Policy Brief

Strengthening Private Sector Engagement in the Oil and Gas Value Chain in Kenya

Strathmore University
Extractives Industry Centre

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STRENGTHENING PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT
IN THE OIL AND GAS VALUE CHAIN IN KENYA

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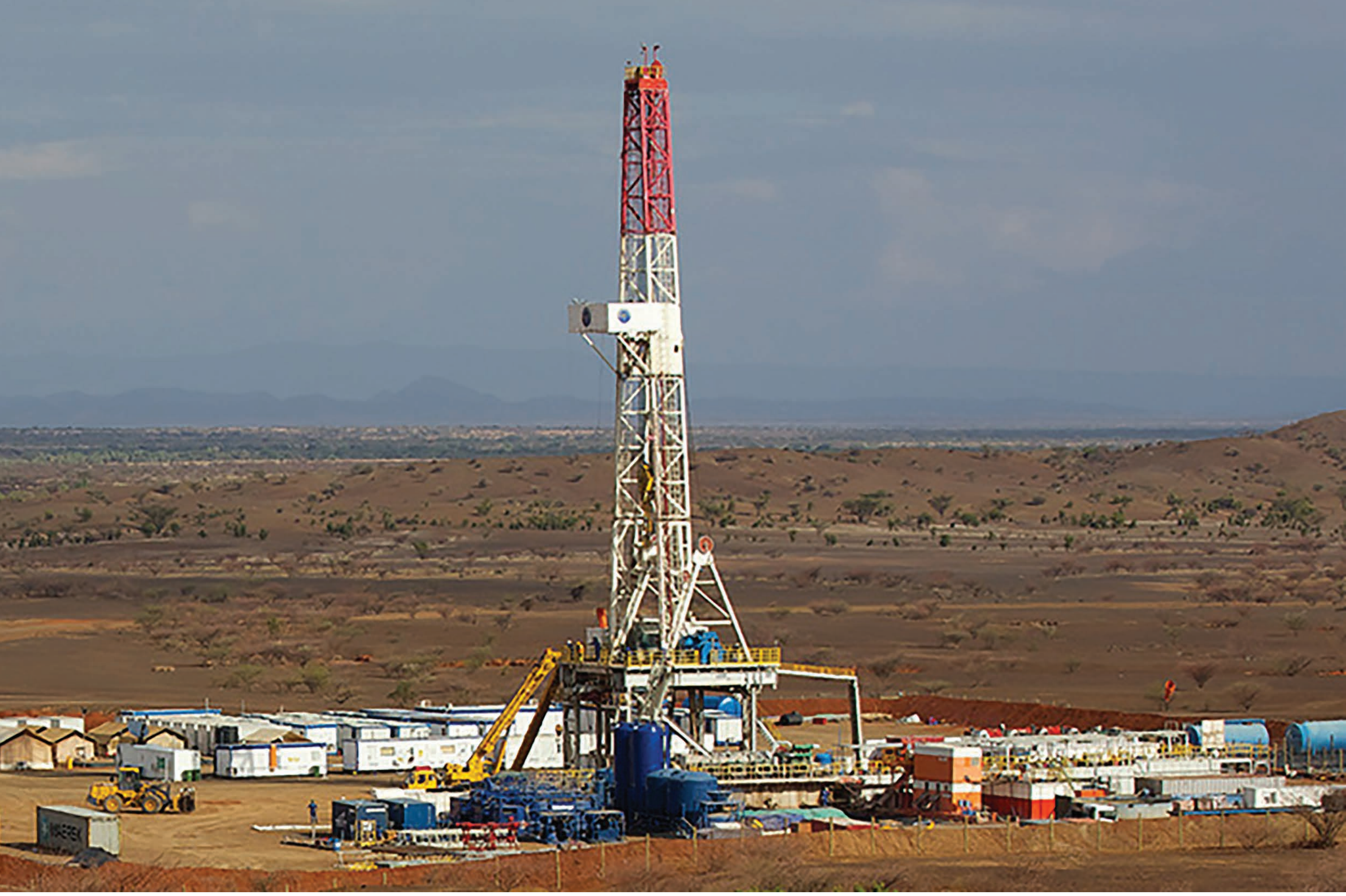
POLICY BRIEF

Oil and gas finds in Kenya present a unique opportunity that can cement the path towards sustainable development. Enhanced SME engagement in the sector is a critical lever for sustainable development. Together with micro enterprises, SMEs are estimated to contribute about 33.8% to Kenya's GDP and employ close to 14.9 million Kenyans. These figures are likely to rise if SMEs are strengthened to sustainably participate in the nascent oil and gas sector. Nevertheless, SME sustainability is considerably constrained due to inadequate capacity, lack of information on market and quality standards, and lack of access to technological knowhow and resources to strengthen their operations consistent with international standards for the oil and gas supply chain, among other challenges. Kenya has recently enacted the Petroleum (Exploration, Development and Production) Act 2019 and is in the process of developing a local content policy and petroleum local content regulations. While a robust legal and policy framework is crucial, it is not in itself the panacea to the growth of SMEs and participation in the quality-intensive oil and gas sector. There is a resounding need for collaborative efforts to enhance the capacity of SMEs and address other constraints that hinder their growth.



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Introduction

Kenya's GDP growth in recent years has been moderate, remaining below the average of East African countries. Fortunately, the discovery of roughly 560 million barrels of recoverable oil in the Northern region, provide the potential to boost the country's economy. Kenya is still not an oil producing country, but ongoing activities present a unique opportunity that can cement the path towards sustainable development. Most benefits would come from increasing national content opportunities, through transfer of expertise/skills, knowledge and technology to Kenyan small and medium enterprises (SMEs); creation of both direct and indirect employment in secondary SME industries resulting from the sector; business opportunities for the specialist and non-specialist SME sub-contractors to the petroleum companies; and attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the development of supporting infrastructure such as transportation and communication (African Development Bank Group, 2012). At the same time, mismanagement of the finite resource and lack of preparedness could push the country to the deep end of the dreaded resource curse.

Early planning, national content and diversification could set the stage for Kenya to maximise gains from the nascent resource. Private sector engagement, especially SMEs, form an integral fulcrum for diversification and interlinkages. Together with micro enterprises, SMEs are estimated to contribute about 33.8% to the national output and employ close to 14.9 million Kenyans (KNCCI, 2018, p. 2). They are well spread across almost all sectors of the economy, majority of them operating in the service industry (KNBS, 2016, p. 26). Due to this diversity, SMEs' engagement in the oil and gas sector is imperative. It provides an opportunity not only to enhance diversification, but also to scale up the competitiveness of SMEs and ultimately double their contribution to Kenya's GDP. Nevertheless, SMEs are faced with myriad challenges that may hinder their participation in the standard-intensive oil and gas sector. At the top is inadequate knowledge of the industry and capacity to meet industry standards, but this by no means suggests that SMEs do not face other constraints.

This Policy Brief identifies key constraints that face SMEs, with possible policy considerations that can help strengthen their engagement in the fast-transitioning and time-bound oil and gas sector. The Brief draws on existing research and highlights from the High-Level Policy Dialogue held on 21st June 2019 at Strathmore University as part of the East Africa SME Training in Oil and Gas.[1]

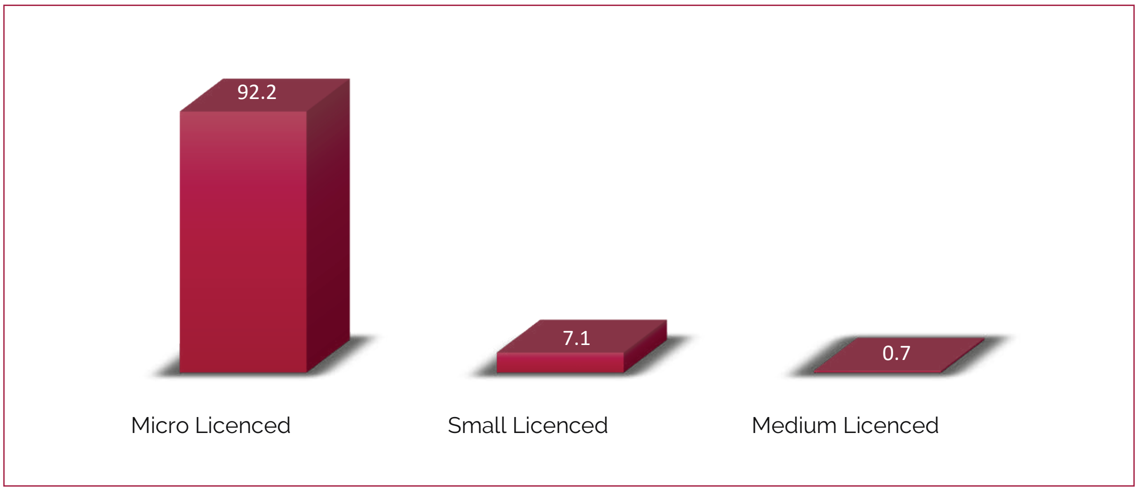
Rationale

SMEs, generally defined as establishments having between 10 and 99 employees, are critical enablers of national content development (KNBS, 2016, p. 10). Their sustainability is critical, especially in the competitive oil and gas sector. However, SME sustainability is considerably constrained due to inadequate capacity, lack of information on market and quality standards, and

[1] Under the partnership of Strathmore Extractives Industry Centre, Extractives Baraza and the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) through the Africa Legal Support Facility and the African Natural Resource Centre.

lack of access to technological know-how and resources to strengthen their operations consistent with international standards for the oil and gas supply chain, among other constraints (Wasunna & Kirwa, 2018). Some SMEs operate informally and lack essential tools to sustainably thrive in the sector. Out of 7.4 million micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya, only 1.6 million are licenced—most of which operate in the service sector, particularly wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles, accommodation and food service activities, and other service activities (KNBS, 2016; KAM, 2017). About 92.2% of the licenced MSMEs are micro establishments while SMEs only account for 7.8% of the total licenced MSMEs (KNBS, 2016, p. 130). The statistics paint a worrying picture for a subsector that is expected to harness the opportunities in the oil and gas sector to boost in-country value addition.

Figure 1: Distribution of Licenced MSMEs



Source: KNBS (2016)

Within the upstream oil and gas sector, the level of SME participation has been irregular and declining. In 2017, 30% of Tullow Oil's supplier spend was with Kenyan businesses, down from 33% in 2016, albeit with a higher absolute value due to increased expenditure related to the 2017 South Lokichar appraisal campaign (Tullow Oil plc, 2018). This calls for collaborative strategies to strengthen local SMEs to plug into the oil and gas supply chain.

Easing SME Growth and Participation in the Oil and Gas Sector

The requirement that locally-sourced goods and services must meet acceptable standards justifies the need for capacity building of SMEs to improve their competitiveness given the unique and complex nature of the petroleum sector.

The Government of Kenya has made significant progress in its efforts to enhance business growth and access to opportunities, but more collaborative efforts targeting the petroleum sector are needed to create a better enabling business environment for SMEs. A key milestone is the recent enactment of the Petroleum (Exploration, Development, Production) Act 2019. Section 50(1) (b) of the Act requires petroleum contractors to give priority to services provided and goods manufactured in Kenya provided the goods and services meet the specifications of the petroleum industry as prescribed by the Kenya Bureau of Standards or, in absence of a Kenyan standard, any other approved internationally acceptable standard. This proviso justifies the need for capacity building of SMEs in Kenya to improve their competitiveness given the unique and complex nature of the petroleum sector. The Act further states that local enterprises should be treated equally in accessing tender invitations and the tender evaluation criteria.[2] Similar requirements are reflected in the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act 2015, though limited in scope.[3]

The Kenya Vision 2030 underscores the need to strengthen the capacity and financial capability of SMEs, and establish SME industrial parks in key urban centres (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Information is considered a central tenet in the realisation of this foundation. Additionally, Kenya's National Agenda (presently dubbed, 'The Big Four') highlights technology and innovation, and infrastructure as some of the key elements in the success of the manufacturing sector, including SMEs operating within this sector (PDU, 2019). The Micro and Small Enterprise Act of 2012 (MSE Act), and its operationalisation through the Micro and Small Enterprise Authority, is key towards achieving the aspirations of Vision 2030, but only with respect to micro and small enterprises. Section 2 of this Act defines a 'small enterprise' as an establishment having between 10 and 50 employees, an annual turnover of between 500 Kenyan shillings and 5 million Kenyan shillings, and its total assets and financial investment ranging between 5 million and 20 million Kenya shillings (if a service and farming enterprise) and 10 million and 50 million Kenya shillings (if engaged in the manufacturing sector). A 'medium enterprise', on the other hand, has between 50 and 99 employees. The fact that the MSE Act does not cover medium enterprises limits its effectiveness as an enabling legal framework for SME engagement.

Nevertheless, according to the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Report 2019, Kenya was one of the most improved countries in the ease of doing business during the reporting period (Cytonn Investments, 2019). Notable reforms included: streamlining tax paying process by merging all permits into a single unified business permit; making access to electricity more efficient and reliable; and making registration of property easier through an online land rent financial management system (on the eCitizen portal) (World Bank, 2019).

Ease of Doing Business in Kenya Ranking				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ease of doing business rank (1-190)	113	92	80	61
Ease of doing business score (0-100)	58.1	62.4	65.2	70.3

Source: Cytonn Investments (2019)

Through an amendment of the Companies Act 2015, the Government of Kenya has strengthened protection of minority investors by increasing disclosure requirements, regulating the approval of transactions with interested parties and increasing available remedies if such transactions are prejudicial, increasing shareholders' rights and role in major corporate decisions, and requiring greater corporate transparency (Cytonn Investments, 2019).

2 Model Production Sharing Contract 2019, cl 22(6) (as outlined under the First Schedule of new Petroleum Act 2019).

3 Section 155(2) of this Act provides that preferential procurement shall apply only to manufactured articles, materials or supplies wholly mined and produced in Kenya, subject to availability and realization of the applicable international or local standards.

The Government has also enacted the Movable Property Security Rights Act 2017, which allows the use of movable property as collateral facilities, promotes consistency and certainty in secured financing relating to movable property, and establishes the office of the Registrar of Security Rights to facilitate the registration of security rights in movable property. While this reform seeks to enhance the ability of individuals and SMEs to access credit using movable assets, it should be noted that most SMEs start with no tangible assets and are therefore locked out of credit. Thus, an innovative approach that takes into consideration the uniqueness and peculiarity of each business is imperative.

In a bid to speed up cross-border trade, the Government has implemented an electronic cargo tracking system which is linked to the Kenya Revenue Authority's electronic interchange system for customs clearance (World Bank, 2019). Relatedly, vide the Presidential Directive of 1st June 2019, the Kenya Ports Authority, Kenya Revenue Authority and Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) should honour shipment inspections done by KEBS-appointed agents at the port of origin (Nyamori, 2019). The Directive comes at a time when SMEs have incurred losses as a result of protracted detention of their goods at the port of Mombasa due to alleged non-compliance with stricter importation rules. Further, in its 2019/2020 national budget, the government set aside 1.7billion Kenyan shillings to support the growth of SME in the manufacturing sector (National Treasury, 2019). This can only be fruitful with proper management and spending that eschews corrupt practices.

Private Sector-Led Initiatives to Enhance SME Growth

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) currently runs an entrepreneurship development programme that is tailored for MSMEs. The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), which comprises diverse sector boards, including energy and extractives, has been implementing the training and internship component of the Kenya Youth Empowerment Project, in partnership with the Government of Kenya. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) also plays a crucial role in advocating the government to create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and SME development. In 2017, for instance, KAM launched its Business Growth Programme geared towards scaling up SMEs for inclusive growth. KAM also runs the Manufacturing Academy, which provides technical and specialised training services to enhance capabilities and competitiveness of local manufacturers. Invest in Africa (IIA) also runs a Kenyan Chapter that promotes linkages between investors and local businesses. Invest in Africa has been working to increase SMEs access to skills, markets and finance in partnership with leading entities in Kenya, such as Tullow Oil, Educate Global, Strathmore Business School, Shell, and Safaricom Limited, among others. Through the African Partner Pool (APP) and Business Linkages Programme, IIA directly links SMEs to procurement opportunities from larger organizations sourcing for goods and services locally and offers capacity building to address their skills and knowledge gaps. The APP presently has a cross-sector database of over 1,300 vetted SMEs from Kenya. From an IOC perspective, Tullow Oil Kenya emphasises its commitment towards improving access to supply chain opportunities for local firms through targeted capacity development initiatives for the local firms in Turkana oilfields. For instance, the company has supported Morutena Contractors in building their capability by involving them in training sessions thereby enhancing their business knowledge and professional skills.

Constraints to SME Participation in the Oil and Gas Supply Chain

> *"SMEs lack the ability to package themselves properly, with clear records, accounts and business plans, before going for funding."*

The biggest challenge is how to fund SMEs. On the one hand, SMEs lack the ability to package themselves properly, with clear records, accounts and business plans, before going for funding. A huge number of SMEs in Kenya are informal, tax non-compliant, and lack a track record of their own that can enable them access credit to expand their businesses. On the other hand, access to information on and/or affordable credit schemes remains a challenge for SMEs that lack tangible security to get funding. A perception also exists among financial institutions that the SME ecosystem is risky to invest. The solution for this lies in continuous engagement with SMEs to create awareness on available funding opportunities and how SMEs can prepare themselves adequately.

Moreover, despite Kenya's exponential ranking in the World Bank ease of doing business, the regulatory environment is still burdensome for SMEs—mainly due to the cost and number of licences and permits that one should obtain, bureaucratic and costly business registration process, and unfair and prohibitive tax regimes coupled with numerous (and often informal) fines and fees. In counties where most SMEs operate, the issue of double taxation is prevalent as SMEs are forced to pay taxes in different counties for goods on transit (Nyamori, 2019). These constraints partly explain why the number of unlicensed SMEs in Kenya is high (about 79%) (KNCCI, 2018; KNBS, 2016).

Very little has been done to create an enabling business environment in the petroleum sector. Although the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives recently launched the Kenya E-Trade Portal to ease the way in which Kenyan enterprises access opportunities both locally and internationally (Jefwa, 2017), a central information centre that is specifically dedicated for suppliers and opportunities within the petroleum value chain is essential. Luckily, Kenya is currently developing the Petroleum (Local Content) Regulations 2019, which, though inconsistent with the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act 2015 in terms of targets, provides for the establishment of a supplier database. Whether this will be stand-alone or interlinked with the E-Trade Portal and other databases is unclear.

SMEs also face a continued challenge with payment turnaround when dealing with both government and private sector players. The long delays in payment threaten to shrink capital for SMEs who struggle to remain in business and be sustainable in the sector (Amadala, 2019). This greatly affects the potential of the SMEs to grow and create more job opportunities for many Kenyans. This calls for a streamlining of the payment procedures and timelines especially in government as well as private sector to enable SMEs thrive in the sector.

Other constraints include lack of trust among the SMEs to form joint ventures (with fear that their ideas may be stolen); lack of confidence to bid for oil and gas tenders, partly based on the perception that the sector belongs to a few 'rich' individuals; inadequate capacity to deliver bulky contracts; and lack of awareness on the standards and procedures required to benefit from the business opportunities in the petroleum sector, especially the upstream segment.

Challenges Facing Women and Youth-led SMEs in Kenya

Kenya's Vision 2030 recognises power and resource distribution as a core social pillar for improved livelihoods of women, youth and vulnerable groups. In keeping with this, the MSE Act 2012 requires the Micro and Small Enterprise Authority to promote the mainstreaming of youth, gender and persons with disabilities in MSE activities and programmes. Under Article 27(3) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres.[4] Article 55 of the Constitution requires the State to take measures, including affirmative action programmes, to ensure that the youth access relevant education and training; have opportunities to associate, be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life. The Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Act 2015 contains an affirmative action provision requiring that at least 30% of government tenders be designated for women, youth and persons with disability. These provisions provide a basis for women and youth to benefit equally from economic opportunities, including those created in the petroleum sector.

"Women and youth generally form the dominant group in Kenya's MSME sector, but largely as owners of micro and small enterprises which may not sustainably compete in the petroleum sector."

Nonetheless, evidence suggests that economic empowerment of women and youth in the petroleum sector is still wanting (NEMA, 2017). Women and youth generally form the dominant group in Kenya's MSME sector, but largely as owners of micro and small enterprises which may not sustainably compete in the petroleum sector (KNBS, 2016).[5] In addition, 61% of unlicensed MSMEs are female-owned compared to 31.7% which are male-owned (KNBS, 2016). The average growth rate of female-owned enterprises has significantly increased in the recent past, but with low survival rates compared to male-owned enterprises. For example, the 2016 MSME Survey Report reveals that majority (54.9%) of enterprises closed were female-owned (KNBS, 2016).

The reasons for these findings include lack of access to adequate finance; relatively low rates of business skills and technical capabilities to compete more effectively; access to credit information; and 'time poverty' due to household management responsibilities on the part of women (IFC, 2011; KNBS, 2016). Women's limited control over productive resources, such as land, means they lack a key form collateral to get credit and invest in in-come generating activities that can enable them effectively participate in the petroleum sector (Omolo, 2014; NEMA, 2017). Equally, the recent listing of defaulters of Higher Education Loans Board loans by the Credit Reference Bureau limits the youth from accessing credit, including special funds such as Uwezo Fund and Affirmative Action Fund.

[4] See also Articles 60(1) (f) and 232(1) of the Constitution, 2010; Employment Act, 2007.

[5] Within the petroleum sector are few women-owned or run enterprises. The key ones include: Akiberan Aberu comprised of over 120 women operating within the Turkana oilfields; Tsavo Oil Field Services; and Meturena Investment Limited.

Policy Considerations

As Kenya moves to the development phase of the oil and gas sector, with First Oil production set for 2021/2022, there is a resounding need to strengthen SMEs to unlock opportunities in the oil and gas sector. Creating a robust regulatory and policy environment is essential, but may not be a panacea to sustainable SME engagement. As highlighted below, other levers exist, including collaborative efforts to eliminate barriers to entry and integrate SMEs into the oil and gas supply chain.

Key Issues	Action(s)
Information Asymmetry	*Government* • Create a national supplier database for SMEs to register and access opportunities in the oil and gas sector. *SMEs* • SMEs engaged in the oil and gas sector should form an Oil and Gas SME Association and an online platform that is linked to IOC and government databases for ease of access to opportunities. It should be open for other SMEs interested in the oil and gas sector to join the platform.
Low capacity and competitiveness	*Government* • Pursue collaborative efforts for continuous capacity development on business management skills and ethics, including how to prepare bids, and the required standards. • Collaborate with IOCs to tailor the size of tenders for local SMEs. *IOCs* • Unbundle bulky and complex contracts to accommodate local SME participation; and align procurement rules with the needs of SMEs. • Develop a system to continuously engage with SMEs, show progress, and address concerns relating to payment and tendering. This can be quarterly or semi-annually. • Encourage international suppliers to incorporate subsidiaries in Kenya and form joint ventures with local suppliers. *SMEs* • The proposed Oil and Gas SME Association should deepen linkages between well-established oil and gas SMEs and new or potential entrants to facilitate experiential learning, particularly regarding standards and certification requirements. • Partnerships among SMEs to effectively handle bulky contracts.
Limited Investment Capital	*Government* • Integrate supplier databases with financial institutions to ease access to credit. • Simplify procedures for registering property to enable SMEs' ownership of assets. • Explore how to introduce SMEs to equity market. *Financial Institutions* • Improve the financial literacy of SMEs through continuous engagement to create awareness on available funding opportunities, requirements, and how SMEs can prepare themselves adequately.

Key Issues	Action(s)
	• Align credit parameters with the needs of SMEs, including flexibility with respect to tangible security. *SMEs* • SMEs should first look within their business, put their systems together (value proposition) before going for funding.
Burdensome business regulatory environment	Government should address key determinants of SME willingness and ability to invest in the oil and gas sector, namely: • removing bureaucratic red tape by simplifying business registration and licensing to incentivise SME formalisation; and • reducing the cost of licences and permits.
High oil and gas quality standards	*Government & IOCs* • Incessantly communicate oil and gas quality standards to SMEs and encourage them to adopt improved technology and innovative approaches to improve product quality. • Develop Kenya oil and gas standards in consultation with IOCs and reduce certification costs to accommodate local SMEs. *SMEs* • SMEs should be alive to the fact that oil and gas is a standard intensive industry and endeavour to improve to be certified as capable suppliers.
Delayed payments	Government and IOCs should improve on their payment procedures and timelines to cushion SMEs from shrinking their capital base.
Women and youth	Government should pursue gender responsive local content requirements; and create an enabling environment for youth and women to thrive as asset owners, entrepreneurs and employees within the oil and gas value chain. This should take into consideration women's unique roles in society.
Sector interlinkages and economic diversification	*Government* • The database envisaged in the Draft Petroleum (Local Content) Regulations 2019 should be integrated with existing databases, such as the Kenya E-Trade Portal established by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives in 2017 to enable easy access to business opportunities across sectors. • Use the oil revenues to support sectors, such as manufacturing, construction and transport, to create more opportunities for SMEs. *SMEs* SMEs should diversify their businesses considering that oil and gas are finite resources.

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