



GENOWA ECHO

ENDLESS POTENTIAL

NEWSLETTER | VOL. 9 – NOVEMBER 2023

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF HOMA BAY



WE ARE ON TRACK

"When we pronounced that Homa Bay will no longer be searched for from the bottom but from the top, some may have dismissed it as pure rhetoric. And now, because we stand for something extraordinary and we dare to defy norms and because we firmly believe that our faith in God leads us to success, we are Kenya's best-performing county. As Nelson Mandela once said, 'It always seems impossible until it's done.' Thank you to the people of Homa Bay, thank you Kenyans, for propelling us to the top once more!"

H. E Gladys Wanga, CBS, Governor Homa Bay County

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Word from CECM COMMUNICATIONS



Grace Mercy Osewe (Mrs)
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We are excited to deliver this ninth edition of Genowa Echo, just two weeks after our eighth edition which served as a special Issue to celebrate our heroes. We are buoyed by the reviews and feedback we continue to receive, especially on the Mashujaa Issue where most of you contended that the editorial team did a splendid job, both in the choice of those we celebrated and the stories about them and how in one way or the other they shaped the cultural, communal, educational and social landscape of this county.

Our lead story for this Issue is the survey that saw Homa Bay County ranked among the top counties in service delivery and H.E Governor Gladys Wanga placed second among the governors who have made an invaluable improvement in the running of the devolved units.

This ninth edition, just like the regular monthly issues, is about the activities and programs the county administration undertook in the month of October. What is more, we have introduced two new features as we aim to continue making Genowa Echo your preferred source of our county news.

We have introduced the Tours and Travel Segment where we shall be sampling the county's top tourist destinations and adventure havens as we continue to position the endless potential we have in tourism. In our next edition we shall be introducing the Citizens' Corner where we welcome write-ups on pertinent topics, be it opinions or issues you might want to be addressed which we then publish in the subsequent issues. This is, therefore, to tell you to prepare something and send it in good time using the addresses provided by the side.

Flip the pages and see more!

SURVEY: HOMA BAY COUNTY NOW LEADING FROM THE TOP



Citizens have been at the center of the transformation

By Lawrence Magware

Homa Bay County has emerged as a top-performing county in terms of service delivery. This is according to a recent survey by renowned research and survey firm Infotrak. The survey ranked Trans Nzoia Governor George Natembeya (70%) and Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga (70%) as the best-performing county bosses.

Released in late October, the report highlighted that participants in the survey commended the two governors for their outstanding service delivery. Following closely behind were West Pokot Governor Simon Kachapin (67%), Kisii Governor Simba Arati (64%), and Murang'a Governor Irungu Kang'ata (64%).

The ranking revealed that first-term governors surpassed their second-term counterparts in terms of implementing key projects and development initiatives.

The County Track Survey, conducted between July and September, involved a sample size of 58,748 people from all 47 counties.

The assessment also recognized governors who had made notable improvements in comparison to their predecessors. Notably, Governor Gladys Wanga successfully elevated Homa Bay County from its previous position at 45th to become one of the two leading counties.

The ranking evaluated the performance of counties across different sectors, taking into account the impact of launched projects in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and infrastructure.



Governor Wanga has prioritized water supply to the rural population

Under Governor Wanga's leadership, Homa Bay County has witnessed significant transformation in terms of infrastructure development and service delivery. The governor prioritized healthcare, resulting in the restoration of the county's largest hospital to full operational capacity. This achievement includes the introduction of critical services such as a CT scan, top-tier maternity services, and the availability of pharmaceuticals.

Additionally, the governor addressed transportation and mobility issues by improving over 300km of rural roads to make them accessible. Leveraging donor funding, municipal roads within Homa Bay Town were also given attention.

The agricultural sector in the county experienced remarkable progress with the adoption of farm mechanization, farm input subsidies, and the revitalization of farmer cooperatives over the past year.

As Governor Wanga continues to fulfill her promise of making Homa Bay County competitive among other counties, she acknowledges the unwavering support from the county's residents. Their trust and expectations have motivated her to deliver on her campaign pledges.



Governor Wanga crowning the winners at the end of the Miss Tourism Contest

TOURISM: CURTAINS DRAW ON AN EPIC BEAUTY PAGEANT, WINNERS CROWNED

By Geoffrey Khoore

Congratulations Sheila Akinyi 23 years Old from Rangwe Sub County. Sheila was crowned Miss Tourism Homa Bay County 2023/2024 in a colorful event held at Homa Bay's Tourist Hotel. The savvy and bold young lady is a graduate of Kenyatta University holding a bachelor's degree in Health Records and Information Management. She beat 13 other finalists to be the face and the Ambassador of Homa Bay County Tourism.

Whitney Juma, 21 years old a Civil Engineering student at Mawego Technical Training Institute from Karachuonyo Sub County came second while the crowd favorite, Suna North's Mary Laura Ogada, a 23-year-old fashion entrepreneur from Zetech University closed the podium spot.

The pageant judges were unanimous that the contest exhibited one of the closest competitions for a Miss Tourism, with their verdict read out by Winnie Wenger Walcott who added, "All the contestants were exceptionally fine. They have outperformed themselves and we are elated." Other Judges were Mike Linton and Kayla Mercy.

The winner carried home KES 150,000 in cash prize while the first runner-up took KES 100,000 with the second runner-up bagging KES 50,000. All the other finalists were given 5,000 each as a token of appreciation.

The successful execution of the grand is attributed to the exceptional leadership and dedication of H.E Governor Gladys Wanga and her pursuit to establish Homa Bay County as a leading tourist destination in the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit. Under her leadership, the second edition of the pageant was a success, captivating the audience with its awe-inspiring production, cultural representation, and empowering messages of beauty, intelligence, and tourism.

The pageant showcased the diverse heritage and cultural richness of Homa Bay County while promoting tourism and environmental conservation.

One of the highlights of this edition was the exceptional quality of the contestants who represented various sub-counties across the county. Each sub-county was represented by at least two contestants.

While crowning the winner HE governor Gladys Wanga said so much is expected from the winners “ I take this opportunity to congratulate our winners today, I’m looking forward to you now to market and put Homa Bay county on the map” The county boss also invited all the finalists who participated at the finals for a special dinner.

Also present at the function was Madam Esther Akothee. In her remarks, she said she will organize and tour in Switzerland next year where all the top ten girls will accompany her to the world’s biggest fashion show.



The new Miss Tourism Homa Bay County Ms Sheila Akinyi

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIP: COUNTY AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS ON MUTUAL VISION

PRESIDENT RUTO’S WHIRLWIND TOUR BRINGS DEVELOPMENT PROMISES

By Lawrence Magware

The highly-anticipated visit of President Ruto did happen, culminating in a visit to the Affordable Housing construction site in Homa Bay town. The President’s packed schedule included various key stops throughout the county, highlighting his commitment to advancing development in the region.

The tour commenced with a historic visit to Mfangano Island in Suba Central, where President Ruto, accompanied by





Governor Gladys Wanga, became the first sitting president to set foot on the island. During his visit, the President launched the construction of a 53km island ring road, which will significantly enhance the transportation of goods and people within the expansive island. Furthermore, President Ruto expressed his support for the upgrading of Sena Level 4 Hospital, the establishment of a Coast Guards Base, an Island Water Purification system, a Fish Landing Bay at Wakula, the construction of Suba Central Sub-County headquarters at Sena, an Airstrip upgrade, and the acquisition of a government-funded public ferry.

Following this momentous occasion, the President proceeded to the renowned Victory Farms in Roo, Kaksingri West. Here, he presented the leading fish farming and fish value addition firm with a license, granting them the opportunity to expand their business operations to enhance production for both local and international markets. A public rally in Sindu Township followed, during which President Ruto unveiled the government's plan to replenish the lake with seven million fingerlings every month once the Kabonyo Fish Hatchery in Kisumu is fully operational.

Continuing his tour, the President's entourage traveled to Magunga, where he inaugurated the upgrade of the Sori-Kiabuya-Magunga-Sindu-Mbita road to bitumen standards. The tour's final stop was Homa Bay Town, where President

Ruto participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the rehabilitation of the pier.

Throughout his engagements, President Ruto reiterated his unwavering commitment to driving development in Homa Bay County. The President also unveiled several other initiatives, including the construction of modern markets in Ndhiwa, Rodi Kopanya, and Kendu Bay, the Kendu Bay Water Project, the continuation of the Adiedo-Namba Karabok-Oyugis Road, and the creation of additional affordable housing units across the county's five municipalities, among other promised benefits.





Unveiling the plaque after Riwa Industrial Park groundbreaking

RIWA PARK TO TRANSFORM THE COUNTY FROM CONSUMPTION TO PRODUCTION

By Communication Team

Homa Bay became the seventh county to launch the construction of an industrial and Aggregation Park. During the launch of the County Aggregation and Industrial Park at Riwa in Rachuonyo North sub-county, the then Trade, Investments, and Industry Cabinet Secretary (CS) Moses Kuria challenged county governments to prioritize industrial production as a way of promoting the local economies.

Kuria said governors should set targets for production and value the addition of diverse local produce to curb reliance on imports. This, he said, will address economic challenges and save the country's foreign exchange.

He hailed Governor Gladys Wanga for her commitment to the realization of industrial take-off in the county, saying that it was in line with the government's transformation agenda.

The CS called on investors to establish firms to produce various products.



Governor Wanga, CS Kuria at the exhibition booth on value addition

Mr. Kuria said the industrial parks, which offer a platform where several industries engage in the production of different goods, should be put to good use.

"Counties need to set targets to produce goods and compete among themselves. This is the only way they will be sustained," he said.



Governor Wangari, CS Kuria admiring the architectural model of the Park

The CS was accompanied by Homa Bay Governor Gladys Wanga, Woman Representative Joyce Osogo, and Karachuonyo MP Adipo Okumu at the launch of the county industrial park, which measures 353 acres.

Homa Bay will use the facility to exploit the production of edible oil and cotton.

Already, farmers have expressed their willingness to produce crops such as oil palm that will be used in the production of edible oil.

Other crops that will be processed at the park include sweet potatoes, pineapple, and others. Mr. Kuria said some investors have already shown a willingness to set up firms at the park.

It includes an investor who wants to establish a cotton ginnery.

"Another investor wants to engage in fish production by making boats. It is an opportunity that the county government should take advantage of," the CS said.

Mr. Kuria encouraged local investors to set up industries within counties.

He said some people have been establishing firms in foreign countries when Kenya has few people doing the same.

"With the industrial parks, there will be urban-rural migration. People will also move from the diaspora back to the country to invest," Mr. Kuria said.

Governor Wangari said the launch of the industrial park comes at a time when her administration is finalizing the registration of farmers.

She said Homa Bay has registered more than 220,000 farmers, which was so far the highest in the country. "After registration, the farmers will get subsidized farm inputs to enable them to realize maximum production," the governor said.

Meanwhile, she asked the contractor undertaking the project to consider local youth and women in the provision of labor.

She also called on the government to ensure roads to the industrial park are completed. It includes Oijo Oteko Road, where the contractor abandoned the site before completing the project. Another key road that supports the park is the Kanyadhiang-Pala-Kandiego-Kadel Ring Road.

"If they are done, we will be sure that goods will move with ease in and out of the park," Governor Wangari said.

Meanwhile, Governor Wangari has already initiated the process that will see Riwa Gazette as a special economic zone

COUNTY TO BETTER MANAGE SOCIAL AUDIT ISSUES

By Steve Muga

Homa Bay County Government has agreed to adopt a model policy for complaints handling from the Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ). This follows a sensitization session that was organized for county chief officers and directors to educate them on the commission's mandate and its role in promoting access to information.

The sensitization session was held as part of the ongoing county engagements under the National Treasury's Financing Locally Led Climate Action (FLLOCA) program. Speaking during the forum,

Director Access to Information at CAJ, Ms. Viola Ochola, said the commission was keen to help counties set up complaints resolution mechanisms. "We have a responsibility to ensure counties have a policy in place to handle complaints as the constitution requires," said Ms. Ochola.

Financing Locally Led Climate Action program representative, Mr. Simon Ochieng, said the handling of complaints at the county level has not always been very good. He applauded Homa Bay County for having already established ward climate committees and implementing climate action plans. He added that FLLOCA wants to help the county implement a structured way to handle issues at the sub-county level.

County chief officer for Public Communication who is also the county's designated Access to Information officer, Ms. Caroline Atieno, said the county administration is committed to developing a county-specific access to information law. She added that the county will continue to proactively provide and publicize information to the public through its key platforms and that it will soon be implementing a complaints resolution mechanism. She also committed to giving reports to CAJ by the 30th of June every year.



The County top leadership at a past event on leadership, integrity and accountability



Governor Wanga being shown how to use the smart machine to collect water at God Bondo Water Point, Kochia Ward

WARD-BASED PROJECTS: COMMISSIONING OF COUNTY-FUNDED PROJECTS BEGIN ACROSS THE COUNTY

By Communication Team

When H.E. Governor Gladys Wanga issued an internal memo calling for her government to meet to review the status of government-funded projects, there was one expected outcome – every project must run to a full course. After a roundtable meeting lasting the entire morning, it was resolved that the governor and her entire team would be moving from project to project, ward to ward, and sub-county to sub-county commissioning those projects while at the same time, various departments were tasked with the responsibility to ensure that the projects under them were not only complete but done to realize the value for money.

In the foregoing, The County Government of Homa Bay under the stewardship of Governor Gladys Wanga has embarked on launching county government-funded projects.

Starting with the Homa Bay Town constituency the Governor unveiled the County Cotton Aggregation Center and Tractor Transport for improved cotton marketing in Magare, Homa Bay West Ward. This project is significant to the county as it positions

itself as a leader in the cotton value chain, having had several farmers registering as prospective cotton growers. The county government will make this facility a one-stop point for cotton value addition processes and a holding depot for the farmers.

In Homa Bay Arujo Ward, the government has unveiled the Lieta-Kabunde Primary School Water Project that will supply the school and the surrounding community. The Governor then commissioned a new maternity unit, staff houses, and an ablution block at Miniambo Health Center.

In the Rangwe Sub-County, she launched vital projects in Kochia, Kagan, Gem East, and Gem West. These projects include the Obengle - Junction Omoya Road, God Bondo Rural Water Supply Project, Olare-Dhok Mit Pipeline Water Supply in Kochia, Ndiru-Oriek Road in Kagan, Dago Dispensary in Gem East, and a modern staff building at Nyawawa Dispensary in Gem West. These projects reflect the Government's commitment to delivering quality services. The commissioning continues across all wards.



Governor Wanga, DG Magwanga taste the water after commissioning it at Lieta-Kabunde Primary School, Homa Bay Arujo Ward



Governor Wanga admires a new-born at the newly opened Dago Dispensary in Gem East



HEALTHCARE: FISTULA CAMP MAKES LIGHT OF THE DISEASE BURDEN

Governor Wanga shares light moments with the beneficiaries of free fistula medical camp

By Veroncia Nyasoro

The county Government of Homa Bay in Collaboration with UNFPA, Mpesa Foundation, Amref Health Africa in Kenya, Beyond Zero, and Flying Doctors Society of Africa, supported a free Fistula camp through screening and surgery for Obstetric fistula (women with an inability to control urine, stool or both).

The free Fistula camp screening started on 14th October to 19th October 2023 in the nine sub-counties. From 20th October to 26th October 2023, the medical team was at Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital performing corrective surgeries and treatment of all the patients who were found within the nine Sub-Counties. The services were also extended to patients outside Homa Bay County.

The camp has screened over 200 cases, 39 were cases referred for Physiotherapy, psychotherapy, and cancer treatment for suspected lesions, 85+ admissions 25 ongoing surgeries.

H.E Governor Gladys Wanga was

pleased to receive the guests from the supporting partners, who assured her of providing fistula repair kits and also transfer the skills to mid-wives and Communication health promoters.

“We are dedicated to making a significant impact and improving the lives of those affected by Fistula.” Said H.E Gladys Wanga during her visit to the Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital, where she spent time with the beneficiaries of the Uzazi Salama program.

NHIF came in aid during the fistula-free camp to register the patients who did not have the NHIF to help them during the treatment.

“I thank the Homa Bay county Government H.E Governor Gladys Wanga for the wise decision she came up with by helping us who have been suffering for a long time from Fistula. Many of us are still under stigma and embarrassment making them not come out and be treated.” said one of the patients



CLIMATE CHANGE: HOMA BAY TAKING LEAD IN CLIMATE SMART INNOVATIONS



Governor Wanga doing a test-run on the toll-free line at the County Climate Information Center

COUNTY LAUNCHES CLIMATE INFORMATION CENTER

Communications Team

The County Government of Homa Bay has recently unveiled its Climate Information Center which will be used in collating, analyzing, packaging up, and distributing climate data on variables such as temperature, rainfall, wind, soil moisture, lake conditions, and extreme weather indicators.

While presiding over the function at the departmental offices of Energy, Forestry, and Climate Change, H.E Governor Gladys Wanga said this data will be crucial to farmers in the County to make the right decisions for their farming activities and to decision-makers and policymakers in the County. The center will also have other capabilities including serving as a call center for disaster risk management.

“The agro-weather information we shall be disseminating to our farmers and our fishermen will be crucial for them in enabling their proper planning and execution of their farm activities,” the Governor said.

The Homa Bay County Climate Change Policy, 2022 recommends the use of appropriate technology for reliable data collection, analysis, and dissemination of climate information. This is integrated into the Homa Bay County Climate

Change Action Plan 2023-2027 and has now been implemented in the form of the Homa Bay County Climate Information Center.

The technology infrastructure was provided by Tomorrow Now, a climate change tech service provider while the county government will be partnering with Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) in providing information to the farmers’ on-farm practices and policies based on the climate and weather information generated by the Call Center.

The farmers and the public can use the **Toll-Free Number 0800000870** to reach the call center.



The County Climate Information Center set-up

COUNTY AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT CERTIFIED CLIMATE SMART



Receiving the certification from EDGE and NHC representatives

By Collins Ogutu

Homa Bay County received an Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiency (EDGE) certificate for the first phase of the County's green-built affordable housing project, becoming the first affordable Housing Program to be certified in Africa.

EDGE is an International green building certification platform, developed by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank that is focused on making buildings more resource-efficient. EDGE requires a minimum projected reduction of 20% of energy use, water use, and embodied carbon in materials as benchmarked event, Gard local building.

Speaking during the event, Governor Wanga expressed her gratitude to the IFC and stressed that the certification confirms that her administration is committed to providing solutions to housing problems in compliance with set standards.

She added that the housing units will not only provide low-income residents in Homa Bay County with an opportunity to own decent houses but will also be a source of employment for hundreds of locals including carpenters, masons, electricians, plumbers, and painters, among others.

IFC county representative Evans Kamau congratulated Homa Bay County for being the first affordable housing program to be certified in Africa and urged Governor Wanga to continue leading other certified projects.

QS David Mathu, Managing Director of National Housing Corporation in his remarks committed to continue working closely with Homa Bay County and asked her to be an ambassador of greener built technology in the Country. He also emphasized that through the National Housing Levy, an additional 1900 units will be constructed.

COUNTY SHIFTS TO LOW-COST FUEL-EFFICIENT JIKOS FOR MARKET TRADERS

By Collins Ogutu

The County Government of Homa Bay launched Jiko Kisasa, a climate-friendly and fuel-efficient cooking appliance that has optimal heat retention enabling faster cooking with a significant reduction in smoke emissions. H.E. Governor Gladys Wanga commissioned the cooking stoves of low-cost energy technology to be used by friend fish traders in Homa Bay Municipal Market.

The County Government, GIZ, and DACCA have partnered to adopt clean and sustainable cooking solutions to eliminate the dependence on biomass fuel in the County.

Making her remarks during the initiative, Governor Wanga expressed her gratitude to the partners for working with her administration. She further



A trader prepares fish for deep frying at the Homa Bay Municipal Market

implored the county residents to purchase and use improved cooking stoves. “The three cooking stoves are a major contributor to climate change. Together with our partners, we have produced an alternative which is an improved cooking stove that uses less firewood or charcoal “she said.

The Governor noted that improved cooking stoves will help address our emissions towards the atmosphere reducing deforestation and improving lives, especially women.

Homa Bay Risk and Vulnerability Assessment shows that 95% of households within Homa Bay County are using charcoal and firewood as their main source of cooking energy. This has contributed to massive deforestation and clearing of our hilltops.

Professor Donald Ogwen, Chief Officer for Energy disclosed that Homa Bay County had been nominated for an award for the successful efforts

towards adopting clean cooking methods in the clean cooking week in Naivasha, Nakuru County.

Pamela Adede, Development Officer GIZ Lake Victoria Cluster Zone said GIZ is keen on working with the County Government to train youth and women with skills to make Improved Cooking Stoves.



The Jiko Kisasa

GENDER INCLUSIVITY: COUNTY TAKES WOMEN AND GIRL CHILD EMPOWERMENT A NOTCH HIGHER



TRAINING WOMEN ON FINANCIAL LITERACY BEGINS ACROSS THE COUNTY.

By Geoffrey Khoore

A sturdy foundation of financial literacy can help support various life goals, such as saving for education or retirement, using debt responsibly,

and running a business.

“Key aspects to financial literacy include knowing how to create a budget, plan for retirement, manage debt, and track personal spending.”

These were remarks made by Mrs. Ombogi Mildred- the Chief Officer for Gender and Women Empowerment as she led the financial literacy training for women at Nyakiya in Ruma Kaksingri ward. She also said that as a county they will be training more women on financial literacy as this will empower them to manage their finances more effectively.” On an individual level, it empowers you to manage your finances more effectively, potentially leading to higher levels of economic security and prosperity.”

She was accompanied by Silas Rabah Director for Youth Affairs, and a nominated member of the county assembly Hon Milka Oron, among others.



Processions to mark the day

COUNTY MARKS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

By Hillary Achieng

International Day of the Girl Child is a significant global observance that highlights the importance of empowering girls and advancing gender equality. Through its history, initiatives, and the tireless efforts of organizations and individuals, the day continues to make a positive impact in the lives of millions of girls worldwide.

As Homa Bay County grapples with the triple threat of teenage pregnancy, new HIV infections, and Gender-Based violence, it is important to categorize them as serious issues that intersect and have significant consequences to individuals and communities, more importantly, the girl child.

Addressing the root causes of these issues requires a holistic approach that challenges harmful gender norms, promotes human rights and dignity, empowers young girls, women, and communities to make informed decisions about their health and well-being, socio-economic empowerment programs and opportunities for households as well as the implementation of strategic plans and policy frameworks that address the root causes of the triple threats.

The day was held under the theme “Our Time Is Now - Our Rights Our Future.” The purpose of the day was to reaffirm commitments by both State and non-state implementers to creating a County where every girl can thrive. Specifically, the celebration aimed to promote girls’ rights to education, access to healthcare, and opportunities as a means of unlocking their potential and contributing to a more equitable and inclusive society. The event took place at Mango Tree Girls High School in North.

In addition to celebrating girls’ rights and potential, Homa

Bay County used the occasion to address emerging issues around teenage pregnancy among young girls as well as the triple threats. With support from Uraia Trust UNW Project, Homa Bay gave this year’s celebration a governance perspective by organizing an interface meeting with women leaders in key positions drawn from the County Assembly of Homa Bay, Governance, Finance and Economic Planning, Gender, the Governor, and other key women leaders.

During this meeting, action plans were developed alongside commitments and declarations on how they would provide leadership and accountability in ending the Triple threats in Homabay through the implementation of existing relevant policies and formulation of a gender-responsive and need-specific budget. The day involved various sessions between girls, community members, and duty bearers where different issues were raised and discussed. Girls were encouraged to be bold and speak up about their experiences while duty bearers listened attentively with a commitment towards addressing any issues raised. It was a day dedicated to empowering girls through education while advocating for their rights in Homabay County.





AGRICULTURE: HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COMBAT DROUGHT, FOOD SHORTAGE

GOVERNOR FLAGS OFF SEEDS, SOCIAL SUPPORT TO MITIGATE DROUGHT

By Collins Ogutu

Homa Bay County Governor HE. Gladys Wanga officially flagged off a consignment of seeds to be distributed to beneficiaries under the Drought Mitigation on Food Security and Livelihood Project.

The Project, being Coordinated by the County Department of Livestock Production and Veterinary Services, targets to reach about 1,500 households by providing Sorghum seeds, cash transfers, and animal health services to vulnerable groups in three Sub Counties of Ndhiwa, Suba North, and Suba South.

This initiative is a collaboration between the County Government of Homa Bay, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO), German Cooperation (Deutsche Zusammenarbeit), and First Bridge Foundation (FBF) who are the service providers.

Moments after the flagging off, the Project Implementation Team (PIT) embarked on the process of distributing the seeds to beneficiaries across the three Sub Counties of Ndhiwa, Suba South, and Suba North.

The team, divided into three groups, traversed

the earmarked wards within the designated Sub Counties distributing seeds for the various clusters. The beneficiaries, eagerly waiting for the seeds, have shown immense joy and appreciation for the County Government Led initiative which they hope will impact their lives by putting food on their tables.

The beneficiaries are drawn from Kabuoch South, Kanyikela, Kanyadoto, Kwabwai, and Kosewe wards in Ndhiwa Sub County, Gembe and Lambert wards in Suba North Sub County and Gwasi North, Gwasi South, Kaksingri West and Ruma Kaksingri Wards in Suba South Sub County.



HOMA BAY COUNTY FARMERS RECEIVES EQUIPMENT WORTH KES 13 MILLION.



By Abneri Pajero Okoro

The County Department of Agriculture and Livestock through the National Agricultural Inclusive Project (NARIGP) has distributed equipment and tools worth thirteen million to farmers and farmer cooperatives across the County in an event held at the Governor's Park, Homa Bay Town.

The equipment distributed includes fifty solar pumps, 20 desktops and 20 printers, 200 beehives, and 6 testing kits geared towards increasing food security in the County.

Homa Bay County Governor H.E Gladys Wanga and her Deputy, who is also the County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture H.E Joseph Oyugi Magwanga presided over the event.

Speaking at the launch, Governor Wanga underscored the importance of Farmer SACCOs. "I appeal to all the farmers to join the Ward SACCOS since my Administration is in the process of structuring all agricultural activities through these SACCOs," she said. She asked the SACCOs to recruit more members especially women and youth to strengthen the SACCOs.

She lauded the Department of Agriculture for the commendable job done during the just concluded farmer registration exercise. "I am pleased that so far Homa Bay tops the Country with 245,000 registered farmers". Governor Wanga, however, disclosed that registration in the County is still ongoing to map as many farmers as possible to the Database.

The Governor said the County Government is keen to take a lead in fish since we occupy 80% of Lake Victoria, cotton farming, and growing of edible oil like sunflower, groundnuts, soya, and oil palm alongside other crops.

Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga, while speaking to the farmers stressed the importance of registration because unregistered farmers will not benefit from government subsidies. He further implored farmers to test their soil to ensure optimum production.

Dr. Joash Aloo, CECM for Water, Irrigation, Sanitation, Environment, Forestry, and Climate Change informed the farmers to use the toll-free number of the recently launched Climate Information Center to know the weather patterns to enable them to know the right time to plant.

NARIGP County Project Coordinator Erick Adel said they were pleased to partner with the Homa Bay County Government and asked Governor Wanga to ensure the sustainability of their activities as the Project comes to closure in a few months.



EDUCATION: HOMA BAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE BURSARIES IN DECEMBER



By Oketch Bernard

Asigh of relief for parents as the County Government of Homa Bay through the Department of Education, Human Capital Development and Vocational through Stakeholder's Management team embarked on plans to disburse bursaries to needy but bright students across the county.

The meeting brought together Education officials, sub-county administrators as well and ward administrators and resolved to adopt a Village Clusters Ad hoc Committees for bursary allocation. The team agreed that there will be no issuance of bursary forms instead members of the public through village clusters will be charged with the responsibility of identifying the beneficiaries.

Speaking during the event, the then Chief Officer of Education Ms. Dolphine Ochere said, "Government plans to increase its disbursement for bursaries from KES 2.5 million to KES 4 million per ward.

This follows the Stakeholder's decision to adjust the kitty to meet the ever-increasing demand for educational opportunities by the residents, most of whom cannot afford fees to access secondary schools and tertiary institutions".

Consequently, number of beneficiaries will be increased from 500 to 800 per ward. Each will benefit from KES. 5000. On the Fins to Swim Scholarship, the County Government will continue funding the over 240 students across by paying full fees, shopping, transport as well as pocket money. Plans are in top gear to double the number of beneficiaries as they intend to incorporate the incoming Form ones.

Additionally, the government is set to build at least five new Early Year Education Centers in every ward this fiscal year including equipping of technical and vocational training centers.

This is geared towards creating a conducive environment for equipping the youth with relevant skills, knowledge, and competencies for gainful employment.



This year's finals will be played at the Raila Odinga Stadium

SPORTS: GET YOUR JERSEYS READY, THE KICK-OFF IS HERE

GENOWA GOVERNOR'S CUP RETURNS

By Communication Team

The second edition of the county-wide Genowa Governor's Cup is set to kick off on 11th November 2023 through New Year's Eve. While announcing the dates and the format of the tournament, the county deputy director of sports Mr. Collins Kalee revealed that the Ward Level will run from 11th to 29th November 2023 at venues in respective wards where the finalists will proceed to the Sub- County Level which will run from 2nd to 27th December 2023. The County Finals slated for 30th and 31st December 2023 will be played at the Raila Odinga Stadium, Homa Bay.

The ward-level events will include both football and netball. Volleyball for men will be introduced at the sub-county levels while football for women will be introduced at the county finals. The tournament is not only a confirmation of Homa Bay County's ability to initiate and conduct a world-class grassroots sports event, but also a means to establish our credentials as the Western Kenya sports heaven. The implications for future events

and tourism in general are exciting. The county has a strong base upon which to build future grassroots sports and our team is committed to lifting Game even higher. Competitors, team management, national and county officials, volunteers, the public, and staff will all contribute to the games.

Last year, Nyamrich FC emerged winners followed by Kamwala FC and Roo Simba - Jamhuri Onyango while in football women's Gideons Memorial finished top followed by Victoria Watoto Starlets and Lambwe Queens. Kendu Starlets took the gong in Netball ahead of Ruma Queens and Sophia Queens. Volleyball Men saw Ligisa, Three K, and AP Line Kasipul scoop podium finishes.

The department in charge of youth affairs also plans to use the county-wide tournament to rally the youth against drugs and substance abuse.



GENOWA 10-A-SIDE RUGBY TOURNAMENT LIVES TO THE BILLING

By Lawrence Magware

Nairobi's Rugby on the Road (ROR) RFC emerged victorious in the inaugural Genowa 10-Aside Rugby Tournament. They secured a convincing 17-0 win over Homa Bay RFC at the Raila Odinga Stadium, with three tries and a conversion boosting their score. The tournament, which took place over the weekend, was a significant event as it marked the first competitive tournament at the stadium, aside from Shabana FC's home KPL matches.

Eight senior teams and four high school teams participated, attracting a large crowd of enthusiastic fans eager to witness the intense physicality of the sport.

The participating teams included hosts Homa Bay RFC, Kisumu Lakers, Maseno RFC, and Siaya RFC, among others. Rugby on the Road RFC emerged as the winner, receiving a cash prize of KES 80,000. Homa Bay RFC, the runners-up, was awarded KES 60,000, while Rongo University, which finished in third place, received KES 40,000. Additionally, all the teams received jerseys donated by the Talanta Hela national secretariat. Participants were also presented with gift hampers

by Renegade Air, the commercial passenger flight operating between Homa Bay and Nairobi. Moreover, Eugene Onyango from Rongo University, who was voted the most valuable player of the tournament, was awarded a return air ticket.

During the event, Collins Kalee, the Homa Bay County deputy director of Sports, conveyed Governor Gladys Wanga's message, reiterating the government's commitment to nurturing and promoting sports talent within the county. He emphasized the county's desire to use sports to attract tourists and investors, stating that this successful rugby tournament signifies a shift in focus from football to other sports disciplines.





TOURS AND TRAVEL: SHOWCASING THE BEST OF HOMA BAY COUNTY TOURISM

A GEM THAT IS THE TAKAWIRI ISLAND RESORT

With a pristine stretch of white sandy beach, tall palm trees, and the clearest blue water, all key characteristics of the Kenyan coast, one would be forgiven for thinking that Takawiri Island is in the Lamu archipelago, Diani or even Zanzibar judging by pictures alone. One of the various islands on Lake Victoria, this unique, private, and unspoiled property may well be the crowning jewel of Western Kenya. Kenya's west coast is an area of great geographic, cultural, and natural diversity. It offers visitors a diverse range of tourist products that blend to create this magical region of Kenya.

On this otherwise rocky island, at the tail end of it, giving you the view of the seaway Misoro Channel, lies the Takawiri Island Resort. There is nothing in the aforementioned Lamu, Diani, or Zanzibar that you would not find on the white sandy lakeshore that caresses the lush of this exquisite resort. What is more, while you will be worried about swimming in the salty sea waters, Takawiri offers you a chance to immerse yourself in the fresh waters of Lake Victoria.

Takawiri Island Resort can be reached both via private and public transport. There are direct motorboats plying between Mbita Point and the hotel as well as across the channel from Sena. If you are to use the Waterbus or the



ferry from Mbita Point, either will drop you at Kamarach Beach from where the hotel always offers extended transport to reach you there.

For bookings and reservations, reach the hotel Kati Alaputto at **+254 704 371 033** or by email at **takawiri@gmail.com**





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Endless Potential