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Danida

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Skills Development Learning Brief

Across Nairobi, Mandera, Garissa and Turkana programmes



Introduction

Skills development emerged as a key driver of self-reliance across the programmes, equipping refugees and host communities with vocational, entrepreneurial, financial and business management skills. Participants reported improved employability, increased income opportunities, stronger business practices and greater confidence. However, evidence shows that skills alone are insufficient to sustain livelihoods. Lasting outcomes require an integrated approach that connects training with practical experience, mentorship, access to finance, markets and protection support.



What worked

Approaches that consistently generated strong and sustainable outcomes across the programmes.

Learning by doing

Practical training, apprenticeships and demonstrations led to stronger results than classroom training alone.

Mentorship and coaching

Ongoing guidance helped participants apply skills, solve challenges and grow their enterprises.

Peer learning and exposure visits

Participants learned from successful businesses and adopted proven practices.

Building local training capacity

Programme staff, community facilitators and local structures were equipped to deliver training sustainably.





Skills to economic opportunity

Participants acquired practical, market-relevant skills that improved incomes, employment and enterprise growth.

1,374

TVET graduates

564 Kakuma | 810 Dadaab

46%

of Dadaab graduates transitioned to employment.



<1,000

Jobs created through business development.

55%

41%

P2P & FCDO graduates earning income from skills in Kakuma.

Dadaab monthly earnings.

KES 5,800

Kakuma monthly earnings.

KES 1,000 → 7,600

Challenges and strategic lessons

Key challenges

Skills alone do not create income

Additional support is needed to translate skills into sustained livelihoods.

Limited capital and market access

Many graduates lack the finance, equipment and market links to go grow.

Digital skills gaps

Limited access to digital tools and training reduces competitiveness.

Different learners need tailored pathways

Varying needs (youth, women, refugees and host communities) require flexible and inclusive options.

Strategic lessons

Connect training to jobs and enterprises

Link skills training to employment opportunities and business development.

Expand mentorship

Expand mentorship opportunities and business

Align with labour market demand

Ensure training responds to real market needs and local opportunities.

Invest in digital & financial skills

Strengthen digital literacy, financial capability & access to finance

Partners

ReDSS

DCA actalliance

Pastoralist Girls Initiative — Empower Girls, Save Communities

Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)

Rights Organization for Advocacy & Development (ROAD)

TUPADO — Creating Change in Pastoralist Lives

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