

THE 4TH KIPPRA ANNUAL REGIONAL CONFERENCE, JUNE 2021

CONCEPT NOTE

The Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) is organizing its 4th Annual Regional Conference themed, ***“Science, Technology, and Innovation (ST&I) in Enhancing Delivery of the Big 4 Development Agenda”***. The conference brings together stakeholders to exchange views on policy options and measures pertaining the role of ST&I in guiding the country’s transition to a knowledge-driven economy that supports realization of the Big 4 Agenda. The conference is planned for **23rd – 25th June 2021** in Nairobi County. The conference is hosted by KIPPRA in collaboration with other key stakeholders including the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) alongside other government ministries, departments, and agencies. The conference will also bring together delegates comprising officials from national and county governments, representatives of national authorities from the regional economic blocs, regional think tanks, as well as development partners, civil society, persons with disability and other special interest groups.

The Kenya Vision 2030 proposes intensified application of ST&I to raise productivity and efficiency levels across the social, economic, and political pillars. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 as well explicitly places a premium on the generation and management of a knowledge-based economy. Nonetheless, the ST&I sector has been experiencing myriad of challenges, which have slowed the development of a knowledge-based economy. Among the key challenges are a weak policy framework to facilitate effective integration of ST&I in all sectors of the economy; “Silo Mentality”; and inadequate funding where the expected 2% of the national budget to fund ST&I, has decreased over the years. Further, is perennial non-alignment of education and training curricula to industry needs which has led to skills mismatch and under-employment.

The conference will provide a forum for sharing knowledge through discussions on various issues key among them:

1. Status of ST&I in Kenya: Investment in research and innovation by the public and private sector; Access to ICT; FINTECH; E-commerce and status of industrial technology.
2. Policy, Institutional and Legislative Framework: What makes a good ST&I policy objective? Coordinating the institutional structures of ST&I; The political economy of ST&I.
3. Development of Human Capital: Does the education system matter? The role of technology universities in innovation; What can TVETs do to propel ST&I? Is the existing skills level ready for ST&I?

4. Building a strong innovation system: Investing in research and development for quality innovation; Technology and innovation process; Patenting and intellectual property rights; i-Labs and innovation centers.
5. Infrastructure: Access to information, Communication, and technology system; Access to roads, energy, and water as enablers of ST&I; Special economic zones role in promoting innovation.
6. Cross cutting issues: Availability and use of ST&I statistics; Gender perspectives in technology and innovation; Technologies to able the PWDs.
7. Building resilience with ST&I; Agricultural technologies in food security and nutrition; Appropriate technology and innovations in water, sanitation and waste management; Exploiting the blue economy through development in technology; Sustainable cities and communities; Disaster preparedness and the role of ST&I.
8. Industrialization and ST&I: Are we ready for 4th Industrial Revolution? Artificial intelligence; SMEs and ST&Is.
9. Youth Event: Opportunities for youth with ST&I; Commercializing innovations; Youth activities.

“Thinking Policy Together”