



The HOMA BAY ECHO

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF HOMA BAY COUNTY

AUGUST 1, 2025 - DECEMBER 31, 2025



Devolved power driving economic impact as Homa Bay stages 9th Counties Forum



DEVOLUTION
CONFERENCE
2025

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by putting dignity first



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The Editor's Echo

Hosting the 9th Devolution Conference in 2025 marks a defining milestone for the County Government of Homa Bay.

To host the event, which rotates among Kenya's 47 counties, will take nearly a century to circle back—making Homa Bay's moment in the spotlight both rare and symbolic.

For Homa Bay to host the event isn't just a logistical triumph but a full-circle moment that evokes the legacy of Dr. Chrispine Odhiambo Mbai, a son of the soil and one of the fiercest champions of devolution, whose life was tragically cut short during Kenya's constitutional reform journey. His vision for decentralization, once dismissed by a resistant regime, is now being realized in his homeland through this landmark conference.

Coinciding with this national gathering is the launch of The Homa Bay Echo, the county's official publication. Over 100-page commemorative magazine details the progress made under Governor Gladys Atieno Nyasuna Wanga's leadership, who took over from the pioneering governor Cyprian Achillaus Otieno Awiti. As the first female county boss in the Lake Region Economic Bloc, Wanga has not only reignited confidence in devolution but also positioned Homa Bay firmly on the national development radar.

The publication offers a sweeping view of departmental achievements across governance, infrastructure, health, education, and agriculture, among others—documenting the remarkable shift from a lost decade to a future brimming with promise. It captures stories of transformation, citizen engagement, and a renewed people-centered governance approach.

Homa Bay may have lost the first 10 years of devolution, but the county has turned around to become a learning ground for peers seeking functional models of devolution.

Read the incisive stories of how the county has refocused into a people centered entity as it picks up from a state of hopelessness to a county of endless potential. Welcome to Homa Bay. Welcome to the home of Gor Mahia..

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Mbita Bridge connecting to Mbita Town

Welcome to Homa Bay County

Home of endless potential

Nestled along the sparkling waters of Lake Victoria, Homa Bay County is no longer the quiet frontier it once was. With an unassuming charm and a growing sense of purpose, the county has been chosen to host the upcoming Regional Conference in August—a recognition that speaks volumes about its rising stature in governance, innovation, and people-driven transformation.

For a county once overlooked, this moment is both a celebration and a promise: Homa Bay is open for business, leadership, and inspiration.

What makes Homa Bay's unique is not just the pristine setting or centrality to the Lake Region Economic Bloc, but its story—a story of resilience, rebirth, and rising ambition. The county's journey is stitched together by the unwavering efforts of its people, the visionary push of its leaders, and a renewed belief in its place at the regional and national table.

From bustling fish markets along the lakefront to highland farms producing sweet potatoes

and bananas, from health centers once bare now brimming with new equipment, to classrooms echoing with hope rather than despair, Homa Bay's transformation is grounded in the everyday acts of its citizens and leaders who dared to dream bigger.

The people of Homa Bay are its most precious asset. This lakeside county has always produced giants—from fiery politicians who shaped Kenya's independence, to cultural icons who kept Luo traditions alive in the face of modernity.



Homa Bay offers a unique blend of serene landscapes and strategic location, and sits at the intersection of economic potential and natural beauty.

Today, a new crop of heroes and heroines is quietly changing the script. Governor Gladys Wangari, the first woman to lead the county, has become a symbol of bold, inclusive leadership.

Her administration is credited with transformative changes in healthcare, infrastructure, and education. Under her stewardship, Homa Bay is no longer a place struggling at the periphery, but a nucleus of possibility drawing interest from investors, policymakers, and development partners alike.

The decision to host the regional conference here is as much about logistics as it is about symbolism.

Homa Bay offers a unique blend of serene landscapes and strategic location. It sits at the intersection of economic potential and natural beauty. The shimmering lake is not just a scenic backdrop but an economic engine.

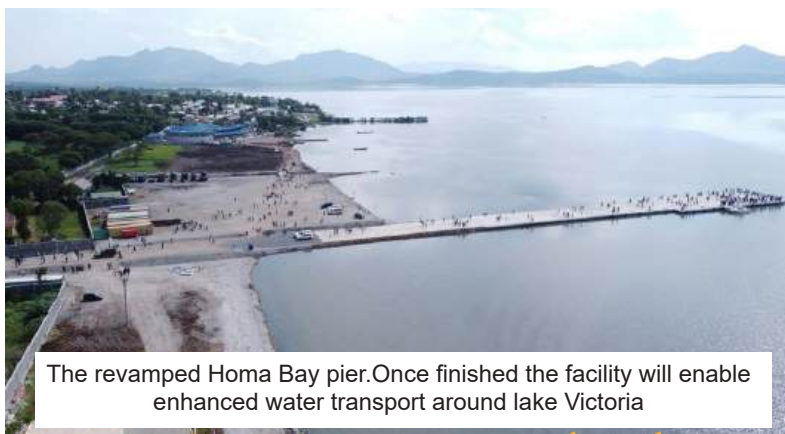
With Africa's largest inland fishery at its doorstep, the county supports thousands of livelihoods through fishing and fish processing.

But it's not stopping there—plans

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The revamped Homa Bay pier. Once finished the facility will enable enhanced water transport around lake Victoria

are underway to boost aquaculture, with new hatcheries, cold chains, and market access programs bringing dignity and growth to a sector long dominated by informal trade.

Agriculture remains another cornerstone of the local economy. Vast tracts of fertile land support maize, cassava, sorghum, and groundnuts. But more interesting is the quiet revolution in horticulture and high-value crops, led in part by youth and women's groups. Supported by county and development funds, these new agripreneurs are tapping into domestic and export markets.

The county government has also invested in climate-smart agriculture, working with farmers to harness solar-powered irrigation and drought-resistant seeds.

These are not the headlines that often make national news, but they are the heartbeat of a community building its future.

Yet, what truly sets Homa Bay apart is its people's hunger for progress. The heroes and heroines shaping this renaissance are found in unlikely places: a young woman from Suba teaching digital literacy in rural schools, a local chief championing anti-teen pregnancy campaigns, a team of engineers upgrading roads in flood-prone areas, and community health workers going door-to-door in Mbita to ensure every child gets immunized. Each of these stories threads into a county narrative that values people, potential, and purpose.

The regional conference is expected to bring together governors, ministers, private sector leaders, scholars, and civil society players from across the East African region.

But perhaps most exciting is the opportunity for Homa Bay to showcase not just what it has become, but what it is becoming.

The event will spotlight

Annual rainfall varies across the county, with higher elevations receiving up to 1,200 mm while the lower areas near Lake Victoria receive about 700-800 mm.

The shimmering lake is not just a scenic backdrop but an economic engine.

the county's investment climate, tourism appeal, health and education milestones, and commitment to inclusive governance. For local entrepreneurs, this is a rare moment to pitch innovations, attract partners, and build networks that extend far beyond Kenya's borders.

Tourism in Homa Bay is a sleeping giant now slowly awakening. The iconic Ruma National Park, home to the rare roan antelope, is drawing more eco-tourists and conservationists. Birdwatchers flock to islands like Takawiri and Mfangano, where fish eagles and kingfishers dance in the air. Cultural tourism is also finding its place—visitors come to experience the spiritual draw of Kit Mikayi, the sacred rocks of Simbi Nyaima, and the ancient rock art on Mfangano Island. County efforts to improve infrastructure and hospitality services around these attractions are already paying dividends, with local tour operators reporting rising bookings, especially from domestic travelers eager to rediscover Kenya's hidden gems.

Beyond natural beauty, Homa Bay's innovation ecosystem is gathering

pace. The county is part of the Lake Region Economic Bloc's push to digitize services, attract fintech startups, and create innovation hubs for young people. The Governor's Digital Talent program, for instance, is already equipping hundreds of youth with coding and graphic design skills. The county's first tech hub in Homa Bay Town is expected to be unveiled before the conference, featuring co-working spaces, mentorship programs, and investor linkages. For a region often branded as lagging, this is a leap forward that challenges long-held perceptions.

It would be impossible to talk about Homa Bay's rebirth without acknowledging its women. Women are at the center of this county's progress—from senior officials to grassroots changemakers. Programs such as Ngima Mama (Dignity for Mothers) are reducing maternal deaths through better prenatal care and emergency transport systems. Women-led cooperatives in cotton revival, fish processing, and agribusiness are proving that empowerment is not just a slogan—it's an economic strategy. The county has even introduced a gender-responsive budgeting framework to ensure that resources reflect the needs and rights of all residents. This shift is not accidental; it is deliberate, and the results are measurable.

As August approaches, the excitement is palpable. Roads are being repaired, hotels are expanding, and residents are being trained as guides, translators, and service providers. But perhaps more importantly, a new narrative is being written. A narrative that says a lakeside county in western Kenya—long stereotyped by poverty and politics—can host a regional dialogue on development, innovation, and leadership. A narrative that proves that when given the right tools and trusted with the reins of change, any community can rise.

The regional conference is not a destination but a milestone. It is a moment to reflect, showcase, and dream even bigger. With the lake as its mirror and its people as its light, Homa Bay is stepping confidently onto the regional stage. The county may once have been on the margins, but come August, all eyes will be on this rising star of the west—where history, opportunity, and human spirit meet.

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Reclaiming the devolution promise in era of progress

Devolution in Homa Bay was once a forgotten promise. When I took over as the second Governor of Homa Bay County nearly three years ago, the people were weary, their hopes dimmed by years of dysfunction.

The healthcare system had collapsed, roads were impassable, access to clean water remained a distant dream despite the county's proximity to Africa's largest freshwater lake, and the legacy of our son, Dr. Chrispine Odhiambo Mbai—the man who championed devolution and paid for it with his life—felt more like historical irony than lived reality.

It became crystal clear that the time had come to reinspire hope and reignite Homa Bay's true identity as the County of Endless Potential. That is when it dawned on us that there was need to reinspire hope, and reignite the position of Homa Bay as the home of endless potential.

The county has risen from a crawling entity raising about Ksh 200 million annually in revenue to a Ksh 1.7 billion own source revenue mobiliser, through an enhanced cashless strategy, that has also cut down on theft and pilferage.

And in the health sector, we started by reviving our health system by restoring the supply of drugs to all the over 250



Hon. Gladys Wanga EGH,
Governor Homa Bay county

facilities in the county, that had been starved of drugs supplies. This ensured the uninterrupted services in all public hospitals in the county. Our people stopped tramping to the neighbouring hospitals.

We have since operationalised the Cancer Centre, which a relief to cancer patients from our county, while the reactivation of the renal center was even a much-appreciated salvation.

We quickly moved from one place to the other opening up various hospital facilities, including Sena Hospital in the middle of an Island in Lake Victoria, a level 4 hospital now equipped with blood transfusion equipment.

We have equipped the laboratory and radiology section at the Homa Bay Teaching and Referral (CT-scan) departments, increased bed capacity at the hospital.

Community health services are anchored on the Kenya Community Health Policy, 2020-2030, with a goal of enhancing community access to healthcare to improve productivity through promotive, preventive

We have equipped the laboratory and radiology section at the Homa Bay Teaching and Referral (CT-scan) departments, increased bed capacity at the hospital.

and rehabilitative services thus reducing poverty, hunger, maternal and child deaths, as well as to improve educational performance across all stages of life.

In order to achieve this, 261 CHAs/CHOs and 2,954 CHPs have been trained on electronic community health information system (eCHIS). 2,954 CHPs have been issued with phones and are currently reporting electronically.

Some 2,954 CHPs have been sensitized on the use of CHP kits including commodities. In addition to capacity building of the workforce at the community level, my government has ensured consistent payment of stipends to the CHPs a feat that has enhanced their productivity.

THE NUMBERS

Ksh 1.7b

Own source revenue has surged from Ksh 200 million annually in revenue to Ksh 1.7 billion

GOVERNOR'S REMARKS

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Governor Gladys Wanga testing a plant machinery

We have spent close to Ksh 700 million in just three years to fund our children's, education through bursaries and scholarships. Our Fins to Swim program has come as a saviour to hundreds of children whose future would have been shuttered after the exit examination at the basic education level.

And over and above the bursaries we have in two years constructed about 280 Eye Classrooms through my administration's Ondo Kaunda initiative with 164 of them constructed through a community based funded program in only 90 days last year.

This far, the County has opened 255kms of new roads in the entire County with up to 40 new roads projects under ward-based program already initiated and more are lined up for this financial year.

Not to mention the maintenance of over 580kms of county roads, construction of three-foot bridges to ease connectivity, maintenance of two hydraulic machineries that include a motor grader, an excavator, two tippers, one roller and some utility vehicles over the period.

The implementation of the

IN NUMBERS

255kms

**The length of roads
Homa Bay county has
managed to open with
40 new projects open**

Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project 2 (KISIP2) has kicked off in our county. This is an Investment Project Financing (IPF) project of US\$ 150 million (EUR.134,800,000 equivalent) from International Development Association (IDA).

The project is meant to improve access to basic services and tenure security of residents in participating urban informal settlements, strengthening institutional capacity for slum upgrading in Kenya and shall be implemented between the years 2020 to 2026.

In Agriculture, we have distributed over 605,345 tons of seeds worth over Ksh 200 million to local farmers to boost production. This is over and above

the four tractors we purchased to support farming among others.

My governance and accountability frameworks have been overhauled to reduce corruption and restore trust. Public participation is now more than a formality—it is embedded in how we plan, decide, and execute. Communities are actively engaged in shaping their development agenda. Our enforcement officers have been trained to become true partners in compliance and revenue mobilization, helping improve service delivery without coercion or conflict.

Devolution, introduced by the 2010 Constitution, has surpassed expectations across Kenya—but in Homa Bay, it is now a lived success. Since 2022, the county has joined the ranks of devolved units where transformation is tangible, where progress is measurable, and where citizens no longer have to imagine better days—they are already living them.

Welcome to the 9th Devolution Conference. Welcome to Homa Bay, the Land of Endless Potential.

Hon. Gladys Wanga EGH
GOVERNOR HOMABAY COUNTY

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Homa Bay County at a glance

1,131,950



POPULATION

According to the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, the county has a population of 1,131,950 people. The population is distributed as follows:

- **Male:** 539,560
- **Female:** 592,367
- **Intersex:** 23
- **Number of Households:** 262,036
- **Average Household Size:** 4.3 persons
- **Population Density:** 356 persons per square kilometer

The population is largely youthful, providing a strong labor force that, if adequately harnessed, can drive economic development and innovation across the county.



Homa Bay Constituency Boundary

1. Suba West
2. Suba South
3. Suba North
4. Ndhiwa
5. Homa Bay Town
6. Rachuonyo West
7. Rangwe
8. Rachuonyo East
9. Kasipul
10. Kabondo Kasipul

4,001.5 km²

TRADE AND INVESTMENTS

- The county is investing in aquaculture and fish processing, including cold storage facilities, processing plants, and cage farming initiatives to reduce post-harvest losses
- Retail and wholesale trade, including vibrant market centers for fresh produce, fish and second-hand goods, anchored by supermarkets, shops, and informal street vending networks.
- Small-scale manufacturing is centered in Homa Bay Town and Mbita, including: Textile & cotton-based garment production, wood-based furniture, metal fabrication and agro-tool production.
- Industrial Park – Riwa Special Economic Zone (SEZ). A 532-acre industrial zone in Karachuonyo constituency, in master-planning stage (roads, utilities, zoning).
- Approximately 6,400 artisans are registered under local jua kali associations.
- Tourist attractions include Lake Victoria (beach tourism, boating, sport fishing), Ruma National Park (roan antelope, giraffe), Simbi Nyaima, and cultural sites on Mfangano and Rusinga Islands
- High demand for services like hotels, lodges, boat tours, cultural festivals, and visits to natural and historical landmarks
- Infrastructure investments include modernisation of fish markets (e.g. Koginga Beach), road upgrades, water and sanitation improvements, and plans for industrial parks and aggregation hubs, boosting enterprise and cross-border trade with Uganda and Tanzania.

POTENTIAL

- Untapped potential in tourism, sports fishing, boat excursions, and island tourism (including Lake Simbi Nyaima, Ruma National Park, Mfangano/Rusinga islands)
- There is massive potential for investments in cold storage and fish processing plant, to reduce post-harvest losses by ~50% and boost export capacity
- New investment areas can be found in Waterfront infrastructure (access roads, sanitation, street lighting) and tourism-related services (lodging, guided tours).
- With a large workforce in Homa Bay, there is potential in agriculture (74%), yet it contributes only ~25% to the county's GDP—major room to boost productivity through industrialization
- In the cotton value chain revival bid, there is potential for up to 10,000 acres, yielding ~1,500 kg/acre, and supporting ginnery, ginning, spinning, and textile production
- Fruit processing investment in pineapple, banana, mango available across sub-counties with araw produce largely sold locally. Opportunity for a ~Ksh 100 M plant in Rangwe for multi-fruit processing.

HOMA BAY COUNTY IN '5' MINUTES

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H.E Joseph Oyugi Magwanga
Deputy Governor Homa Bay county

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It is a true honor to welcome you all to Homa Bay County for the 2025 Devolution Conference.

This year's theme, for the people, for prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, resonates deeply with our county's journey and vision of endless potential. Since the advent of devolution, Homa Bay has placed people at the centre of development. Our investments in healthcare have reduced inequality by expanding services in previously underserved rural areas.

Through the upgrading of Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital and over 70 dispensaries across wards, we are bringing health closer to the people.

To promote inclusion and prosperity, we've prioritised youth and women.

Our fish farming, poultry, and sunflower value chains have created jobs and dignified incomes. Through targeted support to women's cooperatives and youth groups, we are not just fighting poverty, we are building economic justice

to our people.

We are also investing in infrastructure inclusive of rural roads, clean water projects, and digital hubs to ensure no community is left behind.

Our ECDE programs and bursaries are nurturing every child's right to education, regardless of background.

Devolution has made this possible.

It has shifted the power of planning, budgeting, and dreaming to the grassroots.

As Deputy Governor, I believe the future of social justice and equity lies in strengthening county governments, enhancing citizen participation, and ensuring resources reach every village and every household.

Let this conference renew our commitment to a people-driven, inclusive, and prosperous Kenya.

Welcome to Homa Bay County. Thank you, and may God bless you all.

H.E Joseph Oyugi Magwanga
DEPUTY GOVERNOR HOMA BAY COUNTY



Through the upgrading of Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital and over 70 dispensaries across wards, we are bringing health closer to the people.



We have upheld the Constitution by ensuring full and timely disbursement of the equitable share to counties. We increased allocations from KSh 370 billion in 2022 to KSh 385.4 billion in 2023. The Equalisation Fund rose by KSh 1.2 billion to KSh 8.3 billion. For 2024, counties received KSh 387.4 billion, and we have proposed KSh 405.1 billion for 2025 to reinforce this commitment

William Ruto
President of the Republic of Kenya



As we convene for the 9th Devolution Conference, it is with immense pride and great resolve that I join fellow leaders, citizens, and partners in reaffirming the Government of Kenya's steadfast commitment to the full realization of our devolved system of governance. Devolution remains one of the most transformative constitutional gains in our Republic's history.

Prof. Kithure Kindiki
Deputy President



Devolution was founded on the tested belief that it is good to do locally what is best done locally, and nationally only what is best done at the national level. It is bearing fruits. The regeneration of Homa Bay remains an inspiration and, so far, a success story on what devolution can do.

Raila Odinga
Former Prime Minister The Republic of Kenya-ODM leader



There is no better place to celebrate the International Womens Day, than Homa Bay. This is a great County. I congratulate Hon Gladys Wanga for making history as the first woman Governor in the LREB region.

H.E. Rachel Ruto
First Lady



Governor Wanga is proving to be a great steward of development in Homa Bay County. The people of Homa Bay count yourselves lucky to have her as your Governor.

Kipchumba Murkomen
CS Interior and National Administration



"We are committed to supporting Homa Bay's development agenda. The county's strategic plans are well-aligned with national priorities."

John Mbadi
CS for National Treasury and Economic Planning



"Homa Bay County is demonstrating that environmental conservation can go hand in hand with development. I was impressed by the county's reforestation efforts and commitment to restoring degraded landscapes. Governor Wanga has shown leadership in climate-smart governance. Initiatives like tree planting in schools and support for sustainable agriculture are practical actions with long-term environmental impact."

Soipan Tuyu
CS for Defence



"Homa Bay has taken bold steps in harnessing the potential of Lake Victoria. From improving fish landing sites to empowering beach management units, the county is making the lake a true economic resource. We are keen to support the kind of work Governor Wanga is doing in the fisheries sector. Her government is prioritizing both conservation and livelihoods, and that's the right approach for a blue economy."

Salim Mvurya
CS for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs



"There's a visible sense of order and cooperation in Homa Bay. Governor Wanga and her team are working closely with national administrators to ensure public safety and efficient service delivery. In terms of intergovernmental coordination, Homa Bay stands out. The synergy between county and national structures here should be emulated elsewhere."

Raymond Omollo
Principal Secretary for Ministry of Interior and National Administration

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“Governor Wanga is among the few county leaders who combine political experience with administrative efficiency. Her focus on inclusive growth is inspiring. You don't need to be told that Homa Bay is changing—just drive through and you'll see upgraded hospitals, clean streets, and active youth programs. That's real leadership at work.”

Anyang' Nyong'o
Governor, Kisumu County



“Homa Bay is rising steadily under Governor Wanga's leadership. What strikes me is her focus on dignity—making sure every resident, from youth to the elderly, feels seen and supported.”
“It's encouraging to witness how she integrates public participation in planning and development. That's how devolution was meant to work.”

Paul Otuoma
Governor, Busia County



“Governor Wanga's work is visible and impactful. She is a doer, not just a talker, and that has earned her respect from across the political divide.” “Homa Bay is in safe hands. The projects on the ground reflect good planning, accountability, and a government that listens to its people.”

Opiyo Wandayi
CS for Energy and Petroleum



“Homa Bay has a spectacular sunset positioning which can be a great tourist attraction. In Europe there is a country where tourists visit to access vantage position from where to view the sunset. This county indeed sits on a great potential when it comes to tourism

Kenneth Lusaka
Governor, Bungoma County



“Governor Wanga's approach to public participation and transparency is commendable. She's raising the bar for county governance.”

Cecily Mbarire
Governor, Embu County



“Governor Wanga has shown that women can lead with vision and impact. Her work in Homa Bay is a testament to what inclusive leadership can achieve.”

Anne Waiguru
Governor, Kirinyaga County



“From healthcare to youth empowerment, Homa Bay is setting the pace. Governor Wanga's initiatives are inspiring counties across.”

Susan Kihika
Governor, Nakuru County



“Gladys Wanga is not just building roads and hospitals—she's building hope. Her leadership is a model for all of us.”

Wavinya Ndeti
Governor, Machakos County



“Homa Bay's climate resilience programs and blue economy investments are impressive. Governor Wanga is proving that women governors can lead bold environmental agendas.”

Fatuma Achani
Governor, Kwale County



I commend Governor Wanga for championing inclusive development and women's leadership in Africa. Her administration reflects resilience, innovation, and a model of governance worth global attention.

H.E. Natasha Pirc Musar
President of Slovenia



“It's my first visit to Homa Bay and I have to say I am so amazed and surprised to see the beauty of Homa Bay, the lake the hills the greenery, the agriculture, it is a spectacular county. I said to the governor early today that this must be the best kept secret of Kenya. May be this will be the end of the secret.”

Meg Whitman
Former U.S. Ambassador to Kenya



“We need common efforts to achieve a Carbon Net-Zero Economy, increasing renewable energy capabilities, and promoting innovation in the energy industry.”

Caroline Vicini
Swedish Ambassador to Kenya

Devolution must deliver development for Kenyan citizens



Hon. Moses Otieno Kajwang

SENATOR'S VIEWPOINT

The past ten years have proven that giving citizens the opportunity to make decisions locally leads to better outcomes.

Devolution empowers communities to plan, budget, spend and legislate at the county level, a departure from the centralised system where ill fitting decisions were made in Nairobi.

The functions that were devolved to county governments are the backbone of our economy. These include agriculture, water, roads, health, early childhood education, urban planning and energy reticulation. A truly bottom up approach to development must have devolution at its core.

Verifiable data shows that health outcomes have improved across all 47 counties. County Gross Domestic Product is also on an upward trend, with some counties growing faster than the national average. More roads have been constructed and the network of clean water has increased across the country.

In some counties, retention of health workers and other professional cadres was a historical problem due to harsh climatic and economic conditions. Today every county has medical specialists and advanced diagnostic equipment thanks to the Managed Equipment Scheme.

Besides health workers, each county has been compelled to have County Attorneys to advise on legal matters as well as Chartered Accountants to handle financial matters. Professionals are trooping back to the village.

It could be argued that in health care, roads, markets and early childhood enrollment, devolved governments could have achieved more in ten years than what the centralized government did

IN NUMBERS

47

Verifiable data shows that health outcomes have improved across all 47 counties.

in 50 years.

These achievements must be safeguarded against an increasingly dangerous threat of devolved corruption and mediocrity.

Todo so, oversight institutions like County Assemblies and Parliament must be proactive in addressing emerging problems as highlighted by Independent Commissions and the Auditor General.

There is also the outstanding matter of costing and adequate financing of devolved functions. The Constitutional minimum of 15% of national revenues is not adequate to support the critical functions that county governments have to deliver. It is for this reason that the Senate has been a loud advocate for more funds through the Division of Revenue Bills.

As we move to the second decade of devolved governments, we must encourage counties to cooperate and exploit economies of scale through Regional Blocs. These blocs will offer synergies and economies of scale necessary for integrated development planning and execution.

We must also encourage counties to move from basic service provision to unlocking value chains and exploiting their comparative advantages.

As Kenyans grow healthier, they will also demand to grow wealthier. As citizens grow wealthier, county governments will have the opportunity to grow their own source revenues and offer quality services and public goods to citizens.

Moses Otieno Kajwang
SENATOR HOMABAY COUNTY

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Statement from the Woman Representative

Evidently and in deed outstandingly, devolution remains a fundamental transformative basic structure of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. As is envisioned in Article 174 of the Constitution, in its 15 years' lifespan, devolution has promoted social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services throughout Kenya, thus bridging the marginalisation gap. Counties as devolved units have acted as focal points for participatory governance.

In Homa –Bay County, under the able leadership of Her Excellency Governor Gladys Nyasuna Wanga, CBS, the fruits of devolution are glaring. To mention a few, through devolution, residents of Homa-Bay County can now count on opened up access roads to facilitate their movement and transportation of farm produce within and outside the County thus facilitating easy access to various services and opportunities including healthcare, markets, labour opportunities and social services. Further, many health facilities in form of dispensaries have been constructed and nearly equipped to offer primary healthcare. In line with the Urban Areas and Cities Act, a number of areas including Mbita, Rangwe, Oyugis, Kendu-Bay have been conferred the status of a municipality and town thus accelerating development and one stop provision of critical government services.

Even though county governments are bestowed with distinct functions, it must dawn upon all of us and especially the leadership within a county that no county government can work in splendid isolation. For due optimisation of the benefits of devolution, there must be teamwork through targeted and strategic corporation and partnership in the delivery of services to wananchi. I am happy that in Homa Bay county, this is the norm. For example, the delivery of some of my ten-point agenda including environmental conservation, education support to Women, Youth and The PWDs, market construction have been generously supported by the County Government. Equally, I have participated in a number of Homa Bay County government functions and activities.



Hon. Dr. Joyce Atieno Osongo Bensouda

Whereas the benefits of devolution are countless and the future looks bright, I must remind the various county government leadership including the county assemblies and the county executive that the stability, high performance and sustainability of devolution is dependent on robust internal controls, meaningful public participation, strategic leadership and robust monitoring and evaluation systems. All these must be mainstreamed in county governance.

Thank you.

Hon. Dr. Joyce Atieno Onsongo Bensouda, MP
Woman Representative
Homa Bay county

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Hon. Caroli Omondi
Suba South



Hon. Eye Akinyi Obara
Kabondo Kasipul



Hon. George Peter Kaluma
Homa Bay Town



Hon. Lilian Achieng Gogo
Rangwe



Hon. Martin Peters Owino
Ndhiwa



Hon. Millie Odhiambo
Suba North



Hon. Andrew Adipo
Okuome Karachuonyo

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Statement from County Speaker

Homa Bay County Assembly is privileged and honoured to welcome all participants to the Devolution Conference 2025, from the August 12th to the 15th in Homa Bay County. The Conference will mark a significant milestone in Kenya's devolution journey and provide a platform for sharing experiences and best practices in devolved governance.

It will examine the place of devolution in the realization of equity, inclusion and social justice and generate practical proposals that can be adopted by state and non-state actors for the bridging of socio-economic divide.

The Homa Bay County Assembly has played a crucial role in devolved governance and successfully played its legislative, oversight and representative roles since the inception of devolution in 2013.

Key Legislative Areas:

The Assembly has deliberated on Motions, bills, statements and topical concerns as mandated by the Kenyan Constitution 2010.

Labour based contracts guidelines

The Homa Bay County has successfully developed the labour based contracts guidelines. The guidelines were developed by the County Department of Education, Human Capital Development and Vocational Training in conjunction with County Directorate of Procurement and the Office of the County Attorney, to complement, and not substitute, the law. They are meant for use by the procuring entities for community projects in which the community participates in the procurement process.

The guidelines restate, in a simplified manner, what the law provides on community procurement and/or labour based contracts. Users especially the technical level are advised to familiarize themselves with the law on public procurement and public finance.

Homa Bay County Assembly is enthusiastic to partner and collaborate with the participants of the devolution conference 2025 in order to network,



Hon. Polycarp Okombo

HIGHLIGHTS

The bills passed by the House in the recent past include:

- The Homa Bay County Climate Change Bill 2022
- The Homa Bay County Revenue Board Bill 2022
- The Homa Bay County Administration Bill 2022
- The Homa Bay County Finance Bill 2022
- The Homa Bay County Lake Front Development Corporation Bill 2023
- The Homa Bay County Facility Improvement Financing Bill 2023
- The Homa Bay County Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Bill 2022
- The Homa Bay County Supplementary (No.3) Bill, 2023
- The Homa Bay County Infrastructure Financing Fund Bill 2023
- The Homa Bay County Education Bursary and Scholarship Fund Bill 2023
- Homa Bay County Public Participation Bill 2024
- The Homa Bay County Enterprise Development and Affirmative Action Fund Bill 2024
- Homa Bay County Supplementary Appropriations Bill 2025

exchange knowledge and influence policies in order to promote cohesion for the greater good.

Karibuni Homa Bay.

Hon. Polycarp Okombo

Homa Bay County Assembly Speaker.

Message from County Assembly Clerk

The Homa Bay County Assembly expresses utmost heartfelt appreciation and honour to welcome you to the Devolution Conference 2025 in Homa Bay County.

The Devolution Conference seeks to create a platform that will offer an opportunity to learn, network and forge partnerships that will advance the devolution discourse in Kenya. The Homa Bay County Assembly leadership, legislators and staff have shown exemplary performance in service

delivery since the inception of devolution and played a remarkable role in the devolved governance.

The Homa Bay County Assembly has had the legislators play the following roles in line with the Constitution of Kenya 2010 that has seen the County Government of Homa Bay accelerating to greater heights thereby exploring endless potentials.

Legislation: The Assembly has effected various legislations necessary for the effective running of the County Government.



Hannington Day

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Representation: The legislators act as a link between the electorates and the County Government presenting issues and concerns of the public.

On Oversight, the legislators exercise oversight over the county executive committee. This includes scrutinizing proper utilization of resources and accountability, approving the county budget and expenditure. They also vet and approve nominees for various public offices. They also ensure

public participation is well conducted to gather public opinion for legislation.

The legislators establish committees to handle specific areas of concern and for in-depth review of issues.⁶

Participation in the County Assemblies Forum and other fora: The Legislators have been participating in such fora to exchange ideas and contribute to emerging issues in order to have a positive evolution in matters

devolution.

We look forward to a memorable and historic devolution conference 2025 with a significant impact to the County of Homa bay, stakeholders, partners and County Assemblies as well as citizens of Kenya for better and stronger devolved governance.

Karibuni Homa Bay.

*CPA Hanington Ochieng Day
Clerk of the Homa Bay County Assembly.*



Hon. Samuel Hawkins
Deputy Speaker



Hon Richard Ogindo
Leader of Majority



Hon. Monoflorita Ondiek
Deputy Majority



Hon Bob Obondo
Chief Whip Majority



Hon. Samuel Lieta
Dep. Whip, Majority

Statement from the Leader of Majority

It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I extend this message as the Majority Leader of the Homa Bay County Assembly, on the momentous occasion of hosting the 2025 Devolution Conference. This is not just a milestone for our county but a historic affirmation of the vital role devolution continues to play in shaping inclusive and people-driven governance across Kenya.

Homa Bay is honored to host this national event for the first time. In doing so, we open our doors to leaders, thinkers, development partners and citizens from across the country to witness firsthand transformation that devolution has enabled in our region. The selection of our County as the host is both a recognition of progress and a call to action, a moment to showcase, reflect, and recommit.

The gains from hosting Devolution Conference 2025 are far-reaching as it places Homa Bay County at the center of national attention, boosting our visibility as an investment destination with enormous potential in sectors

such as tourism, agribusiness, blue economy, and innovation. The economic stimulus from this event through hospitality, transport, local trade, and services, is already being felt, and will continue long after the conference is concluded.

As an Assembly, we continue to work collaboratively with the executive to align our priorities with the aspirations of the people. Having passed key legislation on Education, Health, Agriculture and youth empowerment among other. We believe that good governance is not a destination but a continuous process of listening, learning, and adapting.

The Devolution Conference is more than an event, it is a celebration of the dream that every county can thrive on its own terms, with its own resources and with its people at the center. Let us use this platform to amplify our collective voice as Counties, renew our commitment to equitable development and push the boundaries of what devolution can achieve.

On behalf of the County



Hon. Richard Ogindo

Assembly of Homa Bay, I warmly welcome all delegates to our County and wish you a fruitful and inspiring Devolution Conference 2025.

I thank you all.

Hon. Richard Ogindo
Majority Leader – County Assembly of Homa Bay

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Assembly scaling the heights in oversight and legislative agenda



Clerk Of the County Assembly Hanington Day Abeka during session

The County Assembly of Homa Bay has laid a solid legislative foundation for sustainable development, accountability, and inclusive governance.

These laws have not only guided fiscal management and service delivery but also empowered communities to be active participants in development. As implementation continues, the impact of these transformative laws will be felt across the county for years to come.

With a composition of 54 members 40 elected to represent single ward and 14 nominated with the majority party Orange Democratic Movement ODM.

Homabay County assembly is one of the few assemblies in Kenya that boasts having elected four women to represent the single wards.

Hon. Susan Onyango, MCA Gwasi South, Hon. Joan Ogada MCA Kojwach Ward, Hon. Sophy Salim MCA Lambwe Ward and Hon. Monoflorita Ondiek MCA Homabay Town Central Ward bridging the gap of two third gender parity.

Under the steward of Hon. CPA Polycarp Otieno Okombo as the Speaker of the County Assembly of Homabay, Hon. Richard Ouma Ogindo MCA Kwabai Ward and the Majority leader, Hon. CPA Hannington Day Abeka as the Clerk of the County Assembly, the assembly has demonstrated a remarkable unity testament

to the good working environment to enable the members discharge their three major responsibility of oversight, representation and legislation. This has been done with equity and equality without discrimination with the aspect of regional balance taking center stage.

A fair and equal distribution of members into different select committees by the selection committee chaired by Hon. Richard Ogindo is something that members appreciate. For records, the homabay county assembly is one of the few county assemblies where the nominated members are selected as chairs of different select committees. "As a committee, we have decided to assign members into different committees so that there is harmony in the manner in which we operate in this house." Richard Ogindo, Chair of Selection Committee and the Majority Leader.

MANDATE

The Assembly's core functions include legislating, oversight and representation.

Article 185 of the Constitution and Section 8 of the County Government Act, 2012; are very elaborate on the roles of the County Assembly. These are: Representation; Legislation and Oversight.

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MEMBERS OF HOMA BAY COUNTY ASSEMBLY



Hon. Nancy Orina



Hon. Nicholas Owaka



Hon. Odongo Daniel



Hon. Ogindo Richard



Hon. Pamela Akinyi



Hon. Patrick Ware



Hon. Paul Barry



Hon. Paul odock



Hon. Pauline Omogi



Hon. Peter Nyakomitta



Hon. Raphael Odongo



Hon. Monoflorita
Ondiek



Hon. Ruben Molo



Hon. Samuel Hawkins



Hon. Samuel Lieta



Hon. Samuel Obwana



Hon. Sharon Joseph



Hon. Sophie Salim



Hon. Susan Akoth
Onyango



Hon. Sylvance Wanjala



Hon. Titus Asiago



Hon. Tom Adinda



Hon. Tonny Okoth



Hon. Lilian Kochola



Hon. Victor Obuya



Hon Ojwang' Joseph
Tom



Hon. Margaret Koweje



Hon. Michael Nyang'i



Hon. Milka Mbogo



Hon. Florence Ouma

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Hon. Victor Owuor Uhuru



Hon. Wilikester Adhuu



Hon. Yvonne Atieno



Hon. Zakayo Ojango



Hon. Dorine Oyugi



Hon. Lentana Apopo



Hon. George Odiwuor



Hon. Joan Ogada



Hon. David Oloo



Hon. Erick Omollo



Hon. Adongo Walter



Hon. Alice Weke



Hon. Billy Noah



Hon. Bob obondo



Hon. Erick Owidhi



Hon. Bondo Vickins



Hon. Caroline Odundo



Hon. Daniel Ogada



Hon. David Hamilton



Hon. Everlyne Atieno



Hon. Lazurus Ojango



Hon. Khiri Kakhiri



Hon. Jessica otieno



Hon. Jeff Ongoro

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H.E Gladys Wanga, EGH
Governor, Homa Bay county



H.E Joseph Oyugi Magwanga
Deputy Governor, Homa Bay county
CEC Member for Agriculture
Livestock Production



Prof. Benard Muok,
County secretary/
Head of Public
Service



Hon. Solomon Obiero
CEC Member
for Finance and
Economic Planning



Hon. Dr. John Agili
CEC Member for
Water, Irrigation,
Sanitation,
Environment, Energy
And Climate Change



Hon. Martin Opere
CEC Member for
Education, Human
Capital Development
and Vocational Training



Hon. Grace Mercy Osewe
CEC Member for
Public Health and
Medical Services



Hon. Dr. Peter Ogolla
CEC Member for
Lands, Physical
Planning, Housing and
Urban Development



Hon. Roseline Omollo
CEC Member
of Governance,
Administration,
Communication and
Devolution



Hon. Danish Onyango
CEC Member
for Roads, Public
works, Transport and
Infrastructure



Eng. Elijah Munga
CEC Member for Sports,
Talent Development,
Gender, Inclusivity and
Social Services



Hon. Dr. Joash Aloo.
CEC Member for
Trade, Industry,
Youth, Cooperative
Development, Tourism
and Marketing



Hon. Sarah Malit
CEC Member for Blue
Economy, Fisheries,
Mining and Digital
Economy



Fred Orego,
County Attorney

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Dr. Kevin Osuri,
Chief Officer Health



Mrs. Diana Ongere,
Chief Officer, Environment,
Energy, Forestry and Climate
Change



Atieno Otieno,
Chief Officer - Public
Communication



Mr. Isaac Ongiri
Chief Officer Governance
Administration and
Devolution



Charles Obondo
Chief Officer for
Housing and Urban
Development



Ombok Judith,
Chief Officer for
Agriculture and
Irrigation



Jack Maurice Obonyo
- Chief Officer - Gender
Inclusivity and Women
Empowerment



**Collins Onyango
Obango,** Chief Officer
for Education



Alphonse Werah,
Chief Officer for
Finance



**Bernard Okoth
Omwanda,** Chief
Officer for Livestock
Development



**Bernard Ouru
Nyobange** Chief Officer
for Trade, Investments,
Industrialization, Tourism
and Marketing



**Kennedy Odhiambo
Ojala,** Chief Officer for
Blue Economy, Fisheries,
Mining and Digital
Economy



Stephen Othira,
Chief Officer
Vocational Training



**Dr. Lawrence Smith
Gworo,** Ag. Chief
Officer - Economic
Planning and Budget



Ms. Everlyne Odada
- Ag. Chief Officer
Public Health



Wilson Ochola, Chief
Officer Water and
Sanitation



Elijah Obiny Dede,
Chief Officer - Roads
and Transport



Silas Rabah, Ag. Chief
Officer for Youth Affairs and
Cooperative Development



Jack Obonyi, Chief
Officer for Gender



Elly Otieno Nyiero, Chief Officer -
Youth, Sports, Talent Development,
Cultural Heritage and Social Services



Ellyas Orando, Chief
Officer Lands and
Physical Planning



KENYA MEDICAL TRAINING COLLEGE
Training for better Health



KMTC AT THE DEVOLUTION CONFERENCE 2025

Empowering Counties, Transforming Healthcare

About KMTC

The Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) is a State Corporation under the Ministry of Health, established by an Act of Parliament in 1990. As the oldest and largest mid-level medical training institution in Kenya and the East African region, KMTC plays a central role in strengthening healthcare systems through competency-based training, research, and consultancy. With 91 campuses and 6 satellites spread across 45 counties, KMTC is at the heart of devolved healthcare, training fit-for-purpose, compassionate, skilled, and community-driven health professionals who serve Kenya and beyond.

Vision

A globally competitive institution for training human resource for health.

Mission

To develop fit-for-purpose middle-level health professionals through transformative training, research, and consultancy.

KMTC Curricula

- Competency-based, with an emphasis on practical skills (70% practical, 30% theory)
- Regularly reviewed to address emerging and re-emerging health challenges
- Accredited by relevant regulatory bodies for quality assurance

Strategic Focus (2023–2028)

- Quality Training

- Research, Innovation & Consultancy
- Digital Transformation
- Institutional Sustainability

KMTC's Contribution to Devolution

- Over 85% of Kenya's mid-level healthcare workforce are proud KMTC alumni
- Training tailored to meet both local and global health priorities, supporting Universal Health Coverage (UHC)
- Alignment with the Kenya Kwanza BETA Agenda, Vision 2030, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Strong emphasis on Primary Healthcare and specialized services for communities at the bottom of the economic pyramid

Academic Programmes

- Clinical Medicine and Surgery (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Community Oral Health (Diploma)
- Dental Technology (Diploma)
- Health Promotion and Community Health (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Health Records and Information Technology (Certificate and Diploma)
- Health Professions Education (Higher Diploma)
- Medical Engineering (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Medical Laboratory Sciences (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Nursing (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Nutrition and Dietetics (Certificate, Diploma

- and Higher Diploma)
- Occupational Therapy (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Optometry (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Orthopedic Technology (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Pharmacy (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Public Health (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Radiography and Imaging (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Orthopedic Trauma Medicine (Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Physiotherapy (Diploma and Higher Diploma)
- Mortuary Science (Diploma)
- Emergency Medical Technology (Certificate and Diploma)
- Health Insurance (Certificate and Diploma)

Some of the Short Courses

- HIV Training and Counseling Services (HTS)
- Adherence Counseling
- Echocardiography
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Integrated BLS/First Aid
- Safe Phlebotomy
- Point of Care Ultrasound
- Regional Anaesthesia and Acute Pain Management
- Upper Extremity Splinting in Occupational Therapy
- Community Mental Health
- Sign Language for Health workers
- Basic Occupational Health and Safety
- NCLEX-RN

14. Health Care Assistant

15. Foreign Languages including Arabic

How to apply

Preservice Programmes (Certificate & Diploma):

Apply via the KUCCPS portal: students.kuccps.net during designated application periods.

Upgrading, Higher Diploma, and Short Courses:

Apply through the KMTC admissions portal: admissions.kmtc.ac.ke

In-Person Support:

Visit any of the 91 KMTC campuses or 6 satellite centers nationwide for guidance and support with your application.

Dr. Kelly Oluoch
Chief Executive Officer
August, 2025



Quality Training of Health Professionals
Towards Realization of Kenya Vision 2030.



Enquiries

For more information on the training programmes, intakes and application procedure, please visit the College website at www.kmtc.ac.ke, email info@kmtc.ac.ke, call Tel. 0202725711/2/3/4, 020-2081822/3, 0737-352543, 0706-541869. [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [YouTube](#) [Instagram](#) @KMTCOfficial.

Governor Wanga rebuilding health from the ground up, brick by brick



Hon. Grace Osewe,
CEC, Public Health and Medical Services



Dr. Kevin Osuri,
Chief Officer, Health



Ms. Everlyne Ododa,
Ag. Chief Officer, Public Health

MANDATE

To provide effective leadership and participate in sustainable, technologically driven, evidence based and client centered health care system to the county population .

VISION

A county free from preventable diseases and controllable ill health

MISSION

To provide effective leadership and participate in sustainable, technologically driven, evidence based and client centered health care system to the county population

Just two years ago, a woman in labour at Mfangano Island would be ferried across Lake Victoria in the dead of night—an anxious three-hour journey to a mainland hospital. Patients with kidney failure faced painful choices: miss dialysis or travel hundreds of kilometers. Families in mourning waited days to retrieve loved ones from overcrowded, crumbling mortuaries.

That was the reality for many in Homa Bay County—until a shift began under Governor Gladys Wanga. This is as a bold, people-centered transformation is underway, reshaping the region's healthcare from the ground up. Governor Wanga has placed health at the core of her administration's priorities, not as a campaign talking point but as a lifeline for thousands.

In Ndhiwa and Rachuonyo East, new maternity and outpatient wings have significantly boosted health outcomes. Deliveries in Ndhiwa have nearly doubled, from just over 100 to more than 200 per month, with cesarean sections now routinely performed.

On Mfangano Island, emergency surgeries are now possible for the first time ever, thanks to a new theatre at Sena Health Centre.

Residents no longer risk their lives crossing the lake in search of basic care. Rural health facilities are also being revitalized. Dispensaries in Kamser-Seka and Soklo have been upgraded to Level III status, easing pressure on higher-tier hospitals and bringing critical care closer to communities.

Few initiatives capture the turnaround more than the Renal Unit at Homa Bay County Referral Hospital. Previously, dialysis patients were either turned away or forced to seek help in Kisumu or Nairobi.

With the installation of five new dialysis machines and support from the Safaricom Foundation, the unit now serves up to 21 patients daily—over 360 dialysis sessions per

month—making it one of the most active renal centers in the Lake Region.

The county has also restored dignity in death with the construction of a modern mortuary. The old facility could barely hold 15 bodies and



Governor Gladys Wanga in working tour of the county renal unit

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offered no comfort to grieving families.

The new mortuary, built to accommodate over 150 bodies, features state-of-the-art refrigeration, organized storage, and family-friendly viewing rooms—demonstrating that even in mourning, respect is non-negotiable.

Meanwhile, Homa Bay Referral Hospital is steadily evolving into a hub for specialized care. A functional cancer centre now screens and manages oncology patients locally.

The upgraded dental unit serves over 500 patients each month, offering both emergency and preventive care.

A comprehensive outpatient block is operational, and another is under construction to

accommodate rising demand. The numbers speak for themselves: deliveries have nearly doubled at key hospitals, dialysis coverage has tripled, dental care has expanded fivefold, and NHIF coverage has risen from a mere 5% to 21%. These aren't just statistics; they reflect lives saved, suffering reduced, and dignity restored. This transformation is

a model for devolved healthcare—grounded in responsive governance, community-driven solutions, and long-term investment. It illustrates what's possible when leadership aligns with the needs of the people.

As Governor Wanga prepares to showcase Homa Bay's progress at the 2025 Devolution Conference, her administration is emerging as a national example of what can be achieved when counties take healthcare seriously.

Her message is clear: the health revolution is not only possible—it is happening, and it's here to stay. "We're not just building hospitals. We're building a healthier, more dignified future for every Homa Bay resident," she says. And in Homa Bay today, that future is already taking shape.

**“
We're building
a healthier,
more dignified
future for every
Homa Bay
resident.**

Hon. Gladys Wanga



A nurse on duty at the new born incubation center at the Homa Bay referral

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Healthy communities spur wealth in the devolved units



Rachuonyo East Sub County Hospital

When the story of Kenyan devolution is written, Homa Bay County will undoubtedly earn a prominent chapter—especially in the realm of community health. Under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga, the county continues to demonstrate that local governance, fueled by innovation and inclusion, can be a powerful engine for health transformation.

From lakefront villages to urban centers, Homa Bay's health networks are now stronger, smarter, and community-led—thanks to systemic investment and bold reforms driven by the county's Department of Health. 100% Coverage, 100% Commitment

Homa Bay County has achieved full coverage of Community Health Units (CHUs), now numbering 287. That means every corner of the county has access to preventive and promotive health services from nearly 3,000 Community Health Promoters (CHPs). These frontline workers aren't just volunteers—they're trained, kitted, digitalized, and data-driven.

Health County Executive Committee Member, "This digital integration has improved tracking of illnesses, streamlined service delivery, and anchored evidence-based policy making."

Grace Osewe said.

Beyond Numbers: Empowered Structures and Dialogues

Community health is not just about medical interventions—it's about governance and ownership. Homa Bay has doubled down on this approach by forming some 287 Community Health Committees, with 150 trained on their roles, technical working Groups, enabling coordination across departments and community scorecards in 38 health facilities, elevating accountability and feedback

She further added; "Structured community dialogues across the entire county have brought health matters to the forefront of civic engagement.

These forums allow citizens to speak directly to their leaders, voice their needs, and co-create solutions."

Innovations in Care: Targeting NCDs and Childhood Development

Homa Bay isn't resting on malaria victories alone. Through the Community Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) model, the county is expanding its reach into non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like hypertension and diabetes.

Additionally, early childhood interventions are taking center stage—with 500 CHPs trained in nurturing care approaches, ensuring that the county's youngest residents get the healthiest start possible.

A Model for Kenya's Future

The Wanga administration has made community health a centerpiece of its governance. By focusing on data, partnerships, equity, and frontline workers, Homa Bay is redefining how counties approach health—not just as a service, but as a civic right.

As delegates convene at this year's Devolution Conference, Homa Bay's story will stand out as more than a tale of success—it will be a blueprint for what's possible when communities lead, and governments listen.

AT A GLANCE

- **2,974** CHPs trained on basic health modules
- **2,860** CHPs actively using the eCHIS platform for household-level care
- **288,000** Households registered, serving a population of 1.3 million



Homa Bay County Referral Funeral Parlour

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Governor Gladys Wanga during the commissioning of a CT scan at the Homa Bay County Referral hospital in 2023.

Homa Bay redefining county health system under Wanga

The need for quality and timely delivery of services has seen Homa Bay County embark on a journey that redefines healthcare delivery through bold, people-centered investments in infrastructure, equipment, and frontline personnel.

With a clear focus on equity, dignity, and access, the county is setting a new benchmark in health service delivery that places residents' wellbeing at the heart of development.

The cog of this healthcare revolution strategy is the reengineering of the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital (HBCTRH) into a hub of specialized care. The construction of a new outpatient block has modernized the facility and significantly improved patient flow.

A state-of-the-art CT scan machine now provides advanced diagnostic services locally, eliminating the need for costly referrals to other counties. The operational renal unit, fully equipped with dialysis machines, is saving lives and reducing financial strain for patients managing chronic kidney conditions.

In response to growing demand for eye care, the county has

established a functional eye clinic that now serves hundreds of patients monthly.

A newly built blood bank has improved emergency response and bolstered maternal and surgical care through safer transfusions. Meanwhile, the maternity wing and outpatient/casualty departments have been upgraded to provide expanded, efficient, and dignified care.

The hospital pharmacy has also been revamped and consistently stocked to reduce out-of-pocket drug expenses, while work is underway to establish a cancer center—an investment that promises to bring early screening, diagnosis, and treatment closer to home. For families dealing with loss, a modern funeral parlour has been constructed within the referral hospital, offering a more dignified and affordable experience in their time of grief.

Beyond the referral hospital, service delivery has improved dramatically across the county. Sub-county hospitals are now better staffed, better equipped, and more reliably stocked with essential drugs.

In remote and underserved areas, new facilities have been constructed while existing dispensaries have

been rehabilitated and fitted with staff housing to attract and retain qualified health professionals. Maternal and child health remains a key priority.

The newly completed Mother and Baby Unit in Ndhiwa offers a safe and comfortable space for delivery, while Hope Centres in Mbita and Makongeni provide integrated care for HIV, reproductive health, and psychosocial support—particularly for vulnerable populations.

Recognizing that real transformation begins at the grassroots, Governor Wanga's administration has invested heavily in Community Health Promoters (CHPs), offering them monthly stipends and equipping them with tools to deliver preventive care and promote health awareness.

These CHPs now serve as the critical first point of care for many households, bridging gaps in access and trust between communities and the formal health system. With every new clinic, every life-saving intervention, and every motivated health worker, Homa Bay is proving that devolved governance can deliver life-changing results.

From specialist services to last-mile dignity, the county's comprehensive approach is not only improving health outcomes—it's building a system that truly puts people first. As the journey continues, Homa Bay stands firmly on the path to achieving universal health coverage for all its residents.

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County's spirited fight to tame Malaria scourge

In Homa Bay, malaria was once a persistent public health menace, a quiet revolution has been unfolding. In the county, under the administration of Governor Gladys Wanga, is now setting the pace for Kenya's fight against malaria—with results that are both measurable and remarkable.

Since the onset of devolution, Homa Bay has leveraged community-driven health initiatives, data-powered planning, and inter-agency collaboration to turn the tide on one of its most pressing health concerns. And the numbers tell the story.

According to the County Malaria Coordinator, Mr Philip Mbom, in just two years, malaria incidence have dropped significantly—from 309 per 1,000 residents in 2022 to 244 in 2024. Among children under five, morbidity has seen a similar decline.

"This isn't just a health success, it's a story about empowered communities and a government that listens," said Mr Mbom.

Investing in the Frontlines

The engine behind this transformation is the county's



Service Indicator	2022	2024
Deliveries at Ndhiwa	~113/month	~209/month
Deliveries at Rachuoonyo East	~30/month	~65/month
Dialysis sessions/month	~130	~360
Dialysis patients/day	6	18–21
Dental patients/month	<100	~500
Mortuary capacity	15 bodies	150+ modern
NHIF coverage	5%	21%

investment in grassroots healthcare. Homa Bay now boasts 100% coverage of Community Health Units (CHUs), with 87.5% of these units actively managing malaria cases through community case management.

Mr Mbom attests that his approach has doubled the number of malaria cases diagnosed and treated at the community level—jumping from 33,027 cases in 2022 to over 70,000 in 2024.

Electronic Community Health Information Systems (eCHIS) now underpin this work, ensuring real-time data informs every decision.

A Layered Shield of Protection

Beyond treatment, Homa Bay has been relentless in deploying preventive measures. From mass distribution of Long-Lasting Insecticide-Treated Nets (LLINs)—which covered 91.7% of the population in 2023—to routine net distribution through local clinics, the county has ensured that both pregnant women and infants under one are protected.

Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) continued to maintain over 95% spray coverage for eligible structures in recent years.

Transformational infrastructure development

Two years ago, a woman in labour in Mfangano Island would be ferried across Lake Victoria in the dead of night—an anxious three-hour journey to a mainland hospital. Patients with kidney failure faced painful decisions: skip dialysis or travel hundreds of kilometers. Grieving families waited days to collect loved ones from overcrowded, crumbling mortuaries.

Today, that story is changing—and fast. In what is being hailed as one of the boldest and human-centered healthcare turnarounds in the region, Governor Gladys Wanga has put the health of Homa

Bay residents at the very heart of her administration's agenda. Said CECM for Health and Medical Services Grace Osewe, "This is not just about new buildings. It's about restoring dignity, saving lives, and proving that devolution can deliver real change."

Surgery on the Island. Safe Deliveries at Home.

At Rachuoonyo East and Ndhiwa sub-county hospitals, Governor Wanga commissioned new maternity and outpatient wings that have dramatically increased service uptake. In Ndhiwa alone, monthly deliveries have surged from 113 to 209, with doctors now performing up to 34

cesarean sections every month.

The county minister said that for the first time ever, Mfangano Island residents can access life-saving surgeries without leaving the island. The newly built Level 4 theatre at Sena Health Centre now serves communities that were previously beyond the reach of emergency surgical care.

In rural outposts like Kamser-Seka and Soklo, dispensaries have been upgraded from Level II to Level III, equipped with outpatient departments, maternity wards, and community health units—critical steps in decongesting higher-tier hospitals.

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Former US diplomat Meg Whitman admiring a new born baby at the Homa Bay Referral Hospital as the mother looks on

How maternal health revolution set to spur human capital growth

A nation's true wealth lies in the health of its people. Without strong bodies and minds, productivity falters, innovation stalls, and economic potential remains unrealized.

In Kenya, where maternal mortality once cast a dark shadow over entire counties, the story of Homa Bay offers a powerful reminder that investing in health is not just a moral imperative—it's an economic one.

Three years after launching an ambitious overhaul of maternal healthcare, Homa Bay County is quietly celebrating a revolution that's saving lives and strengthening the foundation of its workforce. In 2022, the county recorded one

of Kenya's highest maternal mortality rates—583 deaths per 100,000 live births.

Today, that narrative is changing. Thanks to strategic investments in healthcare infrastructure and skilled personnel, 95% of expectant mothers now deliver in health facilities under the care of

trained professionals.

"We've moved from mothers delivering in poor facilities to modern maternity wards with trained staff and equipment," says Grace Mercy Osewe, County Executive Committee Member for Public Health and Medical Services. "Every mother now has access to dignified care, whether at our referral hospital or in rural health centers."

The transformation began with a sweeping upgrade of key facilities. The Homa Bay Teaching and Referral Hospital expanded its labor ward, while the Ndhiwa Level IV Hospital added a modern maternity wing. Twenty-four additional health centers across the county now feature dedicated delivery rooms, newborn resuscitation units, round-the-clock staffing, and emergency obstetric care—all designed to ensure that women receive timely, respectful, and life-saving support.

"We didn't just see statistics—we saw mothers,

HIGHLIGHTS

- Deal follows the Pamba Mwandu campaign which is changing how crop is grown, sold in county
- Deal follows the Pamba Mwandu campaign which is changing how crop is grown, sold in county

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Our referral system now connects every health facility, with ambulances reaching emergencies in record time

Dr. Osuri



children, and families in distress,” says Health Chief Officer Dr. Kevin Osuri. “Our mission was clear: rebuild a healthcare system that delivers both quality and dignity.”

The county’s strategy rested on three pillars: enhancing maternal health services, upgrading emergency response systems, and expanding community-based care. The results have been deeply human and unmistakably economic. Healthier mothers mean fewer school days missed by children, reduced medical costs for families, and greater workforce participation by women.

For Linda Awuor, a 28-year-old teacher, the difference has been personal and profound. After a traumatic first birth in an under-equipped facility, she recently delivered her second child at Kabunde Health Center. “This time, I had quality care just minutes from home,” she said, holding her newborn. “It gave me peace of mind and the strength to return to work

without fear.”

Community Health Volunteers like Rose Atieno have also felt the shift. “Before, we struggled to convince women to deliver at clinics. Now they come willingly because they see clean, well-equipped spaces.”

Supporting this ecosystem is a strengthened ambulance network that links even the most remote areas to emergency care. “Our referral system now connects every health facility, with ambulances reaching emergencies in record time,” says Dr. Osuri.

The county is not resting on its achievements. It is recruiting more skilled birth attendants, scaling up postnatal care, and installing solar power in off-grid facilities to ensure 24-hour service. These measures are not just about maternal health—they are about economic resilience. Healthy mothers raise healthier children, contribute to household incomes, and build stronger communities.

In brief

The bold bodel transforming Homa Bay’s ward-level planning

For Mildred Apiyo, a resident of Rachuonyo South Ward, the thought of benefiting from county funds once felt far-fetched—an exclusive reserve for others. But today, she chairs a Project Management Committee overseeing the installation of a new water kiosk in Kokal Village.

“Before, projects were unpredictable because the previous administration did little to involve us. Now, we decide where every pipe goes,” she says, standing beside freshly laid infrastructure that now reflects community priorities.

Her journey illustrates how Homa Bay County’s Village-to-Village Public Participation Model is reshaping local governance. Launched in March 2022, the model spans all 40 wards and directly embeds residents in the full cycle of development—priority setting, budgeting, implementation, and oversight. It is a shift that earned Homa Bay the prestigious Ndovu Category—Devolution Warrior Award at the national devolution conference.

This approach is a break from top-down planning. Governor Gladys Wanga, under whose leadership the model was instituted, insists that inclusion is not a choice but a strategy. “When citizens own development, sustainability follows,” she said during a citizen engagement forum in Rachuonyo South. There, residents gathered in clusters to guide the county’s plans—an everyday feature of the model that Governor Wanga says makes development more relevant and responsive. From elders to youth, women, and persons with disabilities, everyone is invited into the conversation through structured ward-level forums. These engagements culminate in Project Management Committees composed of locals like Mildred, who ensure follow-through on implementation. According to Roselyn Omollo, County Executive Committee Member for Governance and Devolution, the model’s strength lies in its transfer of real decision-making power: “We didn’t just consult; we handed communities the steering wheel.”

That decentralization is intentional, says Chief Officer Isaac Ongiri. “The goal was to build accountability and transparency by centering citizens in the service delivery framework. When people feel seen and heard from the beginning, they take ownership.” The 2025–2026 Annual Development Plan was shaped by this ethos—across all 40 wards, over two days each, more than 10,000 residents contributed their priorities, ranging from agriculture support to market expansion.

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Rachuonyo Sub-County Hospital

Homa Bay redefining healthcare by putting people's dignity first

The County Government of Homa Bay, under the visionary leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga, has undertaken a bold and transformative journey to redefine healthcare delivery across the county. With a people-centered approach and strategic investment in infrastructure, equipment, and human resources, Homa Bay is making historic strides in ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare for all residents.

At the heart of this transformation is a comprehensive facelift of the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital (HBCTRH), the county's top-tier facility, which has now been reengineered into a center of excellence in specialized care.

Notable milestones include the construction of a new outpatient block, giving the hospital a major facelift; installation of a CT scan machine that has drastically reduced the need for patients to seek diagnostic services outside the county; and operationalization of a renal unit, fully equipped with

dialysis machines, now offering lifesaving treatment for kidney-related ailments.

The establishment of a functional eye clinic is addressing a growing need for specialized care and now serves hundreds of patients monthly. A modern blood bank has been constructed to enhance emergency response and support safe transfusions, particularly for maternal and surgical cases.

The maternity wing and outpatient/casualty department have been upgraded, creating a more dignified and efficient patient experience with expanded space, modern equipment, and more health personnel. The county pharmacy has been revamped and stocked to ensure reliable access to essential drugs, easing the financial burden on residents.

The ongoing establishment of a cancer center aims to bring early detection, ty. With a people-centered approach and strategic investment in infrastructure, equipment, and human resources, Homa Bay is making historic strides in ensuring equitable access

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From dilapidation to innovation: Homa Bay's bold health overhaul

The face of healthcare in Homa Bay has changed from what was once defined by a worn-out building and poor service delivery to a new responsive and responsible utility.

This after photos of the structure, with its crumbling walls and outdated design, became a symbol of underperformance, often shared online to critique the state of public healthcare. But what was once a punchline on social media has been turned into a blueprint for transformation.

In line with Governor Gladys Wanga's campaign commitment that no mother should die giving birth and no family should fall into poverty from treatable illness, the Governor began her term ensuring that within her first 100 days in office, a new outpatient wing was unveiled at the Homa Bay County Referral Hospital. This replaced the symbolic decay of the past with a bold new vision for the future. Adjacent to that new facility, a modern five-storey accident and trauma centre is nearing completion. The facility will feature operating theatres, emergency units, and support offices and is projected to serve over 10,000 patients annually.

Her administration is prioritizing Universal Health Coverage with modernized infrastructure and a motivated workforce. Already, the referral hospital has been upgraded to a Level 5 facility, and County Health Director Dr. Gordon Okomo says patient numbers have surged since the new outpatient wing opened in early 2024, with a 56 percent increase in visits and a 47 percent rise in maternity ward deliveries.

The hospital has also introduced advanced medical equipment, including a CT scan and new dialysis machines at its renal unit. Across the county, significant investments have been made in surgical theatres at Sena Level 4 Hospital and



Tom Mboya Memorial
Level 4 Hospital

“no mother should die giving birth and no family should fall into poverty from treatable illness.”

Hon. Gladys Wanga



Nurses taking care of a new born baby

new outpatient and maternity complexes in Rachuonyo South, Rachuonyo East, and Ndhiwa. To support emergency response, ambulances have been purchased for the referral hospital and Malela Level 4 Hospital.

This wave of investments is yielding measurable results. Data from the Department of Health and the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS) shows maternal deaths have dropped to zero over the past two months. Stunting has reduced from 18 percent to 13 percent, and uptake of the new Social Health Authority stands at 46.2 percent. The county has also achieved full Open Defecation Free (ODF) status, with latrine coverage increasing from 63 percent in 2022 to 87 percent in 2025, earning Homa Bay national trophies for the most improved rural sanitation for four consecutive years.

In addition, the county has been recognized as Kenya's top performer in TB and leprosy management for two straight years. Staff morale

is also improving, with 336 medical personnel promoted, and major gains made in sub-county hospitals thanks to better equipment, staffing, and reliable drug supply.

Beyond hospital walls, community health has been a major focus. The county has trained and equipped 2,500 Community Health Promoters (CHPs) with medical kits, smartphones, and monthly stipends. These CHPs are tackling pressing issues such as HIV, teen pregnancies, maternal mortality, malaria, sexual and gender-based violence, and infant mortality at the grassroots level.

According to Infotrak's 2024 County Health Index, Homa Bay was ranked the best-performing county in healthcare with a score of 53 percent—rising from second place the previous year and surpassing counties like Murang'a and Kirinyaga. The survey, conducted across 47 counties, reflects the growing public confidence in the systems being rebuilt from the ground up.

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Kenya's lakeside county made history in December 2024, by becoming the first to be declared fully Open Defecation Free (ODF), marking a major milestone in the nation's push toward universal sanitation.

The transformation is credited to a community-first approach led by Governor Gladys Wanga, whose administration placed sanitation at the center of public service delivery. With 3,316 villages across all 40 wards now certified ODF, Homa Bay's achievement is not just a statistic—it is a story of empowerment, innovation, and political will.

Just three years earlier, only three of the county's eight sub-counties had achieved ODF status. The turning point came with the introduction of Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), where communities were mobilized to take charge of their environments and eliminate open defecation through behavioral change. But the campaign was not only behavioral—it was technological, financial, and deeply participatory. The county adopted real-time monitoring using GIS systems and WhatsApp platforms to track progress and identify lagging areas. Informal settlements, often neglected in such efforts, were mapped and integrated into adaptive sanitation planning.

The success of Homa Bay's sanitation agenda was also built on the back of strategic partnerships. Organizations like UNICEF, Amref, WKSP, JICA, and the Safaricom Foundation provided vital support in scaling up interventions. For instance, Safaricom's mobile sanitation

How toilets, techies, and trust made county sanitation model



Public Health Chief Officer
Evelyn Ododa

booths now serve over 60,000 users daily, while JICA's Smile Latrine Project introduced affordable, modern toilet designs to Kabondo. Meanwhile, local artisans were trained under the SanMark model to produce durable latrine slabs, ensuring both quality and economic empowerment. Micro-financing through sanitation loans helped

households construct safe toilets—proof that access can be both inclusive and sustainable when systems are designed around the needs of the people.

Public Health Chief Officer Evelyn Ododa emphasized that success didn't just come from constructing toilets but from building systems that work. The county government adopted a decentralized structure where ward and village-level actors were accountable for local progress. Political goodwill from the county leadership ensured sanitation was prioritized in planning and budgeting cycles. Governor Wanga herself remained an active voice in the campaign, signaling commitment from the highest level of government. "We empowered communities to lead their own change. The results speak for themselves," she said.

What sets Homa Bay apart is the way it turned a global challenge into a locally owned victory. The county is now shifting its focus to fecal sludge management, school sanitation, and climate-resilient WASH infrastructure. It aims to scale lessons from the ODF journey to reinforce sustainable hygiene behaviors and prevent backsliding. According to Ododa, climate adaptation is also being embedded in sanitation planning to ensure resilience in flood-prone and water-scarce areas.

The Homa Bay sanitation story is not just about the elimination of open defecation; it is a broader reflection of how devolution, when matched with data, innovation, and trust in the people, can yield tangible change. In achieving ODF status, the county has not only safeguarded health and dignity but also restored confidence in what local government can accomplish. As counties across Kenya struggle with sanitation challenges, Homa Bay now stands as a national benchmark. The work is far from done, but the foundations have been laid—not with concrete alone, but with vision, partnerships, and belief in the transformative power of communities.

**“
The success
of Homa Bay's
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partnerships**



One of the completed toilets



Governor Gladys Wanga inspecting a dental unit

Public dental and eye clinics serving people with new confidence

When Governor Gladys Wanga walked into the Homa Bay County Referral Hospital for a dental check-up in October 2022, it wasn't just a routine appointment—it was a strategic move that signalled the beginning of a turnaround for the facility's long-neglected dental unit. By choosing to undergo treatment at a public hospital instead of a private clinic, Governor Wanga sent a message of confidence in public healthcare, underscoring her administration's intention to restore dignity, trust, and efficiency to government-run medical services.

Just days before her visit, the county had delivered a new set of dental equipment, reviving a unit that had previously been underutilized due to years of neglect and equipment shortages. Her visit and endorsement catalyzed change. What was once a sleepy clinic that struggled to attend to fewer than ten patients daily is now a thriving hub, serving as many as 50 residents each day with cleanings, restorations, and other oral health services. The transformation has not only enhanced physical appearance but also boosted emotional well-

being, as more residents seek to reclaim their confidence through healthier smiles.

The dental unit now operates with a full team comprising one dentist and three community oral health officers. The presence of modern tools and adequate supplies has made procedures more efficient, timely, and reliable. The growing number of patients underscores the unmet demand that once existed and how strategic investment can directly impact service uptake in public health.

Adjacent to the dental unit is the equally revitalized eye clinic. Previously limited to outpatient services with no overnight ward, the unit struggled to meet the growing demand for vision care. That has changed. With the introduction of a dedicated eye ward, the unit has seen a dramatic rise in patients—from five a day to over 30, with dozens undergoing surgeries monthly.

Dr. Francis Ochieng, the ophthalmologist heading the department, notes that improved infrastructure and reliable equipment have motivated the clinical team and enhanced service delivery. With one ophthalmologist, four clinical

officers, and six specialized nurses, the unit is now well-positioned to handle both routine and complex eye conditions. Equipment breakdowns are rare, and when they occur, prompt replacements ensure services continue with minimal disruption.

The eye unit benefits from strong interdepartmental collaboration, drawing support from radiology and laboratory teams for fast diagnostics. This level of internal coordination has reduced turnaround times and allowed for quicker decision-making, which is critical for conditions where early intervention can prevent permanent vision loss.

Perhaps the most impactful aspect of the hospital's renewed health strategy lies in its outreach programs. These bring eye care to residents who may not have the means or mobility to travel to the hospital. One such beneficiary, Mary Atieno, a 72-year-old from Rachuonyo East, recently underwent a cataract surgery during an outreach initiative. Before the surgery, she struggled with daily chores due to blurry vision. Post-surgery, she speaks of a newfound independence and hope—her restored sight being a testament to the transformative power of accessible healthcare.

Since 2024, more than 700 patients have been booked for consultations at the eye unit monthly, with an average of 60 surgeries performed in the same period. The numbers reflect more than just improved statistics—they mark a shift in public perception about the quality of services at county-run facilities.

The success of both the dental and eye units at Homa Bay County Referral Hospital highlights what can be achieved when political will, strategic investment, and professional commitment intersect. While many public hospitals across the country still battle underfunding and inefficiency, Homa Bay's experience offers a promising case study in how targeted reforms can restore public trust and deliver quality healthcare where it's needed most.

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Dialysis no longer death sentence as Homa Bay expands renal services

The diagnosis of kidney failure in Homa Bay County often came with a silent sentence in Homa Bay—one that few survived without travelling far or enduring unbearable costs. Dialysis, a lifeline for patients with chronic kidney conditions, was once a rarity at the Homa Bay County Referral Hospital. The few outdated machines constantly broke down, forcing patients into long queues, missed treatments, and in worst cases, fatal outcomes. Many gave up, while others were pushed to seek services in Kisumu or Kisii, incurring heavy travel expenses and still facing long waits at already overwhelmed facilities.

But that chapter is now closing. Today, nearly all dialysis patients in Homa Bay are served weekly at

the county referral hospital, with the renal unit now operating at full capacity. Equipped with six beds and 11 specialised nurses, the unit sees 12 patients daily—about 84 every week—delivering care that has become a lifeline for over 400 individuals enrolled since 2017. Nursing Director Carol Adongo notes that 284 of these patients have made significant recoveries, with some transitioning out of dialysis altogether. The patient base has even expanded beyond county borders, drawing individuals from Migori and Nyakach.

A major turnaround came in January 2024 when the Wanga administration procured five new dialysis machines, boosting both capacity and reliability. The machines have been operational throughout the week, including

weekends, ensuring uninterrupted care. Alongside this, the county has consistently supplied the unit with essential consumables and introduced a renal-friendly diet for patients to support their treatment journeys.

Ms Adongo emphasizes that the unit's success is rooted not just in equipment, but in dedicated staffing and a supportive system. "We have adequate, well-trained nurses who ensure patients receive the best care possible," she says.

For patients like 48-year-old Sharon Adhiambo from Kaguria in Ndhiwa, the change has been life-altering. After her diagnosis in 2024, Sharon initially sought treatment in Nairobi at Kenyatta National Hospital—a journey that quickly became financially unsustainable. "I had no idea I could get dialysis here until someone advised me to switch," she recalls. Enrolled in December 2024, Sharon now makes regular visits to Homa Bay's facility, where she says she receives not only excellent care, but compassion and dignity.

Dignifying last respects with ultra-modern funeral parlour



Refrigerated units at Homa Bay County Referral Hospital funeral parlour

The dignity of death is taking on new meaning as the government prepares to unveil an ultra-modern funeral parlour designed to offer grieving families comfort, respect, and state-of-the-art services during their most difficult moments.

The Sh48 million facility, whose construction began on September 1, 2023, is nearing completion and is expected to open its doors soon. It will replace the ageing mortuary that has served the region since the days of the defunct local

authorities. With a capacity to hold up to 120 bodies, the new parlour marks a major leap from the current mortuary at Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital, which can only accommodate 30 bodies—and often operates at near-capacity.

"This new building isn't just a structure, it's a promise of dignity and peace," said Hospital CEO Dr Vincent Oduor. "For years, families have had to deal with outdated equipment and limited space. This new facility changes all that."

The funeral parlour is thoughtfully designed with two distinct wings: a public wing and a private section, the latter of which will hold up to 12 bodies for families who may wish for more exclusive arrangements.

Beyond its expanded capacity, what sets the facility apart are the extra features that speak to care and compassion. According to Nursing Director Carol Adongo, the parlour will include a chapel where families can hold brief prayers before collecting their loved ones. "All that remains is the final installation of the trolley line walkway that will transport bodies into the facility. We are ready," she said.

The current mortuary's infrastructure has long been strained, with aging machines and limited space frequently pushing operations to the brink. The new facility, by contrast, is equipped with modern preservation equipment and improved workflow systems to ensure bodies are handled with both care and efficiency.

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KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

Health Milestones

HBE

01

Construction of an outpatient (OPD) block -

This initiative has given the hospital a serious facelift.



02

Installation of a CT Scan Machine

- A game-changing addition that has drastically reduced the need for patients to travel outside the county for advanced diagnostic



03

Operationalization of the Renal Unit

- Fully equipped with dialysis machines, the unit is now offering lifesaving treatment for patients with kidney-related ailments.



01

Establishment of a Functional Eye Clinic -

Addressing the growing need for specialized eye care, the clinic has become a beacon of hope for hundreds of patients



04

Construction of a Modern Blood Bank -

Enhancing emergency response and supporting safe transfusions, particularly for maternal and surgical cases. Upgrading of the



Maternity Wing and Outpatient/ Casualty Department - Creating a more dignified and efficient patient experience through expanded space, better equipment, and more health personnel.

05

Revamping and Stocking of the County Pharmacy

- Ensuring reliable access to essential drugs and reducing the burden of out-of-pocket expenses for residents.



Ongoing Establishment of a Cancer Center - A long-term investment aimed at early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer, cutting the cost and trauma of referrals to distant facilities.

06

Construction of a Funeral Parlour

- Providing a humane, affordable and dignified space for grieving families, integrated within the referral hospital's services.



MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and child health has remained a key focus. The newly built Mother and Baby Unit in Ndiwa ensures a safe and comfortable environment for deliveries, while facilities like the Hope Centers in Mbita and Makongeni offer integrated HIV care, reproductive health, and psychosocial support for vulnerable groups.



Recognizing the critical role of frontline healthcare workers, Governor Wanga's administration has introduced incentive packages for Community Health Promoters (CHPs), giving them a monthly stipend



From investing in specialist services to prioritizing dignity and access at the last mile, the County Government of Homa Bay has set a new benchmark in county-led healthcare reform.



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Management, Public
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and Disaster Management

Homa Bay revamps sub county offices to help strengthen decentralized units

In a significant stride toward improving governance and public service, the County Government of Homa Bay has breathed new life into its sub-county offices, transforming them into modern, efficient work spaces.

Among the recently renovated facilities in the financial year 2024-2025 is the Kendu Sub-County office, now a shining example of the devolved unit's commitment to enhancing service delivery and staff welfare.

Gone are the days of leaking roofs, dimly lit rooms, and overcrowded work spaces. The refurbished offices in Rachuonyo South, Rachuonyo North, and Suba South now boast fresh paint, reliable office space, electricity, and improved sanitation, a far cry from their previous state.

"For a long time, our staff worked under difficult conditions, which sometimes affected morale and efficiency," said Ms. Alice Waseth, the Rachuonyo North Sub County Administrator.

"Now, we have a workspace that not only motivates our team but also ensures residents receive services in a dignified environment."

The renovations align with Governor Gladys Wanga's broader agenda of strengthening devolution by investing in public infrastructure. Ms. Roselyn Omollo, the County Executive

Committee Member (CECM) for Governance, highlighted the project as a testament to the county's dedication to transform Homa Bay County into the Best County to "Live, Invest and Work."

"Devolution is about bringing services closer to the people, and that starts with having functional, well-equipped offices," Omollo said. "These upgrades are not just about aesthetics--they are about efficiency, accountability, and restoring public confidence in our systems."

Architect Peter Wajero, who spearheaded the renovations, with a team from public works, added that the renovations were carefully planned to address long-standing challenges.

"We prioritized critical needs such as roofing, lighting, and accessibility to ensure these offices meet modern standards," he

explained.

For locals like Mary Auma, a small-scale trader in Kendu Bay town, the improvements have already made a difference.

"Before, you would find files scattered everywhere, and sometimes officers struggled with poor lighting or heat," she recalled. "Now, the offices are organized, clean, and welcoming. It feels like the county government is truly listening to us."

The county's chief officer in-charge of devolution said the department had earmarked investment in office upgrades to reflect a larger commitment by Governor Gladys Wanga to strengthen devolution's promise, as clearly vested in her "Genowa En' Dongruok" manifesto, bringing not just services, but dignity and efficiency, closer to the people.

**“
For a long time,
our staff worked
under difficult
conditions, which
sometimes
affected morale
and efficiency**

Alice Waseth



The new ultra modern office of the Governor, Homa Bay

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**MANDATE**

The GAC&D Departmental core functions are derived from the Executive Order No. 1

These include but are not limited to:

- Responsible for public participation and stakeholder management
- In charge of Emergency and Disaster Response
- Responsible for liaison on devolution, Council of Governors, and other relevant regional fairs e.g. LREB
- In charge of county administration and devolved units
- Responsible for public communication
- Monitoring and coordination of community mobilization and development programmes
- Coordinate participation of communities in governance at the local levels
- In charge of Performance Contracting
- Responsible for enforcement of county laws and compliance and general security.

VISION

A receptive, well managed and accountable public service for effective service delivery and governance in Homa Bay County

MISSION

To provide policy guidance, strategic leadership and institutional development in optimal conditions for inclusive and sustainable governance of Homa Bay County.



Raila Odinga Stadium Homa Bay

Historic Madaraka Day celebrations

For the first time in history, Homa Bay County took center stage as the host of the national Madaraka Day celebrations, marking a momentous occasion not only for the lakeside county but also for the entire Nyanza region.

The event, held at the newly upgraded 12,000-seater Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay town, was graced by President William Ruto, who made history by becoming the first sitting head of state to spend a night at the Homa Bay State Lodge.

The celebrations were a spectacle of national pride, military prowess, and economic promise, with Homa Bay reaping significant infrastructural and economic benefits in preparation for the big day.

From the rehabilitation of the Homa Bay Pier to the construction of a modern fish market at Koginga Beach, the county has seen a flurry of development activities that locals say will leave a lasting impact.

President Ruto's overnight stay at the Homa Bay State Lodge, a first for a sitting president signaled the growing importance of the region in national affairs. Residents lined the streets as his motorcade passed through the town, with many expressing pride in hosting the first of June national event.

"This is a clear indication that Homa Bay is no longer a forgotten county," said Michael Otieno, a local businessman. "The President's presence here shows that we matter

in Kenya's development agenda."

In the lead-up to the celebrations, the national and county governments fast-tracked several key projects aimed at improving infrastructure and boosting trade. Among the most notable developments was the construction of a modern fish market at Koginga Beach, set to revolutionize the fishing industry in the region.

While delivering her speech at the event, governor Gladys Wanga commended the state support in constructing the market including fresh produce markets in various parts of the county.

The Homa Bay Pier, a critical docking point for fishermen and traders, was rehabilitated, while major roads within the town were upgraded to bitumen standards, easing transportation. The Kabunde Airstrip also received a facelift, complete with an extended runway, a project that proved its worth when Slovenia's President Nataša Pirc Musar among dignitaries landed at the airstrip, becoming the first foreign head of state to do so.

Additionally, the Raila Odinga Stadium, where the main event was held, underwent major renovations, including new terraces - covered all-round by a roofed canopy that makes it a versatile venue for social gatherings, setting the stage for future sporting and national events. The celebrations were marked by a spectacular military parade, with Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) officers showcasing precision drills and a display of

armored vehicles, not forgetting the exemplary performance of the county inspectorate who participated in the march. The air force thrilled the crowd with a flypast, and paratroopers leaving spectators in awe.

Adding to the glamour of the event was the presence of ambassadors and key guests from various parts of the country, who were received with honor. The arrival of guests at Kabunde Airstrip underscored the growing international interest in Homa Bay as a key investment and tourism destination.

In her address, Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga highlighted the county's progress in healthcare, education, and finance. She pointed to a remarkable 700% increase in own-source revenue, from Ksh 191 million to over Ksh 1 billion, the construction of 241 ECDE classrooms, and a scholarship program supporting more than 20,000 students among projects. She also emphasized the county's

strong agricultural output, including fish, sunflowers, and cotton, while calling on the national government to support the recruitment of healthcare workers.

"We call on the national government to support the establishment of a Blue Economy Centre of Excellence here in Homa Bay, alongside critical investments in infrastructure that will unlock the full potential of our lakeside economy," Wanga said. She also emphasized the county's plans to relocate to the new county headquarters and the vision of transforming Homa Bay into a vibrant economic hub.

President Ruto, in his speech, praised Homa Bay's readiness to host the event and pledged continued support for the county's development. He disclosed plans to support the county's blue economy.

"To strengthen the fisheries value chain, we are also building modern fish markets with cold

storage and hygiene facilities."

As the fete came to a close, residents reflected on the long-term benefits of hosting Madaraka Day. Jane Adhiambo, a fish trader at Koginga Beach, expressed optimism: "The new market will help us sell our fish better. This is more than just a celebration, it's a new beginning for Homa Bay."

With improved infrastructure, international recognition, and renewed investor interest, Homa Bay's historic Madaraka Day may well be remembered as the turning point that propelled the county into a new era of growth.

We call on the national government to support the establishment of a Blue Economy Centre of Excellence here in Homa Bay, alongside critical investments in infrastructure that will unlock the full potential of our lakeside economy..

Gladys Wanga



Kenya Air force officers landing in a parachute during the madaraka day



Governor Gladys Wanga and Military service commanders following the proceedings on the Madaraka Day

KDF's spectacular display at Madaraka day leaves Homa Bay residents in awe

For many residents of Homa Bay, this year's Madaraka Day celebrations were not just a historic milestone—they were a breathtaking showcase of Kenya's military might, witnessed up close for the first time.

As the national fete unfolded at the newly renovated Raila Odinga Stadium, the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) stole the show with a dazzling display of

precision, power, and patriotism. From thunderous armored vehicle processions to a thrilling air force flypast, the military's performance left thousands of spectators, many of whom had never seen such a spectacle live, utterly mesmerized.

"I've only seen this on TV before," said 58-year-old George Kakach, who traveled from Kendu Bay to attend.

"Watching the soldiers march

in perfect unison, the helicopters flying low—it gave me chills. I never imagined I'd see this in Homa Bay."

The KDF's parade was a masterclass in discipline, with officers executing flawless drills under the bright midday sun.

The crowd erupted as paratroopers descended from the sky, their colorful chutes dotting the horizon. Armored

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personnel carriers rumbled past the grandstand, showcasing Kenya's defense capabilities, while the Kenya Air Force's aerial maneuvers drew gasps and cheers.

For younger attendees like 12-year-old Eunice Amondi, the display was nothing short of magical. "The jets were so loud and fast! I want to be a pilot when I grow up," she exclaimed, eyes wide with excitement.

The county inspectorate also earned praise for their participation in the march, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with national forces—a symbolic moment of unity.

President William Ruto, visibly impressed, commended the KDF for their exemplary performance, stating that their discipline and dedication embody the spirit of Madaraka Day.

Governor Gladys Wanga added, "Today, Homa Bay has not only made history but also witnessed the brilliance of our nation's defenders. It's a day we'll never forget."

As the celebrations wound down, the buzz among residents was unmistakable. For Homa Bay, this Madaraka Day was more than a ceremony—it was a front-row seat to national pride, leaving an indelible mark on all who attended.



A spectacular drill by military in preparation for the Madaraka Day Celebration

New county headquarters to redefine governance and unlock economic potential

The county government of Homa Bay is set to complete construction of a modern county headquarters in Arojo Ward, Homa Bay Town Sub-county, a development hailed as one of the most significant infrastructure milestones under Governor Gladys Wanga's leadership.

The Ksh 500 million ultra-modern facility, now 95% complete, is expected to be inaugurated in August 2025 and is envisioned to enhance governance, service delivery, and regional economic growth.

Located in Kanyabala on the outskirts of Homa Bay town, the

new headquarters will serve as a centralized one-stop service center for county operations.

It will house key departments and provide a conducive working environment for county staff, while also making services more accessible to residents across all sub-counties.

"This new headquarters will enhance the efficiency of the county government and serve the citizens for generations to come," said Governor Wanga at the groundbreaking ceremony. "It will become a cornerstone for enhanced innovation, productivity, and service delivery."

The project is financed through a loan agreement with the County Pension Fund (CPF) Group under a tenant purchase scheme, allowing the county to repay the cost over 30 years. The land on which the building sits has been leased to CPF, which is developing the project in partnership with the county.

The project is part of the county's development priorities, with the new headquarters replacing a previously earmarked animal feed factory.

"We had to relocate the proposed animal feed factory due to its proximity to Kabunde

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A raring iconic structure that will now host over 600 County Executives and staffs

Airstrip. It would pose a risk by attracting birds that can cause air accidents,” Wanga explained.

She clarified that the factory project had not been scrapped, but would instead be relocated to the Riwa Industrial Special Economic Zone in Karachuonyo sub county, aligning with the county’s broader plan to cluster industrial investments in designated zones.

“Our goal is to ensure most industries are constructed at Riwa, where private sector actors can partner with us,” she said.

According to the county executive member for Trade, Investments, Industrialization, Tourism and Marketing, Dr. Joash Aloo, the relocation of county offices to Arujo is part of a long-term strategy to expand the urban footprint of Homa Bay town and unlock lakeside development for tourism and commercial investments.

Our goal is to ensure most industries are constructed at Riwa, where private sector actors can partner with us

“This is smart urban planning. We’re separating governance functions from our tourism golden belt while creating new economic nodes,” said Dr. Aloo.

“The lakeshore will now focus on expanding our blue economy, while Arujo becomes our nerve center for efficient service delivery.”

The development is also expected to trigger economic

activity in surrounding rural areas. Area Member of Parliament, Peter Kaluma said the project would help extend the town’s infrastructure and services toward the outskirts.

“This project will help in expanding our town toward rural areas,” Kaluma noted.

County Woman Representative, Joyce Osogo added that the new administrative hub would stimulate local economic growth by attracting real estate and small businesses.

“The local investors are going to build rental houses near the county headquarters, and that will contribute to an increase in the town’s GDP,” she said.

CPF Group CEO Dr. Hosea Kili praised the partnership model and said it could serve as a blueprint for future public infrastructure financing.

“We’re excited to be pioneers of a transaction that leverages innovative financing models like the tenant purchase scheme for county infrastructure projects,” Kili said.

The project was enabled by the Homa Bay County Infrastructure Act, which provides a legal framework for public-private partnerships to implement county priority infrastructure.

As the county prepares to officially open the facility, the new headquarters stands not just as a symbol of administrative growth but as a huge step toward economic transformation in Homa Bay.



An impression of the County Headquarters by an artist

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New enforcement Cadre marks key milestone in county governance reform

Two years into Governor Gladys Wanga's tenure, Homa Bay's Department of Governance and Administration has marked a major milestone with the successful training and graduation of 250 county law enforcement officers—a move that is already transforming public service and regulatory enforcement across the county.

The officers, trained at the Kenya Forest Service's Londiani Academy, were officially passed out during a ceremony held on 16th February 2024 at Raila Odinga Stadium.

Presiding over the event, Governor Wanga described the moment as a turning point in county administration.

"You are prepared to serve our county with renewed commitment, professionalism, courage and vigor," she told the officers, urging them to uphold ethical standards and integrity in their daily duties.

The group, made up of 240 men and 10 women, received specialized training in revenue collection, by-law enforcement, and service delivery; skills directly aligned with county operations.

Since their deployment, the officers have helped increase local

revenue by 40% in just eight months and contributed to a 50% reduction in confrontations with traders, thanks to a more consistent and professional enforcement approach.

Beyond enforcement, the officers are playing an active role in frontline service delivery. Their presence at sub-county and ward levels has improved access to county services and strengthened communication between the government and citizens.

Clad in standard uniforms and guided by a clear Scheme of Service, the unit has become a visible and disciplined force.

According to the department's chief officer in charge of administration, Mr. Isaac Ongiri, the decision to link the unit directly to the Governance and Administration docket has helped create a structured feedback loop, enabling quicker response to public service needs.

"This wasn't just about law enforcement," Ongiri noted. "It was about building a professional cadre that bridges our administration with

IN NUMBERS

250

The number of successful trained and graduated county law enforcement officers in a move that is already transforming public service and regulatory enforcement across the county.

ground-level governance."

In response to the success of the first batch, the county government plans to train additional cohorts of enforcement officers in the coming financial year.

"This is part of a broader strategy to scale up enforcement capacity and strengthen governance structures across all wards," Ongiri added.

To extend their reach, the county has equipped the officers with motorcycles and a renovated patrol vehicle, improving coverage in remote markets and trading centers.



The Wanga Administration has invested heavily in the capacity development of the County Enforcement Officers (Insert) the Governor partaking a guard of honor mounted by the enforcement troops



Governor Gladys Wanga flagging off two donated fire trucks to enhance fire emergency services

County receives two fire trucks in boost to emergency response

The County Government of Homa Bay has added two more fire engines to its emergency response fleet, marking an important step in strengthening the region's disaster preparedness.

The donation, made possible by the Rotary Club of Cumbria, the Florian Group, and Kootab Myoot, all from the United Kingdom was flagged off outside the Office of the Governor on the 16th of July, 2025, drawing applause from county officials, firefighters, and residents.

This is the second time the UK-based partners are supporting Homa Bay with emergency equipment. In 2016, the same organizations donated two fire trucks and two ambulances. With the latest donation, the county now possesses four fire trucks—two currently in operation, and two undergoing mechanical servicing.

Speaking during the handover ceremony, Governor Gladys Wanga expressed deep appreciation for the continued support.

"We are grateful to our partners for this generous donation. A brand-new fire engine costs around KSh 67 million, which is well beyond what most counties can afford in the current fiscal climate. This kind of partnership is crucial for building our capacity to handle fire-related emergencies," said Governor Wanga.

The county has recorded a sharp increase in fire outbreaks, with 32 incidents in 2024 and another 35 in the just-ended financial year, across all sub-counties.

The Governor said the county is actively working to enhance its fire management infrastructure, especially in light of growing urban centres.

"Our goal is to establish a fully equipped fire station in Homa Bay Town and reliable satellite stations in our other municipalities. These trucks will significantly boost our response time and readiness," she added.

Ahead of the launch, the county's department of disaster management conducted a fire drill to test emergency response protocols and staff readiness.

The exercise was successful and helped identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Our goal is to establish a fully equipped fire station in Homa Bay Town and reliable satellite stations in our other municipalities.

Hon. Gladys Wanga

Chief Officer for Governance, Administration and Devolution, Mr. Isaac Ongiri, commended the team's performance: "The drill demonstrated our team's growing capacity. With continued training and support, we are better prepared to protect lives and property during real emergencies."

Governor Wanga also gave a directive on truck deployment once all four units are roadworthy. Two will remain stationed in Homa Bay due to high incident rates, while the other two will be assigned to Oyugis and Mbita.

She called on the public to support the work of the county's fire brigade.

"I urge our citizens to stop attacking our fire crews during emergencies, like what we witnessed in Oyugis. These trucks are expensive and damaging them only increases risks and costs to the public," she said.

The Governor also acknowledged national government support, thanking Treasury Cabinet Secretary John Mbadi his Trade and Investment counterpart, Lee Kinyanjui for customs waivers and logistical support that helped facilitate the donation's arrival.

Homa Bay is now pursuing the shipment of two more fire engines identified by the same partners, as it continues efforts to strengthen its emergency services countywide.

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Citizen service charter drives accountability one year after launch



Chief Officer Governance Mr. Isaac Ongiri making a presentation

A year ago, the county government of Homa Bay broke new ground by unveiling five citizen-led service charters, the first in the county's history. Twelve months later, that bold step is beginning to reshape accountability, quietly transforming how public services are delivered across the county.

The citizen service charter, launched under the stewardship of governor Gladys Wanga in November 2024, was crafted through technical support from Uraia Trust and Integrated Development Facility-Kenya (IDF-K) with a series of public consultations.

The charter set clear service delivery standards for every department, outlining timelines, responsibilities, and avenues for recourse when those standards aren't met. It was designed not just as a document but as a tool to promote openness, responsiveness, and citizen trust in government.

"We wanted a social contract that puts residents in the driver's seat of governance, letting them know exactly what to expect and when," says Ms. Roselyn Omollo, the county executive committee member for governance, administration, communication and devolution. "This is about

accountability you can see and measure."

So far, 10 departments and municipalities have established their service charters. At the sub county level, residents can walk into health facilities, municipal offices, the county public service board or even agricultural offices and see clear commitments including; turnaround time for lab results, days for issuing farm inputs or response time to a grievance submitted.

In Homa Bay town, for instance, a gentleman, Jack Okeyo, says he no longer has to worry after registering a grievance. "They give me a tracking number and I get updated on the progress of my case," he says.

The County Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism has also become more active. Out of 2,100 public complaints and inquiries lodged in the past year,

1,600 have been resolved, thanks to service tracking linked directly to the charter.

Mr. Oliver Waindi, Executive Director of Uraia Trust, described the citizen-led service charter as a formal agreement outlining how the county government is expected to deliver services to its people.

"This charter sets clear, measurable standards that can be tracked," he noted. "It builds on the work we've supported in Homa Bay, alongside IDF and the county government, to ensure public participation happens within a strong and lasting framework."

According to the county chief officer for governance, Mr. Isaac Ongiri, the department is still working IDF-Kenya and URAIA Trust to build the capacity of staff for seamless roll out and implementation of service charters.

"We want our staff to see the service charter as part of how they work every day," said Mr. Ongiri. "It's about making sure everyone knows they are answerable to the people and committed to quality service."

Mr. Isaac Ongiri stated further that the charter introduces several mechanisms, including a 72-Hour Response Guarantee where all citizen inquiries must receive official acknowledgment within three working days.

Early results are already visible. At the county headquarters grievance office, a recent report for the year 2024 shows that resolution rates are currently at 89% for the month, up from 62% before implementation.

The charter's creation followed a citizen report card that revealed gaps in service delivery. Rather than dismiss criticism, Governor Gladys Wanga's administration turned to establish service charters for solutions.

The innovation has drawn interest from other counties and national government, with the Council of Governors planning a study tour. Constitutional expert Dr. Linda Musumba calls it "the most significant advance in participatory governance since devolution began."

For citizens seeking to utilize the charter, complaints can be filed through: a digital form at www.homabay.go.ke, an email report. grievance@homabay.go.ke or they could use the toll-free number 0800000889.

“We want our staff to see the service charter as part of how they work every day.”

Isaac Ongiri

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Q&A:

How to strengthen devolution through citizen engagement



Japheth Ojijo, a Programs Officer working for IDF-Kenya during a previous engagement .

The Homa Bay Echo spoke to Governance Expert Japheth Ojijo on Homa Bay's Open Governance Ugatuzi Award. Excerpts

Question: Homa Bay County has been recognized for its innovative public participation model. What sparked this shift toward deeper citizen engagement?

Answer: The turning point was a 2022 directive by Governor Gladys Wanga, mandating meaningful public participation—inspired by Makueni's success. With partners like IDF-Kenya, we designed a six-tier engagement framework, piloted in two wards, and later institutionalized it through the County Public Participation and Civic Education Act (2024).

This moved us from tokenism to tangible inclusion—80% of citizen priorities now shape county budgets.

Q: How did Homa Bay leap from 44th to 7th in budget transparency within a year?

A: Transparency became non-negotiable. We enacted service charters for governance departments, launched a citizen report card, and partnered with URAIA Trust to train communities on tracking expenditures. The Access to Information Bill—currently under public review—will further solidify this.

Q: You've emphasized the difference between "public participation" and "citizen engagement." Why does this

distinction matter?

A: Participation often stops at hearings; engagement ensures citizens drive priorities. For example, our bursary program was overhauled after grassroots feedback revealed inefficiencies. Now, the County Bursary Act embeds engagement at every stage—from planning to oversight.

Q: Homa Bay recently reported its first Voluntary Local Review on SDGs. How does this tie to devolution?

A: SDG localization—especially Goal 16 (accountable institutions)—is devolution in action. We integrated SDGs into our CIDP III [County Integrated Development Plan] and co-developed an SDG tracking tool with communities. This lets a fisher in Mbita monitor lake conservation projects or a mother in Rangwe demand clinic upgrades—all via simplified indicators.

Q: What lessons can other counties take from Homa Bay's hosting of this conference?

A: Equity and inclusion aren't buzzwords here. Our Ndovu Award winner for 2023 outstanding work in educating and mobilizing citizens to participate in various governance and service delivery sectors in Homa Bay County proves that when citizens co-own devolution, services improve. The conference theme—"Social Justice Through Open Governance"—mirrors our next frontier: embedding open governance countywide to lock in these gains.

“

Devolution thrives when citizens aren't spectators but architects of their development.

Japheth Ojijo

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION,
COMMUNICATION AND DEVOLUTION

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Former US Ambassador Meg Witman join Governor Wanga in a jig when the diplomat visited Homa Bay

“

With thousands of delegates expected, Homa Bay is already witnessing increased activity in hospitality, transport, catering, and retail.

Hon. Gladys Wanga

Homa Bay County stepping up as devolution's new bold frontier

The quiet rhythm of Lake Victoria's waves and the shadow of Ruma National Park are now the backdrop to a bold new chapter for Homa Bay County.

Once overlooked, this lakeside region is stepping confidently into the national spotlight as it prepares to host the 2025 9th Devolution Conference—one of Kenya's most significant governance events.

Fresh from successfully hosting this year's Madaraka Day celebrations, Homa Bay is proving to be more than just a scenic location. It has become a trusted destination for conference tourism and national dialogue, driven not only by geography but by leadership, delivery, and a development model that leaves no one behind.

Governor Gladys Wanga's pursuit to bring the Devolution Conference home was visionary. Her administration showcased a county that is living the promise of devolution: from labour-based infrastructure projects that employ local youth to digital procurement systems that enhance transparency. Homa Bay proved it was ready and leading.

The 2025 theme, "For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice," finds a natural

home here.

In Homa Bay, equity is a slogan and a practice woven into policy and community life. But hosting the conference is more than policy sessions and speeches. It's a festival of culture, sport, innovation, and crucially, an economic stimulus that touches every corner of the local economy.

With thousands of delegates expected, Homa Bay is already witnessing increased activity in hospitality, transport, catering, and retail. Hotels are expected to be fully booked days in advance. Tuk tuk drivers, boda boda riders, event suppliers, artisans, and fish vendors are experiencing a surge in demand.

For small businesses, this is more than visibility, it's income and opportunity. The economic ripple effect will be felt across villages and towns, long after the tents come down.

The Delegate Experience A highlight of the week will be the Roan Half Marathon, themed "Running for Conservation." The race aims to raise awareness about the endangered Roan Antelope, only 17 of which remain in Ruma, Kenya's only national park in the western circuit.

Alongside the Roan, Ruma is home to White and Black Rhinos and over 800 Rothschild Giraffes.

Homa Bay is using the moment to champion conservation as part of sustainable prosperity.

A youth-led hackathon will run parallel to the conference, where young developers will pitch real-world tech solutions in governance, health, agriculture, and service delivery. Winning innovations will be considered for piloting by the County Government, turning ideas into action and positioning Homa Bay as a center of civic-tech excellence.

Delegates will also experience the vibrant Rech Festival, a culinary and cultural celebration of Lake Victoria's fish heritage. From mbuta to omena, dishes prepared by local chefs will tell stories of tradition and identity.

Traditional boat races on Lake Victoria, Ajua, tug of war, and a friendly football match between Bunge FC and the Governors' team will add rhythm and colour to the conference week. For Homa Bay, this moment is more than an event. It is a declaration that devolution works, that local innovation matters, and that when governance is close to the people, justice and development go hand in hand. The story of devolution in Kenya will never be told without Homa Bay. And in 2025, the country and the world will see why.

New era as Homa Bay automates PC signing

The County Government of Homa Bay is on the cusp of a major governance shift as it prepares to launch a fully digital performance contracting system in the 2025/2026 financial year. Designed to replace outdated manual processes, the new platform promises a results-based, transparent, and accountable model of service delivery across all departments. For the first time, county officers will be able to set, track, and report their targets through a centralized digital dashboard, signalling a new chapter in how performance is managed in public service.

Governor Gladys Wanga has framed the transition as part of a wider reform agenda to make county governance more responsive, efficient, and citizen-focused. “This move is not just about digitizing our processes—it’s about changing how we manage performance,” said Wanga. “With the launch scheduled for August, we’re setting a higher bar for accountability and data-driven decisions.”

The shift is expected to bring clarity and consistency to how departments operate. According to County Executive Committee Member for Governance, Roselyn Omollo, the system will ensure that expectations are clearly defined and visible across leadership levels. “We want every department to know exactly what is expected of them, and for that information to be visible at all levels of leadership,” she noted.

Departments will be required to input their annual targets into the system, align them with county strategic priorities and national development goals, and provide quarterly updates. This real-time tracking mechanism will give the executive team the tools to monitor delivery and identify performance gaps early.

County Chief Officer for Governance, Administration, and Devolution Isaac Ongiri confirmed that preparations are already in full swing. “We’ve finalized system development and are currently training departmental



Isaac Ongiri, County Chief Officer for Governance, Administration, and Devolution

representatives. The idea is to start strong in August, with at least four key departments going live,” he said. The rollout will begin with a symbolic signing ceremony, starting with the Governor and County Executive Committee Members, followed by ministers and their respective Chief Officers.

The digital platform has been developed and customized by Digipedia Limited to suit the unique operational demands of Homa Bay’s government. For Director of Performance Management Dr. Kennedy Ongeko, the system promises to correct years of inefficiency in the way performance has been tracked and evaluated. “For years, we have struggled with fragmented reporting and unclear lines of accountability. A digital system fixes that,” said Ongeko. “It provides evidence of what’s been done, by whom, and when. That’s a game-changer.”

Still, the county isn’t blind to the challenges ahead. Low digital literacy among some staff and patchy internet connectivity in rural areas are hurdles that could slow down adoption. To address this, targeted digital skills training is already underway, particularly for officers in sub-county and ward-level offices. “We’re conducting appraisals readiness training to prepare staff for this

“We’ve finalized system development and are currently training departmental representatives. The idea is to start strong in August, with at least four key departments going live.”

Isaac Ongiri

shift. We want everyone ready and confident when the system goes live,” said Ongeko.

Once implemented, the platform will make it easier to evaluate departmental performance, track progress, publish verifiable results, and communicate impact to citizens in a transparent manner. “We look forward to generating our first digital performance report by the end of the financial year,” added the director.

With this launch, Homa Bay becomes one of the first counties in Kenya to transition fully to a digital performance management system—turning vision into action and setting a new benchmark for data-driven governance in the devolved units.





Homa Bay eyes 532-Acre Riwa SEZ to unlock economic potential



The construction of the Riwa Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Rachuonyo West is poised to transform Homa Bay County into an industrial and commercial powerhouse, creating thousands of jobs and attracting major investments across key sectors.

Spanning 536 acres just 20 minutes from Homa Bay Town, the SEZ will offer investors investment opportunities, infrastructure and unmatched

incentives to establish manufacturing and processing plants. The zone is already generating buzz as the anchor for the county's ambitious industrialization agenda.

The SEZ comes at a pivotal moment for Homa Bay's resurgent cotton sector, which has seen acreage expand by 40% to 12,000 hectares. With two ginneries set for modernization and textile factories in the pipeline, the zone will complete the cotton-to-garment value

chain right in Homa Bay.

“Riwa SEZ will give us the perfect platform to process our cotton locally instead of exporting raw materials,” said Agriculture CECM Joseph Oyugi Magwanga. “We’re talking spinning mills, weaving plants, and garment factories that will employ thousands.”

The zone's agro-processing cluster is attracting edible oil manufacturers keen to capitalize on Homa Bay's 767,851 acres of oil palm-ready land. A flagship

MANDATE

This department is responsible for aligning and implementing state department policies at the county level, organizing and coordinating agricultural trade fairs, exhibitions and shows, developing and disseminating appropriate technologies, capacity building, providing field extension services and advisory services. The department also focuses on food security and nutrition campaigns, food safety and organic farming. The main focus is on promoting and developing sustainable agricultural practices for the benefit of the county's farmers and community

VISION

An innovative, commercially oriented and modernized agriculture, livestock and fisheries sector

MISSION

To improve livelihoods of the people of Homa Bay County through promotion of competitive agriculture, innovative research and sustainable livestock and fisheries development.

Kshs. 2.7 billion edible oil plant is already in development, aiming to produce 246,000 metric tonnes annually and reduce Kenya's 91% import dependence.

Sweet potato processing

Sweet potato processing is another priority, leveraging the county's 80,000 metric tonne annual production.

“We’re finalizing deals for a processing plant to make flour, crisps and frozen fries for export,” revealed Trade Chief Officer Eng. Bernard Nyobange.

With its proximity to Lake Victoria, the SEZ offers opportunities to boost the Blue Economy sector including; opportunities for dedicated fish processing facilities and cold storage units to add value to the county's aquaculture. Improved road networks linking to Kisumu International Airport provide seamless access to regional and global markets.

The SEZ offers unparalleled benefits including; 10% corporate tax for 10 years, duty-

free import of machinery, fast-tracked licensing, full profit repatriation among several benefits.

“Since we broke ground, investor inquiries have tripled,” The Governor notes on a monthly county magazine, the Genowa ECHO. “We’re processing 15 serious applications from local and international firms.”

The county projects 20,000 direct jobs in the SEZ's first five years, with thousands more in linked cooperatives and farms.

For Homa Bay's youth like 24-year-old mechanic James Omondi, the SEZ represents hope: "Finally, we won't have to move to Nairobi to find good jobs. Industry is coming to us."

With construction ongoing and first-phase factories to open soon, Riwa SEZ is rapidly becoming the hope of Homa Bay's economic transformation, proving that with the right infrastructure and vision, even rural counties can compete on the global stage.



LAND USE PROPOSALS		
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL		
1. (A) LIGHT INDUSTRIAL		
S ₁ , S ₂ , S ₃ , S ₄ , S ₅ , S ₆ , S ₇ , S ₈ , S ₉ , S ₁₀ , S ₁₁ , S ₁₂ , S ₁₃ , S ₁₄ , S ₁₅ , S ₁₆ , S ₁₇ , S ₁₈ , S ₁₉ , S ₂₀ , S ₂₁ , S ₂₂ , S ₂₃ , S ₂₄ , S ₂₅ , S ₂₆ , S ₂₇ , S ₂₈ , S ₂₉ , S ₃₀ , S ₃₁ , S ₃₂ , S ₃₃ , S ₃₄ , S ₃₅ , S ₃₆ , S ₃₇ , S ₃₈ , S ₃₉ , S ₄₀ , S ₄₁ , S ₄₂ , S ₄₃ , S ₄₄ , S ₄₅ , S ₄₆ , S ₄₇ , S ₄₈ , S ₄₉ , S ₅₀ , S ₅₁ , S ₅₂ , S ₅₃ , S ₅₄ , S ₅₅ , S ₅₆ , S ₅₇ , S ₅₈ , S ₅₉ , S ₆₀ , S ₆₁ , S ₆₂ , S ₆₃ , S ₆₄ , S ₆₅ , S ₆₆ , S ₆₇ , S ₆₈ , S ₆₉ , S ₇₀ , S ₇₁ , S ₇₂ , S ₇₃ , S ₇₄ , S ₇₅ , S ₇₆ , S ₇₇ , S ₇₈ , S ₇₉ , S ₈₀ , S ₈₁ , S ₈₂ , S ₈₃ , S ₈₄ , S ₈₅ , S ₈₆ , S ₈₇ , S ₈₈ , S ₈₉ , S ₉₀ , S ₉₁ , S ₉₂ , S ₉₃ , S ₉₄ , S ₉₅ , S ₉₆ , S ₉₇ , S ₉₈ , S ₉₉ , S ₁₀₀ , S ₁₀₁ , S ₁₀₂ , S ₁₀₃ , S ₁₀₄ , S ₁₀₅ , S ₁₀₆ , S ₁₀₇ , S ₁₀₈ , S ₁₀₉ , S ₁₁₀ , S ₁₁₁ , S ₁₁₂ , S ₁₁₃ , S ₁₁₄ , S ₁₁₅ , S ₁₁₆ , S ₁₁₇ , S ₁₁₈ , S ₁₁₉ , S ₁₂₀ , S ₁₂₁ , S ₁₂₂ , S ₁₂₃ , S ₁₂₄ , S ₁₂₅ , S ₁₂₆ , S ₁₂₇ , S ₁₂₈ , S ₁₂₉ , S ₁₃₀ , S ₁₃₁ , S ₁₃₂ , S ₁₃₃ , S ₁₃₄ , S ₁₃₅ , S ₁₃₆ , S ₁₃₇ , S ₁₃₈ , S ₁₃₉ , S ₁₄₀ , S ₁₄₁ , S ₁₄₂ , S ₁₄₃ , S ₁₄₄ , S ₁₄₅ , S ₁₄₆ , S ₁₄₇ , S ₁₄₈ , S ₁₄₉ , S ₁₅₀ , S ₁₅₁ , S ₁₅₂ , S ₁₅₃ , S ₁₅₄ , S ₁₅₅ , S ₁₅₆ , S ₁₅₇ , S ₁₅₈ , S ₁₅₉ , S ₁₆₀ , S ₁₆₁ , S ₁₆₂ , S ₁₆₃ , S ₁₆₄ , S ₁₆₅ , S ₁₆₆ , S ₁₆₇ , S ₁₆₈ , S ₁₆₉ , S ₁₇₀ , S ₁₇₁ , S ₁₇₂ , S ₁₇₃ , S ₁₇₄ , S ₁₇₅ , S ₁₇₆ , S ₁₇₇ , S ₁₇₈ , S ₁₇₉ , S ₁₈₀ , S ₁₈₁ , S ₁₈₂ , S ₁₈₃ , S ₁₈₄ , S ₁₈₅ , S ₁₈₆ , S ₁₈₇ , S ₁₈₈ , S ₁₈₉ , S ₁₉₀ , S ₁₉₁ , S ₁₉₂ , S ₁₉₃ , S ₁₉₄ , S ₁₉₅ , S ₁₉₆ , S ₁₉₇ , S ₁₉₈ , S ₁₉₉ , S ₂₀₀ , S ₂₀₁ , S ₂₀₂ , S ₂₀₃ , S ₂₀₄ , S ₂₀₅ , S ₂₀₆ , S ₂₀₇ , S ₂₀₈ , S ₂₀₉ , S ₂₁₀ , S ₂₁₁ , S ₂₁₂ , S ₂₁₃ , S ₂₁₄ , S ₂₁₅ , S ₂₁₆ , S ₂₁₇ , S ₂₁₈ , S ₂₁₉ , S ₂₂₀ , S ₂₂₁ , S ₂₂₂ , S ₂₂₃ , S ₂₂₄ , S ₂₂₅ , S ₂₂₆ , S ₂₂₇ , S ₂₂₈ , S ₂₂₉ , S ₂₃₀ , S ₂₃₁ , S ₂₃₂ , S ₂₃₃ , S ₂₃₄ , S ₂₃₅ , S ₂₃₆ , S ₂₃₇ , S ₂₃₈ , S ₂₃₉ , S ₂₄₀ , S ₂₄₁ , S ₂₄₂ , S ₂₄₃ , S ₂₄₄ , S ₂₄₅ , S ₂₄₆ , S ₂₄₇ , S ₂₄₈ , S ₂₄₉ , S ₂₅₀ , S ₂₅₁ , S ₂₅₂ , S ₂₅₃ , S ₂₅₄ , S ₂₅₅ , S ₂₅₆ , S ₂₅₇ , S ₂₅₈ , S ₂₅₉ , S ₂₆₀ , S ₂₆₁ , S ₂₆₂ , S ₂₆₃ , S ₂₆₄ , S ₂₆₅ , S ₂₆₆ , S ₂₆₇ , S ₂₆₈ , S ₂₆₉ , S ₂₇₀ , S ₂₇₁ , S ₂₇₂ , S ₂₇₃ , S ₂₇₄ , S ₂₇₅ , S ₂₇₆ , S ₂₇₇ , S ₂₇₈ , S ₂₇₉ , S ₂₈₀ , S ₂₈₁ , S ₂₈₂ , S ₂₈₃ , S ₂₈₄ , S ₂₈₅ , S ₂₈₆ , S ₂₈₇ , S ₂₈₈ , S ₂₈₉ , S ₂₉₀ , S ₂₉₁ , S ₂₉₂ , S ₂₉₃ , S ₂₉₄ , S ₂₉₅ , S ₂₉₆ , S ₂₉₇ , S ₂₉₈ , S ₂₉₉ , S ₃₀₀ , S ₃₀₁ , S ₃₀₂ , S ₃₀₃ , S ₃₀₄ , S ₃₀₅ , S ₃₀₆ , S ₃₀₇ , S ₃₀₈ , S ₃₀₉ , S ₃₁₀ , S ₃₁₁ , S ₃₁₂ , S ₃₁₃ , S ₃₁₄ , S ₃₁₅ , S ₃₁₆ , S ₃₁₇ , S ₃₁₈ , S ₃₁₉ , S ₃₂₀ , S ₃₂₁ , S ₃₂₂ , S ₃₂₃ , S ₃₂₄ , S ₃₂₅ , S ₃₂₆ , S ₃₂₇ , S ₃₂₈ , S ₃₂₉ , S ₃₃₀ , S ₃₃₁ , S ₃₃₂ , S ₃₃₃ , S ₃₃₄ , S ₃₃₅ , S ₃₃₆ , S ₃₃₇ , S ₃₃₈ , S ₃₃₉ , S ₃₄₀ , S ₃₄₁ , S ₃₄₂ , S ₃₄₃ , S ₃₄₄ , S ₃₄₅ , S ₃₄₆ , S ₃₄₇ , S ₃₄₈ , S ₃₄₉ , S ₃₅₀ , S ₃₅₁ , S ₃₅₂ , S ₃₅₃ , S ₃₅₄ , S ₃₅₅ , S ₃₅₆ , S ₃₅₇ , S ₃₅₈ , S ₃₅₉ , S ₃₆₀ , S ₃₆₁ , S ₃₆₂ , S ₃₆₃ , S ₃₆₄ , S ₃₆₅ , S ₃₆₆ , S ₃₆₇ , S ₃₆₈ , S ₃₆₉ , S ₃₇₀ , S ₃₇₁ , S ₃₇₂ , S ₃₇₃ , S ₃₇₄ , S ₃₇₅ , S ₃₇₆ , S ₃₇₇ , S ₃₇₈ , S ₃₇₉ , S ₃₈₀ , S ₃₈₁ , S ₃₈₂ , S ₃₈₃ , S ₃₈₄ , S ₃₈₅ , S ₃₈₆ , S ₃₈₇ , S ₃₈₈ , S 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₅₁₄ , S ₅₁₅ , S ₅₁₆ , S ₅₁₇ , S ₅₁₈ , S ₅₁₉ , S ₅₂₀ , S ₅₂₁ , S ₅₂₂ , S ₅₂₃ , S ₅₂₄ , S ₅₂₅ , S ₅₂₆ , S ₅₂₇ , S ₅₂₈ , S ₅₂₉ , S ₅₃₀ , S ₅₃₁ , S ₅₃₂ , S ₅₃₃ , S ₅₃₄ , S ₅₃₅ , S ₅₃₆ , S ₅₃₇ , S ₅₃₈ , S ₅₃₉ , S ₅₄₀ , S ₅₄₁ , S ₅₄₂ , S ₅₄₃ , S ₅₄₄ , S ₅₄₅ , S ₅₄₆ , S ₅₄₇ , S ₅₄₈ , S ₅₄₉ , S ₅₅₀ , S ₅₅₁ , S ₅₅₂ , S ₅₅₃ , S ₅₅₄ , S ₅₅₅ , S ₅₅₆ , S ₅₅₇ , S ₅₅₈ , S ₅₅₉ , S ₅₆₀ , S ₅₆₁ , S ₅₆₂ , S ₅₆₃ , S ₅₆₄ , S ₅₆₅ , S ₅₆₆ , S ₅₆₇ , S ₅₆₈ , S ₅₆₉ , S ₅₇₀ , S ₅₇₁ , S ₅₇₂ , S ₅₇₃ , S ₅₇₄ , S ₅₇₅ , S ₅₇₆ , S ₅₇₇ , S ₅₇₈ , S ₅₇₉ , S ₅₈₀ , S ₅₈₁ , S ₅₈₂ , S ₅₈₃ , S ₅₈₄ , S ₅₈₅ , S ₅₈₆ , S ₅₈₇ , S ₅₈₈ , S ₅₈₉ , S ₅₉₀ , S ₅₉₁ , S ₅₉₂ , S ₅₉₃ , S ₅₉₄ , S ₅₉₅ , S ₅₉₆ , S ₅₉₇ , S ₅₉₈ , S ₅₉₉ , S ₆₀₀ , S ₆₀₁ , S ₆₀₂ , S ₆₀₃ , S ₆₀₄ , S ₆₀₅ , S ₆₀₆ , S ₆₀₇ , S ₆₀₈ , S ₆₀₉ , S ₆₁₀ , S ₆₁₁ , S ₆₁₂ , S ₆₁₃ , S ₆₁₄ , S ₆₁₅ , S ₆₁₆ , S ₆₁₇ , S ₆₁₈ , S ₆₁₉ , S ₆₂₀ , S ₆₂₁ , S ₆₂₂ , S ₆₂₃ , S ₆₂₄ , S ₆₂₅ , S ₆₂₆ , S ₆₂₇ , S ₆₂₈ , S ₆₂₉ , S ₆₃₀ , S ₆₃₁ , S ₆₃₂ , S ₆₃₃ , S ₆₃₄ , S ₆₃₅ , S ₆₃₆ , S ₆₃₇ , S ₆₃₈ , S 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County taps Sh200m for youth agriculture training institution

Homa Bay County has announced plans to establish a Sh200 million Agricultural Training College (ATC) in Kabondo East which is projected to train at least 500 young agripreneurs annually.

This comes as over 2,800 farmers have already benefited from digital extension programmes (through platforms like Kuza Biashara), 2,000 have accessed soil testing and 250 youth have been trained as extension agents. Through Mshamba initiative, 1,200 farmers have similarly been linked to ready markets.

Governor's take

According to Homa Bay County Governor Gladys Wanga, this initiative is part of an ambitious drive to modernise agriculture and transform farming into a sustainable venture for the youth of Homa Bay.

"We are opening the door

for our youth to see agriculture not just as a means of survival, but as a viable business. The ATC will be a centre of excellence that anchors our vision for a new generation of farmers," she quipped.

Additionally, companies like Amtech have automated 10 farmer producer organisations (FPOs), and Hello Tractor has introduced digital tractor management with GPS-enabled machines deployed across the county.

IN NUMBERS

- **2,800** farmers have benefited from digital extension programmes through Kuza Biashara
- **2,000** have accessed soil testing
- **250** youths have been trained as extension agents

Expressing how the initiative has been beneficial, Jackline Atieno from Pala in Karachuonyo shared that "before this programme, I never saw myself in farming. Now I help farmers form SACCOs and adopt new technologies".

Agricultural officers

With the extension officer-to-farmer ratio currently at 1:6,125 (which is far from the ideal 1:600), the ATC is expected to boost both capacity and confidence in farming, especially among young people seeking opportunities in agribusiness.

As observed by the County Director for Agriculture Mr Eric Adel, the state-of-the-art ACT, which sits on 12.5 acres, will include modern conference facilities, demonstration sites for best farming practices and fully equipped value addition and processing units.

"Once operational, the ATC is set to become a regional hub for agri-tech innovation, farmer training and youth empowerment, directly contributing to the county's long-term vision of an industrialised, food-secure economy."

The college is expected to begin admitting students once infrastructure is completed, drawing from the growing pool of digitally trained agripreneurs.



Dairy farming is expected to benefit immensely from the new digital integrated farming

County empowers 35,000 cotton farmers

Since its inception by the county government in 2024, Homa Bay's Pamba Mwandu (loosely meaning our cotton, our wealth) campaign has breathed new life into cotton farming as it has put over 18,000 acres back into production and earned the farmers a mouth-watering Sh556 million from their harvests.

This, additionally, has set the stage for thousands of new jobs in a revitalised textile industry as it seeks to empower 35,000 farming families. Where fields once lay fallow, cotton plants now stretch toward the sun, signalling the rebirth of an industry that could reshape the region's economy. The initiative began with the distribution of high-yield *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) cotton seeds across all eight sub-counties.

New warehouses

The results are already promising. Around 18,533 acres are now under cotton cultivation. Last season alone, farmers harvested 8,000 tonnes of cotton, valued at Sh556 million.

To support this growth, two new cotton warehouses have been established in Homa Bay West and Lambwe Wards.

These facilities are helping farmers store their harvests and sell at better prices.



Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga holding a seminar

"Before Pamba Mwandu, I struggled with low maize prices," says Jane Amollo, a mother of four from Arujo Ward.

"Now with cotton, I've doubled my income. The new warehouse means I don't have to sell at throwaway prices when middlemen come knocking." Mechanisation has also changed how cotton is grown in the region.

Four cotton cooperatives (Kochia, Pala, Lambwe, and the Homa Bay Cotton Farmers Union) have benefited from six tractors purchased by the county government.

These are part of a larger investment of 10 tractors with full implements, valued at Sh44 million.

As per the county Chief Officer for Agriculture, Irrigation and Cooperatives Development Ms

Mildred Nyambok, the machinery has already made a difference. "By placing the tractors at the cooperative level, we're enabling farmers to prepare their land more quickly and cover more ground.

This is directly contributing to larger acreage under cultivation and better yields," She goes ahead to call upon farmers to fully utilise the farming equipment provided and embrace good agricultural practices.

But the county's vision extends far beyond the farm. With plans underway for a ginning factory in Riwa City (a designated special economic zone) Homa Bay is working toward a complete cotton value chain, from farm to fabric. This could create thousands of jobs in processing, transportation, and eventually, garment manufacturing.

Challenges

"This isn't just about growing cotton," explains Ms Ombok. "It's about building an industry that will employ our youth and keep profits within our community." Still, challenges remain. Farmers continue to face issues such as pests and fluctuating market prices. In response, the county has allocated Sh15.7 million for pesticides and is partnering with agricultural experts to offer ongoing training and support. Governor Gladys Wanga captures the broader ambition: "Pamba Mwandu represents our commitment to turning Homa Bay into a textile powerhouse. Every seed planted today grows tomorrow's prosperity."



: Homa Bay County Governor Gladys Wanga at a cotton farm in Karachuonyo





Sunflower farming is taking shape

Tapping Homa Bay's edible oils potential

For years, oil crops like sunflower, groundnuts, and soybeans have played a minor role in Homa Bay's agriculture. But that's changing fast. Backed by the County Government and energized by new partnerships, these crops are gaining traction as a key avenue for income, nutrition, and industrial growth.

"In 2024, we distributed 40 tons of soybean seeds and followed up with 2.5 tons for seed bulking in 2025," says Homa Bay's Chief

Officer for Agriculture, Irrigation and Co-operatives Development.

"That translated into over 1,384 tons of soybeans valued at nearly Ksh. 97 million. But we're not stopping at farming, we're now pushing for local processing so that more value stays with our farmers."

Sunflower has also taken root. Between July and November 2024, farmers planted 10,000 acres of sunflower using 40 tons of seeds provided by the county.

They harvested an impressive 4 million kilograms worth Ksh. 200 million. The crop is now a top source of raw material for edible oil and livestock feed.

The county's next step? "Invest in local oil extraction," says Mr. Eric Adel County Director of Agriculture. "This is how we can create jobs and make rural farming profitable."

Groundnuts, often overlooked, are now being cultivated on 11,250 acres, with plans to expand to 20,000. The county has introduced quality seeds, aflatoxin management, and linked small-scale processors with farmers.

"Before, we just sold raw nuts," says Millicent Awuor, a farmer in Ndhiwa. "Now we have a local processor in our cooperative where we make peanut butter. My income has doubled." Homa Bay's potential is even bigger. Over 767,000 acres are suitable for oil palm, a long-term game changer if tapped. With support from partners, the county is focusing on value addition and market linkages.

"Homa Bay County seeks to be a leader in edible oils production," says Governor Wanga. "It's about building a local economy where the farmer earns more, food is healthier, and industries grow."

With the right investment in processing and markets, the county's oil crop sector could soon flow with opportunity.

Harvesting data for economic growth

Homa Bay government plans to use data from registration of farmers to venture into edible oil crops production, Governor Gladys Wanga has said.

Wanga asked residents who are registering as farmers in the county to divulge the needed information to enable them to get accurate data.

The county government is shifting its focus to start growing crops such as oil palm, cotton and sun flower among others.

It aims at engaging farmers in producing the crops to empower them economically and fight poverty. Production of groundnuts is also expected to be increased.

Wanga said Homa Bay has the potential of growing those crops in a large scale and be a leading county in the lake region.

The governor said they have realized that seven out of eight sub-counties in Homa Bay can

support the growth of those edible oil crops.

"My administration is keen on the ongoing registration of farmers because the date obtained will be used to identify farmers we'll support to grow the crops," Wanga said.

Speaking when she oversaw the registration at Karogo village in West Kamagak ward, Kasipul constituency on Monday, governor said up to 75 per cent of people in the county depend on farming as their source of income.

Some of the information being captured is bio data of the farmer, the size of the land, types of crops they have been growing and method of cultivation. Farmers are also asked the type of livestock they are keeping.

Kenya Crops and Dairy Market System (KCDMS) has undertaken tests in Homa Bay and identified



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the acidity or alkalinity (Hydrogen Potentials) solution of soil.

The county government is using the results to advise farmers on the best fertilizer to use for crop production.

According to Wanga, many farmers in Homa Bay are limited to growing crops such as maize, beans, sorghum and other common grains.

The subsistence method of crop production does not bring enough profit to farmers.

She asked residents to start focusing on the new crops and increase production of others whose propagation is on the decline.

Wanga is more ingested in edible oil which she said will eliminate poverty in the county.

"We are pushing for farmers to grow oil palm because of the benefits it has. We have already identified regions where it can do best and we will support farmers to propagate it," she added.

In company of her deputy Oyugi Magwanga and Agriculture chief officer Samuel Owigo, Wanga said the government will prioritize the registered famers when distributing subsidised fertilizer and other inputs.

The county government expected to register at least 500,000 people as farmers. Wanga said the information should be accurate to enable her government to make good plans.

"Anyone who does not register will not benefit from farm inputs the government will be giving. A voucher will be issued after registration and it is what will be used to get inputs," she said.

Magwanga who also serves as the county agriculture executive member said more than 570

enumerators have been trained on how the exercise will be conducted.

He said they will be in the field for 21 days while collecting information from farmers.

"Homa Bay has capacity to grow such new crops. The registration data will enable us provide support where necessary," Magwanga said.

Agricultural and field extension officers have been hired to sensitize farmers on the best practices.

This will enable the farmers to acquire knowledge on some of activities that can ensure maximum production.

"The data of farmers are what will inform the number of the officers to be employed in wards. Enumerators should therefore be persuasive in their work to enable them to take data of many farmers," Magwanga said.

IN NUMBERS

767K

acres are suitable for oil palm, a long-term game changer if tapped. With support from partners, the county is focusing on value addition and market linkages.



Palm Oil



Groundnuts farming

Backing livestock farmers to promote food security

The county government of Homa Bay is investing in its livestock sector to help farmers earn more, protect their animals, and access better markets.

Two years ago, the livestock department rolled out ambitious programs to empower livestock farmers, safeguard animal health, and unlock new market opportunities.

Under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga and with support from partners like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the county is proving that strategic investments can turn livestock into a reliable engine of prosperity for rural families.

For years, diseases like Lumpy Skin Disease and Black Quarter have threatened cattle herds, while droughts left animals weak and unproductive. But today, over 100,000 cattle have been vaccinated, drastically reducing outbreaks.

"We're seeing fewer losses, and that means more milk and meat for our families," said Mr. Bernard Omwanda, the county chief officer in charge of livestock development.

During dry spells, the county



Goats grazing

and FAO distributed 5,000 bags of livestock feed to farmers in Ndhiwa, Suba South, and Suba North, ensuring animals stayed healthy even when pastures faded.

"That feed saved my cows," shared Philemon Otieno, a dairy farmer from Ndhiwa. "Now I can sell milk year-round."

Gone are the days when farmers sold their livestock in dusty, chaotic yards. Homa Bay has upgraded sale yards in Oyugis, Nyakwere, Nyangweso, and Ndhiwa, offering safer, more structured trading spaces.

Meanwhile, new slaughterhouses in Magunga and Homa Bay town, built or renovated at a cost of Ksh. 10 million ensure meat meets

higher safety standards.

"Clean facilities mean better prices and trust from buyers," explained Jared Omondi, a cattle trader from Kipasi.

Beyond cattle, the county is diversifying opportunities. A Ksh. 2.4 million investment delivered 200 modern beehives to farmers, boosting honey production and crop pollination. "The hives doubled my income," said Beatrice Adhiambo, a beekeeper in Rangwe.

Livestock is a major source of income and food for many families. Healthy animals mean better milk, meat, and income.

To combat ticks and tsetse flies, vectoclor sprays and pour-on treatments are now widely available, leading to healthier livestock and higher milk yields. "Our cows gain weight faster, and that means more profit," noted farmer James Okoth.

Governor Wanga emphasized the broader goal: "We want to make livestock a reliable source of income. These investments are about helping our farmers thrive," added, the county chief. "We're seeing fewer disease outbreaks, and that's a big win."

FAO taps 9000 farmers to increase production



Governor Gladys Wanga ploughing on a tractor

The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) is supporting at least 9,000 farmers in Homa Bay with agricultural equipments to increase food production.

The organisation also provided equipment to cushion the farmers from post harvest losses.

FAO through Homa Bay government supports the farmers to grow crops and rear livestock in large scale.

The county government through Governor Gladys Wanga on Friday received chisel plough.

The equipment is used for land preparation as it is expected to salvage the farmers from high cost of hiring land preparation services.

The UN agency also gave the county three multi-crop threshers and three digital weighing scales.

The threshers will be used to process grains and cushion the farmers from post harvest losses. They will make threshing soya beans less tedious.

Other equipment included three combined feed crushers, mixers and moisture meter.

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The crushers and mixers are used for value addition besides promoting production of local feed.

FAO country representative and head of programmes Williams Hamisi said they are capacitating Homa Bay farmers to improve food security and economic benefits.

“Our agenda is to make residents to embark on agribusiness. Agribusiness will enable farmers to get economic value for their sweat,” Hamisi said.

Residents are urged to start doing agriculture as businesses on grounds that they will always have money in their pockets.

Speaking during hand over of the agricultural equipment at the county headquarters in Homa Bay town, the FAO official said practicing agribusiness will help in achieving food security since many people will embrace crop production.

A moisture meter equipment was also issued to help the farmers understand moisture content of the

soil before starting to grow crops for better yield and quality.

“We’re absolutely sure that we will realize our objectives should the equipment put in good use,” he added.

Wanga in company of her deputy Oyugi Magwanga expressed optimism saying the equipment will enable them turn around the county agricultural sector.

The equipments were handed to register six farmer groups dealing various crops including soya beans, maize, sweet potatoes, sorghum and livestock. The programme will look into value chain of the crops.

Wanga said the farmers hail from Ndhiwa, Suba North and Suba South constituencies.

“Such supports will enable us to reduce dependency ratio in the county. Farmers will be able to produce adequate food both for subsistence and commercial,” Wanga said.

The governor said agriculture is the key source of livelihood that

everybody in the county should embrace.

She told residents that the secret for wealth creation in the current Kenyan economy is agriculture, adding that the income from crop production is not exposed to taxation compared to that of people in formal employment.

“If you want to be rich in the current Kenyan economic situation, invest heavily in agriculture,” she added.

The governor said her administration will continue to seek partnerships with various agencies to improve livelihood of Homa Bay residents.

Magwanga said proper utilization of the equipment will boost food security in the county.

“The best way to fight famine in our midst is through farming. Utilize the equipment effectively for better agricultural production,” Magwanga said.



Governor Wanga during seed distribution exercise in Suba south

Wanga kicks off edible oils campaigns with major seed distribution

More than 7000 farmers in Homa Bay have received sunflower seeds to support the production of edible oil and enhance their economic activities in agriculture.

Homa Bay government through the support of Agriculture Food Authority gave out 27,250kg of sunflower seeds to the farmers to plant in at least 6500 acres piece.

Governor Gladys Wanga and her deputy Oyugi Magwanga said the seeds will enable Homa Bay to improve in production sunflower.

The variety they distributed is of high-quality and produce good quality of edible oil.

Wanga urged the beneficiaries

to focus on growing the crop for better yields.

“The distribution of the seeds marks a good step towards making our farmers agriculturally empowered. Engaging in agribusiness will not only economically benefit them but also improve food security in Homa Bay,” Wanga said.

Speaking when they launched the crop seed distribution at Rawinji chief’s camp in Oyugis town, Kasipul constituency, the governor said Homa Bay wants to take lead in edible oil production.

Homa Bay government under the department of agriculture is also promoting production of groundnuts, cotton, palm oil

and soya beans which are used in making oil.

Homa Bay is endowed with black cotton soil that is capable of supporting the growth of such crops.

Until early 90s, the county was among the leading cotton crop grower and sunflower.

Wanga asked the farmers who got the seeds to ensure they plant them.

“Our agricultural officers will be moving around to ensure the seeds are planted. Further distribution will be done to ensure all registered farmers get the seeds,” she said.

A kilogram of sunflower is currently sold at sh70.

A local cooperative society buys the produce and uses it to make oil.

“We hope to increase the purchase price of sunflower produce to encourage more people to grow the crop”.

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County mulls BT cotton deals

Homa Bay government partnered with the State to register hundreds of famers and increase cotton production in the county.

The registration has seen more than 10,700 registered and gets cotton seeds to undertake production.

The farmers operating in different cooperative societies they formed started by getting 48.6 metric tons of the cotton seeds during the distribution.

The cotton seeds include BT Cotton and Open Pollinated Variety (OPV) seeds. The seeds were distributed to the farmers through their cooperative societies.

Principle Secretary for Cooperatives and SMEs Patrick Kilemi, Homa Bay Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga and the manager of Rift Valley Products Ltd Sital Panara say their agenda is to increase the crop production.

Homa Bay has already built the County Cotton Aggregation Center situated at Magare village in Homa Bay Town constituency.

Kilemi said the national government is committed to promoting cotton production in Homa Bay.

The PS says his department has already sent a proposal for construction of a ginnery in Homa Bay in the next financial year budget.

Efforts are being made to set up ginning factory at Riwa Special Economic Zone after farmers cited lack of ginnery as one of the obstacles which hinders cotton production in Homa Bay.

"The government expects to improve the crop production after providing the farmers with the certified seeds. We've had sent a proposal to the National Treasury to factor in funds for construction of a ginnery in Homa Bay," Kilemi says.

He urged youths in Homa Bay to join cotton farming and improve their economic income.

Cotton is significant not just for cash income, it also promises to support ginneries and garment factories that will create jobs and enhance local value addition.

"Cotton is one of the crops with at least two value chains. Growing the crop in large scale will enhance job opportunities for the youths," he added.

Magwanga said the county government has put measures in

place to create a niche in cotton production.

The deputy governor says Homa Bay has embraced cotton as a flagship crop to transform household incomes, revive rural economies, and anchor future textile industries.

The initiative is expected to make Homa Bay a leading cotton producer in Kenya as the county boasts of its black cotton soil that supports the production of the crop.

In this year, Homa Bay together with its partners distributed 1.55 tons of BT cotton seeds, which were planted on 1,033 acres, and another 105 tons of KSA (OPV) cotton seeds in May 2025 that covered 17,500 acres.

This builds on earlier support in 2024, where 12.09 tons of BT cotton seeds were planted on 8,060 acres and 30 tons of KSA seeds on 5,000 acres, bringing the cumulative acreage to 13,060.

"Homa Bay government has set aside over 40,000 hactres for growing of cotton and other edible oil crops. We give tractors to farmers for ploughing and ensure they get certified seeds,"

IN NUMBERS

40,000

Hectres Homa Bay county has set aside for growing of cotton and other edible oil crops

Magwanga says.

According to Magwanga, the interventions have already delivered tangible returns, with farmers harvesting 8,000 tons of cotton worth sh556.3 million.

Farmers are currently expecting yields of approximately 7,826,400kg (7,826.4 tons), translating to potential revenue of about sh563.5 million once all the newly distributed seeds are fully planted and mature.

Magwangwa who doubles up as the executive member for Agriculture says Homa Bay is endowed with land for the crop production.

He argues that soil and climatic conditions in five out of eight constituencies in the county can support propagation of cotton effectively.

He urges residents especially the youth to venture into cotton production to improve their standards of living.

"If we want to alleviate poverty and educate our children without financial difficulties, let us venture in cotton production. We don't want a situation where crop production is left for the elderly persons," he said.

Panara said his organization is committed to providing a market for cotton produced in Homa Bay.

He told farmers not to be worried about the lack of market for their produce.

"My organization is ready to purchase cotton produce from farmers in Homa Bay and the payment is done promptly. Let's grow cotton without worry because we're ready to provide you with quality seeds," Panara said.



H.E Governor Gladys Wanga (Right) with US Ambassador, H.E Meg Whitman when they visited cotton farms in Pedo area of Homa Bay Town.



Homa Bay moves to privatize Kigoto maize milling plant to support farmers

The county government of Homa Bay is finalizing plans to privatize the Kigoto Maize Milling Plant in a bid to streamline its operations and provide better market support for local maize farmers.

The County Executive Member for Trade and Industry confirmed the move, noting that the county is seeking a private investor to manage the day-to-day running of the plant, located in Suba South.

“This is about getting the right expertise to run the facility sustainably while ensuring our farmers get value for their harvests,” He said.

The plant, which was officially commissioned on November 4, 2022, by Governor Wanga and Azimio leader Raila Odinga, was designed to process 30 tonnes of maize daily.

Its primary goal was to create a reliable market for maize producers

across the county, particularly in grain-rich areas like Gwassii and Suba, and to cut down on post-harvest losses that have long plagued smallholder farmers.

Despite its promise, the facility has faced operational challenges, including a protracted financial dispute with a consultancy firm that had been contracted during its early stages. As a result, the county decided to seek a long-term solution through privatization.

Speaking on the planned lease, county Chief Officer for Trade, Eng. Benard Nyobange, said the move will ensure the plant fulfills its original vision.

“We want this factory to be more than a symbol. It must actively contribute to the livelihoods of our farmers. Bringing in a service provider with the capacity and experience to manage milling operations is the practical next step,” he explained.

The county’s strategy aligns

with the broader “one county, one product” initiative, which promotes value addition to local produce.

Stakeholders say the plant’s full potential remains untapped, and with the right management, it could emerge as a key pillar in food processing for the region.

Suba South farmer Philemon Akoko expressed optimism. “We have the maize, but we’ve lacked steady markets and fair prices. If this change brings stability and better returns, we’re all for it,” she said.

The county Trade minister assured residents that the privatization process will be transparent and focused on community benefit.

“This isn’t about selling off public assets. It’s about making them work for the people,” she said.

The county expects to finalize the leasing process in the current financial year.

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Farmers tap Sh58m to boost trade

The National Agricultural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) is engaging farmers in Homa Bay to implement farming activities in four selected value chain areas.

The projects which are undertaken in the poultry, dairy, cotton and banana (tissue culture) will ensure registered farmers are supported to increase and improve production in each subsector.

The farmers have already received a total of Sh58 million from the government to enhance their businesses.

The money was issued to farmers by the National Agricultural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) through the department of agriculture in Homa Bay.

NARIGP is a state project that is implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Fisheries and Irrigation.

The projects coordinator Erick Adel said they have identified 71 farmer groups from six constituencies in Homa Bay to implement the project.

The constituencies include Ndhiwa, Kasipul, Rangwe and Homa Bay Town.

"The farmers are expected utilize the funds in expanding their agricultural ventures. Each project

has their value addition to ensure expansion in business," Adel said.

During distribution of cheques to the farmers, Adel said the beneficiaries are already operating under cooperative societies.

The distribution was presided over by Governor Gladys Wanga and her deputy Oyugi Magwanga.

Some of the beneficiaries are Hosrand Dairy, Rangwe Dairy, Kasbondo Aim Dairy, Ndhiwa and Great Wang Chieng Poultry Farmers' Cooperative Society.

The first four groups deal in milk production and processing while the fourth group processes poultry feeds.

Magwanga who is also the executive member for Agriculture said the project will help in ensuring

food security.

He urged youths to join farming to realize economic benefits.

Banana can be used to produce fiber, crisps, jam and fertilizer among others.

With poultry, you can add value to meat, eggs, feathers and bones.

"The project ensures there is quality food production for good health. Farmers are also able to earn and create wealth," he said.

The deputy governor added that the project will spur up creation of industries.

Wanga said they are hopeful the farmers would increase their production should they utilize the funds prudently. She said this will improve food security.



Poultry farming

Farmers registration nets over 500,000 in new deal

Homa Bay government has started registering more than 500,000 farmers they will work with as the county strives to increase its agricultural production.

It has already hired and trained more than 575 enumerators and supervisors who are going to undertake the exercise across the county. Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga said the farmer listing is going to help the county government to develop a data bank for supporting them in crop production during the imminent season.

The support includes distribution of farm inputs which include subsidised fertilizers to the farmers. The Kenya Crops and Dairy Market System (KCDMS) have already done soil testing in the county.

Magwanga said the registration involves listing the number of

farmers, the kind of crops and livestock they keep and in what scale among other details.

The enumerators will also take details of the farmers who rear livestock.

"The exercise will enable the government to distribute subsidised fertilizers to the farmers efficiently. Let our people take the exercise seriously due to the significance of the data," Magwanga said.

Addressing enumerators at Kabunde social hall before the start of the exercise in Homa Bay Town constituency, Magwanga said they aim at promoting modern agricultural practices.

The county is also going to employ agricultural field extension officers to sensitize farmers on modern ways of doing agricultural practices.

Magwanga said the data of

farmers are what will inform the number of the officers to be employed in wards.

"The extension officers will be deployed in wards or villages to help the farmers. The date will enable us know the number of officers to deploy in a given jurisdiction," he added.

He urged farmers to focus on food production to fight food insecurity.

"We are putting an elaborate plan to ensure Homa Bay ceases to be a recipient of food produced in other counties," he said.

Homa Bay Agriculture chief officer Samuel Owigo said the county government is planning to exploit propagation of emerging value chain crops like oil palm, cotton, sun flower and rice.

He said extension officers will identify suitable places where the emerging crops can be grown.

"The county government is committed to supporting farmers in promoting food security. We're taking the exercise seriously for economic value of the people," Owigo said.

Inside sweet deal to make pineapple industry boom

Homa Bay County's bold vision is turning simple fruit farming into powerful engine for financial opportunity, industrial development



Vendor displays pineapples on her stall

Homa Bay County is targeting to become Kenya's pineapple powerhouse. In place, according to the county government, are plans to expand cultivation from the current 3,000 acres producing 36,000 tonnes yearly to an ambitious 30,000 acres projected to generate 600,000 tonnes at maximum output.

The county government, under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga, is leading this major shift by supplying farmers with better seeds, training and plans to set up a dedicated juice processing plant that will generate jobs and stabilise prices.

"We have a vision of shifting from selling raw fruit to exporting

finished products. This will ensure farmers earn more, and our youth gain employment in processing," says County Agriculture Chief Officer Mildred Ombok.

Pineapple farming is already uplifting livelihoods in places like Kochia Ward, where organised farmer groups and government support have turned what was once small-scale cultivation into a booming venture.

George Omollo is one of the many farmers from Kochia Ward and has seen his income grow since planting pineapples. He notes, "Pineapples are no longer just a fruit here. They are a lifeline. With better seeds and training, my harvests are increasing and the market is growing."

The county is pushing for contract farming models to secure stable and fair prices, and protect farmers from exploitative middlemen. The Kochia farmers group, for example, plans to link over 500 farmers to potential bulk buyers.

Experts believe the county's favourable climate and rising demand for juice both locally and abroad give it a unique advantage. "With the right investments, this crop could rival tea and coffee in economic impact," notes County Agriculture Director Mr Eric Adel.

Plans for value addition and market linkages have raised hopes as Homa Bay prepares to showcase its progress at the upcoming devolution conference. For farmers like Omollo, the future feels hopeful: "Every harvest feels like a step toward prosperity," he smiles, standing amid his flourishing pineapple fields.



Ripe pineapples on sale by the roadside (insert) vendors selling pineapples to passengers

AGRICULTURE, IRRIGATION AND
LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

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Building resilient rural livestock-driven development from the ground up

**Pumping Sh10 million
renovating modern
slaughterhouses in
Magunga and Homa
Bay town near fruits**

The livestock sector is being re-energized through a renewed multi-pronged deal designed to boost productivity, improve animal health, and ensure farmers have better access to reliable and rewarding markets.

From disease control to infrastructure development, the

county government mulls rolling out comprehensive interventions that not only safeguard rural livelihoods but also anchor agriculture as a core pillar of local economic transformation.

Experts say that one of the most pressing challenges for livestock farmers in the region has long been the threat of disease outbreaks.

The county has responded with an aggressive vaccination programme, administering 100,000 doses of Lumpy Skin Disease and 20,000 doses of

Black Quarter vaccines.

These efforts have protected over 90,000 cattle, significantly reducing mortality rates and ensuring steady production of milk and meat.

Coupled with sustained pest control using 250 litres of vectoclor spray and 150 litres of pour-on treatments, the fight against ticks and tsetse flies is bearing fruit. Farmers are reporting healthier animals, better weight gain, and increased yields—a positive shift translating into higher incomes and improved food security.

At the height of prolonged dry spells, the county took decisive action to cushion livestock keepers from the effects of drought.

Through a partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 5,000 bags of range cubes were distributed across Ndhiwa, Suba South, and Suba North. This not only helped maintain animal condition during the lean season but also preserved the livelihoods of thousands of families dependent on livestock.

To further diversify income sources, the county invested Ksh. 2.4 million in modern beekeeping by distributing 200 upgraded hives. This initiative is already paying dividends—boosting household incomes through honey production and enhancing pollination for local crops, thereby improving agricultural yields across the board. Farmers now have more than one avenue to generate earnings, making rural households more resilient to economic shocks.

Equally critical to the county's livestock agenda is the upgrading of trade infrastructure. Livestock sale yards in Oyugis, Nyakwere, Nyangweso, and Ndhiwa have

“

**Through a partnership
with the Food and
Agriculture Organization
(FAO), 5,000 bags of range
cubes were distributed
across Ndhiwa, Suba
South, and Suba North.**



Meat hanging in a slaughter house

been modernized at a combined cost of over Ksh. 12 million.

These improvements have created safer, more structured trading spaces that protect farmers from exploitation, enhance transparency in pricing, and stimulate local economies.

The investment in slaughterhouses is another major milestone, with Ksh. 5 million going into the construction of a new facility in Magunga and Ksh.

4.8 million allocated to renovating the Homa Bay slaughterhouse.

These facilities are critical for ensuring meat safety, adding value to livestock, and raising public health standards while generating more county revenue.

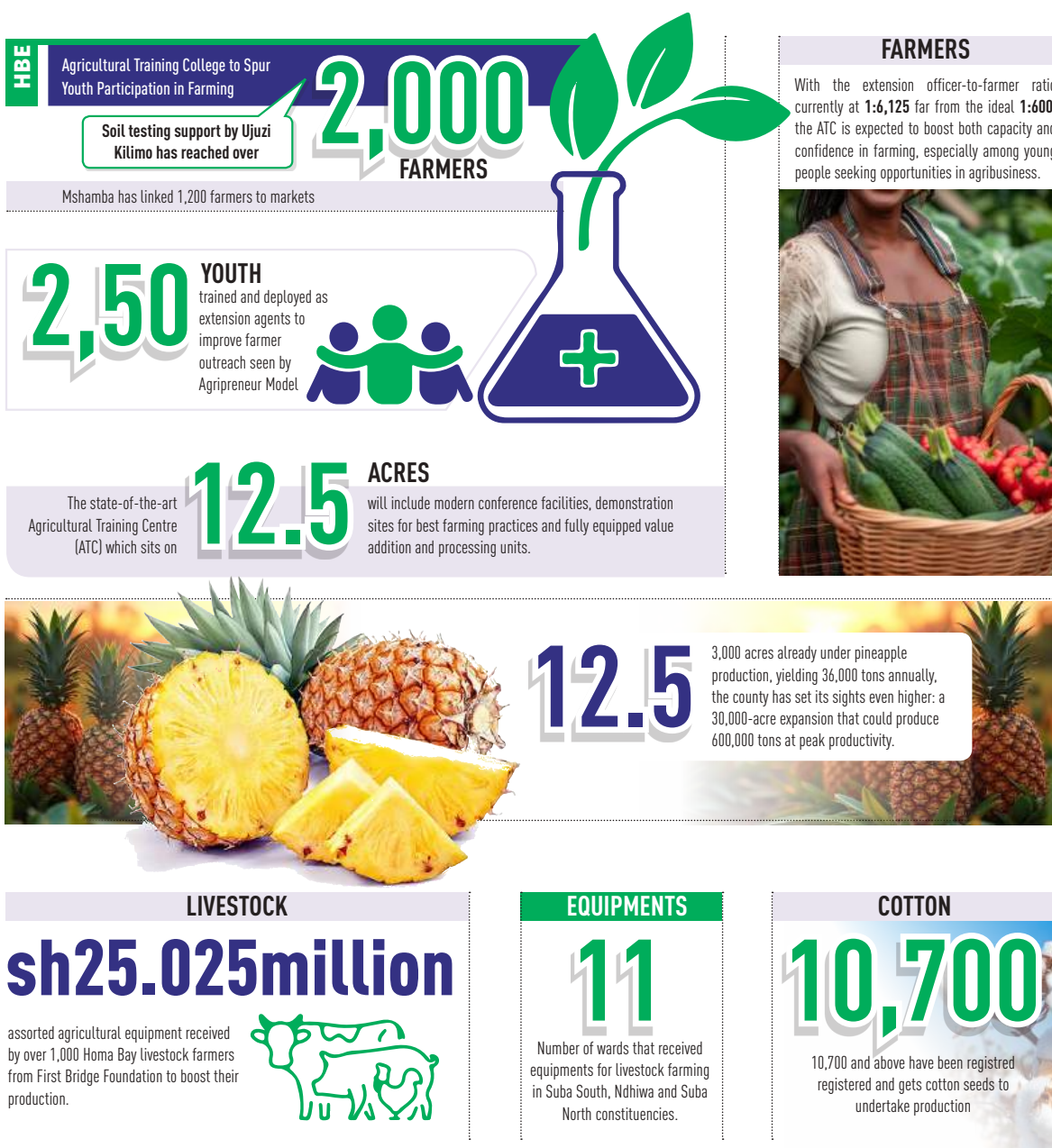
What's unfolding in Homa Bay is a long-term vision for agricultural transformation.

This as the county government positions livestock as a key driver of food security, rural employment,

and inclusive economic growth. By combining smart investments, strategic partnerships, and strong community engagement, the county is setting itself apart as a showcase of what devolved governance can achieve. Experts wager that if this momentum is sustained, the county is well on its way to becoming a model for livestock-led development in Kenya and beyond.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

Agricultural Training College to Spur Youth Participation in Farming





Hon. Solomon Obiero, CEC
Member for Finance and
Economic Planning



Lawrence Gworo, Chief
Officer Economic Planning



Mr. Alphonse Wera, Chief
Officer Finance

Homa Bay doubles earnings to post Ksh1.73b in own revenue

In just three years, Homa Bay County has more than doubled its own-source revenue, reaching an impressive KSh 1.73 billion in the financial year ending June 30, 2025. This leap from KSh 859 million in 2022–23 and KSh 1.2 billion in 2023–24 marks a transformation rooted in fiscal discipline, digitization, and accountability.

The shift began in October 2022, when the county launched a fully cashless revenue collection system. All payments—from market fees to parking and single business permits—were digitized using mobile platforms like PayBill and USSD codes. The new system quickly closed loopholes, reduced corruption, and simplified the payment process for residents.

Governor Gladys Wanga unveiled the revenue performance at the 30th County Revenue Round-table in July 2025, noting a 44 percent increase over the previous year. She credited the gains to technology, efficient revenue officers, and an expanded network of collection points across the county. More importantly, she said, it reflected growing public confidence in county systems.

“By harnessing local resources and maximizing revenue streams, we are building a stronger financial foundation that allows us to reinvest directly into community development,” Governor Wanga said.

Controller of Budget Margaret Nyakang’o confirmed that the health sector remained the largest revenue contributor through Appropriation-in-Aid and the Facility Improvement Fund, and



praised Homa Bay’s progress relative to other counties.

County Finance Executive Solomon Obiero emphasized that the revenue turnaround sends a clear signal to investors and residents alike: Homa Bay is serious about creating a transparent, reliable financial environment. He added that the county exceeded its 2024 target of KSh 1.4 billion by KSh 246 million—achieving 117 percent of its annual goal.

The benefits of this financial growth have been tangible. Increased revenue has helped fund health programs, education bursaries, employment for ECDE teachers, and vital infrastructure across the county.

Behind the numbers was a cultural shift. Real-time revenue tracking, frequent audits, and regular officer rotation have helped tighten internal controls and combat complacency. The county’s Revenue Director, Brian Matete, noted that automation introduced personal accountability. “Our officers now



“All payments—from market fees to parking and single business permits—were digitized using mobile platforms like PayBill and USSD codes.”

know that the system reports what they collect daily. There’s no hiding. It has made everyone sharper and more focused.”

Homa Bay’s growth proves that with the right mix of transparency, innovation, and leadership, counties can become financially self-reliant—delivering better services without overburdening citizens.

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Homa Bay County is reshaping its financial future with a bold commitment to discipline, transparency, and accountability. By tackling legacy pending bills and revamping cashflow management, the county is laying the groundwork for sustainable budgeting and faster, more reliable service delivery.

In March 2023, Governor Gladys Wanga launched a decisive intervention by appointing the Pending Bills, Lands and County Assets Verification Taskforce.

The team was tasked with auditing all pre-2023 claims—including contracts and assets—to separate legitimate obligations from those that failed to meet procurement and legal standards.

Of the more than KSh 1.7 billion in claims reviewed, just over KSh 825 million were verified as valid pending bills, while approximately KSh 1.08 billion were flagged as ineligible.

A structured appeal process was put in place for contractors wishing to challenge rejected claims.

Based on the verified list, the county developed the Homa Bay Pending Bill Settlement Plan 2024, a detailed roadmap for settling outstanding payments. As of now, the county has paid off nearly 70 percent of both historical and current pending bills, a significant milestone in restoring trust among contractors, suppliers, and service providers.

To prevent recurrence of unmanageable arrears, the Department of Finance has implemented annual cashflow forecasts that help align spending with expected revenues. This approach limits the risk of overcommitment and enhances fiscal discipline.

Operational efficiency has also improved markedly. The turnaround time for processing fund requisitions has been slashed to within

Sorting pending bills made a priority to spur area's economic growth



Solomon Obiero CECM Finance and Economic Planning

24 hours, accelerating project implementation and day-to-day administration.

Regular reconciliation with the Kenya Revenue Authority and other statutory bodies has further reinforced compliance, resulting in the clearance of all outstanding tax arrears and statutory obligations.

Finance Executive Solomon Obiero says these reforms have been a game-changer. “The verification taskforce and settlement plan have enabled us to prioritise genuine debts, settle them quickly, and build predictability into our financial planning,” he said, noting the importance of real-time requisition processing and statutory reconciliations in building accountability.

Governor Wanga echoed the sentiment, saying, “By clearing

what we owe and instituting transparent systems, we have not just balanced the books—we’ve restored public confidence in our financial governance.”

Chief Officer for Finance, Alphonse Werah, underscored the importance of making these reforms permanent. “What we’re building is not just a short-term fix. We’re putting systems in place that will outlive individual leadership and ensure financial stability for years to come.”

With the majority of its debts addressed and new systems now embedded in day-to-day operations, Homa Bay is not just managing its finances—it’s setting a new standard in public financial management for counties across the country.

Sealing loopholes in revenue collection digitally for growth

Homa Bay County is undergoing a major transformation in revenue collection, shifting from outdated manual, cash-based methods to a fully digitized, app-driven model. This bold move is streamlining services, closing corruption loopholes, and boosting local revenue.

Until recently, county staff moved from market to market collecting cash—a slow, opaque system vulnerable to errors and revenue loss. Governor Gladys Wanga described that era as one where manual processes “fell short in terms of functionality,” exposing the county to inefficiencies and theft.

In September 2023, the Governor launched the Homa Bay County Collector app, a tool designed to automate the entire revenue process. With features like real-time payment tracking, automatic integration of County Finance Act rates, and vehicle and motorbike number plate scanning, the app has made enforcement and compliance seamless.

Governor Wanga stated unequivocally that the digital shift is meant to seal tax evasion loopholes and projected that it could raise up to KSh 2 billion annually. She warned that any official found collecting cash manually would be removed from duty. “We have automated the system to seal loopholes... all revenue officials have targets,” she affirmed.

To support adoption, local traders and boda boda riders in Mbita, Ndhiwa, and Homa Bay town were trained to remit payments digitally. According to Revenue Director Brian Matete, this sensitization helped overcome resistance and encouraged widespread compliance.

The impact has been striking. Own-source revenue jumped from KSh 230 million in 2021–22 to KSh 859 million in 2022–23—a nearly fourfold increase largely credited to digitization. Applicants now receive digital receipts and licenses instantly, avoiding long queues and paperwork, while county revenue officers report faster service delivery and fewer delays.

Internal audits reveal a sharp decline in unremitted funds, a problem that plagued manual collection for years. Quarterly performance tracking of ward revenue officers and compliance monitoring on the digital platform have added new layers of accountability. Data is now verifiable and traceable, reinforcing public trust.

Though the rollout faced a temporary legal hurdle in 2022 over access and inclusion concerns, those issues have been resolved through public education and targeted outreach to less digitally equipped users.

Today, the near-total automation of Homa Bay’s revenue systems has not only increased revenue but improved service turnaround and slashed corruption risks—marking a turning point in the county’s journey toward digital governance.

We have automated the system to seal loopholes... all revenue officials have targets

Gladys Wanga



Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga assessing the impact of the cashless revenue which has seen an exponential rise in own-source revenue in the county

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Kendu Bay welcomes first-ever commercial banking facility



KCB Homa Bay branch, the first and only bank in the entire county

The banking landscape in Homa Bay County is undergoing a transformation, marked by strategic expansions from major players like Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) and Diamond Trust Bank (DTB).

In a bid to bring financial services closer to the people, the latest milestone is the opening of a new KCB branch at Tom Mboya University, offering direct access to students, staff, and nearby residents. Tailored products such as low-fee accounts, digital platforms, and savings tools are now within reach for the academic community.

The branch was launched during the Blue Economy Conference held at the university, presided over by President William Ruto and former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, and hosted by Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga. This expansion follows a historic move in 2024 when KCB opened the first-ever commercial banking facility in Kendu Bay—a town that had gone nearly six decades without one.

The Kendu Bay branch, officially launched on December 9, 2024, was the result of sustained lobbying by Governor Wanga and local leaders across

With the foreseen potential in mind, KCB Bank Kenya has decided to open a new branch in this region, the KCB Kendu Bay Branch, the first-ever bank branch in this vibrant town

Annastacia Kimtai, KCB

Rachuonyo North and West sub-counties. The bank's presence has been hailed as a game-changer by both residents and business owners who now have access to reliable financial services without traveling over 30 kilometers to the nearest towns.

KCB Managing Director Annastacia Kimtai described the opening as a strategic move rooted in confidence in the region's commercial growth. She emphasized the bank's broader commitment to empowering the community through financial literacy programs, entrepreneurship training, and inclusive partnerships.

"With the foreseen potential in mind, KCB Bank Kenya has decided to open a new branch in this region, the KCB Kendu Bay Branch, the first-ever bank

branch in this vibrant town," she said.

For decades, Kendu Bay was known across Kenya as "a town without a bank," a label that stifled its economic potential. Local women leader Rosemary Ashley Ochuka called the new branch "a long-overdue gift," noting that residents and investors now feel empowered to explore new ventures.

Governor Wanga underscored the impact of the new bank on business security and community safety. Without nearby banking options, traders often resorted to carrying large sums of cash or risky savings methods like table banking. The result was increased vulnerability to theft and exploitation by informal lenders. With the arrival of a formal financial institution, small businesses can now safely save earnings, access credit, and plan for growth.

In addition to KCB and DTB, Homa Bay County also hosts Equity Bank, Cooperative Bank, Absa, NCBA, and Post Bank in major townships. But the expansion into historically underserved areas like Kendu Bay signals a renewed era of financial inclusion and regional empowerment.

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Hon. Martin Opere
CEC Member for Education,
Human Capital Development and
Vocational Training



Stephen Othira, Chief Officer
Vocational Training



Mr. Collins Obango
Chief Officer Education

MANDATE

Early Year of Education Vocational Training Village/Youth Polytechnics Responsible for the development and keeping of the county human capital data base Childcare and rescue facilities

VISION

A globally competitive education, training and innovation for sustainable development

MISSION

To provide, promote and coordinate quality education and training, integration of research and innovation for a sustainable socio-economic development process.

Sheds to smart classrooms: How Homa Bay is redefining education equity for students



Governor Gladys Wanga joins learners at a Homa Bay EYE Center

Education remains the world's most powerful equalizer—a force that levels the playing field, unlocks human potential, and fuels upward mobility. Across continents, education has enabled generations to escape the cycle of poverty and become architects of their futures. In Kenya's Homa Bay County, this universal truth is being embraced with transformative urgency.

Under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga, the county is rewriting its educational narrative through a bold investment in infrastructure, scholarships, and vocational training—ensuring no child is left behind in the quest

for knowledge.

In just two years, the results are nothing short of remarkable.

The number of Early Years Education (EYE) classrooms has skyrocketed from just 20 to 241—a 1,000% increase. These aren't just more buildings; they are modern, child-friendly learning environments that have triggered a 22% surge in enrollment. The message is clear: when you build with dignity, children—and parents—show up.

"We've moved from makeshift sheds to dignified learning spaces. Parents now trust that their children are in safe, conducive environments," said Martin Opere, the County Executive Committee

Member for Education. It's a transformation that goes far beyond the classroom walls.

By adopting a labour-based construction model, the county not only upgraded its learning infrastructure but also stimulated the local economy. More than Kshs. 163 million was injected into the county through this initiative, engaging local artisans, youth, and suppliers in every corner of Homa Bay.

"The transformation is most visible at the ward level, where children previously learned in poor conditions. We've replaced the Kaunda mabati structures with proper classrooms that have good lighting, ventilation and safe play areas," explained Collins

THE HOMA BAY ECHO



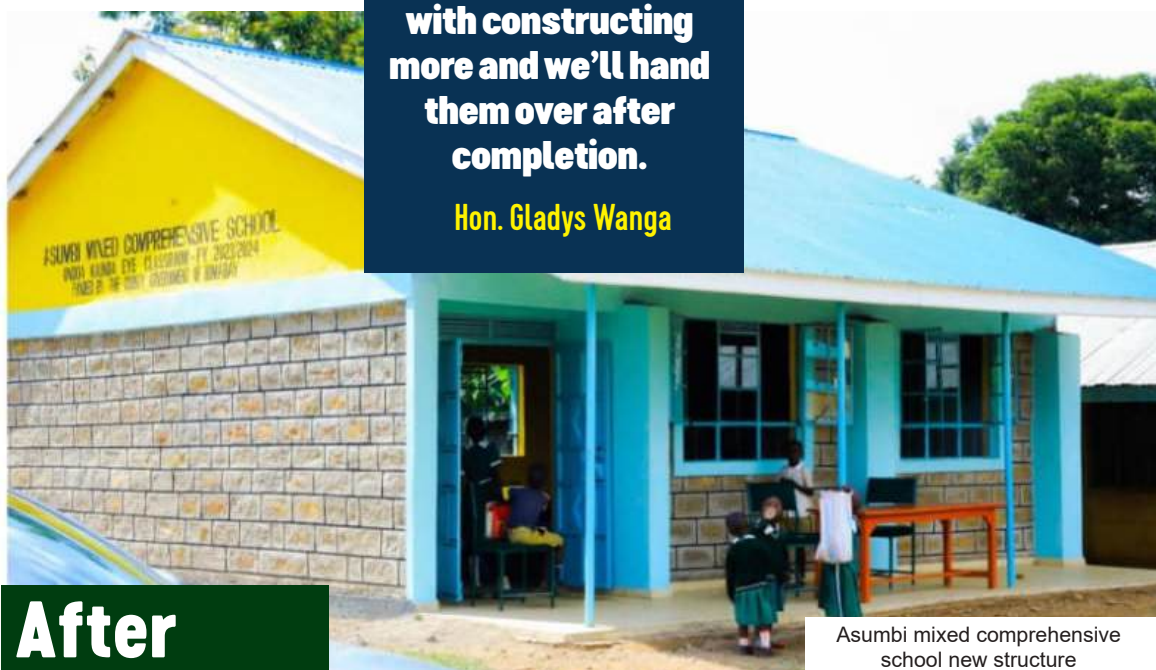
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Asumbi mixed comprehensive school old structure

Before

“
We are going on
with constructing
more and we’ll hand
them over after
completion.
Hon. Gladys Wanga



Asumbi mixed comprehensive school new structure

After

Obango during a site inspection.

It’s a triple-win strategy—delivering quality classrooms, boosting youth employment, and sustaining local businesses. Over 120 local youth per ward have gained construction skills through the program, with materials sourced locally, reinforcing Homa Bay’s commitment to community-driven development.

This investment is not lost on parents. Grace Atieno, whose youngest child now attends the Ndihiwa EYE Center, recalls the contrast vividly. “My first child learned under a dilapidated mabati structure. Now his younger sister enjoys colorful classrooms and play areas. She

wakes up eager for school every morning,” she shared.

Teachers, too, are witnessing a pedagogical shift. “The environment makes all the difference,” said Sarah Ogada, an Early Years Education teacher in Mfangano ward. “Children are more engaged, and we can implement the competency-based curriculum effectively.”

The new EYE facilities feature spacious designs, proper sanitation, and dedicated play zones tailored to early learning needs. These changes are not cosmetic—they reflect a deep-seated belief that education must be rooted in dignity and access.

But the work is far from over. With infrastructure taking

shape, the county’s next frontier is investing in human capital—teacher training, curriculum support, and access to quality learning materials. “We’re building both the physical and human foundation for lifelong learning—one classroom, one child at a time,” emphasized CECM Opere.

Homa Bay’s educational renaissance is proof that with the right leadership, community participation, and strategic investment, education can indeed be the great equalizer. It is a story of hope, grit, and resolve—an unfolding legacy that is lighting the path for other counties and affirming that the future belongs to the empowered child.

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Wanga's Sh800m bursary plan keeping dreams alive

For thousands of students in Homa Bay County, a bursary has meant the difference between dropping out and staying in school, between fading hope and renewed opportunity. Thanks to the County Government's unwavering commitment to education, over Ksh. 800 million has now been disbursed in bursaries over the past three financial years, supporting more than 81,860 learners across the region.

This is not just a statistic—it's 81,860 lives kept on track, families whose burden has been lifted, and communities where education is steadily transforming futures. In the 2022/2023 financial year, the county disbursed Ksh. 109.9 million, benefitting 21,997 students. That number rose to Ksh. 149.8 million in 2023/2024, supporting 29,966 learners. The current financial year, 2024/2025, has continued on a strong trajectory with Ksh. 149.4 million reaching another 29,897 students.

The growing number of beneficiaries reflects both the widening need and the government's growing capacity to respond. Secondary school recipients rose from 17,847 in 2022 to 21,033 in 2024. Support for university students increased dramatically from 1,240 to 4,218, while the number of college



Governor Gladys Wanga joins a group of scholarship beneficiaries for a photo session. Homa Bay has sponsored more than 1,000 students with full scholarship for secondary education

students funded grew from 2,910 to 4,646. These are not just numbers; they are markers of real progress in a county once held back by poverty and inaccessibility.

But beyond access, the bursary program is achieving something deeper: restoring dignity to struggling families, empowering youth with education, and planting seeds for long-term change. Dropout rates are falling. Dreams once deferred are finding wings again. Homa Bay is proving that when a county invests in its people, the returns ripple across generations.

This investment in education is part of a broader vision. From the construction of 243 Early Years Education (EYE)

classrooms to full Fins to Swim scholarships and vocational training through the Fundi Mang'ula program, Homa Bay is building a comprehensive education pipeline—from pre-primary to post-secondary. A 22% rise in enrolment, Ksh. 163 million injected into the local economy through labour-based construction, and over 800 bursary beneficiaries per ward annually signal the scale and impact of this work.

Governor Gladys Wanga has made it clear: education is not just one of many sectors—it is the heartbeat of her administration. "When we invest in our children, we invest in the future of Homa Bay. Education is not just a sector; it is the heartbeat of our transformation and a social safety net to our people," she affirms.

And indeed, the heartbeat is strong. With each classroom built, each bursary awarded, and each skill acquired, the county is not just closing the education gap—it is building a legacy of equity and opportunity. Homa Bay's approach places people at the center of progress, ensuring that no child is left behind simply because of where they were born or how much their parents earn.

This is what real transformation looks like and it is not measured in speeches, but in school fees paid. Not in applause, but in attendance registers and graduation lists.



Hon. Wanga takes a tour to the beauty classes with the help of a student

Brains and skills: Dual scholarships powering the dreams of youths

The County Government of Homa Bay is using a two-pronged attack to break barriers to education through two transformative scholarship programs that are reshaping lives across the region. The Fins-to-Swim academic scholarship and the Fundi Mang'ula vocational training initiative have so far supported more than 1,196 beneficiaries, signaling a growing commitment to inclusive, opportunity-driven learning.

Fins-to-Swim has emerged as a lifeline for bright but financially disadvantaged students. In 2025 alone, 596 full scholarships were awarded, covering tuition, boarding, uniforms, and transport—removing every financial barrier to quality secondary education.

“Without this scholarship, I would have dropped out after primary school,” says Evans Anan, a student from Kanyamwa Kosewe Ward, now studying at Homa Bay High School. “Now I’m focused on becoming an electrical engineer to help develop our county.”

Education CECM Martin Opere underscores the program’s equitable design: “We’ve selected at least two students from every ward to ensure representation and reach. These scholars are our future doctors, engineers, and civic leaders.”

For students whose aspirations lie in hands-on careers, the Fundi Mang'ula program offers an equally powerful alternative. In partnership with the KCB Foundation, the county has invested Kshs. 48 million to

train 600 youth in trades such as plumbing, welding, and tailoring—sectors with high demand in the regional economy.

Mary Atieno, a tailoring graduate from Rangwe, credits the program for her transformation: “The six-month training changed everything. I now run my own shop, employ two apprentices, and support my family independently.”

Chief Officer for Education Collins Obango explains the county’s dual-track strategy: “Fins-to-Swim nurtures academic excellence, while Fundi Mang'ula produces job creators. Together, they build a balanced foundation for the county’s social and economic progress.”

The results are tangible. Harriet Aketch, a Fins-to-Swim scholar studying at Kisumu Girls, dreams of becoming the county’s first female neurosurgeon. Meanwhile, James Omondi’s welding skills—acquired through Fundi Mang'ula—have earned him steady contracts with local construction companies.

At a recent scholarship award event, Governor Gladys Wanga captured the programs’ transformative spirit: “Education is the great equalizer. With these initiatives, we’re ensuring every child in Homa Bay has a real shot at success—regardless of background.”

“

Fins-to-Swim nurtures academic excellence, while Fundi Mang'ula produces job creators. Together, they build a balanced foundation for the county’s social and economic progress.

Collins Obango



Hon. Gladys Wanga joins Fundi Mang'ula's first cohort graduates in celebrations

EDUCATION, HUMAN CAPITAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

THE HOMA BAY ECHO



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Governor Gladys Wanga hands over a dummy cheque to facilitate scholarships

600 in Fundi Mang'ula scholarship to study top technical courses

More than 600 students have been enrolled to take technical courses in Homa Bay courtesy of the county government in partnership with KCB bank.

The students are undertaking various artisan courses as a way of promoting self-employment among youths in the county. Dubbed Fundi Mang'ula (Professional Artisan) Scholarship programme, Governor Gladys Wanga and KCB Head of Programme Joblin Omari say they are spending a total of sh24million each year as fees to support the students.

Wanga says students reported to various technical institutions to pursue technical skills and knowledge in courses of their choice.

The county government also offers them three months industrial attachment at a firm of their choice.

"The programme was initiated to promote self-employment among the youths and fight the poverty vicious cycle. Technical skills are on high demand and that is what we want our youths to have," Wanga said.

Some of the courses students register for include masonry,

plumbing, carpentry, food and beverage, fashion and design among others.

The students are expected to be given tools of work after graduation to enable them to start their own industries.

The department constructed five new Vocational Training Colleges (VTCs) in Kasunga, Gem West, Alum, Ochimbo and Wire to increase access to vocational training, created jobs during construction, long-term skill development for youths, promoted self-employment and economic independence.

Another five VTCs such as Kabuoch, Sila Mbani, Sero, Ndiru, Omoro have also been built to improve learning environments and accelerate skill acquisition to open doors to formal and informal employment.

Students are selected through a competitive process that involved a team from KCB and county government administration.

Such sponsorships inspire beneficiaries to be job creators.

The governor advises beneficiaries to put all their energy in the programme.

"The government is investing in the future of Homa Bay children and beneficiaries have no

choice but to study hard. Let the students work hard so that the money does not go to waste," she says.

Omari said KCB agreed to give out sh12 million to support the programme.

He argues that the programme will ensure the economy of the area is improved as the beneficiaries will be able to create jobs for themselves and for others.

"The programme itself supports the economy. The beneficiaries will be trained on how to start business," says Omari.

Omari added that the scholarship will also encourage investors to put their money in Homa Bay. "Training expands opportunities for youths to acquire market-relevant skills, leading to self-employment and job creation," he adds.

“

The government is investing in the future of Homa Bay children and beneficiaries have no choice but to study hard. Let the students work hard so that the money does not go to waste.

Hon. Gladys Wanga

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County transforming early education

The County government of Homa Bay is rewriting its educational narrative through investments in infrastructure, scholarships, and vocational training, ensuring no child is left behind in the quest for knowledge.

Under Governor Gladys Wanga's leadership, the county has prioritized human capital development, with tangible results already transforming lives.

In just two years, Homa Bay has increased Early Years Education (EYE) classrooms from a mere 20 to 241, a 1,000% surge. The modern facilities have spurred a 22% enrolment rise, proving that quality infrastructure was the missing link.

"We've moved from makeshift sheds to dignified learning spaces. Parents now trust that their children are in safe, conducive environments," said Mr. Martin Opere, the county executive member for Education.

The labour-based construction model injected Kshs. 163 million into the local economy, engaging artisans and suppliers countywide.

"The transformation is most visible at the ward-level where children previously learned in poor conditions. We've replaced the Kaunda mabati structures with proper classrooms that have good lighting, ventilation and safe play areas," Mr. Collins Obango was speaking during an inspection tour.

The local labour-based

approach has created a triple benefit in quality classrooms for children, skills for youth, and income for local business.

"We have more than 120 local youth in construction skills from each ward that have directly benefited from this program, while sourcing raw materials from within the county," He added.

Parents are witnessing the transformation firsthand. Grace Atieno, whose five-year-old attends Ndhwa EYE Center, shared: "My first child learned under a dilapidated mabati makeshift structure. Now his younger sister has colorful classrooms with learning materials. She wakes up eager for school every morning."

The new facilities feature child-friendly designs with adequate space, proper

sanitation, and dedicated play areas. Teachers report improved concentration and participation since the upgrade.

"The environment makes all the difference," said Ms. Sarah Ogada, an Early Years Education teacher from Mfangano ward. "Children are more engaged, and we can implement the competency-based curriculum effectively."

With the infrastructure in place, the county is now focusing on teacher training and learning material provision to complete the early education transformation.

As CECM Opere noted: "We're building both the physical and human foundation for lifelong learning - one classroom, one child at a time."



Governor Gladys Wanga interacting with EYE learners



Governor Wanga during a visit to Moi Girls Sindo High school



Q&A

Opere's take: The man at the helm of the a county's transformative EYE plan

Question: Tell us briefly about the department of Education and plans you have for the future given the great take-off since the new administration came into office.

Answer: The Department of Education, Human Capital Development and Vocational Training in Homa Bay County is mandated to drive access, equity, and quality in education from Early Childhood Development to Vocational Training. Since the new administration took office, we've prioritized infrastructure development, equitable bursary distribution, capacity building, and strengthening our vocational sector through programs like Fundi Mang'ula. Moving forward, our plans include upgrading vocational training centers into modern institutions, expanding access to bursaries, introducing competency-based education in ECDE, and deepening public-private partnerships for sustainable education development.

Q: Your department is a top performer in the county, that is the perception, what is the secret?

A: The secret lies in strategic leadership, teamwork, stakeholder engagement, and a strong focus on results. We have a structured monitoring framework, prioritize transparency, and foster ownership among staff and communities. Collaboration with development partners and continuous capacity building for our educators and officers also sustains high performance.

Q: What are you doing to ensure only the less privileged learners benefit through bursaries and scholarships?

A: We've adopted a ward-based Cluster vetting model where bursary committees verify applicants at grassroots level, using vulnerability criteria such as orphanhood, disability, poverty status, and marginalization.

In your mention of bursaries, Fins to Swim and Fundi Mang'ula programmes, what are the milestones and achievements so far? Indicatively, how much money have you spent?

Through the Fins to Swim program, we've disbursed over KES : KES 106,080,749.86

million to secondary, tertiary, and university students countywide. Fundi Mang'ula, in partnership with KCB Foundation, has supported over 1,200 youth to acquire technical skills, with a direct investment exceeding KES 48 million over two cohorts. Achievements include over 600 graduates sitting for NITA Grade III exams, many now in gainful employment or self-employment.

Q: What are you doing in your position through Ondoa Kaunda initiative



to provide conducive environment for learners who happened to get education in impoverished structures whilst fostering economic inclusion?

A: Under Ondoa Kaunda, we've prioritized replacing dilapidated ECDE structures with modern classrooms. To date, over 240 ECDE classrooms have been constructed countywide, creating safe learning spaces. Further, local contractors and suppliers are engaged in these projects, stimulating economic inclusion. Our plan includes scaling up infrastructure rehabilitation in marginalized wards.

Q: How are you ensuring that learners get access to quality education especially in matters of teacher-learner ratio and inclusivity?

A: The county government continues hiring ECDE teachers on permanent terms. To enhance inclusivity, we're implementing training programs for teachers in Special Needs Education (SNE) and continuously mapping learners with disabilities for targeted interventions.

How has the county supported the supply of educational materials in Early Childhood Centers?

The county consistently supplies teaching and learning materials to all public ECDE centers annually. Materials include textbooks, play equipment, and teaching aids.

How have you supported students with special needs or disabilities?

We've employed teachers with special needs education in ECDE and vocational centers, provided assistive devices such as wheelchairs and braille materials, and facilitated specialized teacher training.

Further, students with disabilities are prioritized in bursary allocations.

Q: What partnerships and funding sources are supporting Vocational Training and capacity building in Homa Bay County?

A: Key partnerships include the KCB Foundation (Fundu Mang'ula program), CAPYEI for capacity building, SHOFCO in fee payment, Van Doorn Foundation in supply of tools and equipment etc. We're also collaborating with the national government and private sector players for industrial attachments and capacity development.

Q: What role do you see parents and community members playing in supporting education and how will you engage them?

A: Parents and communities are critical stakeholders. We involve them through education barazas, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and community mobilizations for enrolment drives. Our strategy includes enhancing their roles in school management and strengthening school-community accountability.

Q: What is your vision for the future of education in our county and what steps do you believe are necessary to achieve that vision?

A: Our vision is to transform Homa Bay into an educational hub where every child and youth acquires quality education and relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship. Steps to achieve this include infrastructure modernization, expansion of vocational training, digitization of education services, increased public-private partnerships, and inclusive policies to ensure no learner is left behind.

Q: How do you collaborate with other departments such as health, sports and organizations to enhance educational outcomes for students?

A: We collaborate with the health department for school feeding programs, sanitation infrastructure, and health outreach in schools. With the sports department, we promote talent development in schools through inter-school competitions. Partnerships with NGOs support menstrual hygiene programs and health education, contributing to school retention and attendance.

Q: What is your parting shot?

A: Education remains the most sustainable tool for poverty eradication and human empowerment. I urge all stakeholders—parents, communities, and partners—to join hands in building a strong foundation for our children. Together, we can transform Homa Bay through education.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

Education

HBE

BURSARY PROGRAMME

Beneficiaries:

81,860

students across secondary schools, universities, and other colleges.

58,797
Secondary

9,289
Universities

13,774
Other Colleges

Total Amount Disbursed: **KES 473,815,000**

Impact: This program has been key in keeping vulnerable learners in school and supporting higher education among disadvantaged families.

FINS TO SWIM SCHOLARSHIP

Beneficiaries:

628

learners (mainly high performers from poor backgrounds)

Total Amount Spent: **KES 106,080,749.86**

Impact: This scholarship is tailored for bright but needy students who secure admission to national and extra-county schools. It has ensured that top-performing students from humble backgrounds don't drop out due to financial constraints.

FUNDI MANG'ULA SCHOLARSHIP

Beneficiaries:

1,200

youth enrolled in vocational and technical training in Homa Bay County

Total Amount Spent: **KES 24,000,000**

Impact: This program is empowering youth with practical skills in trades like plumbing, tailoring, mechanics, and electrical work — directly addressing youth unemployment in the county.

The department's focus has not just been numbers, but impact and inclusivity. By reaching as many students and injecting over

KES 600

million into education support, we are securing Homa Bay's future through empowered youth and skilled labor.



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Hon. Danish Onyango CEC
for Roads, Public Works, and
Transport and Infrastructure

“

We are doing
anything possible
to ensure our
roads are possible
despite the effects
of the rains

Danish Onyango



Mr. Elijah Obiny, Chief Officer
for Roads and Transport

Rough road towards renewal of Homa Bay's infrastructure



President William Ruto launching a road project in Homa Bay

Transport infrastructure is the artery of progress, and in Homa Bay County, a transformation is firmly underway. Under the administration of Governor Gladys Wanga, the Department of Roads, Public Works, Transport, and Infrastructure has become the nerve center of economic and social revitalization, ensuring mobility, connectivity, and accessibility for all.

Central to this shift is the Ward-Based Project model introduced by Governor Wanga in 2022. With an annual allocation of Sh10 million to each of the 40 wards, the

program has already seen the maintenance and construction of over 354 kilometers of roadways, bridging remote villages to markets, schools, hospitals, and the larger economy. In total, more than 800km of roads have been rehabilitated, opened, or maintained across the 2022/23 to 2024/25 fiscal years.

The strategy aligns with national priorities. Leveraging collaborations with the National Government and institutions such as the Kenya Roads Board and World Bank, the County has implemented major projects such as the Adiedo-Karabok road, Gor Mahia Ring Road, and the

Sindo-Magunga-Kiabuya corridor. Additional roads under procurement include the iconic Ojijo Oteko route and several others set to redefine trade and transport in the region.

Governor Wanga's influence has unlocked not only resources but momentum. Her political alignment and lobbying prowess led to a successful meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Roads, Hon. Davis Chirchir, where fast-tracking of roads like the Sori-Mbita Highway and Kadongo-Gendia route were prioritized.

The County Executive Committee Member, Dr.

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MANDATE

The mandate of this sector is to provide and manage engineering works and services within the jurisdiction of the County. These works and services include development and maintenance of infrastructure, maintenance of motor vehicles and heavy equipment, licensing of public motor vehicles and development control.

MISSION

The department exists to provide efficient, safe, affordable and reliable infrastructure for sustainable economic growth and development through construction, modernization, rehabilitation and effective management of all infrastructure facilities.

VISION

The department envisions becoming a world class provider of cost effective, efficient and safe physical infrastructure facilities and services.

Danish Onyango, emphasizes preparedness even during challenges like heavy rains. “We are working around the clock to make our roads passable,” he states. The department’s acquisition of new equipment including excavators and graders supports ongoing work.

Additionally, the department’s community-responsive ethos extends beyond infrastructure. Cooperative Social Responsibility programs aid grieving families by opening roads to inaccessible homes, while strategic access roads to public facilities—including hospitals, churches, and schools—continue to be developed.

Homa Bay’s urban face is also changing. The dualing of Kona Kodoyo-Rang’wena Road is easing congestion within the Central Business District, while new roads named after local legends (like Phoebe Asiyo Road) celebrate the county’s heritage.

As Hon. Victor Obuya, chair of the county assembly’s infrastructure committee puts it, “We have a governor who acts on the aspirations of the people.” With Governor Wanga’s vision, Homa Bay is no longer just a county of potential—it’s a construction site of progress.

“
our responsibility
as a government
is to ensure we
operationalize
the lake transport
to enhance
transport in the
lake by allocating
800m toward the
ferry

President William Ruto



National government has partnered with county to improve several roads





Program and Sub-program	Project/ Activity implemented	FY Implemented	Measurable Output (xNo.)	Ward	Current Status
Road Development and Rehabilitation Services	Opening of new roads	2022/23	Opened 168km of roads	40 Wards	Complete and in use
	Rehabilitating of roads by grading and graveling	2022/23	Rehabilitated 265km of roads	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
Road Maintenance	Maintenance of roads	2022/23	Maintained 284.8km of roads	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
Road Development and Rehabilitation Services	Opening of new roads	2023/24	Constructed 350km of new roads	40 Wards	Completed and in use
	Rehabilitation of rural access roads to facilities	2023/24	Rehabilitated 54km of rural access roads	All the Sub Counties	Completed and in use
Road Maintenance services	Maintenance of rural roads(grading)	2023/2024	Maintained 267 km of rural roads	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
	Development of Non-motorized transport	2023/2024	Developed 1km of Non-motorized transport	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
	Maintenance and construction of piped culverts	2023/2024	Maintained and constructed 3260m piped cross culverts	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
	Construction of bridges	2023/2024	Constructed 1 No. box Culvert.(Aoch Muga Box Culvert)	1 Sub County	In use
Road Development and Rehabilitation Services Road Maintenance services	Opening of new roads	2024/2025	Constructed 218km of new roads	40 Wards	Under Procurement
	Rehabilitation of rural access roads to facilities	2024/2025	Rehabilitated 62km of rural access roads	All the Sub Counties	Under Procurement
	Maintenance of rural roads(grading)	2024/2025	Maintained 32km of rural roads	All the Sub Counties	Under Procurement, Ongoing
	Development of Non-motorized transport	2024/2025	Developed 0 km of Non-motorized transport	All the Sub Counties	Not budgeted
	Maintenance and construction of piped culverts	2024/2025	Maintained and constructed 3,430m piped culverts	All the Sub Counties	Under Procurement
	Construction of bridges	2024/2025	Constructed 8 No. box Culvert	Rachuonyo East, Rachuonyo North and Ndhiwa Sub Counties	Under Procurement



Ongoing construction of Kona Mbaya-Olima Market road

Why infrastructural expansion remains top county priority

The Department is keen towards improving access, mobility, connectivity of the County through wide range of capital investments. The County Government of Homa bay through its yearly budget allocations continues to open new roads and routinely maintains roads within its jurisdiction. The grants from Kenya Roads Board Fuel levy fund is utilized to maintain major roads on routine basis and the World bank funding through Kenya Informal Settlement Support Program improves roads to bitumen standards within Municipalities such as Homa bay Town, Mbita, Ndhiwa Oyugis and Kendu bay.

Her. Excellency Governor Gladys Wanga has put her foot on the department through introduction of the Ward Based

project that ensures each and every financial year there is a substantive allocation for upgrade, maintenance and opening of new roads across the forty wards in the county. The model of the ward based Project as was introduced by Governor Gladys Wanga in the year 2022 when she came in office was to ensure that the roads as per their classification would be maintained to help facilitate both trading and agricultural activities to the residents of Homabay County. This model with an allocation of ten million shillings per ward has seen a total of 354km roads maintained across the 40 wards. The good collaboration between the County Government under the patronage of Her. Excellency Governor Gladys Wanga and her influence at the National Government has

seen Homabay benefit from different roads that will benefit residents of the county.

Ojijo Oteko road covering 22km from Pala junction along Homabay Kendu Bay road all the way to Kadel, Adiedo Karabok, Gor Mahia Ring' Road, Sindo Magunga Kiabuya road.

Governor Gladys Wanga together with the political leadership in Homabay County recently visited the Cabinet Secretary Roads Public Works Infrastructure and transport Hon. Davis Chirchir to negotiate projects include expediting the completion of the Sori-Magunga-Sindo-Mbita Road and constructing the Gor Mahia Ring Road in Ndhiwa. Developing the Adiedo-Namba Karabok road, Ojijo Oteko road, Homa Bay town roads, Kadongo- Gendia, and Oboke- Rangwe - Ndiru roads. These initiatives are vital for improving the movement of people and goods in and out of Homa Bay County.

The department has acquired new machines excavator and a grader to assist in doing the roads.

The County Executive Committee Member Hon. Dr.

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Danish Onyango confirms that they are working around the clock to ensure that they their roads motorable to help facilitate movements and transportation of goods and services to the people across the County. “We are doing anything possible to ensure our roads are passible despite the effects of the rains” Dr. Danish Onyango said.

“The other thing that as a department we also do is the Cooperative Social Responsibility where we help members of the public directly make their roads in cases of bereavement and they need to transport the bodies of their loved ones in places without access roads.” Obiny Dede Chief Officer Roads.

The department also opens access roads linking different facilities like hospitals, beaches, churches, schools etc.

The dualing of Kona Kodoyo Rang’wena road is a key milestone that will ease congestion in the Central Business District a project that is ongoing.

Recently during the pre Madaraka Day Celebrations the Kenya Urban Roads in collaboration with the County Government presided over the construction of different roads within the Homabay Town CBD that has opened access and ease

movement within the CBD. The departmental committee chair at the County Assembly of Homabay Hon. Victor Omondi Obuya MCA Wang’chieng’ ward confirms that the idea of Ward Based Projects the brainchild of Governor Gladys Wanga is the best thing that ever happened to the county of Endless Potential. “We have a governor who thinks and acts according to the desires of her

people” Victor Obuya.

The cabinet approval of naming of roads within Homabay town CBD in honor of the county legends is a recognition of the contribution and participation that they invested to the people of homabay. Example of Sofia, Kaburini, Arunda road named after our departed Hon. Dr. Mama Phoebe Muga Asiyo road.



Construction of Mbuni-K’Otieno-Bar Link Road starting from Shauri Yako Estate, Homa Bay Town



Roads minister, Hon. Davis Chirchir when he visited Homa Bay for a road and infrastructure inspection

“
**We are doing
anything possible
to ensure our
roads are passible
despite the
effects of the
rains**

Danish Onyango



A Renegade Aircraft landing at Kabunde Airstrip

Kabunde Airstrip expands to accommodate larger aircrafts

The runway is being extended, its width increased, and the terminal and other facilities are being rehabilitated. This expansion is expected to boost economic growth in the area as it will attract bigger flights.

Currently, Renegade Air is the only airline that flies to Kabunde Airstrip in Homa Bay, offering flights three times a week from Nairobi's Wilson Airport. However, due to renovations and expansion of the airstrip, flights are currently suspended and are expected to resume in the first week of August 2025.

The CS Roads & Transport Hon. Davis Chirchir during his visit to inspect the ongoing expansion works at the Airstrip assured residents of Homabay County that the expansion will ensure the airstrip is upgraded to accommodate bigger flights that will enhance transport sector and boost the economy of the county of Endless Potential. "The Government of President William Ruto is committed to securing this economy. The expansion of the runway will boost the economic status of this County" Hon. Davis Chirchir.

The collaborative efforts of the National Government together with the County Government of Hombay and the good working environment of the two levels of Government will ensure our people benefit out of these development projects. "We don't have a people for the national Government separate from the people of county governments. All are our people and any development will impact positively on them." Governor Gladys Wanga

Air transport system makes significant contribution

towards strengthening trade, connectivity between people within the County and neighboring Countries and promoting both domestic and international tourism.

The expansion of the runway has bolstered the prospects of accommodating even bigger cargo planes.

This will also come with employment opportunity to which the government has been crippling with. "Our people will secure employment opportunities at the airstrip upon its conclusion." Governor Gladys Wanga said.

The expansion of 100m runway on both ends at Kabunde Airstrip will ensure a modern durable airstrip that meets international standards.



Leaders at the launch of Kabunde Airstrip expansion

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Departmental achievements from fy 2022/23 to fy 2024/25

HBE	Program and Sub-program	Project/ Activity implemented	FY Implemented	Measurable	Ward	Current Status
	Road Development and Rehabilitation Services	Opening of new roads	2022/23	Opened 168km of roads	40 Wards	Complete and in use
		Rehabilitating of roads by grading and graveling	2022/23	Rehabilitated 265km of roads	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use
	Road Maintenance	Maintenance of roads	2022/23	Maintained 284.8km of roads	All the Sub Counties	Complete and in use



AIR TRANSPORT

100m

expansion of runway on both ends at Kabunde Airstrip will ensure a modern durable airstrip that meets international standards.

ROAD TRANSPORT

Recently during the pre Madaraka Day Celebrations the Kenya Urban Roads in collaboration with the County Government presided over the construction of different roads within the Homabay Town CBD that has opened access and ease movement within the CBD.

LAKE TRANSPORT

Lake transport has got a boost as president sets aside 500m for the revitalization of the pier.

AIR TRANSPORT

The runway is being extended, its width increased, and the terminal and other facilities are being rehabilitated. This expansion is expected to boost economic growth in the area as it will attract bigger flights.



Improvement to bitumen standards 17km Homabay Town Urban Roads ahead of Madaraka Day

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Hon. Joash Oloo
CEC Trade, Investments,
Industrialization, Tourism and Marketing



Eng. Benard o. Nyobange
Chief Officer Trade, Investments,
Industrialization, Tourism and Marketing



Mr. Silas Rabah, Chief Officer for
Cooperatives and Youth Affairs

MANDATE

This department is responsible for the implementation of national trade and tourism policies at the county level. They promote investments, provide business development services, and coordinate the development of micro, small, and medium businesses engaged in trade. They also manage credit schemes for small businesses, collect business information, and promote fair trade practices. In addition, they facilitate intra and inter-county trade, manage county physical markets, and promote consumer protection. In the area of tourism, they develop and implement county tourism development plans, coordinate and facilitate the management of county-specific tourism matters, and develop partnerships with private sector players to promote tourism in the county.

VISION

A leading tourism destination, industrialized county and economically viable hub in the country.

MISSION

To create wealth, reduce poverty and generate employment opportunities through industrialization, tourism development and value addition.

Kenya's new frontier for tourism and investment deals unleashed

Homa Bay County is emerging as one of Kenya's most promising tourism frontiers—a destination where natural beauty, cultural heritage, and economic opportunity converge.

Spanning over 3,180 square kilometers and home to more than 1.13 million people, the county offers a powerful mix of untapped landscapes, authentic cultural sites, and investment-ready opportunities that position it as a rising star in Kenya's tourism economy.

Long known for its strong fisheries and agricultural productivity, Homa Bay is now strategically pivoting toward sustainable tourism as a third pillar of its economic engine. From the glistening shores of Lake Victoria and the rare wildlife of Ruma National Park to the sacred shrines and rock art of the Suba and Luo communities, the county is staking its claim as a hub for eco-tourism, cultural exploration, and experiential travel.

Its geographic positioning within the Lake Region Economic Bloc—bordering Migori, Kisii, Nyamira, Kericho, and Kisumu—gives it a unique advantage.

Improved road infrastructure, the development of Kabunde Airstrip, and proximity to Kisumu International Airport are making Homa Bay more accessible to tourists and investors alike. The growth in visitor numbers—over 6,000 at Ruma National Park in 2024 alone—signals a shift in momentum, with increasing demand for accommodation, guided experiences, and immersive travel.

At the heart of this growth is a curated mix of tourism assets. Ruma National Park, Kenya's only sanctuary for the endangered Roan Antelope, offers scenic drives, bird watching, and eco-tourism experiences. The islands of Lake Victoria—Takawiri, Mfangano, Ringiti, and Mbasaa—are perfect for beach tourism and cultural retreats, showcasing Suba traditions and ancient rock art. The county is also home to iconic cultural and historical landmarks including the Tom Mboya Mausoleum, Abasuba Peace Museum, and the sacred shrines of Ojijo Oteko and Gor Mahia. Natural wonders such as Lake Simbi Nyaima, Nyama and Ware Rocks, Bala Hot Springs, and Ondago Swamp offer further richness for the eco-tourist or



Tourists enjoying the emerging beauty of Homa Bay county's tourism potential at Ruma national park

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explorer.

Agri-tourism is also taking root, offering visitors a chance to interact with vibrant farming communities known for their sugarcane, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and other crops. This connection between tourism and agriculture is fostering inclusive development while elevating visitor experiences.

The county government has laid the groundwork for tourism-led investment, with a strong focus on infrastructure,

public-private partnerships, and policy support. Investors are being encouraged to expand eco-lodge and resort facilities, develop water-based excursion services on Lake Victoria, support community-based tourism ventures, and partner in heritage preservation. Homa Bay's leadership is committed to creating an enabling environment where tourism can thrive—balancing conservation, cultural integrity, and commercial viability.

This is no longer a hidden gem—it is a destination in ascendance. With strong political will, growing international interest, and unmatched natural and cultural capital, Homa Bay is poised to become a premier destination for eco, cultural, and sports tourism in Kenya. For those seeking an investment with purpose—or a journey that connects adventure with authenticity—Homa Bay offers a landscape of opportunity waiting to be explored.

MISS TOURISM HOMA BAY IS ANCHORED ON SIX POWERFUL PILLARS THAT REFLECT BOTH COUNTY PRIORITIES AND GLOBAL TRENDS:

- Tourism Attraction Sites & Products – Championing Homa Bay's natural wonders: wildlife, lakes, hills, islands, and cultural landmarks.
- Hospitality – Showcasing growing investment in hotels, lodges, and service excellence.
- Peace and Harmony – Promoting the county's culture of cohesion and stability.
- Investment Opportunities – Positioning Homa Bay as open and ready for tourism and private sector investments.
- Environmental Conservation – Raising awareness on climate action, sustainability, and ecosystem protection.
- Cultural Heritage – Celebrating Luo traditions and using culture as an economic and social asset.

Miss Tourism Homa Bay is rebranding the county under devolution spirit



Governor Gladys Wanga helping Miss Tourism Homa Bay 2023 to fit a symbolic crown during the pageantry event in Homa Bay

In the soft glow of stage lights at the Tourist Hotel in Homa Bay Town, fifteen confident young women stepped onto the runway, each representing not just their sub-county, but a story — of culture, conservation, courage, and county pride. This wasn't just a beauty pageant. It was a celebration of what devolution can achieve: empowered youth, reimagined tourism, and a county claiming its rightful place on Kenya's cultural and investment map.

Miss Tourism Homa Bay 2023 was more than an event — it was a statement. A powerful convergence of tradition, ambition, and purpose, anchored on the broader vision

of Governor Gladys Wanga to transform Homa Bay into a thriving cultural and economic hub. In a county blessed with some of Kenya's most stunning yet under-explored tourism assets, this pageant has become a sophisticated platform for place branding, youth empowerment, and strategic storytelling.

Miss Tourism Homa Bay is not your typical runway affair. It is a strategic platform designed to empower youth, elevate women, and rebrand Homa Bay County as a premier destination for investment, eco-tourism, cultural heritage, and global storytelling.

At its core, the pageant is a

county-driven initiative that blends beauty with brains, charisma with community impact, and fashion with function. Each year, it unearths passionate, intelligent, and socially conscious young women from across the nine sub-counties — transforming them into cultural ambassadors, environmental advocates, and tourism champions.

The competition goes far beyond catwalks and crowns. Contestants undergo mentorship in public relations, tourism marketing, leadership, life skills, and entrepreneurship. They participate in immersive boot camps and field visits to key county attraction sites — equipping them with the knowledge and tools to speak confidently about Homa Bay on national and international stages.

In October 2023, auditions were held in all nine sub-counties, drawing 59 contestants. Each model was judged on intelligence, creativity, posture, confidence, and their understanding of tourism development — with intelligence and confidence carrying the most weight. Two winners from each sub-county advanced to a four-day

boot camp, where only 15 finalists proceeded to the grand finale.

On November 3rd, amid vibrant fashion, traditional music, and electric energy, Sheila Akinyi from Rangwe Sub-county was crowned Miss Tourism Homa Bay 2023. She was closely followed by Whitney Juma (Rachuonyo North) and Laura Ogada (Suba North) as 1st and 2nd runners-up. The top three received Ksh. 150,000, Ksh. 100,000, and Ksh. 50,000 respectively, while the remaining contestants were awarded Ksh. 5,000 each — a testament to the county's commitment to recognizing and investing in young talent.

The models competed in four distinct categories: fashion wear, cultural wear, creative wear, and dinner wear, along with a test of their general knowledge in tourism promotion. What emerged was not just competition, but a collective narrative — that Homa Bay's youth are bold, articulate, and ready to carry the torch of the county's identity to the national and global stage.

In a region where tourism potential remains largely untapped, Miss Tourism Homa Bay offers more than entertainment —

it offers strategic visibility. It repositions the county in national conversations about investment, heritage preservation, and environmental sustainability. It nurtures homegrown ambassadors who can speak to investors, host international delegations, and champion community-driven development.

This initiative also aligns seamlessly with Governor Gladys Wanga's vision of a Homa Bay that is youth-driven, culture-forward, and globally connected. Under her leadership, the county is not just investing in infrastructure and services, but in identity and imagination — the soft power that draws visitors, inspires confidence, and catalyzes prosperity.

As Homa Bay prepares to host the 2025 Devolution Conference, the success of Miss Tourism serves as a shining example of devolution in action. It is proof that when counties take charge of their own stories, they not only build pride — they build progress.

In Homa Bay, the crown is more than a title — it is a symbol of possibility. And through it, a county once hidden in the shadows is now boldly stepping into the spotlight.

Running to save Kenya's rare Antelope the Homa Bay way

When the sun rose over the vast plains of Ruma National Park on May 6, 2023, it wasn't just another morning in Homa Bay County. It was the start of a movement—a movement that would ripple across the country and ignite global interest. Hundreds of runners laced up their shoes not just for glory, but for something greater: to save a species on the brink of extinction.

This was the Roan Antelope Half Marathon—Kenya's first and only race dedicated to wildlife conservation. It wasn't just a race; it was a rallying cry from the wild.

The Roan Antelope is a majestic animal—muscular, tall, with striking facial markings and majestic horns. It once roamed freely across western Kenya, but decades of habitat loss, poaching,



The Roan: The rare antelope is at the centre of Homa Bay's tourism strategy

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and cultural hunting traditions have pushed it to the edge.

Today, Kenya is home to fewer than 25 Roan Antelopes, all of them confined to a single sanctuary in Ruma National Park, deep in the heart of Homa Bay County. In contrast, countries like Zambia and Burkina Faso boast thousands in well-protected reserves.

Faced with this sobering reality, the County Government of Homa Bay, in partnership with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Athletics Kenya, devised an audacious idea—blend sport, conservation, and community into a single, powerful event. The CECM for Trade, Investments, Industrialization, Tourism, Marketing, Cooperatives and Youth Affairs, Dr Joash Aloo said that the first half marathon was held on May 5–6, 2023, being the inaugural event that drew over 720 runners from across Kenya.

The 21-kilometer trail was no ordinary track—it wound through Ruma's undisturbed wilderness, cutting across the only sanctuary in the country where the elusive roan still lives.

From 8:00 a.m, runners surged through the park, their footsteps echoing across the valleys and grasslands as they raced alongside zebras, gazelles—and somewhere in the distance, the very creatures they were racing for. It was a

spectacle of adrenaline and advocacy.

"In 2021, Homa Bay County and KWS launched a 5.6 km Roan Antelope Sanctuary, installing predator-proof fencing and increasing ranger patrols. Since then, the population has more than doubled—from just 12 individuals to nearly 25 by 2023."

But numbers alone don't tell the story. The county has also invested in:

- **Community Education:** Transforming mindsets around hunting by reconnecting people to the cultural and ecological value of the Roan.
- **Youth Engagement:** Encouraging school visits, art competitions, and conservation clubs anchored around the marathon.
- **Eco-Tourism Development:** Boosting local businesses by turning Ruma into a wildlife tourism hub, especially during marathon season.

This is not just a race; it's our way of telling the world that we value our wildlife," said Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga, who declared a county-wide holiday for the event said, "The Roan Antelope is our heritage—and we will fight for it."

The second edition of the Roan Antelope Half Marathon is

already set to take place in August 2025, as a flagship event during the Devolution Conference.

In a world racing toward development, the Roan Antelope reminds us to pause and consider what we're leaving behind. The half marathon in Homa Bay is not just about speed—it's about legacy. It's about proving that progress doesn't have to come at the cost of nature, and that ordinary people—farmers, students, teachers, leaders—can play a role in extraordinary conservation.

AT A GLANCE

- 2,000+ runners, including international participants
- A tourism expo showcasing Homa Bay's blue economy, culture, and biodiversity
- Corporate team races, children's fun runs, and guided wildlife tours
- On-site conservation labs and education tents for schools and delegates



The annual roan antelope half-marathon at the Ruma national park has been a sensational event meant to drive traffic into the park.



signing a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Taloya Technology Ltd of China to deliver a transformative Integrated Development Project in Homa Bay

How International Trade Fair unlocked Sh17.3b in investments for county

Homa Bay County took a bold step to tap the global investment map by hosting the 2nd International Investment Conference, a high-profile event graced by President William Ruto, former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, and hosted by Governor Gladys Wanga.

The three-day forum marked a defining moment for the county, drawing national and international attention to its economic potential and setting the pace for the third phase of devolution.

More than just a networking platform, the conference became a launchpad for tangible investments, culminating in the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) worth an estimated Ksh. 17.3 billion.

The deals cut across a diverse portfolio of sectors, from agribusiness and energy to healthcare, education, housing, and industrial development—firmly positioning Homa Bay as a rising hub for production and value addition.

Governor Wanga described the event as a transformational opportunity that elevated the county's status as a serious investment destination.

She reiterated that the MOUs would directly impact the livelihoods of residents, shifting the county from a consumer-based economy to a producer-driven one. Projects born out of the conference are expected to drive economic growth, create jobs, and unlock new value chains.

"These partnerships are

These partnerships are aimed at not only improving the livelihoods of our people but also elevate Homa Bay to producer county status, fostering economic growth and creating employment opportunities

Gladys Wanga

aimed at not only improving the livelihoods of our people but also elevate Homa Bay to producer county status, fostering economic growth and creating employment opportunities," said Governor Wanga,

Key partnerships include a strategic deal with Afrupal Limited for oil palm production, offering the promise of agro-industrial expansion. In the health sector, a partnership with

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Yazmark International will lead to the construction of a 50-bed capacity Mother and Child Hospital, boosting maternal and child care access. Education also received a boost with the Manda University project, which will establish a center of excellence in health and physical sciences.

Other standout deals include an agreement with Rift Valley Products Limited to establish a cotton ginnery that will revitalize the cotton value chain, and a pact with Australian firm Arch Ento Tech to tackle solid waste management through innovative technology.

The housing sector is set for a facelift through a partnership with Fairdeal Real Estate, while

the renewable energy space will benefit from a project with Reddington. Further commitments include the Sweet Potato Pellets project with Trans Sahara Investment and a livestock value addition initiative with Tunasco, targeting meat processing and dairy development.

“Projects such as the construction of a 50-bed capacity Mother and Child Hospital, the establishment of Manda University as a center for training in health and physical sciences, and the improvement of the housing sector will enhance access to quality healthcare, education, and housing, ultimately

contributing to the overall well-being of the people of Homa Bay,” said the County CEO.

Governor Wanga affirmed that the momentum generated from the conference will not be lost. With the support of the national government, private sector players, and international partners, Homa Bay is poised to convert commitments into action, demonstrating how global exposure can translate into local transformation.

The success of the trade fair has not only positioned Homa Bay as a county to watch, but also underscored the power of strategic partnerships in unlocking devolution’s promise.

Culture, conferences, and commerce fuel regional boom

Homa Bay County has emerged as a focal point for investment, tourism, and cultural exchange following a series of high-profile national and regional events held in the region over the past two years. From hosting Madaraka Day celebrations to the Devolution Conference, the HOBIIC Investment Summit, the Roan Antelope Half-Marathon, and vibrant festivals like Piny Luo and Sigand Nyi Nam, the county has stepped boldly into the national spotlight, revealing its untapped potential and cementing its position as a premier destination for business and hospitality.

The recent Madaraka Day festivities, attended by top national leaders including the President, placed Homa Bay at the heart of Kenya’s economic and political conversation. Beyond highlighting its rich cultural tapestry, the event

spotlighted the county’s strategic location along Lake Victoria and its growing role in the Blue Economy, positioning it as a promising hub for trade and logistics.

Momentum has since carried forward, with preparations underway for the 2025 Devolution Conference, a biannual gathering of governors, policymakers, and global stakeholders. The event promises to catalyze dialogue and investment in priority sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, and the Blue Economy, areas where Homa Bay has a distinct comparative advantage.

The Homa Bay International Investment Conference (HOBIIC) marked a significant turning point. Investors from across Kenya and beyond were drawn to the region’s potential in fisheries, renewable energy, agribusiness, and education. Governor Gladys Wanga emphasized the county’s

readiness for partnerships, stating, “Homa Bay is open for business. With our abundant resources and improving infrastructure, we invite investors to explore ventures that will transform this region.”

Celebrations of World Food Day offered further insight into Homa Bay’s agricultural promise, showcasing progress in fish farming, cotton production, and dairy. Local farmer exhibitions and agribusiness showcases demonstrated how the county could not only feed its population but contribute meaningfully to national food security while creating sustainable jobs.

Sporting events have also elevated the county’s profile. The KYISA Games attracted youth from across the region, nurturing athletic talent and boosting sports tourism. The county’s commitment to youth development was underscored by



A huge crowd that showed up for Madaraka Day celebrations held at Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay county

the rehabilitation of the 7,000-seater Raila Odinga Stadium in partnership with the State Department of Sports and Talent Development, offering a modern venue for local and regional competitions.

Meanwhile, cultural celebrations have become major tourist magnets. Festivals such as the Piny Luo, Sigand Nyi Nam, and the Suba Festival have drawn thousands to the lakeside county, offering immersive experiences in Luo heritage through music, dance, and cuisine. “These festivals are not just about culture—they are economic engines that empower local artisans, hoteliers, and traders,” said Dr. Joash Aloo, the County Executive for Tourism.

Homa Bay is open for business. With our abundant resources and improving infrastructure, we invite investors to explore ventures that will transform this region

Gladys Wanga

The ripple effects are clear. Local hotels and resorts have seen spikes in occupancy, with many investors choosing to extend their stays to explore further business opportunities. “We had full occupancy during

the HOBIIC and Madaraka events,” said Paul Omondi, manager of a popular lakeside resort. “What stood out was that many guests were not just tourists—they were entrepreneurs looking to invest.”

With improved road networks, investor-friendly policies, and a vibrant events calendar, Homa Bay is rewriting its economic narrative. Once a quiet lakeside county, it is now a dynamic hub where culture, commerce, and connectivity converge. As the county government continues to build on this momentum, stakeholders are optimistic that the current trajectory will unlock even greater economic growth and regional influence in the years ahead.

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The Kochia traditional dancers performing at a past event

Kochia dancers keeping the Homa Bay's cultural identity on the map

Dressed in bright coloured dancing attires, ostrich feathers on their headdresses and jingles on their feet, Kagan Kochia traditional dancers are considered one of the groups that has kept the Luo cultural practice of Ramogi dance.

The dance team primarily showcases traditional Luo culture through vibrant performances of the dance, a centuries-old form of entertainment that aims to invoke the spirit of Ramogi, the patriarch of the Luo people.

These performances are known for their energetic and expressive moves, accompanied by traditional Luo music and striking regalia.

This dance is a central part of Kagan Kochia's repertoire, representing a connection to

Luo heritage and history.

Mr John Oyugi, the secretary of the group says some of their dance moves mimic the movements of birds, reflecting the ostrich feathers worn by the dancers.

The team is made up of up to 96 members who are divided into four groups: one made up of youths, the other comprising elders and another that incorporates women who use traditional dancing artifacts such as owalo to for entertainment.

"Depending on where we have been invited, we decide on which group should go," Mr Oyugi explains.

The last memorable performance by the group was during Madaraka Day celebrations at Raila Odinga stadium in Homa Bay Town.

The team is also known to

We engage elders in promoting culture but at the same time fight practices such as widow inheritance that is no longer a practice that has value to the community

Rose Omuga

have entertained world leaders including heads of states from different continents.

Their music and instruments and performances are accompanied by drumming and the Tung' (a Luo horn), orutu (a one-stringed, bowed lute), oporo, asili (flute) among other instruments.

Mr Oyugi says the cultural significance of the group is that it helps to preserve and promote Luo culture through their performances, which are often

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featured at national celebrations and other events.

As a means of ensuring continuity of the dance group and other Luo cultural practices, the county government of Homa Bay is in the process of setting up a cultural centre where people will learn about what the community used to do.

Homa Bay Cultural centre is based in Ndiru in Kagan ward in Rangwe sub county.

The piece of land where the centre sits was donated by one of the co-founders of Kagan Kochia dance group Alfred Migire and his family.

Culture Director at the county government Ross Omuga says major works have been completed with all the buildings already put up.

"Just a few final touches are being done before the centre is open. The project will be completed in December this year," she says.

Homa Bay County already has places where history about Luo traditional practices can be obtained.

They include Tom Mboya Mausoleum in Rusing Island, Nyamgodho Son of Ombare in Suba, Gor Mahia shrine in Ndihiwa and Lake Simbi Nyaima in Karachuonyo.

The cultural centre in Ndiru will however stand out as it will offer multiple opportunities for visitors to learn about the Luo community and their cultural

practices.

Upon completion, it will have a display of traditional artifacts that the community used in the past including traditional artifacts, medicine, weapons, traditional farm implements, basketry and pottery, traditional attire and beads, black smith and musical implements.

Ms Omuga says stories of Homa Bay legends, heroes and heroines will also be told through pictorials

This will help future generations learn about some of the practices of their forefathers and how the world has evolved from the old days to modern society.

"It will be primarily a place for displaying traditional artifacts for the Luo community. It will also provide a platform for storytelling, mainly for the community," Ms Omuga said.

The building is designed in such a way that it has space for music and dance.

Artists will take part in performance arts.

"We will have an opportunity to host cultural festivals and the centre will serve as a hub for cultural preservation. It will promote intercultural exchange for Luos and other communities including Suba," Ms Omuga says.

Establishment of the centre is expected to promote tourism in the region and strengthen cultural pride.

Mr Omuga explains that it will offer a platform for preservation of tangible heritage.

"It will showcase indigenous creativity as well as educate youths and tourists on cultural practices," the culture director says.

Other activities in the county that are meant to promote culture include events such as Piny Luo Festivals.

Homa Bay hosted the event in June 2023.

A similar event was held in Siaya in January this year.

The same event will be held in Migori.

Ms Omuga says it is meant to promote cultural knowledge especially among youths.

"We engage elders in promoting culture but at the same time fight practices such as widow inheritance that is no longer a practice that has value to the community," she says.

Hosting cultural days is significant in Homa Bay as it helps the Luo community to make their traces known regionally and internationally.

Mr Omuga explains that hosting cultural events is important as it helps in preservation of identity and heritage, economic empowerment, tourism development, social cohesion and inclusion as well as branding and county identity.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2024

The Kochia dancers keeping the Homa Bay cultural identity on the map

HBE

96

Number of members who are divided into four groups: one made up of youths, the other comprising elders and another that incorporates women who use traditional dancing artifacts such as owalo to for entertainment



DANCING GROUPS

Kagan Kochia traditional dancers are considered one of the groups that has kept the Luo cultural practice of Ramogi dance.





Why Homa Bay is the next big bet in Kenya's hospitality sector



Visiting Governor Paul Otuoma tours the Tom Mboya Mausoleum in Rusing

Tucked along the tranquil southern shores of Africa's largest freshwater lake, Homa Bay County is quietly stepping into the national spotlight as one of Kenya's most promising tourism and hospitality frontiers. With its unique blend of rich cultural heritage, breathtaking natural beauty, and a reform-driven county government, the region is actively opening its doors to investors seeking opportunity, scale, and authenticity.

Once primarily known for its fisheries and fertile agricultural landscape, Homa Bay is now rebranding itself as a tourism destination powered by eco-adventures, cultural experiences, and lakeside escapes. Stretching over 3,183 square kilometers and home to over 1.13 million residents, the county sits at a critical intersection in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB), bordered by Migori, Kisii, Nyamira, Kisumu, and Kericho—an enviable centrality that enhances its connectivity and appeal.

Tourism in Homa Bay is built on a portfolio of exceptional assets. At its heart is Ruma National Park,

a wildlife sanctuary renowned as the only home of Kenya's endangered Roan Antelope. The park's growing popularity, with over 6,000 visitors in 2024 alone, signals a clear demand for high-quality eco-lodges and conservation-based tourism. Complementing this are the stunning islands of Lake Victoria—Takawiri, Mfangano, Ringiti, and Mbasia—where white sand beaches meet Suba traditions, rock art sites, and limitless opportunities for water-based recreation.

The county is rich in historical and spiritual landmarks—from the Tom Mboya Mausoleum and the Abasuba Peace Museum to sacred shrines and mythical lakes like Simbi Nyaima. These sites are woven into the story of Kenya's western communities and offer immersive, educational experiences for cultural travelers. And beyond nature and heritage, agri-tourism is emerging as a new niche, connecting visitors to local farms cultivating pineapples, sweet potatoes, and sugarcane.

What makes Homa Bay truly ripe for investment is the enabling environment. Infrastructure development has taken center stage, with

Kabunde Airstrip now offering fast access from Nairobi and reducing travel time for domestic and international visitors. Road networks within the county continue to improve, and proximity to Kisumu International Airport offers further air connectivity to East Africa and beyond.

For investors, the opportunity landscape is broad and compelling. The county government is actively encouraging partnerships to establish eco-lodges around Ruma, upscale beach resorts on the islands, lake excursion and water transport services, and culturally immersive hospitality experiences rooted in community tourism. There is also room for innovation in heritage preservation, events tourism, and adventure-based offerings such as marathons, hiking trails, and birdwatching.

Governor Gladys Wanga's administration has prioritized tourism in its long-term economic strategy, working closely with national and international partners to attract capital and capacity. Policy incentives, investor-friendly regulations, and land support mechanisms are among the levers being used to foster sustainable growth in the sector.

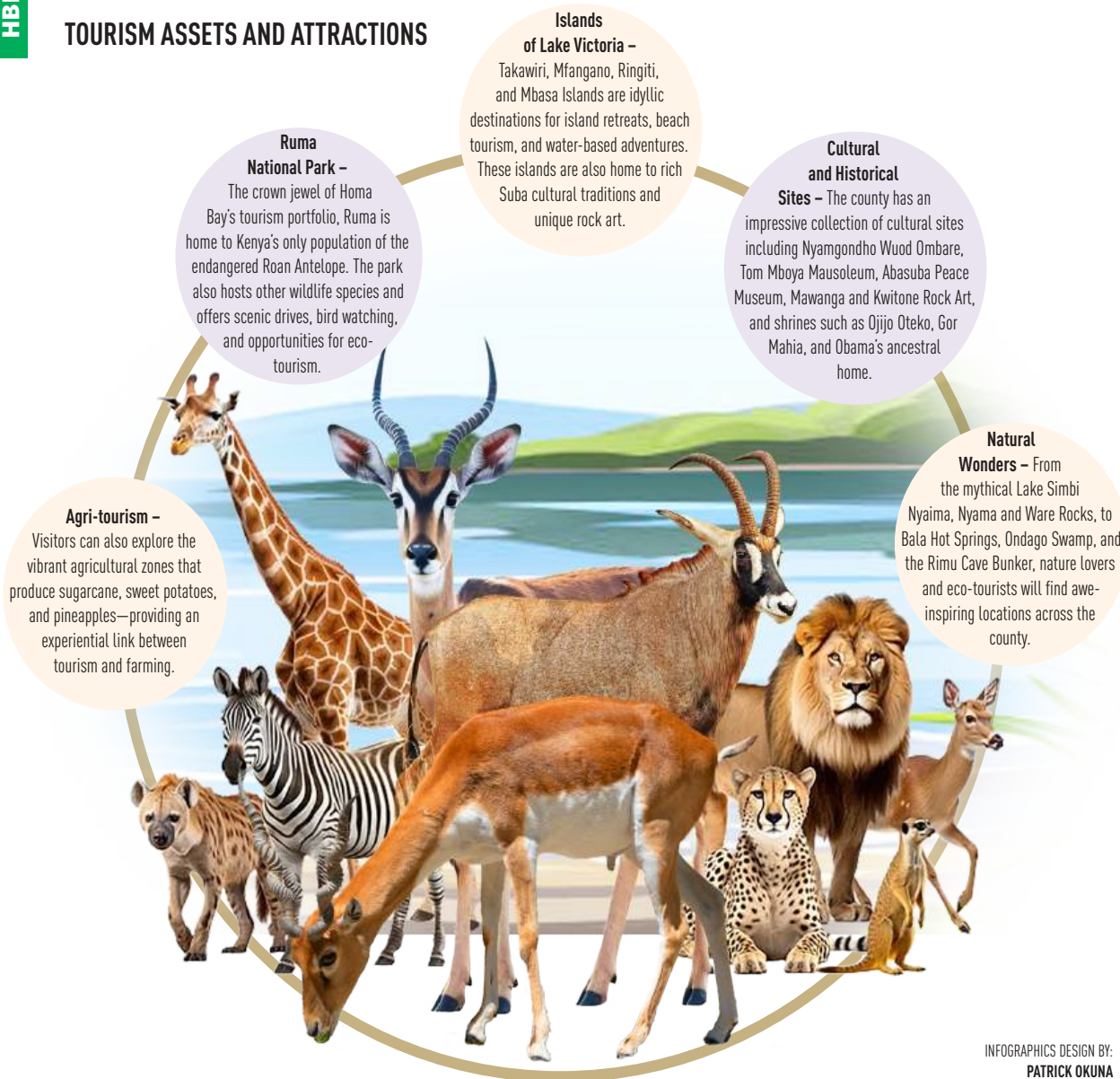
With every passing season, Homa Bay is shedding the image of a hidden gem and emerging as a destination of purpose. For the savvy investor in hospitality and tourism, the county presents not just beautiful scenery but a scalable, future-ready ecosystem for sustainable enterprise. As its tourism landscape expands, Homa Bay is inviting the world not only to visit—but to invest, grow, and thrive.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

Tourism

HBE

TOURISM ASSETS AND ATTRACTIONS



INFOGRAPHICS DESIGN BY:
PATRICK OKUNA

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

6,000 tourists visiting Ruma National Park in 2024, the demand for quality accommodation and eco-friendly hospitality facilities is growing. Homa Bay County is inviting investors to take advantage of this opportunity by:

01

Expanding eco-lodge facilities in and around Ruma National Park.

02

Developing beach resorts and recreational centers on the islands.

03

Supporting community-based tourism and cultural centers.

04

Investing in water transport and excursion services on Lake Victoria.

05

Partnering in heritage preservation and tourism promotion initiatives.

Infrastructure and Accessibility

One of the county's most significant achievements in enhancing tourism is the development of Kabunde Airstrip, which now facilitates fast and convenient travel between Homa Bay and Nairobi. The county is also connected by an extensive and well-maintained road network, making it easier for tourists and investors to reach key destinations. Additionally, its proximity to Kisumu International Airport enhances regional and international accessibility.



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Dr John Agili CECM for Water, Sanitation, Environment, Energy, Forestry and Climate Change



Mrs. Diana Ongere
Chief Officer Environment, Forestry and Climate Change



Mr. Wilson Juma Chief Officer for Water, Sanitation, Environment, Energy, Forestry and Climate Change

MANDATE

Developing water resources in the County Management of forests and water conservation
Development and coordination of the implementation of climate change policy, Act and Regulations
Enforce environmental regulations and standards; Promotion of compliance with the environmental laws, regulations and standards
Implementation of county specific policies on electrical energy, renewable energy, geothermal exploration and development
Increase and improve accessibility of tree seeds/seedlings in the community
Promotion of appropriate renewable energy technology within the county through extension, training/capacity building, public awareness campaigns and demonstration
Raise the tree cover to the 10% level required by the Constitution.
Conserve sensitive forest ecosystems such as Gwasssi Hill Forest, Lambwe, Wire, Kodera, Gembe, aesthetic value and tourism potential programmes. Core Mandate
Promotion of appropriate renewable energy technology within the county through extension, training/capacity building, public awareness campaigns and demonstration
Raise the tree cover to the 10% level required by the Constitution.
Conserve sensitive forest ecosystems such as Gwasssi Hill Forest, Lambwe, Wire, Kodera, Gembe, aesthetic value and tourism potential programmes.

MISSION

To provide access to quality water and Sanitation services and promote sustainable utilization of Natural of Natural Resources.

VISION

A premier County with Sustainable access to Water, Sanitation and Management of Natural Resources.



Governor Gladys Wanga joins President William Ruto in inspecting Atemo water plant in Kojwach, Homa Bay county

Fulfilling the dream of achieving clean portable water for Homa Bay residents

Homa Bay Governor Gladys is committed to reducing distance travelled by residents to fetch water in the county.

Water is an essential commodity which everyone requires to live. But there used to be a serious shortage in the county before.

When Governor Wanga came to power in 2022, she prioritized water shortage as one of the key issues to be addressed. This is in a bid to improve the lives of Homa Bay residents.

Governor Wanga put various strategies in place to alleviate water shortage in Homa Bay.

The strategies include use of the county government funds to implement the water projects. They also encompass lobbying for support from other agencies to implement the projects.

In Sindu Town, Suba South

Constituency, the county government has undertaken a massive water project.

The programme dubbed Rehabilitation of Sindu Water Supply Project was initiated by Lake Victoria South Water Works Development Agency (LVSWWDA), a national government agency. But due to incomplete work and structural defects, the project stalled.

In 2023, the county government intervened to revive it.

Through the department of Water, with funding from the FLOCCA program, the county injected Sh20 million for rehabilitation of the project.

Construction of the project included rehabilitation of intake and treatment works, extension of distribution lines to Sindu Town, Gingo Market and Sindu Level Four Hospital. It also

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Reclaiming urban water access

As the demand for clean water surges across Kenya's growing towns, Homa Bay County is turning the tide through major investments in urban water supply led by the Homa Bay Water and Sanitation Company (HOMAWASCO).



Homawasco MD,
Tom Njonje

Once plagued by intermittent supply and aging infrastructure, urban areas like Homa Bay Town, Oyugis, and Kendu Bay are now seeing longer hours of water access, improved billing systems, and better water quality.

"In just two years, we've gone from 8 to 20 hours of daily water supply," said HOMAWASCO Managing Director Tom Nyonje. "We've invested in efficiency and quality, and the numbers are telling."

In the 2023/2024 financial year, HOMAWASCO produced 2.1 million cubic meters of water, up from 1.2 million the year before.

Water coverage rose from 48% to 63%, while revenue collection topped KES 143 million. The utility was also reclassified as a large utility by WASREB, a testament to its expanded capacity and reach.

But the effort goes beyond the town centers. Across the county's 40 wards, the county government has drilled 19 solar-powered boreholes, many in schools, health centers, and markets, bringing safe water closer to under served communities.

"Water is life, and we're investing in it to transform livelihoods," noted Mr. Martin Omulama, the County Director for Water. "The solar pumps are climate-resilient, affordable, and community-friendly."

Boreholes in Rusinga, Lambwe, Kasungu, and Kakelo are now fully operational, with new projects underway in Gwass North, Kaksingri, and Mfangano.

Meanwhile, rehabilitation works at sites like Kipasi and Wayara have restored service to previously defunct systems.

Further, Strategic partnerships have fueled the progress. Collaborations with DUNEA (Netherlands), USAID, WSTF, and AfDB have provided bulk meters, treatment chemicals, smart billing, and water line extensions, especially in high-demand areas like Shauri Yako and Kabunde in Homa Bay town.

Still, challenges remain, especially with non-revenue water hovering at 42.8%. But with strong policy frameworks and partner support, Homa Bay is well-positioned to sustain gains and close water access gaps.

"This is not just infrastructure, it's dignity and opportunity," Nyonje added. "We're building systems that will outlast us."

included installation of key operational infrastructure.

The project completed in March this year produces 1800 cubic meters per day.

It serves thousands of people living in the area.

The county also undertook rehabilitation of Kanyaluo Water Supply in Karachuonyo Constituency. The project produces 1500 cubic meters per day.

It has various distribution lines which serve Omboga Market, Omboga Health Center and local schools and other institutions in the area.

The project serves thousands of residents by alleviating perennial water shortage in the area.

The county also committed to alleviating water shortage across all the 40 wards in the county. The county government has completed the implementation of 72 water projects across all the wards in the county. The projects were implemented under the ward based projects.

The County also partners with other agencies to implement water projects.

One of such projects is Kaswanga Water Project in Suba North constituency. The project benefits more than 6,000 residents of Rusinga Island.

The project was funded in partnership between Homa Bay County Government and the Government of France at a cost of Sh99.5m. In the partnership, France contributed Sh91 million while the County government contributed Sh8.5 million.

Governor Wanga said she is committed to addressing perennial water shortage in the county significantly.

She said her administration had put significant modalities in place to alleviate water shortage in the county.

"We have put various measures to reduce water shortage in this county. Water is our priority and hence we are working hard to ensure water shortage is no longer a problem in Homa Bay as it used to be before," Governor Wanga said.



Building climate resilience from the ground up

In the face of erratic weather patterns threatening livelihoods, Homa Bay County has launched a driven grassroots climate action program that's already transforming vulnerable communities.

The county's Climate Change Action Plan (2023-2027), supported by the Financing Locally Led Climate Action (FLLoCA) program, takes a radical approach, putting solutions directly in residents' hands.

With 33 new solar-powered boreholes drilled across all sub-counties, women like Mary Atieno of Konyuka Women Association no longer trek kilometers for water.

"The Ondiko Primary School borehole has given our children time for education instead of water fetching," she says.

The projects go beyond access. Each incorporates small-scale irrigation, helping farmers adapt to unpredictable rains. "We're seeing 40% higher yields in areas with irrigation," reports Water CECM Dr. John Agili.

Eighty-two youth and women groups received Ksh150,000 each to establish tree nurseries, resulting in 120 hectares of reforestation. At Gembe Hills, once-barren slopes now sprout young trees tended by local groups.

"This isn't just planting trees, it's creating green jobs," explains Environment Chief Officer Diana Ongere.

The flagship Homa Bay Arboretum project has also transformed 6 acres of urban

space into a thriving green zone.

With 178 metric tonnes of drought-resistant seeds distributed to 1,500 farmers, agricultural resilience is growing.

"The new sorghum varieties withstand dry spells that would ruin traditional crops," shares farmer Joseph Omondi of Kabondo.

The county has also vaccinated 20,000 livestock and installed milk coolers in 20 cooperatives, critical interventions as temperatures rise.

The new Climate Information Center provides real-time weather alerts to fisherfolk and farmers. "Last season, our early storm warning prevented five fishing accidents," notes Disaster Management Officer Victor Were.

Despite progress, Climate Change Director Roy Odongo acknowledges hurdles: "We need stronger enforcement against illegal logging and

more technical capacity at grassroots level."

The county is developing a Climate Finance Policy to attract sustainable investment. As Governor Gladys Wanga states: "Our people are proving that local action can combat global climate challenges, but we must scale up support."

With women and youth leading 82% of projects, Homa Bay's climate response demonstrates how community ownership can drive meaningful environmental change.

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With women and youth leading 82% of projects, Homa Bay's climate response demonstrates how community ownership can drive meaningful environmental change.

Gladys Wanga



The newly refurbished Homa Bay arboretum, creating a fresh array of recreation for the residents



Hon. Dr. Peter Ogolla, CEC member for Lands, Physical Planning, Housing and Urban Development



Mr. Ellyas Orondo, Chief Officer for Lands, Physical Planning



Mr. Charles Obondo, Chief Officer for Housing & Urban Development

Homa Bay goes digital with land records online in nine towns



Digitalization of land records illustrated

Land governance and service delivery took a major step forward in Homa Bay County with the official launch of the Land Information Management System (LIMS), bringing digital land records online across nine towns.

The county received the digital platform on July 31, 2025, from Habitat for Humanity Kenya and Oakar Services Ltd., marking a transformative shift in how land transactions are managed, disputes resolved, and records accessed.

The new system, accessible via web, desktop, and mobile, has so far digitized over 1,250 parcels in nine priority wards at a cost of more than KSh 8 million.

It integrates spatial data such as parcel boundaries and beacons

with ownership, valuation, and rates information—all linked to the county's valuation roll.

This creates a map-centric, real-time dashboard for land administration and revenue tracking.

Governor Gladys Wanga lauded the innovation, saying the platform will reduce land-related conflicts and secure ownership records. She reiterated her administration's commitment to expanding the system countywide, calling LIMS "a critical tool for equitable land management and sustainable development."

The initiative aligns with the Access to Information Act, which mandates public records be digitized within three years of the law's enactment. Millicent Adhiambo, Advocacy Lead at

MANDATE

The mandate of the department is to promote equitable and sustainable use of land, provide affordable housing, and plan and develop liveable and resilient urban spaces. This means having a spatial framework to guide and control development in the county, improve housing conditions, establish and strengthen urban institutions towards sustainable urbanization, implement local/national and international obligations in the field of human settlement management, build climate resilience of the urban poor, spearhead sustainable urban lakefront planning and development and improve service delivery and coordination of department wide functions, programs and activities.

MISSION:

The department exists 'to facilitate improvement of the livelihood of Homa-Bay County residents through efficient administration, equitable access, secure tenure, proper housing and sustainable management of Land resource

VISION

The department envisions "excellence in land management, proper housing and physical planning for sustainable development of Homa-Bay County."

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Habitat for Humanity, noted that the solution would not only streamline land access for investors and the public but also reduce revenue leakages and boost transparency.

County Executive for Lands, Housing, Physical Planning, and Urban Development, Dr. Peter Ogolla, emphasized the platform's role in enabling smarter urban planning and driving investment.

He said the county's goal is a transparent and accountable system that promotes trust and long-term land value stability.

County Lands Registrar Edward Bosire explained that low public awareness, absentee landlords, and fragmented records have long contributed to disputes over succession, boundary encroachment, and fraudulent sales.

The LIMS system, he said, brings transparency and a user-friendly verification process that helps resolve these legacy issues.

Despite this progress, over 18,000 title deeds remain uncollected in the county, leaving landowners vulnerable to disputes

and fraud. The new digital platform, coupled with ongoing outreach campaigns, aims to encourage residents to retrieve their deeds and embrace secure, digital land transactions.

With plans to scale the system across all wards, Homa Bay is setting a precedent for other counties in modernizing land administration. What was once a source of frequent contention is now being reshaped into a pillar of orderly growth, investor confidence, and citizen empowerment.

How Homa Bay is using tech to reclaim public land

In many parts of the country, rogue individuals continue to take advantage of delays in utilizing public land by grabbing it—either through encroachment or outright occupation. Boundaries are quietly extended, community spaces are fenced off, and what was meant for schools, health centers, or roads ends

up in private hands. These illegal takeovers displace vulnerable communities, destroy livelihoods, and derail development.

When public land is contested, the ripple effects are significant. Government projects stall, public investment plans are suspended, and cases often end up stuck in courtrooms for

years. But in Homa Bay County, the tide is turning.

The county government has intensified efforts to curb illegal acquisition of land through a combination of legal enforcement and digital innovation.

Central to this reform is the deployment of the Land Information Management System (LIMS)—a KSh 8 million digital platform designed to modernize how the county manages land records. Developed by Oakar Services Ltd.

with support from Habitat for Humanity Kenya, LIMS is transforming land governance across nine towns including Homa Bay, Oyugis, Mbita, Ndhiwa, and Kendu Bay. The system integrates geographic data with ownership records, lease details, and valuation figures to offer a real-time, tamper-proof view of land holdings.

Housing and Urban Development Chief Officer Charles Obondo notes that since the county began using the



Dr. Peter Ogolla CECM for Lands, Physical Planning, Housing and Urban Development is spearheading use of technology to stem fraud in land records in Homa Bay

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Records are no longer buried in files or prone to manipulation. Everything is digitized and verifiable

Charles Obondo

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platform, cases of land disputes have declined significantly.

“Records are no longer buried in files or prone to manipulation. Everything is digitized and verifiable,” he says.

Governor Gladys Wanga calls LIMS a game-changer that brings transparency, accuracy, and accountability to land administration. Residents can now access land information online through a public portal, saving them time and shielding them from the inefficiencies and corruption that have long plagued manual processes.

“It empowers our people with instant access to their land status, obligations, and rights,” says Wanga. The system has already digitized over 1,250 parcels of leasehold land and continues to expand.

Alongside this, the county is using an updated valuation roll—a legal register of properties and their assessed values—to enhance property tax collection, a critical revenue stream for the county’s development goals. Equally important is the county’s effort to regularize land ownership for long-time occupants of government land.

According to Lands and Housing Executive Committee Member Dr. Peter Ogolla, families in Kendu Bay and Ndhiwa who have lived on public land for decades are now being issued title numbers and will soon receive official allotment letters. Governor Wanga emphasizes that efficient land management is not just about digitization, but about equity and development.

Without clear land records, the county cannot track property taxes, enforce zoning laws, or plan effectively. And for residents, lack of documentation leaves them vulnerable to fraud, eviction, or being locked out of development opportunities.

Homa Bay’s embrace of LIMS represents a firm stand against land grabbing, and a promise to protect public assets for the benefit of all—not just the powerful few. By pairing innovation with political will, the county is not only safeguarding land but also unlocking its full potential as a driver of inclusive growth.

The silent revival of Homa Bay’s informal settlements



Oyugis Town is emerging to be a fast growing urban settlement

Shauri Yako, once the epicenter of crime in Homa Bay Town, has undergone a stunning transformation. Just a few years ago, the name evoked fear—stories of gangs ruling the streets, late-night muggings, and even brutal killings were all too common. Residents lived in dread, and outsiders dared not venture near.

But today, that fear has given way to newfound peace, safety, and a renewed sense of community. Judith Achieng, a resident since 2017, remembers how she was warned about moving into the area.

But over time, she has witnessed a total shift. Roads that were once muddy and impassable are now paved to bitumen standard, complete with pedestrian walkways.

Drainage systems have been overhauled, eliminating stagnant pools that once posed health risks. And most notably, streetlights now bathe the area in light after dark, drastically reducing crime and enabling local businesses to thrive at night.

The dramatic turnaround is largely credited to the Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP), a national initiative under the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development aimed at

improving living conditions in informal settlements. In Homa Bay County, the project has reached Shauri Yako, Makongeni, Sophia, A Thousand Street in Oyugis, Rusinga Old Town, and Nyandiwa in Suba South.

County Housing and Urban Development Chief Officer Charles Obondo says the focus on upgrading roads, installing solar high-mast lights, and improving sanitation has brought back dignity and security to previously neglected areas.

As KISIP enters its second phase, with market rehabilitations underway in Soko Mjinga and Nyandiwa, the promise of inclusive urban development continues to shine—literally and figuratively—across Homa Bay’s informal settlements.

“

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County regenerates dumping site into recreational facility



A section of a dumpsite

Homa Bay County Government has turned a garbage dumping site into an economically viable recreational facility. Governor Glays Wanga's administration has established the facility dubbed the Governor's Park.

The park is situated opposite the Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) in Homa Bay Town's central business district. Prior to her administration, the area was made of a bush used for dumping garbage.

In many cases, it was an open field for grazing cattle and goats. But through the county directorate of environment, the county government partnered with the KCB to establish the park.

The park has chairs, a shade, podium and other facilities which make it suitable for recreational activities and group meetings. It is used by various groups of people for recreation. Others use it for holding meetings.

The Director of Environment Stacy Otieno said the park had changed the face of Homa Bay town by enhancing its esthetic appearance.

"The Governor's Park has made Homa Bay Town look livelier than it used to be," Otieno said. More importantly, the park is now a source of revenue to the county government.

The revenue is generated from people who hold wedding ceremonies, group meetings or record music. Many people like the park because of its ambience. "People who want to undertake their activities in the park pay some money to the county government.

This makes the park a source of revenue," Otieno said. The park provides a cool environment due to trees which are strategically planted inside it.

Its physical outlook makes it a tourist attraction site. The tourists who are mostly domestic visit the park to witness how

what used to be a dumping site was transformed to a magnificent recreational facility.

Josephine Opere, a resident, said the park had gained popularity among both residents and non-residents of Homa Bay County.

"Many people who come from outside Homa Bay County to see the park and enjoy services here. We are glad that a dumping site has been turned to an economically useful facility today," Opere said.

The park is also a source of employment. "Suppose it was still a dumpsite, I would not have had my job. This park earns families livelihoods," said Paul Abuor, the park cleaner.

The Chief Officer for Environment Diana Ongere said the park is suitable for both domestic and foreign tourists. "There is a lot that people can enjoy in the park because of the conducive environment. Let people visit it," Ongere said.

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Hon. Sarah Malit, CECM
Blue Economy, Fisheries,
Mining and Digital Economy

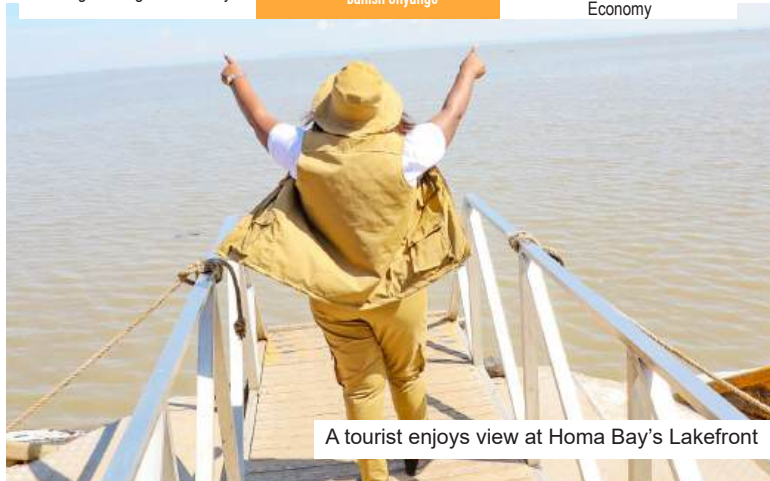
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**By rehabilitating our
lake infrastructure,
we're opening new
doors for commerce
and connectivity..**

Danish Onyango



Mr. Kennedy Ojalla, Chief
Officer, Blue Economy,
Fisheries, Mining and Digital
Economy



A tourist enjoys view at Homa Bay's Lakefront

Homa Bay's lakefront transformation anchors blue economy vision

The Lake Front Development Project, a landmark initiative at the center of Homa Bay's development strategy, is reshaping the region's and lakeside economy.

The flagship project has brought to life a modern fish market, a state-of-the-art pier, and a community amphitheater, all designed to promote trade, cultural expression, and sustainable lake-based enterprise.

"This project is a game-changer for Homa Bay," said Governor Gladys Wanga. "It's not just about infrastructure; it's about creating opportunity for our people and positioning the county as a leader in the blue economy."

The new Koginga fish market is set to become a central hub for fish processing, sale, and storage. Traders will work in a clean, organized environment that supports hygiene and business growth, while buyers from across the region are drawn to its improved standards and accessibility.

The Homa Bay town pier serves as the docking point for boats offloading fresh catch, while the main pier—spanning 153 meters and nearing 95% completion, can handle vessels of up to 4,000 tonnes.

The pier features a 23x50-meter

head, bollards, a gatehouse, and secure boundary fencing. Landscaping and water-quality interventions are currently ongoing, setting the stage for phase two, which will introduce a ferry waiting bay, Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) offices, leisure zones, and a ferry terminal to enhance passenger flow.

Adjacent to these developments, a striking lakefront promenade has been constructed, providing public space and boosting the area's visual appeal.

County Executive Committee Member for Transport and Infrastructure, Mr. Danish Onyango, stated, "By rehabilitating our lake infrastructure, we're opening new doors for commerce and connectivity. The Lakefront Project reflects how local and national collaboration can deliver real results."

In collaboration with the KPA, Kenya Shipyards Limited, the State Department for Blue Economy, and other national partners, the County is rehabilitating additional feeder ports at Mbita, Kendu Bay, Asembo Bay, and Sena.

These efforts are aimed at restoring docking capacity and enhancing the safety of ferry and cargo services across the Lake

MANDATE

The department is responsible for the development and implementation of policies related to the blue economy and fisheries, including provision of extension services, enforcement of regulations and standards, development of infrastructure, and training programs.

MISSION:

To Improve the Living Condition of the People of Homa Bay County through Sustainable Exploitation of Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mineral and ICT resources to Attract Investment and Create Employment Opportunities within the County.

VISION

To Make Homa Bay County a Vibrant and Modernized Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mining and Digital Economy Hub

Victoria region.

Beach Management Unit (BMU) chair for Homa Bay County, Edward Oremo, also praised the changes: "This is the best support we've seen in years. The facilities are set to attract more buyers, and our fisherfolk finally feel recognized."

Peter Okumu, a fisherman from Koginga Beach, noted the expected impact on daily operations. "Docking will now be faster and safer, once the project becomes fully operational. Fishermen will no longer struggle with offloading fish at odd places. The new pier will save us time and reducing post-harvest losses."

The establishment of the Homa Bay County Lakefront Development Corporation is further ensuring long-term management and sustainability



of the investment. Homa Bay's lakefront transformation Anchors Blue Economy Vision

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IFAD deal spurs aquaculture activities by supporting production

Homa Bay has seen a renewed surge in aquaculture activity following the distribution of 412,000 tilapia fingerlings and 84,000 kilograms of fish feed to 412 smallholder farmers under the Aquaculture Business Development Programme (ABDP), a government-IFAD joint initiative.

Governor Gladys Wanga praised the intervention as timely and critical for rural livelihoods. "Fish farming is no longer a side hustle; it is becoming a serious agribusiness in Homa Bay. This support directly strengthens our county's food systems and local economies," she said during a recent tour of fish ponds in Kasipul. The programme, implemented under the Department of Blue Economy, aims to boost aquaculture production beyond Lake Victoria's shores. It also provides training on pond management, feeding schedules, and disease control.

Sarah Malit, the County Executive Committee Member for Blue Economy, commenting on the intervention stated that the focus is to ensure farmers don't just receive fingerlings and feed, but that they also gain the knowledge and follow-up support to grow and harvest quality fish. "We are building a generation of commercial fish farmers," she added.

Among the beneficiaries is Wilkister Anyango from Suba North, who said the fingerlings have changed how she sees farming.

"Before, I relied on lake fishing, but now I see how pond farming can be more reliable and easier to control," she said. "With the feed we've received, I expect to harvest in three months."

Joseph Odhiambo, another beneficiary from Rangwe, echoed her sentiments. "I used to have a pond but lacked proper feed. Now, with this support, the fish are growing faster. I'm already seeing a difference." The ABDP support



Hon. Sarah Malit, CECM Blue Economy

is part of a broader effort to scale up aquaculture across the county. In addition to that, extension officers have been mobilized to offer regular site visits and help farmers with technical issues, especially around feeding regimes and water quality.

According to the Department of Blue Economy, county fish output has increased from 23 metric tonnes to 77 metric tonnes over the past year, a clear evidence that the programme is gaining traction.

As Governor Wanga put it, "When you empower one fish farmer, you feed a household and grow a business. That's the heart of the blue economy we are building in Homa Bay."

Ksh500 million Homa Bay pier to boost lake transport

President William Ruto has announced a Sh500 million investment for the construction of the Homa Bay Pier, a move aimed at revitalizing lake transport and boosting trade in the region.

Speaking during the launch on May 30, the President likened the project to Mombasa's Likoni ferry, promising enhanced mobility for residents and traders.

"We must bring Mombasa here in Homa Bay," declared President Ruto, emphasizing the pier's role in easing the movement of people and perishable goods, particularly fish. The project is expected to significantly reduce travel distances compared to road transport.

Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga, who accompanied the President, reaffirmed her administration's commitment to development through collaboration.

Meanwhile, Mr. Danish Onyango, County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Transport, noted that

residents can currently rely on waterbuses and speedboats as they await the ferry's completion.

"Our people can use alternative lake transport such as water buses and speedboats as we wait for the ferry," said Mr. Onyango.

The new pier is also expected to improve lake security, addressing long-standing challenges faced by fisherfolk. Water transport remains the most cost-effective means of

moving bulk goods, reducing import and export expenses.

Currently, wooden canoes dominate Lake Victoria's transport, supplemented by limited ferry and waterbus services. However, unpredictable weather patterns—driven by climate change—pose risks, often capsizing canoes and endangering lives. Ferries and waterbuses offer safer, more reliable alternatives.

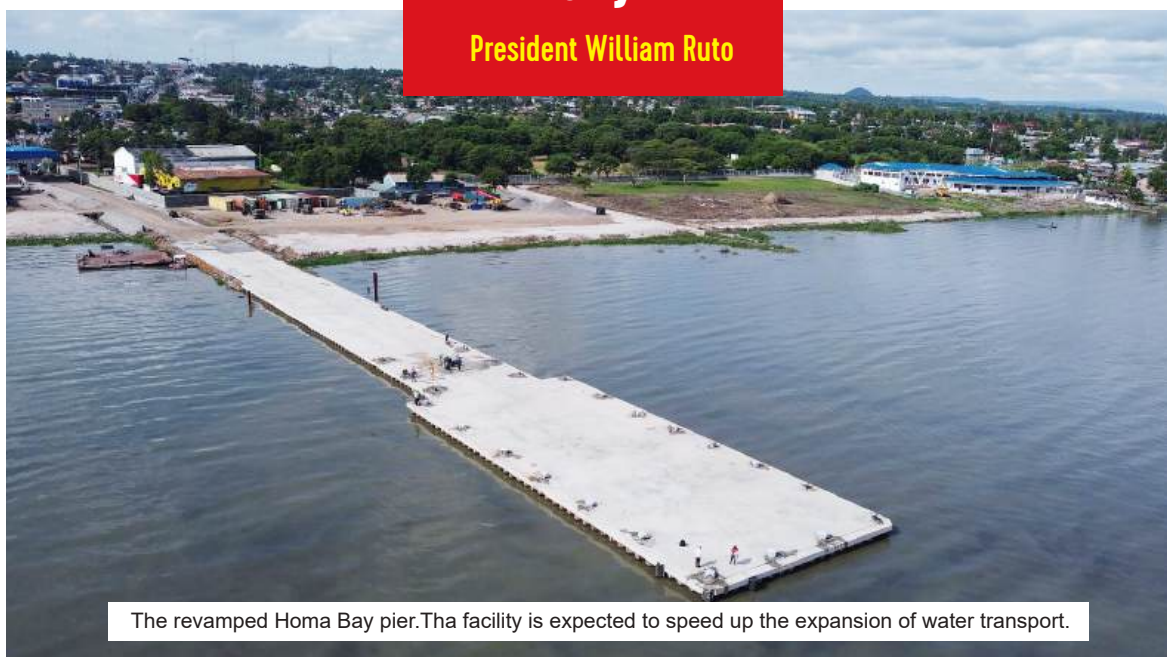
The revitalization of piers in Kendu Bay, Homa Bay, and Sori marks a key step in modernizing lake transport. President Ruto had earlier pledged Sh800 million toward ferry operations, signaling broader government support for the sector.

"Our responsibility as a government is to operationalize lake transport to enhance mobility," he stated during a recent visit.

The project is set to transform regional trade, fishing, and travel, positioning Lake Victoria as a vital economic corridor.

“our responsibility as a government is to ensure we operationalize the lake transport to enhance transport in the lake by allocating 800m toward the ferry

President William Ruto



The revamped Homa Bay pier. The facility is expected to speed up the expansion of water transport.

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Homa Bay



The Homa Bay County Assembly debating hall

Chaos to consent as new sand policy puts communities first

The county government of Homa Bay earlier this year took a major step toward balancing development and environmental conservation with its new Sand Harvesting, Conservation and Mining Policy 2025.

In February 2025, the department passed the policy, aiming to halt the unchecked sand-harvesting that has long scarred parts of Rachuonyo North and Achich Beach, destroying roads, undermining homes, and derauling fishing livelihoods.

As reported by fishermen and residents, the illegal extraction of sand has created steep beach cliffs, damaged utility poles and water pipes, and increased flooding risks during rains.

At a press briefing, County Director of Mining Francis Odalo highlighted the policy's core elements: "We are concerned about environmental conservation, that we came up with a policy to address the sand-harvesting menace."

He explained that the policy mandates licensing of dealers and harvesters' associations; public-designation of harvesting sites and times; and strict transport routes to reduce impact on roads and water bodies.

To oversee implementation, the policy establishes a county-level governance committee which includes executive and environment officials, elected representatives, and at least one representative of riparian

**“
We are
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menace**

Francis Odalo

landowners, along with elders and youth groups.

Members of the County Assembly will vet and approve sand-harvesting associations to ensure participation and transparency.

Also commenting on the policy, Environmental and Forestry director, Stacy Atieno, added that the policy will link to rehabilitation efforts: "We are targeting fruit trees including, reforestation and restoration of wetlands around the lake to help mitigate the effects of sand harvesting."

She revealed that her team has already begun tree-planting efforts to stabilize eroded areas.

Residents most affected have welcomed the policy. Wang'chieng

ward community leader, Bentar Odoyo, said: "We've had several problems with sand harvesting, it has destroyed our roads with deep gullies endangering lives. Three children have died from these pits, some fill with rainwater and become death traps."

Another resident, Willis Omulo, underscored the urgency, stating that sand harvesting is a serious problem affecting their land adding that it also contributes to floods affecting them.

Mr. Odalo stressed penalties for violations: "Whoever contravenes the requirements will be liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding Sh50,000 or imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both."

Fishermen at Achich Beach hope the policy brings relief. Edward Oremo, chairman of the beach management unit, recalled the days when boats could dock safely: "Now the beach has cliffs that make it difficult for boat operators to dock." He urged swift enforcement: "Without proper regulation, damage to Homa Bay's beaches will worsen."

County director for inspectorate services said he is working closely with his mining counterpart to ensure regulation is enforced at the ward level.

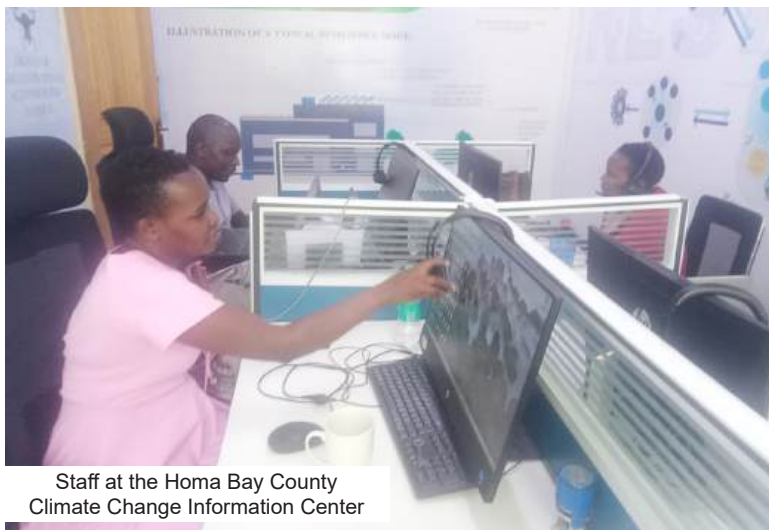
Local leaders and communities alike say the initiative offers a long-overdue framework—one aimed at regulating economic activity while restoring and protecting the county's fragile shoreline and agricultural landscapes.

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Digital hubs launch in wards empower youths and the entrepreneurs



Staff at the Homa Bay County Climate Change Information Center

Homa Bay County has unveiled several digital innovation hubs across the county, marking a strategic push to bring digital access, skills and job opportunities closer to youth and women across the county.

This initiative, launched in Oyugis, Kasewe, Kachieng South, Ndihiwa (Ratanga, Kosewe), Sikri, Pala Kabuoch, Suba and Kosele, is part of the county's broader plan to enhance the digital economy, with each sub county hosting a hub situated within existing TVET institutions or ward-level training centers.

The project aims to provide affordable high-speed internet, computers, trainers and linkages to remote online work opportunities.

Sarah Malit, the County Executive Member for Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mining and Digital Economy, emphasized the timing: "With over 70 per cent of our population under 30, these hubs will be game-changers, offering real digital opportunities right at the grassroots."

She added that the centers will serve as employment and Ajira Digital access points, sourcing online jobs and up-skilling local talent.

TIA Officers report that Ndihiwa's Ratanga AVEC center has already made headway as a transcription hub. "We have over 20

transcribers who have processed more than 2,000 audio hours, showing that digital jobs can thrive anytime, anywhere in Kenya," notes the center's manager.

At a recent launch event in Oyugis, Ward Youth Representative Mercy Anyango described the hub as a lifeline: "We now have access to computers and training inside our ward. I've started taking online courses in digital marketing, and I no longer have to travel to Homa Bay town."

Similarly, Suba South beneficiary Joseph Otieno shared his excitement: "The Kasewe hub gives local youth a place to learn web design and coding. I plan to start freelancing once I finish the six-week cycle."

The digital hubs complement existing initiatives such as Huawei's DigiTruck, which trained 290 young people in Oriwo, covering digital marketing, online safety and entrepreneurship.

Interior PS Dr Raymond Omollo noted that such programmes underscore the government's commitment to making digital literacy mandatory, not optional, for Kenya's youth.

County Director of Digital Economy, Kennedy Ojala, highlighted the next phase: "We will link graduates from these hubs to e-commerce platforms and online gigs, while collaborating with Ajira Digital to ensure the youth find paid work in the global digital economy."

The hubs are scheduled to become fully operational by late 2025, aligning with Homa Bay County's vision to build a modern, connected digital economy that drives inclusive innovation across all wards.

“The government is commitment to making digital literacy mandatory, not optional, for Kenya's youth.

PS Raymond Omollo



Interior PS Raymond Omollo

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A section of a degraded quarry site in Karachuonyo, a result of unregulated sand harvesting

County formulates policy to prevent damages caused by poor mining

Homa Bay County Government has formulated a policy for regulating mining to enhance utilization of natural resources in the county.

The county directorate of mining has coined the policy dubbed Sand Harvesting, Conservation and Mining Policy 2025.

By formulating the policy, the county intends to conserve the environment

though ensuring controlled sand harvesting.

It is worth noting that sand harvesting has caused serious environment degradation especially at Chwowe area in Karachuonyo Constituency.

Sand miners had ended up violating social norms. Some of them had removed human bodies from graves to create space for harvesting sand.

The unwarranted mining had caused destruction of roads

by creating caves on road reserves.

The Policy also stipulates guidelines for rehabilitating used quarries. It has been approved by the county assembly and now awaits the Governor's assent for enforcement.

The Director of Mining Francis Odalo said the policy will help in preventing disasters in the county.

Odalo said there were



“
**There are children
who have died
when swimming
in used quarries.
Such quarries
carry stagnant
water because
they are not
sealed after use**

Michael Ooko

many disasters caused by failure to regulate mining effectively.

“There are roads which have been damaged by uncontrolled sand harvesting. Some quarries mining gold have also killed people in this county. Proper enforcement of this policy will address these issues,” Odalo said.

Michael Ooko, a resident, said lack of policies governing mining had caused serious harm in the county. This results from failure by many minors to seal used quarries after harvesting sand or marrum.

“There are children who

have died when swimming in used quarries. Such quarries carry stagnant water because they are not sealed after use,” Ooko said.

He expressed hope that the

policy will compel miners to undertake their activities in a manner that conserves the environment.

“This policy is going to save lives by preventing environmental degradation and disasters,” he added.

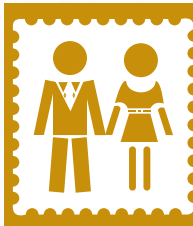
Introduction of the policy will not enhance sanity in sand harvesting which had elicited complaints from many environment advocates in the county.

The Policy is expected to make the county environment friendly by preventing reducing activities which pollute the soil.

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Thika Cloth Mills Limited



Keep Buying Kenya, Building Kenya!



Governor Homabay County Her Excellency Gladys Wanga and Managing Director Thika Cloth Mills Tejal Dodhia during a visit at the factory in Thika.

Thika Cloth Mills is a fully integrated textile mill that manufactures textiles from cotton to fabric. The fabrics are then sold to the garment factories, retailers, government institutions, NGOs etc. in the country.

It is very strong on Buy Kenya Build Kenya and believes that Kenyans should use products made in Kenya for Job creation, value addition, farming, skill development and ensures that whatever can be produced in Kenya is supported fully. Governor Gladys Wanga and MD Tejal Currently the cotton comes

from Homabay Lamu, Busia, Bungoma, Siaya, Taita Taveta, Magharini and Kwale.

Some cotton is also from Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet (produce is used by Rivatex). The cotton is ginned by Makueni, Kitui, Sun Gin, Meru Ginnery, Salawa Ginnery, Luanda Cooperative and Lake Kenyatta Cooperative.

The ginned cotton is then made into textile. Thika Cloth Mills is proud to be associated with the 2025 Devolution Conference, hosted in Homabay from 12th to 15th August, as we celebrate the transformative power of devolution in shaping inclusive, equitable, and locally-driven economic growth across Kenya. Thika Cloth Mills (TCM) is renowned for the quality and consistency of its fabrics and textiles. With state-of-the-art machinery and a highly skilled workforce, TCM ensures production and delivery are aligned with customer requirements and industry standards.

As a leader in sustainable, responsible manufacturing, TCM integrates environmentally friendly practices, including an eco-friendly Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP), a biomass steam boiler, and digital printing technologies that reduce water and chemical use.

TCM's diverse product range includes:

- Uniforms for institutions (schools, hospitals, churches)
- Traditional Khangas
- Durable canvas materials for shoes and bags

Special Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency President William Ruto, and by extension:

- The Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry,
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development,
- The Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs,
- The Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA),



Ground breaking for Ginnery at Baharini Mpeketoni-Lamu County

for championing local manufacturing, local sourcing, agricultural revitalization, and the empowerment of Kenyan cotton farmers. Your vision is the thread that holds our national textile revival together. In support of the 'Buy Kenya, Build Kenya' policy, we prioritize local sourcing to promote national industry, create jobs, and drive inclusive economic growth."

In the heart of Homabay County, over 10,000 cotton farmers, organized into 15 cooperatives, are changing the face of rural livelihoods. With cotton now regaining momentum as a national cash crop, these farmers are driving real change. At the center of their success is an integrated value chain that connects farms to finished fabric — and livelihoods across counties.

The Cotton-to-Fabric Value Chain

FARMERS → GINNER → THIKA CLOTH MILLS → CONVERTERS → INSTITUTIONS

This value chain has already delivered:

- 40,000+ farmers organised in various cooperatives across the country

Voices from the Field

"Homabay farmers are our partners — we gin their cotton with pride. We hope to soon set up a full-scale ginnery in Homabay ..." — Mr. Sital, Manager, RVP.

"Every metre of Kenyan fabric supports a cotton farmer, a ginner, a textile worker, and ultimately our economy." — Roslyne Awuondo, Nokiwe farmers Cooperative Society, Raachuonyo, Homabay.

How Institutions Can Support the Buy Kenya Build Kenya initiative

1. Sensitize your uniform supplier to source fabric from Thika Cloth Mills. We provide samples, spec support, and local impact guidance.
2. Connect us with your converter. We help them adopt Kenyan-made standards and source Homabay cotton fabric.
3. Order fabric directly. We handle sourcing, fabrication, conversion, and delivery—ensuring quality, durability, and Kenyan impact.



Cotton seeds by Government of Kenya distribution in Homabay County

In the heart of Homabay County, over 10,000 cotton farmers, organized into 15 cooperatives, are changing the face of rural livelihoods.

Why This Matters

- Economic sovereignty: Turning Kenya into Kenyan fabric keeps value onshore and reduces reliance on imports.
- Job creation & rural livelihoods: From farm to fabric, employment opportunities stretch across counties, empowering youth and women in the formal and informal economy.
- Sustainable growth: Sustainable Programs initiative s boosting cotton yields, improving seed quality, and building infrastructure to rehabilitate the region's cotton economy.

FUTURE

Continue to Buy Kenya Build Kenya - We thank the President H.E. Dr. William Ruto for the directive on Buy Kenya Build Kenya, The disciplined forces for buying locally made products and not importing. Ministry of Trade, Investments and Industry, Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA), Ministry of Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture, and other Ministries for pushing Buy Kenya Build Kenya.

We would like to also thank all customers for their continued support as we continue to look for new market under AGOA, AFTCA, with Europe and UK. Also, we continue the push the farmers up.

We are now 40,000 small scale farmers countrywide and we hope to continue to grow at the rate we are going. Also, this means in the long run as we continue to push our factories forward



Cotton seeds by Government of Kenya distribution in Siaya County



**Thika
Cloth Mills
Limited**



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County's fish bandas have improved supply of fresh fish from Lake Victoria

Many fishermen in Homa Bay can now breathe a sigh of relief after the county government constructed fish bandas to boost their productivity.

A fish banda is a structure with various components where fisheries activities take place.

The banda has a place for weighing and selling fresh fish. It also has a cold storage where fish can be stored temporarily.

There is also space used as the office of the Beach Management Unit (BMU) officials.

On statistics, the band serves as a place where data on fish are collected. The data emanate from the records where the quantity and species of fish obtained from the lake are registered.

A banda also serves as a central place where buyers get fresh fish from the lake.

Lack of a proper fish banda is a serious challenge to fishermen.

The County Government Department of Fisheries has

constructed fish bandas for fishermen at various beaches at the shore of Lake Victoria.

The beaches include Kaugege in Suba North Constituency, Wakondo (Suba North), Ragwe (Suba South), Rasira (Suba South), Achich (Homa Bay Town), Alero (Suba North), Ongoro (Karachuonyo), Sena (Suba North), Kisegi (Suba South) and Ombogo (Rangwe).

Erick Otiende, the chairman of Achich Beach said the banda is transforming their lives by enhancing efficiency in co-ordinating fisheries activities.

He said their banda has room where they can store fish before being transported to other destinations.

"The banda also has a room where we keep our fishing gears in case of any emergencies. It also provides us with shelter both during rainy and sunny weather," Otiende said.

He said the banda had enhanced hygiene at the beach by enabling them to sell fish in a clean environment.

"The banda has also improved the face of our beach.

Today we have a structure where we hold meetings to solve our issues. Thanks to the county government for constructing this facility," Otiende said.

He said the banda had enabled them to scale up fish catch.

"The proper co-ordination of fisheries activities using the banda has significantly improved the fish catch in our beach," Otiende said.

The Chief Officer for Blue Economy Kennedy Ojala said the project is aimed at boosting fish supply from Lake Victoria.

"A fish bandas is a facility that supports the efforts of fishermen to fish. We started the project of constructing them to boost fish supply from the lake," Ojala said.

He said they will continue with the project to ensure other beaches which have not benefited also get the bandas.

"Fish production is something we highly value in this county. We will continue to support more fishermen with bandas," Ojala said.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

Fish bandas have improved supply of fresh fish from Lake Victoria

HBE

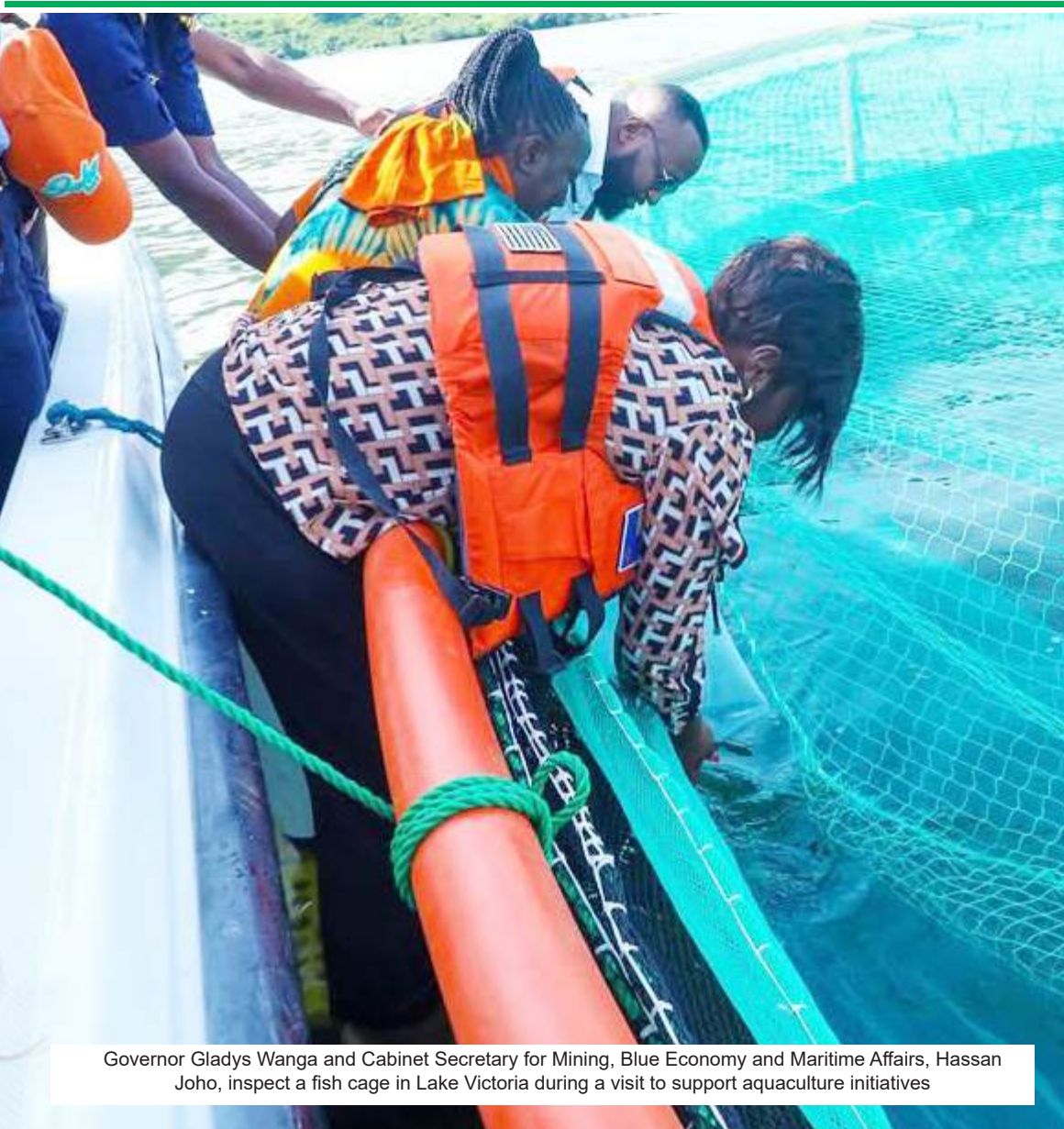


FISH BANDAS

Many fishermen in Homa Bay can now breathe a sigh of relief after the county government constructed fish bandas to boost their productivity.

FISH BANDAS

The banda has a place for weighing and selling fresh fish. It also has a cold storage where fish can be stored temporarily.



Governor Gladys Wanga and Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs, Hassan Joho, inspect a fish cage in Lake Victoria during a visit to support aquaculture initiatives

YOUTH, SPORTS, TALENT DEVELOPMENT,
CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**THE
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MANDATE

The department is responsible for the administration of programs including; promotion and regulation of cultural activities, management of county parks and recreational facilities, control of drug use and implementation of policies and programs on child protection and care..

VISION

The department envisions a sustainable, equitable and socio-culturally developed county with a vibrant and globally competitive sports, culture and creative industry.

MISSION

To formulate, mainstream and implement responsive policies towards the realisation of resilient, equitable and informed communities enriched with vibrant and globally competitive sports, culture, heritage and the arts

Raila Odinga Stadium has become a defining landmark in Homa Bay County, standing as a symbol of devolution's promise and a testament to the region's growing investment in sports. Once a modest venue with a single 2,000-seater pavilion, the stadium has undergone a dramatic transformation under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga.

Now a 20,000-seater sports complex, it boasts modern amenities capable of hosting national and potentially international events, drawing admiration from residents and athletes alike.

Originally upgraded for the 2025 Madaraka Day celebrations, the stadium has become a favorite attraction for locals and visitors who flock to take photos and bask in the pride of a facility that reflects their aspirations. Its role as home ground for Shabana FC in the Kenya Premier League and host of high-stakes matches like



Eng Elijah Munga, CECM
for Sports



The county's commitment to sport extends to its participation in major events like the Kenya Inter-Counties Sports and Cultural Association (KICOSCA) games.



EMr. Elly Nyiero, Chief
Officer for Youth, Sports,
Talent, Development, Cultural
Heritage and Social Services

Raila Odinga Stadium sparks sports revival in Homa Bay county



Former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and Homa Bay governor Gladys Wanga enjoy the match Mashemeji derby at Raila Odinga Stadium



the Mashemeji Derby between Gor Mahia and AFC Leopards underscores its growing prestige.

The county government, in partnership with the Ministry of Sports, fast-tracked the construction of terraces and auxiliary amenities after President William Ruto directed national support in December 2024.

Further improvements—including tartan tracks and possible turf upgrades to Bermuda grass—have been promised by Sports Cabinet Secretary Salim Mvurya to make the stadium fit for international use.

Beyond professional sports, the stadium is a launchpad for youth talent through the annual Genowa Governor's Cup, which engages over 10,000 young athletes each

year in football, netball, volleyball, and Paralympics. The tournament has distributed over 5,000 pieces of equipment and offered cash awards and trophies, while also steering youth away from drugs and crime.

In collaboration with Acakoro Football Academy, the county is also establishing a football training center in Kanyamwa Ward, Ndihiwa, aimed at developing elite talent. Additionally, the county is upgrading playgrounds across all 40 wards, including Pap Kalango, Kosele, and Onundo, ensuring that every part of Homa Bay has a stake in the growing sports ecosystem. Governor Wanga's administration is not just building stadiums—it's building dreams, one pitch at a time.

Homa Bay nurturing football greatness and youth talent



Homabay has emerged as a great footballing county having won the Talanta Hela cup 2024

“
As teams from different counties come together, they share experiences of how they live in different regions and learn about other people.

Lilian Omwenga

Homa Bay has earned its place as the cradle of football talent in Kenya, producing legends whose influence is felt far beyond the pitch. Even Gor Mahia Football Club, fondly known as K'Ogalo, traces its roots to the county. The club's name originates from a legendary Luo magician and prophet, symbolizing the county's deep cultural and football heritage.

The county's dominance in football was affirmed during the inaugural Talanta Hela U-19 tournament in 2013, where the Homa Bay boys' team emerged national champions, while the girls placed third.

This early victory was a result of months of rigorous training and community commitment to nurturing sports talent. Since then, Homa Bay has consistently fielded strong teams in national competitions, often walking away with top honours.

The county's commitment to sport extends to its participation

in major events like the Kenya Inter-Counties Sports and Cultural Association (KICOSCA) games.

Homa Bay featured in the 2023 Kisumu edition and the 2024 Kakamega edition, competing in football, tug of war, and netball. The games are not just about athletics—they are platforms for cultural exchange and regional camaraderie.

Senior Sports Officer Lilian Omwenga says the county has also sent its choir to the inter-county cultural competition, highlighting the diversity in talent. In youth development, Homa Bay has made notable strides through the Kenya Youth Inter-County Sports Association (KYISA) games.

Since joining in 2023, the county has hosted the 2025 edition at Asumbi Complex in Rangwe, drawing 17 counties. Homa Bay's men's football and women's basketball teams claimed victory, with the women's basketball team finishing second.

To secure the future of sports, the county government is finalizing a Sports Policy that will offer a legal framework for developing athletics. This blueprint will guide investment, attract partnerships, and help address systemic challenges in the sector.

With strong leadership and a clear vision, Homa Bay is not only preserving its football legacy but also shaping the next generation of champions.

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Michael Olunga Ogada: The rise of Kenya's football phenomenon

Kenya's football scene has produced many stars, but few have matched the impact and consistency of Michael Olunga Ogada. Born on March 26, 1994, in Kabondo, Rachuonyo East, Olunga has risen from humble beginnings to become a global football icon and a source of national pride.

As the current captain of the Harambee Stars, Kenya's national team, and a key striker for Al-Duhail SC in the Qatar Stars League, his journey is a testament to ambition, resilience, and talent.

Olunga's love for football started early. While studying at Upper Hill School in Nairobi, he played for Liberty Sports

Academy, a little-known club in the Nairobi County League. It wasn't long before his potential was spotted.

In 2013, he signed a one-year loan deal with Tusker FC, where he made a modest mark with two goals. A year later, he moved to Thika United, also on loan, gradually building momentum in the domestic league.

His breakthrough came in 2015 when he joined the legendary Gor Mahia FC. That season, he netted 19 goals, helping Gor Mahia win the league title undefeated—a feat that made headlines across East Africa. His final goal of the season against Muhoroni Youth capped off a stellar year and solidified his status as one of



Michael Olunga playing for Harambee Stars

Kenya's most promising players.

Olunga's rising star soon took him abroad. In 2016, he signed with Djurgårdens IF in Sweden, where he scored 12 goals in a single season. His performances opened doors in Asia, leading him to China's Guizhou Zhicheng and later to Japan's Kashiwa Reysol.

It was in Japan that he etched his name into football history by scoring eight goals in one match—an extraordinary record. He would go on to finish the 2020 season as the top scorer with 28 goals and was named the league's Most Valuable Player.

In 2021, Olunga made the move to the Middle East, joining Al-Duhail SC in Qatar. His goal-scoring prowess continued, helping the team secure multiple league and cup titles, including the 2023 Qatar Stars League trophy.

His leadership on and off the pitch has made him a fan favorite and a respected figure in international football. Beyond the field, Olunga is committed to giving back.

He founded the Michael Olunga Football Academy (MOFA), which nurtures young talent from underprivileged backgrounds in Kenya. Education is equally important to him—he holds a degree in geospatial engineering from the Technical University of Kenya, balancing his academic pursuits with his professional career.

Michael Olunga's story is more than just goals and trophies. It's about purpose, discipline, and impact. With humility and an unwavering drive, he continues to inspire a new generation of Kenyan youth to dream boldly, act fearlessly, and believe that greatness is possible.



Kenyan footballer Michael Olunga with a trophy

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Day out with the children at the Governor's Park

Homa Bay steps up fight against gender violence, teenage pregnancy

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and teenage pregnancies remain two of the most pressing challenges facing women and adolescent girls in Homa Bay County. The region carries one of the heaviest burdens of gender-related violations, with alarming statistics painting a grim reality.

According to the 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, Homa Bay leads the nation in teenage pregnancies among girls aged 15 to 19 at 23 percent.

The same report shows that more than half of women aged 15 to 49 have experienced physical violence since age 15, and over 40 percent of married women have endured violence from intimate partners within the last year.

While these figures point to a deep-rooted crisis, the county government, led by Governor Gladys Wanga, has made substantial strides to change

the narrative. Governor Wanga, long known for her advocacy on gender equality, launched the Homa Bay County Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Policy in March 2023 alongside Ida Odinga.

The policy provides a comprehensive framework to promote prevention, protection, and coordination in tackling SGBV, while aligning with both national and international human rights standards.

One of the key steps in implementing this policy has been decentralizing its message. According to County Gender and Women Empowerment Director Magdalene Owino, the county has effectively disseminated the policy to the grassroots level, ensuring communities are not just aware but also involved in solutions.

Acknowledging the triple threat of defilement, teenage pregnancy, and rising HIV infections, Owino notes the policy has opened new avenues

for mobilizing resources and advancing gender-sensitive interventions.

To improve coordination and data accuracy, the county has also developed a County Integrated Tracking Gender Tool.

This system centralizes data collection on SGBV, reducing discrepancies between reports from police, healthcare, and gender departments. The tool has significantly improved planning and policy response by ensuring stakeholders rely on a single, accurate data source.

As the county awaits the passage of the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Bill 2025, Governor Wanga's administration remains committed to building a safer, more equitable future for women and girls. Through bold policies, innovative systems, and strong partnerships, Homa Bay is turning the tide on gender-based violence.

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County ensuring equity and diversity in sharing of opportunities with PWDS

Homa Bay has one of the highest number of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) employed by the county government.

Nearly all departments have an employee with a form of disability.

This demonstrates just how Governor Gladys Wanga administration is keen on promoting inclusion.

Some of the notable persons serving in government include Social Services and Inclusivity Director Lucy Odwar, Homa Bay Town West Ward Administrator Jacob Omoro, Blue Economy Director Edwins Kakach and Communications officer Tom Okiki.

Others are Ms Bancy Akinyi who works as a human resource

officer at the Road Department and Mr John Wagaka who works as a clerk at the office of the governor.

Inclusion in Homa Bay extends beyond the executive and into the County Assembly where two members were nominated to represent PWDs.

Ms Odwar says the county has made significant progress on inclusion and always involves PDWs in major decision making.

This, she explains, is made possible through the implementation of Homa Bay County Disability Act 2020 which advocates for inclusion and mainstreaming of PWDs in employment and representation of the group in leadership.

"The Act advocates for disability compliance such as

access to buildings, inclusion of PWDs in sports (parasports)," Ms Odwar notes.

Using the Act the group has been able to benefit from a number of things including acquisition of uniforms for children in special needs school.

Meanwhile, other members of staff in Homa Bay have been sensitised on the needs of PWDs. Members of the public are equally aware of disability etiquette.

This has been made possible through awareness creation.

Ms Odwar says making the public know about the existence of PWDs who are sometimes ignored in many activities, has enabled the group to benefit from education support programmes from the county government.

"We have 80 slots set aside for PDWs when bursaries and scholarships are being awarded. This ensures all PWDs or their children go to school," she says.

At level four hospitals across the region, the county government assigned staff who help people with hearing impairment.

Their role of sign language interpretation is to help health workers communicate with ease with the deaf.

Economic empowerment

From time to time, the department of social services and inclusion has been engaging in empowerment of PWDs by giving the group tools of trade for economic empowerment.



Governor Gladys Wanga conferring with a delegate during a meeting with PWDs in Homa Bay

“
We also ensure we give out assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches and walkers.

Lucy Odwar

Some of the items given out include sewing machines, welding machines among other tools.

“We also ensure we give out assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches and walkers,” Ms Odwar says.

As a means of ensuring the interest of children are addressed, the leadership of Governor Wanga developed Child Welfare and Protection Policy 2024 which helps in creation of hope centres (clinics

established to help survivors of SGBV) and safe centres for survivors of triple threat.

The government is also keen on commemorating international celebrations that are meant to create awareness about problems faced by different individuals and the solutions that can be introduced to help them.

It includes International Day of the Girl Child.

Ms Odwar says PWDs and people with special interests

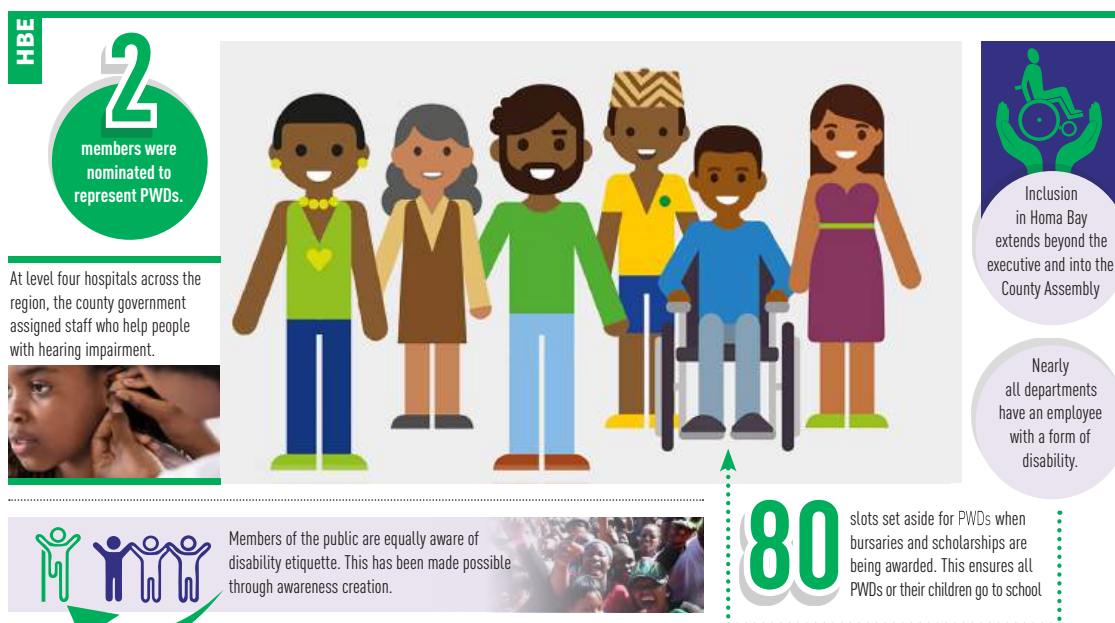
are never left behind in international celebrations and most of them take part in celebrations such as International Day of Older persons, International Day of PWDs and Deaf Awareness Week.

PWDs in Homa Bay are among the most united groups.

The group has a working forum that brings together PWDs who share and find solutions to problems facing them.

KEY MILESTONES SINCE 2022

County ensuring equity and diversity in sharing of opportunities with PWDs



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SGBV SURVIVORS CLINIC

1 the leadership of Governor Wanga developed Child Welfare and Protection Policy 2024 which helps in creation of hope centres (clinics established to help survivors of SGBV) and safe centres for survivors of triple threat.

2 The government is also keen on commemorating international celebrations that are meant to create awareness about problems faced by different individuals and the solutions that can be introduced to help them.



County Secretary's Office delivers reforms and service



Prof. Benard Muok, County Secretary

Since the start of Governor Gladys Wanga's administration in 2022, the Office of the County Secretary has emerged as a driving force behind key reforms and service delivery.

Under the stewardship of the county secretary Prof. Benard Muok, the office has steadily transformed the face of county governance, with a focus on transparency, infrastructure, and public service performance.

Among its most visible milestones is the near-completion of the new County Headquarters, a signature project that signals the county's intent to build a strong administrative backbone. Alongside it, construction of the Governor's official residence is underway.

"These developments lay a solid administrative foundation

for the county's future operations," said Prof. Muok.

Internally, the office has tightened the screws on

Internally, the office has tightened the screws on governance by ensuring smoother Cabinet coordination and better follow-through on executive decisions.

Benard Muok

governance by ensuring smoother Cabinet coordination and better follow-through on executive decisions.

In the area of human resource management, it has carried out a wide-ranging payroll cleansing exercise, eliminating ghost workers and anomalies in a workforce of more than 7,500 public servants.

Further, the integration of the national HRIS-KE system has brought new levels of transparency and accountability. The office has emphasized merit-based staff deployments, a move that has helped professionalize the county's service delivery.

But it hasn't just been about internal operations. The office has rolled out internship opportunities to over 500 young people, offering hands-on experience to recent graduates and bridging the education-to-employment gap.

Meanwhile, the county pension scheme was recently ranked the best-performing in Kenya by the County Pension Fund—a nod to the administration's commitment to staff welfare.

The office also played a central role in organizing the 2025 Madaraka Day celebrations hosted at Raia Odinga Stadium, which were attended by President William Ruto. It is currently steering the preparations for the 2025 Devolution Conference, expected to position Homa Bay prominently on the national stage.

From service reforms to legacy projects, the Office of the County Secretary has become a cornerstone of Governor Wanga's leadership—quietly yet steadily shaping a government that's more responsive to its people.

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Fred Orego, County Attorney

Under Governor Gladys Wanga's administration, the Office of the County Attorney has become a driving force behind Homa Bay's legislative and policy advancements, ensuring robust legal frameworks for development.

Anchored in the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and the County Governments Act (2012), the office has overseen the approval of six key policies, the enactment of six laws, and the drafting of over 20 additional instruments—driving the county's development agenda with efficiency.

"Our mandate is to ensure every law and policy aligns with the Constitution and serves the people of Homa Bay," said Mr. Fredrick Orego, the County Attorney.

He added: "From gender-based violence to water access, we've institutionalized policies that address pressing challenges while fostering accountability."

Notable achievements include;

“

Our mandate is to ensure every law and policy aligns with the Constitution and serves the people of Homa Bay.

Fredrick Orego

the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy (2023), the Water and Sanitation Policy (2024), the Public Participation and Civic Education Act, (2024) and the Climate Change Act (2022)—legislative milestones that Governor Wanga says reflect her administration's commitment to

equitable development.

"Strong laws build strong societies," she emphasized. "These frameworks ensure services reach every resident, from healthcare to infrastructure, in a transparent and sustainable manner."

With 18 policies—including the Blue Economy Policy and Public Officers Ethics Code—in public validation and eight bills under Assembly review, the office is now focused on fast-tracking reforms in agriculture, youth empowerment, and disability rights.

"We are prioritizing laws that uplift marginalized groups and unlock economic potential," Orego added.

Governor Wanga praised the office's collaboration with stakeholders: "Their work exemplifies how devolution, when implemented with integrity, transforms lives."

The County Attorney's Office remains pivotal in turning legal strides into tangible progress.

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Status of Homa Bay's policy, regulatory, and legislative instruments

The County Government of Homa Bay continues to strengthen its legal, policy, and institutional frameworks as part of its mandate under the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 and the County Governments Act, 2012. Anchored on the principles of devolution, rule of law, participatory governance, and sustainable development, the County has undertaken an expansive process of formulating and institutionalizing policies, laws, regulations, and strategic frameworks across multiple sectors.

This report provides a consolidated overview of the status of key policy documents, regulations, bills, and Acts that have been initiated, developed, or implemented by the County Government of Homa Bay. It serves to account for the progress made and to guide ongoing and future legislative priorities in alignment with the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP III, 2023–2027), departmental strategic plans, and public policy needs.

Role of the office of the county attorney and the executive

The Office of the County Attorney, established pursuant to Section 4 of the Office of the County Attorney Act, 2020, plays a critical and statutory role in:

- Drafting and reviewing all county laws, bills, regulations, contracts, and policy instruments;
- Providing legal advice and legislative support to the County Executive Committee Members (CECMs), Chief Officers, and other departments;
- Coordinating legal compliance, public consultation processes, and submission of legal instruments to the County Assembly;
- Ensuring alignment of county

laws and policies with the Constitution, national laws, and judicial precedents.

Working closely with sector departments, the Office of the County Attorney facilitates structured stakeholder engagement, interdepartmental harmonization, and legal vetting. The Executive—through the County Executive Committee and Cabinet—approves policy and regulatory frameworks before they are transmitted to the County Assembly for legislative processing, debate, and adoption into law.

Status categorization of policy, legislative, and regulatory instruments

A. Policies and Guidelines Approved by the County Assembly

The following sector-specific policies have been fully approved by the County Assembly and now form part of the official county framework for service delivery and

regulation:

1. Homa Bay County Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Policy, 2023
 2. Homa Bay County Roads and Transport Policy, 2023
 3. Homa Bay County Water and Sanitation Policy, 2024
 4. Homa Bay County Labor-Based Contracts Policy Guidelines, 2024
 5. Homa Bay County Cooperatives Policy, 2024
 6. Homa Bay County Child Welfare Policy, 2024
- Policies and Guidelines Approved by the Executive and Awaiting Legislative Adoption
- The County Executive has approved the following policies, which have been formally submitted to the County Assembly for consideration:
7. Homa Bay County Youth Development Policy, 2024
 8. Homa Bay County Mining, Sand Harvesting, and Conservation Policy, 2024

Regulatory and Administrative Instruments Approved by the Cabinet

- Homa Bay County Human Resource Manual, 2024
- Policies and Instruments at the Public Participation, Validation, or Cabinet Submission Stage
- The following instruments are under final stakeholder consultations and

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Interdepartmental validation prior to transmission to the Cabinet and the County Assembly:

- Homa Bay County State Officers Ethics Code of Conduct, 2024
- Homa Bay County Facility Improvement Financing Regulations, 2024
- Homa Bay County Genowa Healthcare Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County TVET Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Early Childhood Education Development Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Public Officers Ethics Code of Conduct, 2025
- Homa Bay County School Feeding Programme Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Blue Economy Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Sport and Talent Development Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Water and Sanitation Regulations, 2025
- Homa Bay County Reproductive Health Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Livestock Production and Animal Health Development Policy, 2025
- Homa Bay County Water and Sanitation Regulations, 2025
- Homa Bay County Farm Inputs and Extension Services Strategic Plan, 2025
- Homa Bay County Agro-

Ecology Policy, 2025

- Homa Bay County Roots and Tuber Development Policy, 2025
 - Homa Bay County Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, 2025
 - Homa Bay County Tariffs Policy, 2025
 - Homa Bay County Public Participation and Civic Education Policy, 2025
- Bills Passed and Assented into Law

The County Assembly has enacted a number of laws providing the legislative framework for devolved functions and service delivery:

1. Homa Bay County Civic Education and Public Participation (Repeal) Act, 2024
 2. Homa Bay County Climate Change Act, 2022
 3. Homa Bay County Community Health Services Act, 2024
 4. Homa Bay County Disaster Risk Management Act, 2024
 5. Homa Bay County Finance Acts 2024
 6. Homa Bay County Appropriations Acts 2024
- Draft Bills Currently Under Legislative Consideration

These Bills have been submitted to the County Assembly and are undergoing committee review or awaiting tabling for first and second reading:

1. Homa Bay County Animal

Welfare and Control Bill

2. Homa Bay County Livestock and Fisheries Development Bill
3. Homa Bay County Persons with Disabilities Bill
4. Homa Bay County Youth and Talent Development Bill
5. Homa Bay County Cooperative Societies Amendment Bill
6. Homa Bay County Social Assistance and Protection Bill
7. Homa Bay County Tourism and Cultural Heritage Promotion Bill
8. Homa Bay County Climate Change (Amendment) Bill

Draft Instruments in Development

The following legislative and policy frameworks are currently at the drafting or interdepartmental consultation stage, aligned with the CIDP III and annual departmental work plans:

- Homa Bay County Internship and Apprenticeship Policy
- Homa Bay County Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment Policy
- Homa Bay County Revenue Enhancement and Administration Strategy
- Homa Bay County Legal Aid and Access to Justice Policy
- Homa Bay County Land Management and Urban Planning Bill.



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LAKE VICTORIA SOUTH WATER WORKS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

SOLAR POWERED WATER SUPPLY PROJECT SERVING HOMA BAY TOWN

Homa Bay town has been previously faced by a acute water shortage necessitated by frequent disruptions of water services due to high electricity bills, bursts and water leakages due to old pipelines and high cost of water services due to old inefficient pumping systems.

In 2017, Lake Victoria South Water Works Development Agency received support from the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation to develop and rehabilitate Homa Bay Water Supply System and modernise the operations. This birthed the construction of Homa Bay Cluster Water Supply Project.

The project is solar-powered and has two solar farms comprised of 1,400 solar panels to produce 0.4 Mega Watts of electricity to drive the pumps. Over 80% of the power needs for the supply comes from the solar power panels. The Homa Bay Cluster Water Supply Project was designed to benefit a total of 116,300 residents of Homa Bay town and Rodi-Kopany by the year 2032 through provision of 8,500,000 litres of water per day of clean portable water.

The works implemented in Homa Bay town included Rehabilitation of intake works at the lake, construction of a new water treatment plant of capacity 4,840,000 liters per day at Shauri Yako.

There was also rehabilitation of the existing water treatment works at Got Asego. This increased water supply from the initial 1.2 million litres per day to 4 million litres per day.

Ten pumps were supplied and installed at different places i.e. five at the lake, three at the new water treatment plant and two at Got Asego.

Construction of the solar farms and laying of



10.88km of water pipeline and construction of sludge lagoon to prevent discharge of sludge into the lake.

At Rodi-Kopany, two new solar powered boreholes and a distribution network were constructed at Rodi Primary School and Rodi Market center.

The Project was financed by the Government of Kenya through the support of the Belgium Government.

The Feasibility Study, detailed design and Environmental, Social Impact Assessment of the Project was performed between January 2018 and February 2019. The construction works commenced in September 2019 and was completed in December 2021.



It was jointly commissioned by the Former Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, EGH, the then Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Sicily K. Kariuki (Mrs) EGH and the then Ambassador of Belgium to Kenya H.E Peter Maddens, and handed over to Homa Bay Water and Sanitation Company (HOMWASCO).

**The Chief Executive Officer
Lake Victoria South Water Works Development Agency**

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☎: +254 (057) 2025128, (020) 2157233, Hotline 020-2463081, ✉: info@lvswda.go.ke
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Governor Gladys Wanga holding talks with a high powered EU delegation led by Henriette Geiger when the diplomats visited her in Homa Bay



Partnership on Africa Renewable Energy Solutions' (ARES) initiative to solarize 40 hospitals



EU diplomat HE Henriette Geiger inspecting guard of honour mounted by county enforcement officers



VetNow™ and Enigma Big Data Labs: Collaboration to create a smart agronomist solution to improve agricultural extension services in the county



French ambassador to Kenya Arnaud Suquat flanked by other embassy diplomats greeting Governor Gladys Wanga



Sebastian Groth Germany ambassador to Kenya with Governor Gladys Wanga. The governor has enhanced partnerships and bilateral engagements for the good of the county

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An aerial view of the 12,000-seater Raila Odinga stadium in Homa Bay town



The now complete Funeral Parlour at the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital



The Homa Bay town fish market



Governor's Park in Homa Bay town



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The new county headquarters in Arujo, Homa Bay



Sections of the new roads constructed in Homa Bay town recently



Governor Gladys Wanga during the commissioning of a CT scan at the Homa Bay County Referral hospital in 2023



Revamped OPD at the Rachuonyo South Sub County Hospital



Two recently launched fire trucks on standby, showcasing the county's readiness to respond swiftly to fire emergencies



The out-patient block at the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital.

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Theresa Odira from Suba South 54 (Magunga) – Businesswoman.

I am very happy with the developments that the Governor Gladys Wanga has initiated since she was elected as the second CEO of Homa Bay County, especially when compared to the previous leadership. Homa Bay is shining under her leadership, and we thank her for that. I appeal to her to continue improving our town so that the business community can benefit.

Mary Ajwang 68 from -Karachuonyo (Kauma Bala) Resident.

I am happy with Wanga's development projects, especially the construction of several eye centers for our young children. The Governor has been at the forefront of empowering our women.



Victor Omondi 38 – Kabondo

What we are witnessing now has never happened before, and we encourage her to keep working for the people of Homa Bay.

We want to guarantee her a strong ten-year term. We have been peaceful, and our work is ongoing smoothly.

We see a significant difference in the development projects compared to those being implemented in other counties.

We are pleased with her work, and as the boda boda sector, we want to encourage her to continue with her good initiatives for us and the entire county.

Our county might even turn into a city after she completes her ten-year term.

She is a truthful leader who allocates funds without discrimination regarding which region voted for her.

The Governor listens to everyone's views, regardless of age, and acts on the requests of the locals.

If the Constitution could be amended, we wish she could serve until 2030. Ideally, we believe she should be given a direct ticket to continue until 2030.



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Dennish Omondi 41 – Arujo Katuma

We are happy with her work; the town is clean. Our only request is for her to consider our area for road expansion and clean drinking water so that we can also enjoy the same amenities as other regions, such as Makongeni.



John Okello 63 from Rangwe Omoche School – Businessman

The status of Rangwe Sub County has really improved through road expansion. We appreciate her efforts.



Elida Anyango 49 – Oyugis

Hospitals are now easily accessible, even at the referral hospital. Roads are accessible now, unlike before, and thanks to her connections, we can conduct our fish business more effectively.

Additionally, the formation of business groups has enabled access to loans.



Philip Ochieng 39 – Homa Bay Town

Wanga has performed excellently since she took office. The eye schools, feeder roads, and improvements in our hospitals and dispensaries are commendable. We only request that she employ more youth in various departments in the county. With her second term assured, we hope for ten years without a break.



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Architects of a responsive and accountable public service

As the world convenes for the 2025 Devolution Conference under the theme “For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice,” it becomes imperative to reflect on the often-unseen but powerful engines behind devolution’s success—the County Public Service Boards.

These institutions are not just administrative organs; they are the architects of a responsive, representative, and accountable public service that truly embodies the spirit of the Constitution.

Nowhere is this commitment more evident than in Homa Bay County, where the Public Service Board has embraced its role with clarity and purpose. Devolution promises to bring government closer to the people, and that promise must begin with the people who serve it. From ensuring fairness in recruitment to championing diversity, the Board’s mission is to build a civil service that mirrors the face of the community it serves—one where youth, women, and persons with disabilities are not just included but empowered.

In Homa Bay, public service is being reimagined through transparent hiring, strategic capacity building, and partnerships that unlock opportunities for growth and innovation. It’s a shift away from patronage and toward professionalism. The focus is not just on filling positions but on nurturing a workforce driven by values of integrity, merit, and service to others.

This year’s conference offers a timely platform to recommit to these ideals. As counties confront complex challenges—from climate adaptation to economic resilience—the need for capable, ethical, and inclusive public institutions has never been greater. The work of County Public Service Boards must be recognized as central to achieving the transformative promise of devolution.

In Homa Bay, we are proud to be part of this journey. And as we gather with peers from across the country, we do so with a shared conviction: that devolution must work for everyone, and public service must lead the way.

Mr. Isaiah O. Okoto
Chairperson, Homa Bay County Public Service Board



Mr. Isaiah Odiwuor Okoto – Chairman Public Service Board



Ms. Sarah Waswa - Vice-Chairperson



Ms. Sabina A. Aloo – Chief Assistant Office Administrator



Ms. Christine Amondi Otero – Senior Statistician/Economist



Dr. Lawrence Oteng – Board Member



Mr. Thomas Chariga – Board Member



Ms. Judith Ojwang – Board Member



Mr. Joseph Oreta – Board Member



Ms. Valentine Stella Onundo – Senior Human Resource Management & Development Officer



Ms. Ruth Aloo – Ag. Chief Executive Officer/Board Secretary

“Devolution is the commitment to bring government closer to the people—ensuring that opportunities, services, and development are accessible to every citizen, regardless of background or geography.”

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Leveraging proficiency to enhance service delivery

Homa Bay County continues to set the pace in public sector transformation by embracing structured governance reforms rooted in professionalism, accountability, and citizen-focused service. A cornerstone of this evolution is the successful rollout of the Staff Establishment framework and the implementation of Human Resource (HR) manuals, which have introduced consistency and transparency in human capital management. These reforms have enabled departments to clarify roles, standardize processes, and match staffing needs with service demands—creating a more responsive workforce across all sectors.

By aligning its workforce with well-defined policies and duties, the county has fostered a culture of professionalism that drives service excellence. Job descriptions, reporting structures, and performance expectations are now clearly outlined, eliminating ambiguity and overlap. Employees are more motivated, knowing that opportunities for growth, promotion, and training are guided by merit and structured reviews.

The county's adoption of Performance Contracting has further accelerated the shift to results-based management. Each officer and department is now evaluated against set targets, which are tailored to strategic priorities and service delivery benchmarks. This contract-based approach has cultivated a stronger sense of responsibility and urgency among public officers, leading to timely implementation



Ms Ruth Aloo Ag. CEO Public Service Board

Homa Bay County's journey is a model of how professionalism can strengthen governance

of county programs and improved community outcomes.

Thanks to these innovations, significant strides have been made in health, water access, waste management, and land administration. Service windows now operate on predictable timelines, and feedback loops between offices and citizens have become more streamlined. Residents have noted faster responses to inquiries and more reliable access to county services, reflecting the impact of a professionalized

and performance-driven workforce.

Moreover, Homa Bay's success in harmonizing HR structures and performance monitoring has caught national attention. Experts commend the county for linking policy to practice in a replicable and sustainable manner. The integration of the Staff Establishment and HR manuals with the performance contracting system ensures that service delivery is not just efficient—but deeply rooted in integrity, equity, and professional standards.

In summary, Homa Bay County's journey is a model of how professionalism can strengthen governance. By investing in people, refining processes, and holding institutions accountable, the county is delivering on its mandate—not just through policy, but through practice.





Security and unity keeps Homa Bay safe, open for business

Homa Bay County has emerged as a safe, peaceful, and investment-friendly hub thanks to deliberate cooperation between political leaders, government agencies, and the local community. Moses Lilan, former Secretary in the State Department of Interior and chair of the county security coordinating team, attributes this stability to consistent teamwork and open consultations with elected leaders.

During his tenure, Lilan prioritized inclusive engagement—working hand in hand with security personnel, administrators, and local elders through public forums to foster dialogue and unity. These efforts, he says, created the right atmosphere for the successful implementation of both national and county development projects.

Under the Kenya Kwanza administration, Homa Bay has undergone a significant facelift. Completed projects such as the Raila Odinga Stadium, the modern Homa Bay Pier, a fish market, 110 affordable housing units, and the Rusinga Ring Road have already redefined the county's urban profile. Ongoing works—like the Mfangano Ring Road, Kabunde Airstrip, and key road links in Adiedo, Kanyadhiang, and Kodoyo—have earned Homa Bay the nickname “The Construction Site.”

Lilan, now posted to Harambee House, credits these developments to the county's united leadership and sustained peace. “The collaboration we’ve



Moses Lilan OGW, County Commissioner

had across cadres has made Homa Bay fertile ground for development,” he notes, urging continued support for national government efforts.

Security teams in the county have also embraced proactive engagement—frequent meetings with boda boda operators, fisherfolk, and traders help detect and address emerging threats. Lilan emphasizes the importance of Beach Management Units (BMUs) in ensuring Lake Victoria's beaches remain regulated and crime-free, adding that communities must remain vigilant in identifying and isolating criminal elements.

Youth empowerment has also been central to the government's agenda. Through the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), 1,337 youths and 45 supervisors have been deployed to support climate-resilient projects. Other initiatives, such as the National Youth Opportunities Towards

“
The collaboration we’ve had across cadres has made Homa Bay fertile ground for development
Moses Lilan

Advancement (NYOTA), offer apprenticeships and work placements in various trades. Lilan notes these programs help curb youth unemployment while promoting order and security.

Security preparedness remains high, especially in the run-up to major events like the upcoming Devolution Conference. Lilan says planning involves coordinating traffic, venue access, and crowd control—vital tasks during high-level forums where state and non-state actors commit to future development plans.

Governor Gladys Wanga echoes the need for residents to embrace ongoing development initiatives. She emphasized that national and county projects are designed to uplift living standards and tackle unemployment. “These projects empower our people economically,” she said, calling on citizens to safeguard the gains made through unity and vigilance.

Honouring legacy of Phoebe Asiyo who dared, led, endured

TRIBUTE

In the sweeping arc of Kenya's history, few figures have stood as tall and resolute as Mama Phoebe Asiyo. Her life was a stirring ode to courage, conviction, and the unyielding pursuit of justice and dignity for all. She was a pioneer, a woman who saw beyond the limits of her time and dared to chart a path for those who would come after her.

Born along the shores of Lake Victoria in 1932, Mama Phoebe embodied the grace and strength of her people. She was "Nyar Nam Ma Ratego," a true daughter of the lake.

Her roots ran deep into the heart of Karachuonyo, the land she would one day represent with unmatched distinction in Parliament. But her impact stretched far beyond constituency politics. She carried the hopes and voices of generations of Kenyan women, and she made it her life's mission to ensure those voices were heard.

As the first African chairperson of the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization, she broke barriers in a space long dominated by patriarchal norms.

Her leadership transformed the women's movement in Kenya, giving it both national presence and an unmistakable voice. Later, as Kenya's ambassador to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), she took that voice to the global stage, championing African women's rights in the corridors of international power.

Her election as Member of Parliament for Karachuonyo marked a turning point not just for her community but for Kenya, which was grappling with the urgency of inclusive governance. In Parliament, Mama Phoebe was a formidable advocate, a bridge-builder, and a mentor.

Her legislative legacy was anchored in the belief that development without equity is no development at all. She fought for education, children's rights, healthcare, and above all, for women to have a seat at every decision-making table. I hold a deeply personal story of Mama Phoebe close to my heart. When I stepped into the challenging world of politics, I turned to her for guidance.

Facing off against a well-established civil servant as a daughter of Suba and a wife in Karachuonyo, I knew the odds. Yet Mama Phoebe,

believing in my potential, offered unwavering support. When I decided to run for governor, she was there again, reminding me, "To dare is to do." Her faith in me gave me the courage to persevere.

During my inauguration, even under the scorching August sun, Mama braved the heat to stand by my side, assuring the community they had made the right choice. But my story is just one among many. She was a beacon of mentorship to countless women and men alike.

The accolades she received—Order of the Golden Warrior (OGW) and Chief of the Burning Spear (CBS)—were more than national honours. They were recognition of a life dedicated to public service, advocacy, and uplifting humanity. Her greatest reward, however, lay in the lives she transformed, the policies she helped shape, and the bold leadership she embodied.

Today, her absence leaves a deep and resonant silence. Yet within that silence, we hear the echo of her teachings, her laughter, and her indomitable spirit. Her legacy lives on in every girl who dares to dream, every woman who leads with confidence, and every Kenyan who believes in a just and equal society. Mama Phoebe Asiyo broke barriers, and in doing so, she lit a path that will guide us for generations. May her light never dim. May her legacy endure.

*Hon. Gladys Wanga
Governor, Homa Bay County*



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Visiting Governor Paul Otuoma tours the Tom Mboya Mausoleum in Rusinga



Rothschild giraffes roam freely at Ruma National Park, one of Kenya's last safe havens for this endangered species



Governor Gladys Wanga lays a foundation stone for a new classroom alongside early years learners—part of the 242 Genowa Ondoa Kaunda classrooms initiative aimed at creating supportive spaces for children's growth and learning.



Governor Gladys Wanga inspecting a water project in Homa Bay town



Governor Gladys Wanga and Governor Paul Otuoma at The Late Thomas Joseph Mboya graveyard at the Mausoleum in Kamasengre, Rusinga





President William Ruto accompanied by Governor Gladys Wanga launches 40.5km Marindi-Pala-Oria Construction.



A stretched section of the newly rebuilt Homa Bay Pier



Kagan Kochia dancers performing during a past cultural event, showcasing the region's rich heritage through music and movement



The newly crowned Miss Tourism Homa Bay 2023, Sheila Akinyi from Rangwe sub county



Governor Gladys Wanga and Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs, Hassan Joho, inspect a fish cage in Lake Victoria during a visit to support aquaculture initiatives



Military officials march during the Madaraka Day celebrations at Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay

PICTORIALS

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Trailblazers Of Homa Bay County

Homa Bay County, though officially established only 12 years ago, has a rich and storied history that stretches back through its former names and boundaries. Whenever the history of Kenya is written, Homa Bay consistently occupies a significant place, spanning from the pre-colonial era through colonial times and into independent Kenya.

This vibrant region is the

birthplace of the legendary sorcerer Gor Mahia, a figure deeply embedded in local lore. Homa Bay is also proud to have produced one of the nation's foremost founding fathers, the late Tom Mboya, whose contributions were pivotal in shaping modern Kenya. Additionally, the county is home to Paul Mboya and the trailblazing Phoebe Asiyio, a remarkable woman who has made significant

strides in political leadership.

As the nation clamored for devolution, Homa Bay was represented by the late Crispin Odhiambo Mbai, a leading advocate for the governance structure we have today. The legacy of Homa Bay is not just a chapter in Kenya's history; it is a testament to the county's enduring influence and contributions to the nation's development.

HON PHOEBE ASIYO

A winner of both the Order of the Golden Warrior (OGW) and Chief of the Burning Spear (CBS) Mama Phoebe Asiyio is one of the most respected and influential women leaders in Kenya. She is a former Member of Parliament for Karachuonyo Constituency, the first African chairperson of Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (the largest grassroots women's organization in Kenya), and Ambassador to UNIFEM.

Mama Asiyio began her career as a teacher having successfully trained at Embu Teachers Training College. Although brief, her stint in school classrooms was a stepping stone to the future. She later joined the Prisons Service, which was male dominated, but she rose through the ranks to become the first female Superintendent of the Kenya Prisons Service. It was during her time at the Prison Service that women's prisons were established across the country.

In 1979, she ventured into politics, contesting for and winning the Karachuonyo Constituency parliamentary seat, which she held for two consecutive five-year terms, making her the

first woman in Kenya to serve that long in the history of the National Assembly. Mama Asiyio lost her seat during the infamous Mlolongo elections of 1988 only to bounce back to Parliament in the 1992 multi-party elections.

After retirement from politics in 1997, she was appointed to the defunct Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC) as a commissioner.

She has since devoted her time and energies to community work and philanthropy. Her benevolence and love became the beam of light that awakened the conscience of her generation to the need for gender equality. She works closely with the State Department for Gender Affairs to mentor upcoming female leaders and in the promotion of women's agenda.



THOMAS JOSEPH MBOYA (1930 – 1969)

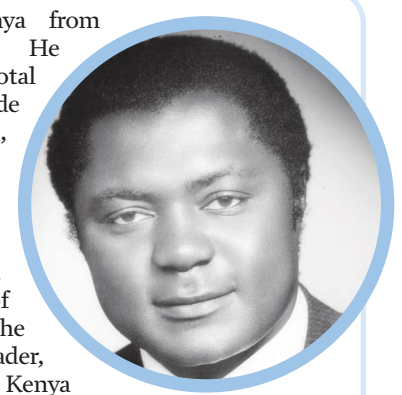
Often referred to as the man Kenya wanted to forget, Thomas Joseph Mboya is celebrated as the best president Kenya never had and regarded as one of the wittiest leaders this nation has ever produced. His charisma and invaluable contributions to the foundations of the country ensure that whenever the history of Kenya is penned, there will always be a chapter dedicated to Tom Mboya. Even 56 years after his untimely departure from this world, his name remains etched in the hearts of many, reflected in the streets, schools, colleges, and even a university that bear his name. Beyond the recognition afforded to the country's first two presidents, Mboya stands as one of the most prominent founding fathers of Kenya.

After receiving his education in mission schools, including Kabaa in Machakos, St. Mary's Yala in Siaya, and later Mang'u in Kiambu and learning via correspondences, Mboya was determined

to deliver Kenya from colonialism. He

became a pivotal figure in the trade union movement, a pathway that led him to engage in labour politics. By 1952, with the onset of the State of Emergency, he was a dual leader, heading both the Kenya

African Union and serving as the Secretary-General of the Kenya Federation of Labour—now known as COTU. These influential platforms transformed him into a passionate Pan-Africanist, as he traversed major cities around the globe advocating for the liberation of Africa from colonial rule. Back in his homeland, Mboya understood deeply that education was the key to



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empowering his people. He played an instrumental role in shaping the foundation and growth of Homa Bay, passionately championing education, regional development, and public infrastructure. His vision was manifested in the establishment of Homa Bay High School, Mbita High School, and several

primary schools across his rural Suba, reflecting his unwavering commitment to educational advancement.

While he may not have held advanced degrees, Mboya's groundbreaking initiative, the Africa Airlift

PAUL MBUYA AKOKO (1891 – 1981)

Ker Paul Mbuya Akoko of Luo Union East Africa was born around 1891 in Kogweno clan of Karachuonyo. He served the Luo nation in various capacities as teacher, pastor, senior chief of Karachuonyo, secretary of the African local native council of South Nyanza, and paramount cultural leader of the Luo nation in Eastern Africa.

The story of Paul Mboya is the story of Kenya. When he was born, colonial rule was yet to start, and by the time he died in 1981, colonialism had run its course, and Kenya was already two decades into independence and on its second president. The intervening period represented decades of epochal historical change characterized by profound social, political, cultural, and even religious transitions, not just among the Luo people of Kenya but all around Kenya. Nothing remained the same again.

By the time of his death, Paul Mboya had gone full circle—from herds-boy, domestic worker, soldier, teacher, clergyman, public administrator, senior civil servant, legislator, and even diplomat. Other than being an outstanding author with a diverse range of books, including ethnographies like Luo Kitgi Gi Timbegi and “Richo Kelo Chira,” he was also a notable lexicographer, bible translator, cultural leader, human rights

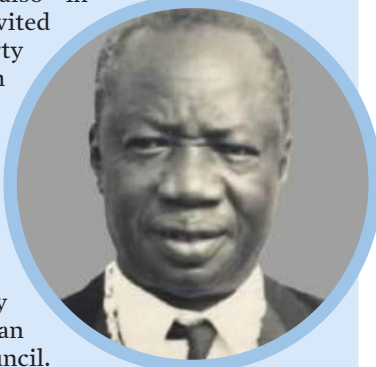
defender, and respected political advisor.

He rose from semi-naked herds boy to wearing starched white shirts and dinner jackets hobnobbing with the elite of European society in Kenya and also in England, twice invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace as the honored guest of two different British monarchs.

He became the first African Secretary of an African District Council.

He went on to become the first African member of the East African Central Legislative Assembly where he was joined by Chief Abdiel Shangali of Tanganyika and Michael Kawalya-Kagwe the Katikiro of Buganda. The British honoured him with various titles and he was officially the Hon Paul Mboya KM, BEM, and MBE.OBE.

Upon retirement, he went on to become Ker, or supreme leader and the custodian of cultural precepts of his people, leading them into the promise of the 21st Century.



PROF. JOSEPH OUMA MUGA (1940 – 2018)

Professor Pius Ben Joseph Ouma was born in Kochia village, Rangwe Subcounty, Homabay County. He first caught the public attention when he sat for his Kenya African Secondary School Examination (KASE) at St. Mary's Yala. He emerged the best student nation-wide. He proceeded to sit for the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate in 1957 in the same school and once again topped the whole country.

He joined Makerere University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography. Afterwards, he did his Master of Science degree (MSc.) in Australia and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Fluvial Geomorphology in a record time-frame. Prof Ouma became a lecturer at Makerere in 1966. There, he held a post of Secretary-General and then Chairman of the University Academic Staff Association of Makerere.

Professor Ouma Muga did a lot of research. United Nations (U.N) selected a team of 7 world elite scientists in 1964 and from Africa, Muga was chosen to help Australia in reforming the dry country. Today Australia is the world leading rice exporter.

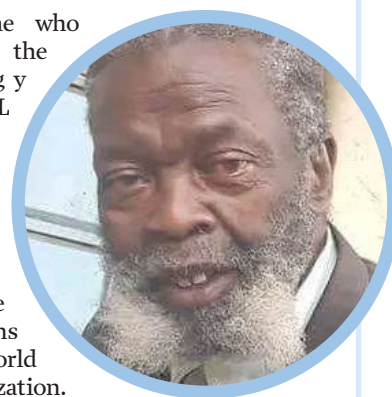
He is the one who introduced the terminology

“GLOBAL WARMING” when

he explained the long-term effect of Depletion of the Ozone Layer as a result of greenhouse gas emissions due to 1st world rapid industrialization.

Through him, UNISDR and UNEP have a working Frameworks e.g. Kyoto Protocol, COP/MOP, HEA1 & now Sendai Framework for DRR.

He became Vice-Chancellor at Moi University and founded the School of Environment Studies at the same institution. He later ventured into national politics and was elected MP for Rangwe in 1989 on KANU ticket. He was appointed Assistant Minister for Environment. He recaptured the same seat in 1992 on FORD Kenya ticket after the introduction of multi-party democracy.



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REV. DR. NAPHTALI MATTAH (1966
– 2020)

Rev. Dr. Naphtali Mattah made an indelible mark on the religious and educational landscape of the Abasuba community and Homa bay County at large. A proud graduate of Moi University, he held a Bachelor of Arts degree and was engaged to Nereah Adala, all while maintaining a steadfast commitment to the Gospel. Despite receiving lucrative job offers in urban centers, Naphtali chose to devote his life to serving the Abasuba community, particularly on Mfangano Island.

One of his most significant achievements was leading the effort to translate the Bible into the Basuba language, a monumental task that spanned 18 years. In 2011, the Abasuba community celebrated the publication of the New Testament in their native tongue, allowing the Gospel to resonate profoundly with the Basuba people.

Throughout his journey, Dr. Mattah became acutely aware of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on his community, which resulted in countless orphans and widowed women facing uncertain futures. In response to this crisis, he founded the Gethsemane Garden Christian Center in 2003. This educational institution has since provided

quality education to thousands of children from Mfangano Island and its surrounding areas, emerging as a beacon of hope in a region that had long been overshadowed by despair.

Dr. Mattah's remarkable contributions earned him an executive appointment as the inaugural County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education and ICT in the newly established County Government of Homa Bay, serving from 2013 to 2017. During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in the establishment of Tom Mboya University, which began as a constituent college of Maseno University and later evolved into a fully-fledged university.

Driven by an unwavering passion for his community, Naphtali Mattah's legacy was honored upon his passing. The community memorialized him with the inscription: "After Naphtali had finished serving God and his community in his generation, he rested and was buried among his ancestors."



GEORGE OTIENO SOLO

Alongside Tairus Omondi, Tobias Ochola Jua Kali, Peter Otieno Bassanga, Austin Oduor Makamu, Isaiah Omondi Japolo, Anthony Ndolo Suzuki, Abbas Khamis Magongo Zamalek, Peter Dawo, Charles Otieno Engine, John Zangi Okello, David Ochieng Kamoga, George Nyangi Odembo, Jaffer Mwidau, Sammy Onyango Jogoo, and Enock Obwaka, George Otieno Solo was a stalwart of the legendary Gor Mahia team that conquered Africa in 1987 by lifting the coveted Nelson Mandela Cup. Their remarkable victory in Tunisia, achieved by defeating the home side Esperance on the away goal rule, marks a historic milestone as the only continental trophy ever won by an East African team, cementing Gor Mahia's place in football history.

Born in Yokia, George Otieno Solo initially showed little interest in football during his early childhood. It wasn't until his high school years that a passion for the sport ignited within him, leading to an impressive career with Gor Mahia that spanned several years. Despite retiring from professional play in the early 2000s, his commitment to the club did not wane; he continued to contribute significantly as a member of Gor's technical bench.

Otieno Solo took it upon himself to nurture

young talent from his hometown, identifying promising players and guiding them towards opportunities with Gor Mahia. His mentorship played a crucial role in the development of talents such as Tillien

Oguta and Francis Odhiambo, who blossomed into household names locally and beyond while representing both Kogalo and the national team, Harambee Stars.

Today, George Otieno Solo dedicates his time to coaching juniors at both school and community levels, aiming to impart valuable skills and life lessons to the next generation. He challenges his young charges to strive for excellence and pursue their dreams with the same determination he demonstrated throughout his career. As the legacy of football in Kenya continues to unfold, one can be assured that the chapters documenting the journey and contributions of George Otieno Solo will hold a special place in the annals of the sport.





JOHN OMIRAH MILUWI (1944 – 1997)

If you have ever watched *Gorillas in the Mist*, the 1988 American biographical drama film directed by Michael Apted, adapted from a screenplay by Anna Hamilton Phelan, you might be familiar with the character Sembagare, played by the late John Omira Miluwi. Locally known as Gudu Omira, John was born and raised in Wakula on Mfangano Island, a place characterized by stunning natural beauty and rich cultural heritage.

Interestingly, John never harbored aspirations of gracing the big screen, nor did he possess much understanding of what a “big screen” entailed during his formative years. His life revolved around his tight-knit community in Wakula, punctuated by the simple yet fulfilling experiences of village life. Although his initial education took place in the local schools, he later had the opportunity to study at Amukuruma in Kakamega, which opened new pathways for him.

While attending school, John took up a role as a casual laborer with the Kenya Wildlife Service. This position allowed him to immerse himself in wildlife conservation, eventually leading to his deployment at the Mt. Kenya Conservancy in Narumoru. John’s hard work and unwavering commitment to the conservation efforts caught the attention of his superiors, earning him a promotion to a full-time ranger.

Eager to embrace new challenges, John developed a passion for mountain climbing. His dedication culminated in a life-changing moment when he heroically rescued an unknown foreign climber stranded on the treacherous Batian Peak of Mt. Kenya. This remarkable act of bravery not only earned him a prestigious Head of State Commendation but also opened unexpected doors in his life.

Subsequently, he was seconded to visiting filmmakers who were engaged in creating a documentary and exploring the African rainforests. Without the need for auditions, these Austrian filmmakers recognized John’s authenticity and charisma, ultimately contracting him for their groundbreaking project, *Gorillas in the Mist*. This remarkable opportunity made John one of the first Kenyans to appear in Hollywood, marking a significant milestone in both his life and the representation of African talent on the global stage. The film has since become a bestseller, further solidifying John’s place in cinematic history.

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Homa Bay celebrates the icon who birthed devolution

(1954 – 2003)



1954

October 25th, the year Dr. Crispin Odhiambo Mbai was born.

Dr. Mbai enrolled for lower primary education at Ligisa day primary school.

1961

He was admitted at the University of Nairobi for a degree course in the Faculty of Arts, which completed in 1976

1976

Mbai joined the civil service in the position of Personnel Officer II

1981

He moved to the Kenya Medical Research Institute as Principal Administrative Officer.

1985

2003

Gunmen stormed his house in Adams Arcade, silencing a mind that had dared to disrupt the status quo.

At the heart of Kenya's long and often turbulent path to inclusive governance stands a name etched in the country's democratic foundations, yet too often overlooked in the national spotlight.

Dr. Crispin Odhiambo Mbai, born on October 25, 1954, in Kojwach, Homa Bay County, was more than a scholar—he was an architect of the country's devolved governance system and a patriot who paid the ultimate price for his convictions.

As a senior political scientist and University of Nairobi lecturer, Dr. Mbai's brilliance illuminated Kenya's constitutional reform process during the early 2000s. He chaired the Devolution of Power sub-committee at the historic Bomas of Kenya National Constitutional Conference, where his bold vision challenged the decades-long stranglehold of centralized power. His push to redistribute political authority and resources to Kenya's neglected regions was revolutionary. Through a carefully crafted model, he sought to ensure local governments had both the mandate and means to serve their people effectively—ideas that would later form the cornerstone of the 2010 Constitution.

But the boldness of his proposals did not sit well with entrenched political forces. In a country still grappling with old power structures, Dr. Mbai's advocacy for grassroots-driven leadership and a rebalanced executive proved dangerous. On September 14, 2003, just months after presenting his ideas to the nation, he was assassinated in his Nairobi home. Gunmen stormed his house in Adams Arcade, silencing a mind that had dared to disrupt the status quo. The murder shocked a nation and decimated reformers' hopes that Kenya's new constitution could be forged without bloodshed. Though three suspects were arrested, they were acquitted in 2005 for lack of evidence, and to this day, the case remains unresolved.

Dr. Mbai's killing is widely believed to have been politically motivated, occurring at a time when tensions within the ruling NARC coalition were high. As factions loyal to Raila Odinga and President Mwai Kibaki clashed over whether to adopt a parliamentary or presidential system, Mbai's support for a devolved, people-driven model placed him at the epicenter of the storm.

Despite his untimely death, Dr. Mbai's legacy survived. His intellectual fingerprints are evident in the devolved systems now transforming Kenya—where county governments build roads, manage healthcare, support agribusiness, and craft policies responsive to local needs. These victories in local governance are the clearest tribute to a man who envisioned a future where every Kenyan, regardless of geography, could shape their destiny.

Beyond governance, Dr. Mbai had set his sights on transformative research in agro-economics, healthcare reform, democratization, and regional integration in Africa. These were not mere academic interests—they were expressions of a deeply held belief in the power of systems to uplift people and empower nations.

As Kenya continues to struggle with gaps in the full implementation of devolution, the legacy of Dr. Crispin Odhiambo Mbai endures not only in legal texts but in the lived experiences of county residents whose lives have improved under the very system he championed. In celebrating him, Homa Bay does more than honour a fallen son—it reminds Kenya that the foundation of its most transformative governance model was laid in courage, intellect, and sacrifice.

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GREAT LAKES UNIVERSITY OF KISUMU

...Centre of Academic Excellence

GLUK's Institutional Role in Enhancing Devolved Governance in Kenya

GLUK's Institutional Role in Enhancing Devolved Governance in Kenya

As Kenya's decentralized governance framework continues to evolve, academic institutions have emerged as critical stakeholders in shaping public policy, strengthening local institutions, and fostering sustainable development. The **Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK)** has notably contributed to these efforts through its research, capacity-building initiatives, and collaborative engagement with the national and county governments.

Curriculum Innovation for Public Sector Capacity Building

GLUK's academic programs are deliberately designed to align with Kenya's devolution goals. Through its School of Community Development, Public Health and medical health, GLUK trains

professionals equipped to understand and manage decentralized systems. These graduates now serve in strategic roles across the country's leadership and management, facilitating evidence-informed policy implementation and fostering responsive governance.

Applied Research Supporting County Decision-Making

The university has produced a corpus of interdisciplinary research addressing socio-economic and public health challenges faced by counties. Its participatory action research approach promotes the co-production of knowledge with local communities, resulting in policy recommendations grounded in lived experiences. The institution's collaborative studies on resource allocation, community health models, and local economic development have shaped strategic planning in numerous counties.

Partnerships for Civic Engagement and Accountability

Recognizing the importance of democratic participation, GLUK has partnered with county governments and civil society organizations to enhance civic literacy, train local leaders, and promote accountability mechanisms. These initiatives have strengthened the interface between duty bearers and rights holders, advancing inclusive governance and fostering a culture of social accountability transparency.

Strategic Knowledge Exchange at the Devolution Conference

During the upcoming Devolution Conference in Homa Bay, GLUK will present its portfolio of research outputs, capacity-building models, and institutional frameworks for stakeholder collaboration. The university seeks to engage policy makers in dialogue around scalable practices that elevate community voices and promote locally

responsive governance.

An Academic Partner for Transformational Devolution

GLUK's commitment to devolved governance is both scholarly and practical. As a partner in Kenya's decentralization journey, the university offers a unique nexus of pedagogy, empirical inquiry, and community service—supporting counties in designing and implementing adaptive policy solutions rooted in academic rigor and local realities.

Milestone Research and Policy.

The national health strategy is a result of many years of research and practice in community health and development which is also the flagship of GLUK over and above any University in Kenya. Building of healthy and healing communities through research and capacity building for use of own resources and advocacy for rights.



GLUK Vice Chancellor Prof Hazel Miseda together with Kisumu County Governor Prof Peter Anyang' Nyong'o during a capacity - building session for members of County assemblies drawn from various counties



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REPUBLIC OF KENYA

County Government of Homa Bay COMPLETED ONDOA KAUNDA CLASSROOMS



COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OF HOMA BAY

RANGWE SUB COUNTY



Rangwe Comprehensive



Asumbi Mixed EYE



Nyakola EYE



Oneno EYE



Yogo EYE



Lwaho EYE



Anwa EYE Classroom



Ludhe Dongo EYE

RACHUONYO SOUTH SUB COUNTY



Nyando Comprehensive



Karabok Primary School



Wirabuor Primary



Nyatindo Primary



Alero Nanga Primary



Kotieno Primary



Mumbo Primary



Silo SDA Primary



Kogwang Primary



Hawira Primary



Opando Primary



Obisa Primary



Cet Kagumbo Primary



Koselo Primary



Nyamboni Primary



Koga EYE



Rapedhi EYE



Ochiambao Rembo EYE



Rongu EYE



Nyamos EYE



Got Kojowi EYE



Pahen Mikumu EYE



Osani EYE



Kombe EYE Center

HOMA BAY TOWN SUB COUNTY



Ndere EYE Center



Saramba EYE



Agudo EYE



Homa Bay Primary



Sero Primary



Makongeni Primary



Shauri Yako Primary



Kopiya Primary

SUBA NORTH SUB COUNTY



Adongo Comprehensive



Meguri EYE



Lwanda Cioo Primary



Nyawira EYE



Kirindo EYE



Nyasumbi EYE



Owiche EYE



Aluor EYE



Sigulu EYE



Nyanya EYE Centre



Uwi EYE



Kamsama EYE



Kisamba EYE



Motta Primary



Mirembe EYE



Osodo EYE

RACHUONYO NORTH SUB COUNTY



Osakwa EYE Centre



Mazogo EYE Centre



Adhira EYE Centre



Sanda EYE Centre



Ayub Okoko EYE Centre



Oneno Nam EYE Centre



Oaongo EYE Centre



Got Adundo EYE Centre

SUBA SOUTH SUB COUNTY



Nyasob EYE Centre



Kade primary



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Kokwango EYE



Ongunjo Primary



Abuaye Primary



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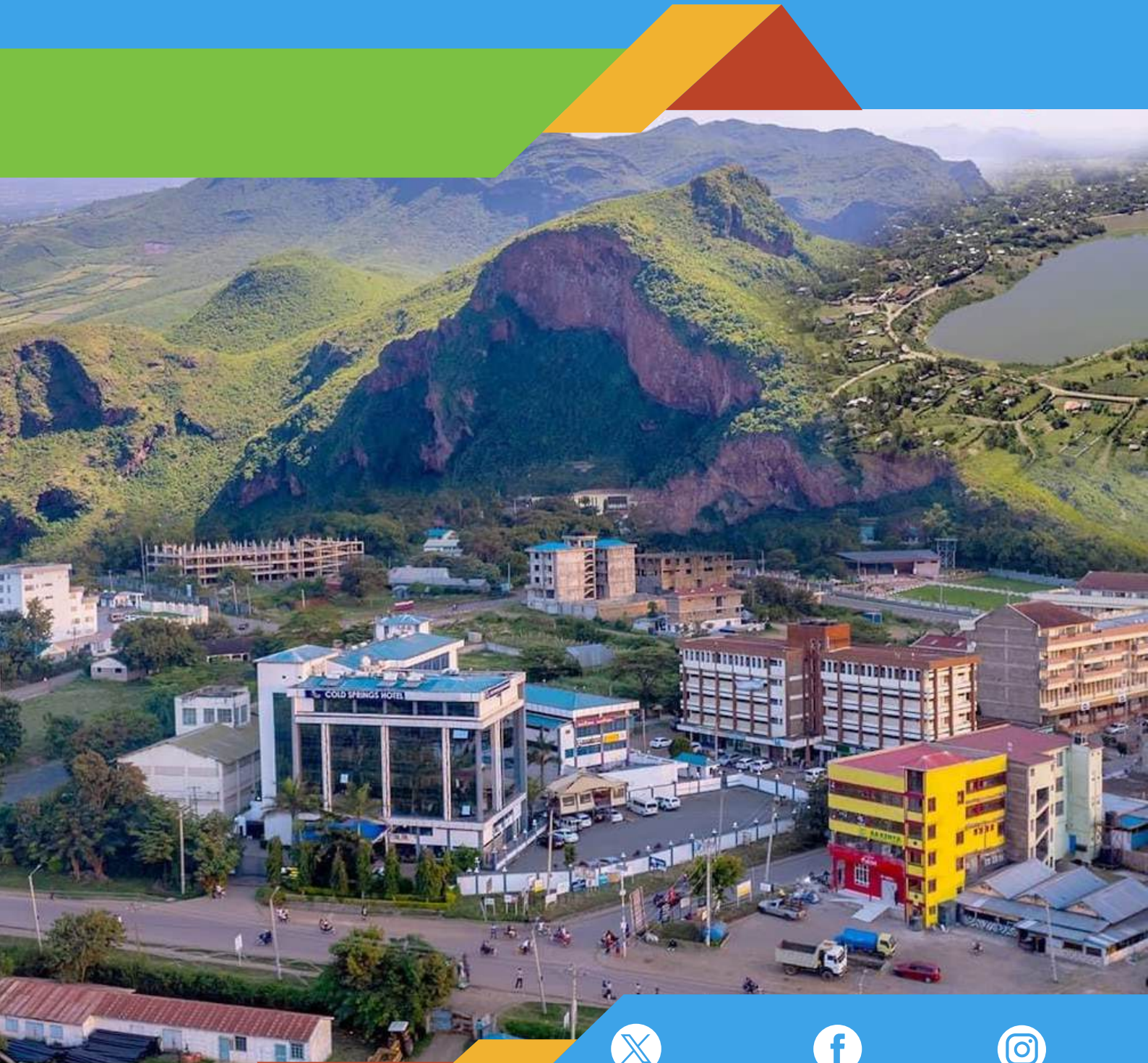
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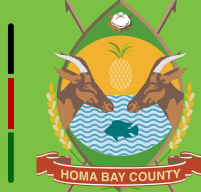
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