

Government urged to appoint trustee to manage youth fund

MWANGI MUIRURI

THE Government was yesterday urged to establish a National Board of Trustees to oversee the implementation of the Sh1 billion Youth enterprise Fund. The trustees will administer the fund, which the Minister for Finance Amos Kimunya has already set aside in the current fiscal estimates to be administered through small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

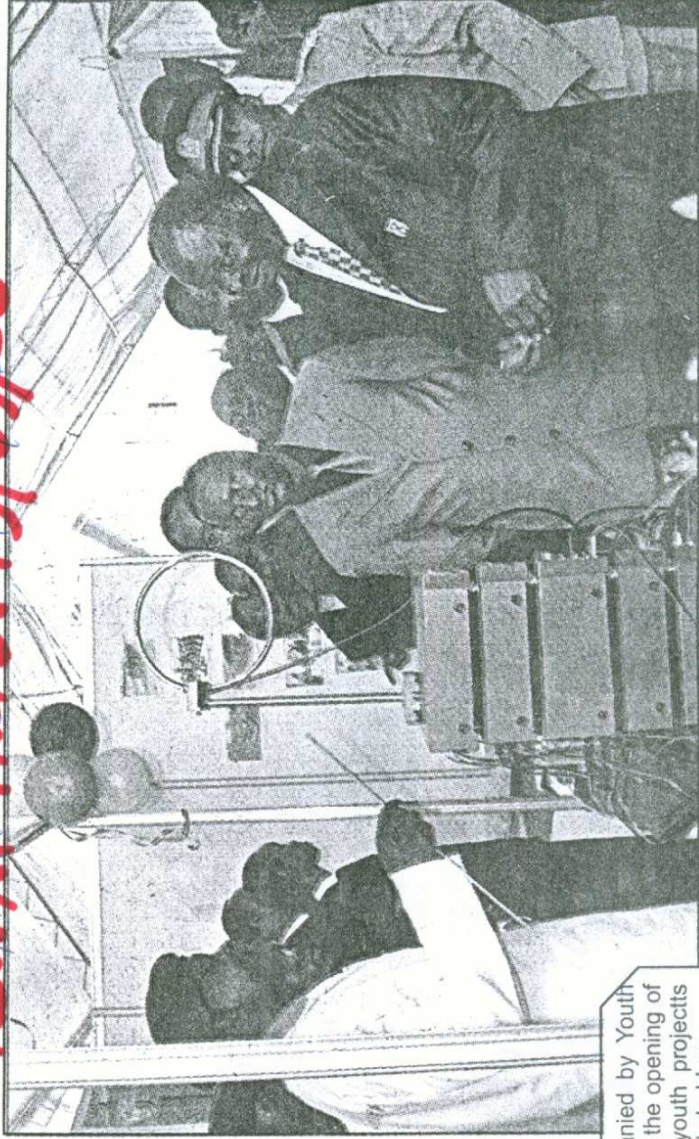
At a press briefing, the Director of Business Solutions Enterprise and Human resources Development consultants **Mwangi Wanjumbi** said the trustees Board should administrate on the fund whereas applications and handling of proposals be in the hands of business development centres.

Wanjumbi said the future of global wealth creation lies in SMEs, adding that Kenya should adopt the concept and herald it to levels of being the engine of development in the battle against poverty amongst the youth.

He said the success of the fund lies in calculated risk taking, patience and commitment by all parties involved as well as defining clear cut implementation modes based on short and long term measures backed and right management structures and identification of competent strategies.

But the fund should not be disbursed before there is a guarantee that business training regarding business development and financial planning that will induce an entrepreneurship culture amongst the beneficiaries, he added.

"Entrepreneurship culture must first of all be ingrained into the beneficiaries minds because the end result might be creating more poverty due to mismanagement of the income generating endeavours the beneficiaries will venture into. That must be curtailed since the end result should be where the enterprises pick up so as to afford repayment of the money disbursed for on-lending to other emerging cases," he cautioned. Further, **Wanjumbi** said the legislators would stand blamed



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President Mwai Kibaki accompanied by Youth minister Mohammed Kuto during the opening of the Yes Youth conference. The youth projects have won a lot of support from stakeholders.

if they will not take it upon themselves to guide the jobless youths in their respective constituencies to access the share of the funds.

"It is up to the MPs and the Councillors to liaise with the Provincial Administration officers to ensure the deserving cases in their political jurisdiction access the funds. Otherwise, who will be the guiding voice for the many youths deep in the villages where access to information is poor and even when it reaches them it is so distorted thus confusing?" **Wanjumbi** posed.

He said it is up to the MPs to establish Youths' Business Development centres in their constituencies using any available re-

sources even if it will be from the Constituency Development Funds (CDF) or the Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF). In those centers, he added, business related proposal writers should be recruited to always be there in guiding the needy groups drawn from the youthful segment.

And the ministry of Youth Affairs was advised to liaise with those of Agriculture and Cooperatives since there is much assistance to be drawn based on their expansive networks in the country. In support of the advice, **Wanjumbi** said the extension officers in the Agriculture ministry as well as its allied development corporations should form a good guide on the way forward regarding adoption of the business development centres.