling our own stories through our own people in our own languages.

Let me also mention that the Board, through the Sinema Mashinani initiative, is collaborating with the Kenya National Drama and Film Festivals, County Governments and other institutions to facilitate an enabling environment for our youth to find thriving careers in this sector.

Indeed, the main objective of this meeting is to sell the idea of Sinema Mashinani to you and exchange ideas on how we can collaborate to roll-out this program through your institutions.

We believe with little investment, every University represented here today can launch Sinema Mashinani and make it a key program for job creation.

Works of art such as music, storytelling, film and poetry can be powerful tools for promoting Kenya's cultural diversity and cohesion.

Our Board is striving to leverage on this tool by working with strategic partners and it is our desire to work with universities across the country to promote film and theatre.

I challenge all the deans of students present here today to find purpose to invest in equipment for the Sinema Mashinani programme under the community service extension, which falls under the universities' mandate.

We are already working with Kisii University which has successfully implemented this idea and are impacting the communities around them by showing films and clean content for information, education and entertainment

It is my sincere plea that we should work together to teach our youths to be proud of their roots and to embrace national cohesion and integration for national development.

Let's use art to glorify positive behavior and social values such as honesty, hard work and patriotism. We must sensitize and empower the youth to know that Art does not have to be dirty to sell.

We also need to encourage them to create content that promotes moral responsibility among our people for national development.

Through partnership between KFCB and Kenya National Drama and Film Festival Secretariat, for the 2019 festivals where KFCB was the Title Sponsor under the theme “Promoting Moral Responsibility among the Youth through Theatre and Film”, the students produced some very high quality creative pieces in seven different genres.

As a result, the Board has been tasked by His Excellency the Deputy President Dr. William Ruto, to collaborate with the Ministry of Education and turn some of these great performances into film.

Let me take this opportunity to interest your universities to work with us on this project since the age groups that you handle are the highest consumers of media content.

Let me once again thank you for responding to our joint invitation to attend this workshop. It is my sincere prayer that at the end of the workshop, we shall come up with strategies and recommendations that will not only be good for your students and institutions but will also greatly impact the community.

Thank you and God bless you.