

KENYA PROFILE

SWISS
FOUNDATION
FOR TECHNICAL
COOPERATION







Who We are

Swisscontact is the independent, business-oriented foundation for international development cooperation. Founded in 1959 by leading Swiss companies, Swisscontact has promoted skills development and entrepreneurship to make a sustainable contribution to economic growth in developing and emerging countries. Globally, we are present in 41 countries, implementing over 131 projects.

In Kenya, Swisscontact has been part of the country's evolving development landscape for 28 years, delivering market-driven, inclusive and sustainable solutions that strengthen youth employability, enhance enterprise competitiveness, and build resilient systems capable of addressing financial exclusion, youth unemployment, climate vulnerability, health system gaps and digital transformation challenges.



Our Mission

We unleash the potential of private initiative to foster sustainable development and shared prosperity in developing and emerging countries.



Our Vision

An inclusive, sustainable economy where everyone has access to income, education, and opportunities. We align our work with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our focus areas revolve around Skills and employment, Enterprise development and Green transition



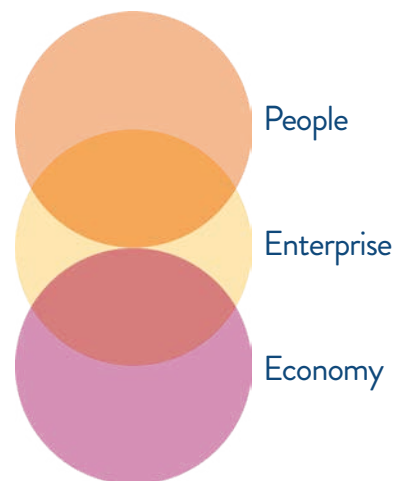
Our Unique Approach

We apply a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach to tackle the root causes of why economic systems fail to deliver for people. We identify system constraints, co-design solutions with key actors, and foster strategic, long term partnerships. By engaging the private sector from the outset; its role as the primary engine of income and job creation; our interventions become market-driven, replicable, and scalable. Through multi actor collaboration and behaviour change, we enable sustainable, inclusive growth that continues well beyond our direct involvement.



What We Stand For

- We strengthen the competencies of people, improving their employability.
- We increase the competitiveness of enterprises, growing their business
- We foster social and economic systems, promoting inclusive development.



Kenya at a Development Crossroads

Kenya stands at a defining demographic and economic moment. Each year, over one million young people enter the labour market, yet high unemployment and underemployment persist due to a systemic skills mismatch. While thousands graduate annually, many lack the practical, digital and industry-relevant competencies employers need, pushing large numbers into informal, low-productivity work.

At the same time, intensifying climate shocks and persistent health system gaps are placing additional strain on livelihoods and economic resilience. Droughts, floods and ecological degradation threaten agriculture and SMEs, while limited access to quality healthcare - particularly in underserved counties - undermines workforce productivity and deepens inequality.

These pressures are interconnected. Without coordinated, system-level responses, Kenya's demographic dividend risks becoming a structural vulnerability rather than a driver of inclusive growth.

“ For over 25 years, Swisscontact has partnered with Kenyan institutions and the private sector to address evolving development challenges. We helped pioneer inclusive finance models that contributed to Kenya's digital finance growth and strengthened enterprise-led livelihoods in fragile contexts such as Kakuma, proving that market-based approaches can outlast donor cycles.

Today, we focus on future-ready solutions in youth employability, dual apprenticeships, climate resilience, digital transformation, public health and inclusive finance. Our private sector-led models are designed to be practical, scalable and locally rooted.

Grounded in system facilitation, we work with government, industry and communities to align incentives, strengthen collaboration and build inclusive markets that prepare young people and enterprises for the economies of tomorrow.

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Thematic Areas

Our strategy going forward builds on this legacy through three integrated and mutually reinforcing pillars.



Future-Ready Skills and Labour Market Integration

Kenya's demographic dividend will only translate into growth if young people are equipped for emerging sectors. Under this pillar, Swisscontact advances **Youth Skills Dual Apprenticeship and Labour Integration**, strengthens **Digital Skills and Digital Transformation**, and supports structured pathways into employment through initiatives such as PropelA, Future Fit, and Climate-Proofing WASH (CP WASH).

This approach aligns training with industry demand, embeds private sector co-investment in skills development, and integrates green and digital competencies into curricula. By strengthening school-to-work transitions and enhancing labour market intermediation, we reduce friction between education systems and employment markets.



Climate Action and Resilient Green Growth

Climate volatility threatens livelihoods, enterprises, and public systems. Our second pillar responds by embedding **Climate Action and Green Growth** into local market systems while promoting climate-resilient business models and green enterprise development through programmes such as NURTURE, Future Fit, and CP WASH.

This work supports nature-positive income generation, circular economy approaches, sustainable water management, and climate-smart value chains. Rather than treating climate as an environmental add-on, we position it as an economic transformation driver, catalysing green jobs, unlocking climate finance, and strengthening SME resilience.





Inclusive Market Systems for Health and Enterprise

Sustainable development requires functioning markets that deliver essential services and generate inclusive growth. Our third pillar integrates **Public Health through Market-Based Models, Private Sector and SME Development, and Business Promotion in Agriculture.**

Through initiatives such as Eye Focus and CP WASH, Swisscontact strengthens rural health workforce pipelines and de-risks private sector participation in essential service delivery. By applying a market systems development (MSD) lens, we crowd in investment, strengthen SMEs as job creators, and enable access to finance and markets, including in agriculture and rural economies.



Work With Us

- Collaborate to pilot and test innovative ideas for youth livelihoods, skills, and enterprise
- Co-finance existing projects to support scale-up and deepen impact.
- Co-design or co-create new initiatives aligned with shared goals
- Engage us to implement your existing project with local insight and proven systems
- Access technical advisory support in strategy, institutional strengthening, and capacity development



Our Work

PropelA Dual Apprenticeship Programme

2022 – 2029

PropelA is a private sector led dual apprenticeship programme that equips young Kenyans with industry relevant construction skills and directly addresses persistent workforce shortages. Adapted from the Swiss apprenticeship model and tailored to Kenya's context, it aligns TVET training with real industry needs through co designed curricula, workplace learning, and strong employer engagement.

To date, PropelA has trained 300+ apprentices, with 80% of the 146 graduates (Cohort 1&2) already employed. The programme has demonstrated that dual apprenticeship can close skills gaps at scale when industry, government, and training institutions co-own delivery.

As Phase II (2026–2029) expands into additional trades, into Tanzania, and across the Central, East, and Southern Africa region, PropelA offers a scalable, region ready model for governments and private sector partners seeking to strengthen workforce competitiveness through structured, industry aligned training pathways.

The project is implemented in partnership with The National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), Don Bosco Boys Town, Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) and 60+ private sector partners.

Project Donors

Hilti Foundation and Geberit International AG. It is part of the Swisscontact Development Programme, which is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA.





Future Fit

(Preparing Youth for a Green Future)
2025 – 2027

The Future Fit project equips disadvantaged young Kenyans with market relevant digital and green skills to access emerging opportunities in the digital economy and e mobility sector. By integrating digital learning, green competencies, and entrepreneurship support into TVET systems and private sector value chains, the project creates practical, demand driven pathways into employment and self employment. Through strong private sector engagement, co investment, and modernised training approaches, Future Fit is building a more inclusive, future ready workforce aligned with Kenya’s economic transition.

Project Donors

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

NURTURE

(Wealthy People, Healthy Landscapes)
2025 - 2026

The project builds a nature positive, climate resilient economic model in Northern Kenya by developing high value honey and gum arabic value chains. It strengthens community enterprises, attracts private-sector investment and restores degraded ecosystems. The model embeds financial de risking and commercially viable business practices, delivering measurable income and climate gains. This creates a scalable pathway for long term, sustainable economic growth.



Project Donor

Wyss Academy for Nature



CP WASH

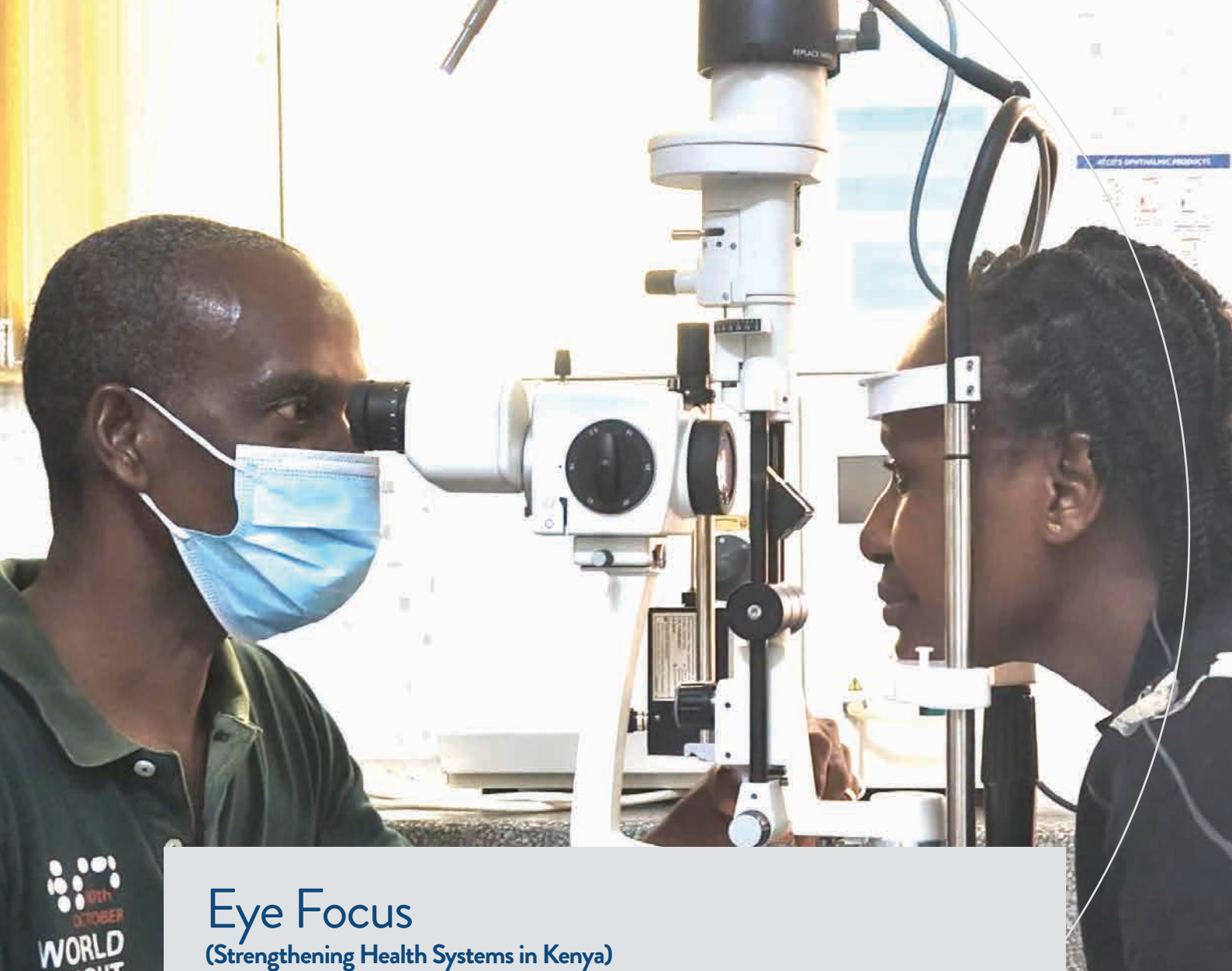
(Climate Proofing Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Services)

2025 - 2026

The CP WASH project expands sustainable access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in Turkana County, strengthening the resilience and economic self reliance of refugees and host communities. Using private sector led, market based models, the project turns climate and water challenges into viable economic opportunities. It builds local entrepreneurship, scales commercially viable WASH solutions, and integrates circular economy approaches to ensure lasting, climate adaptive service delivery.

Project Partners/Donors

Implemented by Plan International Kenya and Water Mission. Financed by DANIDA and Grundfos Foundation



Eye Focus

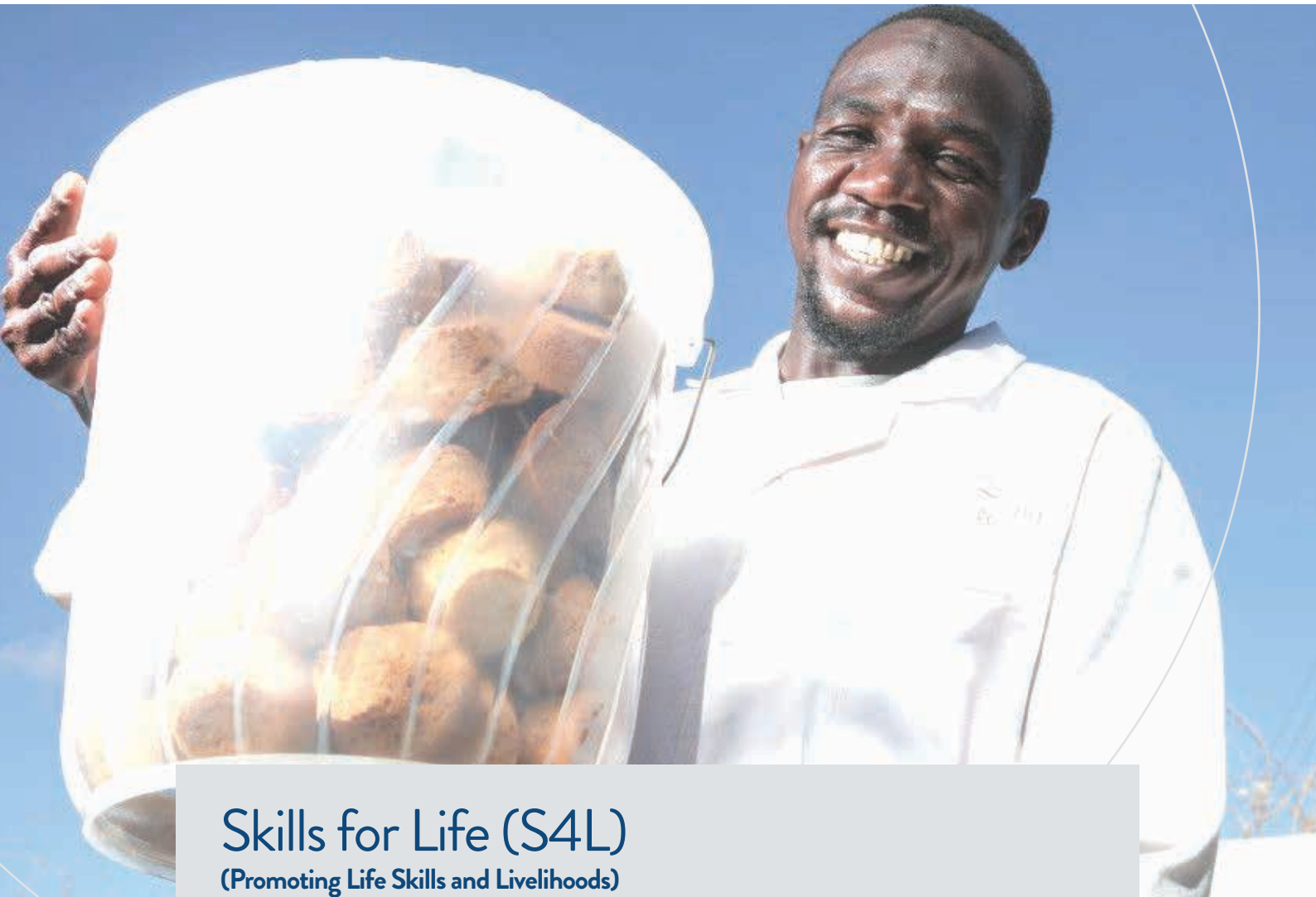
(Strengthening Health Systems in Kenya)

2025 – 2027

This initiative strengthens Kenya's health system by expanding the health workforce and improving service delivery through market based models. As a pilot within this effort, the Eye Focus Project increases access to quality, affordable eye care services in rural and peri urban areas. By strengthening local health markets and establishing sustainable public-private partnerships, the pilot demonstrates how targeted, market led interventions can close service gaps and build a more inclusive eye health system. Lessons from Eye Focus will guide scalable approaches for broader health system strengthening.

Project Donors

ANCP through The Fred Hollows Foundation, Novartis Foundation, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Skills for Life (S4L)

(Promoting Life Skills and Livelihoods)

2013 – 2022

Swisscontact strengthened the income generating capabilities of refugee and host community youth in Kakuma through an integrated skills development model combining technical, life skills, and business training. Young people were equipped for trades across construction, services, and light manufacturing, alongside literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship support. More than 9,275 youth (57% women) benefited from training, apprenticeships, and business development services, resulting in sustainable livelihood pathways and a scalable model for fragile environments.

Project Donor

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)



Inclusive Finance Programme (IFP)

2006 – 2020

Swisscontact helped lay the foundation for Kenya's now vibrant inclusive finance and digital finance ecosystem through 14 years of partnership with financial institutions such as Equity Bank, Juhudi Kilimo, and other actors across East Africa. The programme strengthened financial literacy, workforce capabilities, and innovation in financial service delivery, benefiting 38,591 people (72% women)

Project Donors

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, Foundation ESPERANZA, Credit Suisse, Canton of Zurich, City of Zurich, Finance Department, Canton Basel-Land, Donations

Current & Previous Donors



Foundation **ESPERANZA**

We create opportunities

Swisscontact

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