



GENOWA ECHO

ENDLESS POTENTIAL

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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF HOMA BAY



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Word from CECM COMMUNICATIONS

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Grace Mercy Osewe - CECM
Communications

Atieno Otieno - Chief Officer
and Editor-in-Chief

Rachel Ogutu - The
Spokesperson

Steve Muga - Director
Communications

Vickery Omwandho - Deputy
Director Communications

Lawrence Magware - Managing
Editor

Bushnell Odhiambo - Editor

Collins Ogutu - Editor

Eunice Atieno - Photography

Livone Molo - Photography

Geoffrey Khoore - Videography

Robert Wera - Videography

Renetech Creatives - Design &
Layout

Philip Ogai - Graphics



Homa Bay County
P.O Box 469 - 40300,
Homa Bay.

Governor@homabay.go.ke



Grace Mercy Osewe (Mrs)
CECM Communications

The month of August marked exactly one year since H.E. Governor Wanga assumed office. We did not have the luxury to toast champagne in the form of an anniversary, but we let what we have achieved be seen through the inspiring stories and feedback from our beloved citizens.

What even worked for us more was that the anniversary coincided with the Devolution Conference in Eldoret which offered us a great platform to showcase our scorecard. We had a beehive of activities in the run-up to the event which among other things, made us produce several publications. As you go through this our monthly publication, request copies of our other publications, including newspaper pull-outs, investment booklet and the ten-point agenda magazine.

This issue highlights county activities in the month of August. Of particular interest is that the entire cabinet is now under performance contracting and an appraisal mechanism designed to make sure that every county department and sector meets its mandate as espoused by the vision and mission of our vision bearer, the Governor.

Further, the story on County Integrated Development Plan and the development roadmap for the next four years should be of interest to any resident of Homa Bay County.

As you journey through this publication, be rest assured of our commitment to continue serving you, for that exactly is what our mandate is.

#DEVCON2023: HOMA BAY COUNTY LIGHTS UP DEVOLUTION CONFERENCE



Governor Wanga taking President Ruto through the architectural design of the proposed CAIP

By Bushnell Odhiambo

Idoret was abuzz with energy as Homa Bay County prominently featured at the recent three-day bi-annual devolution conference 2023.

H.E. Governor Gladys Wanga led the charge, organizing a remarkable display to showcase the county's progressive vision under her leadership at the Homa Bay exhibition pavilion. The exhibition garnered attention from influential figures, highlighting Homa Bay's commitment to innovation and growth.

The head of state's visit to the Homa Bay exhibition booth on day two marked a pivotal moment. The county's aspiration to establish special economic zones gained valuable support.

"We are on a path of transformation, creating opportunities for economic growth," Governor Wanga emphasized.

Distinguished guests like US Ambassador H.E Meg Whitman and Danish Ambassador H.E Ole Thonke acknowledged Homa Bay's pursuit of excellence when they paid a visit to the county's pavilion.

The dignitaries witnessed a virtual reality presentation of the "County of Endless Potential," reinforcing the county's unique standing and its tourism potential.

Governor Gladys Wanga's dedication to public involvement in governance was underscored during the awards gala that evening. Integrated Development Facility (IDF) an organization operating in Homa Bay clinched the Ndovu Category award for exceptional public participation. "Inclusion is our strength; our community is at the core of our decisions," Governor Wanga affirmed.



Some of the exhibited items at the county booth



Members of the public and potential investors and tourists at the Homa Bay County booth at the Devolution Conference in Eldoret

“Homa Bay is the first county that has successfully adopted the people-centered public participation model, which previously succeeded in Makeni County,” said Mr. Japheth Ojjo, the Project Manager of IDF Kenya.

“Our partnership with Homa Bay County ensured the model was put into the local context within the community that drove the formulation of the CIDP and ADP to ensure people were able to air out their grievances, identify, prioritize, and budget their projects,” Ojjo added.

Day two was equally significant. The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga visited the county’s booth, where Homa Bay’s development plans were showcased. Mombasa Governor H.E Abdulswamad Nassir, Machakos Governor H.E Wavinya Ndeti, Kirinyaga Governor H.E Anne Waiguru, and Homa Bay County Senator Hon. Moses Kajwang’ also explored the county’s pavilion, which highlighted the county’s visionary strategies.

Governor Wanga’s influence extended to a breakaway session focusing on healthcare technology. As vice-chairperson of the governor’s health committee, she pledged to integrate technology into healthcare systems. The commitment aims to uplift healthcare across counties.

At the heart of our Governor’s engagement on the final day was the affirmative action agenda.

She advocated for its effective implementation to empower women, youth, and vulnerable populations. Plans include funds allocation, climate change actions, emphasizing women’s roles, and a governor’s mentorship camp.

In our exhibition, we prominently showcased various agricultural value chains that hold significant promise, including cotton, groundnuts, sunflower, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and several others.

The County’s remarkable participation at the Devolution Conference underscored our dedication to growth, inclusivity, and innovative strategies, firmly positioning the county as key among leaders in Kenya’s devolution journey.



Governor Wanga holding bilateral talks with COG Chair Governor Anne Waiguru

SERVICE DELIVERY: HOMA BAY COUNTY IMPLEMENTS PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

GOVERNOR WANGA SIGNS PACTS WITH HER CABINET

By Lawrence Magware



Governor Wanga receives a copy of signed PC from County Secretary Prof. Muok

H.E Gladys Wanga, the Governor of Homa Bay County, oversaw the signing of performance contracts with members of her government’s executive committee. This initiative is not only to comply with various statutes of governance, administration, and service delivery but also to enhance the quality and timeliness of services provided to citizens.

By implementing performance contracts, Governor Wanga aims to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and competence within her government. The signing of performance contracts took place at the Governor’s Park in Homa Bay Town. This initiative is designed to improve service delivery by reducing operating costs, increasing revenue and output, and optimizing resource allocation. These desirable outcomes will be achieved through the implementation of an evaluation system that comprehensively assesses performance and ensures accountability and transparency among departmental heads.

This performance management system is designed to help realize superior performance, people-driven, result-oriented, and accountable

government for effective, efficient public service committed to service delivery, transparency, and financial efficacy. The governor aims to build resilient and stronger communities through opportunity leadership.

Overall, Governor Wanga’s focus on performance contracting demonstrates her commitment to enhancing efficiency and effectiveness within her government, ultimately resulting in improved service delivery for the citizens of Homa Bay County.

All the County Executive Committee Members, the county secretary, the county attorney, and the chairperson of the county public service board signed the contracts, witnessed by their respective chief officers.



The Health Department team displaying a copy of their performance contract



THE KEY DELIVERABLES FOR THE MINISTERS

By Lawrence Magware

As each CECM shook hands with the Governor upon signing their performance contracts, the attention was shifted immediately to what had just been signed and which both parties agreed were to be implemented.

Leading the queue was the Deputy Governor Hon Joseph Magwanga who among other things will formulate, implement, and monitor agriculture and livestock legislation, regulations, and policies; provide financial support in the delivery of crop production, livestock, and veterinary services by use of modernized technologies, innovative procedures, and systems; and scale up livestock and veterinary services for improved animal health and public health, by the renovation of slaughterhouses, construction of sales yards, livestock disease surveillance and vaccination, Training and equipping of Artificial Insemination service providers and meat inspection.

Dr. John Agili will create an enabling environment for the exploitation of water resources by providing infrastructural facilities development at the landing sites, establishing a fish hatchery, conducting monitoring, control, and surveillance, and providing institutional support to Beach Management Units; and providing for installation of outdoor LED screens, create network and internet connectivity to various County Departments, implementation of

an automated revenue collection system, acquire ICT equipment and create Wi-Fi hotspots in public places.

Ms. Roseline Omolo will look into scaling up high-impact interventions at all levels to reduce maternal, neonatal, and child morbidity and mortality; provision of a functional and sustainable infrastructure for comprehensive health services; and expanding access to primary and specialized healthcare. Her Trade counterpart Polycarp Okombo is tasked to increase the traffic of local, national, and international tourists into Homa Bay County besides making Homa Bay a leading investment and trade hub in the region by creating an enabling environment for both.

Dr. Peter Ogola aims to provide a spatial framework to guide and control development in the County; create a conducive and enabling environment for land administration and management; establish and strengthen urban institutions towards sustainable urbanization in the County among other things. Mr. Martin Opere will aim to enhance quality and inclusive education as well as make vocational training more attractive to the youths in Homa County. He will also make sure that innovation is integrated with technology as the focus shifts to digitization and the use of artificial intelligence.

GOVERNANCE: RING-FENCING INTEGRITY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

GOVERNOR RECEIVES REPORT ON STAFF AUDIT, PROMISES ACTION



Governor Wanga, her deputy Oyugi Magwanga receive the report from PWC representative

By Lawrence Magware

H. E. Governor Gladys Wanga received and shared the findings of the first phase of the County Government of Homa Bay Public Service Payroll and Personnel Census Audit from Price Waterhouse Coopers - an internationally credible institution on audit matters. This was an exercise that her administration embarked on at the onset of her tenure, ostensibly to deliberately establish an efficient and effective public service for this great County and its people.

The Governor revealed that Phase One of the exercise focused on the verification of county employees and payroll data. The other two phases will include setting up a clear staff establishment for the County's public service and putting in place a Human Resource Management System that will serve the people of Homa Bay County.

"These two phases will be executed upon the full implementation of the report we have received today. Moving forward, my administration will

embark on both administrative and legal actions starting immediately until all the provisions for this report are fully implemented according to the law," the Governor said as she received the report, flanked by her deputy Hon Oyugi Magwanga.

The report exposed a number of glaring issues including but not limited to staff without any papers to support their recruitment but earning salaries, staff with academic papers that have been confirmed as fake by the Kenya National Examinations Council and other Institutions of Higher learning, staff who have been earning but do not know any of their colleagues just by name leave alone their immediate supervisor, staff who were employed while under age (under 16 years, as per the Act), glaring erratic job grade placement, promotions over and above the most obvious cases of erroneous employment or semblance thereof.

129

individuals with no files in the County Registry and did not present any relevant documents during the audit.

287

individuals who did not appear **AT ALL** for verification.

556

individuals who did not present any appointment letters or other key employment documents.

10

individuals were caught in a cybercafé in town generating supposed employment documents.

322

individuals who lacked appropriate academic qualifications and/or have been licensed by their respective professional bodies as well as those whose 'certificates' KNEC confirmed as inauthentic.

479

individuals in the payroll earning but cannot be traced to the signed departmental HR lists.

3

individuals earning but under the age allowable for employment by the Act.

The Governor said she will embark on an administrative and legal journey to ensure full implementation of the recommendations is effective immediately until she establishes an efficient and effective public service, which will enable her administration to satisfactorily deliver

on its pledges and promises to the people of Homa Bay.

"At the end, we look forward to making substantive savings on the public resources under our charge as an administration," the Governor concluded.



L-R: DG Oyugi Magwanga, Governor Wanga, Senator Kajwang and Women Rep Bensuda jointly unveil the CIDP 2023-27

ECONOMIC PLANNING: GOVERNMENT UNVEILS THE ROADMAP

CIDP LAUNCHED, PROMISES RENEWED HOPES

By Collins Ogutu

Homa Bay County unveils 3rd generation CIDP 2023-2027. Governor Gladys Wanga took charge today as the 48.9 billion 3rd Generation County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) was launched at a colourful ceremony at the Governor's Park in Homabay Town. The five-year comprehensive plan signals the beginning of a crucial blueprint roadmap that will guide the County's economic development for the next five years.

Speaking during the event, Governor Wanga stated that the document was subjected to scrutiny by various stakeholders including members of the public, and the County Assembly, and is centred on the inspiring theme of "unlocking and optimizing the endless potential of the County." The Governor committed plans to focus on quality education and healthcare, modern infrastructure and connectivity, social inclusion and empowerment of communities, good governance and institutional strengthening, sustainable economic growth and public



Public sector representatives join the Governor to display the copies of the CIDP

participation as major issues her Administration seeks to deal with Wanga said despite the scarcity of resources, her Administration will endeavour to equitably allocate the available resources in a bid to achieve equitable development across the County and put in place evaluation systems to ensure timely implementation of projects. The County Chief reiterated her commitment to serving

the people of Homabay and assured them that her Administration will continue to be people centered. “We will ensure increased community ownership through public participation. This people-driven approach reflects our commitment to inclusivity and effective governance,” she said.

She further said that Project management committees are formed on every project to ensure

quality service delivery by contractors to county residents. Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga thanked the County Assembly for working closely with the executive to benefit the people. In attendance were Homabay Senator Moses Kajwang’, County MP Dr. Joyce Osogo, CECMs, County officials, representatives from the National Government, and members of the public.

THE CIDP 2023 - 2027 BREAKDOWN

By Lawrence Magware

When Governor Gladys Wanga launched a 47.5-billion-shilling Homa Bay County’s 3rd Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) in a grand ceremony in Homa Bay Town quite noticeable highlights from it emerged. Here are some of the key projects she aims to accomplish by 2027:

- Invest KES 2 billion to upgrade all 9 sub-county hospitals to Level 4 facilities.
- Allocate KES 2 billion for the Lakefront Development Program, which includes constructing a promenade, parks, beaches, and land banking.
- Implement a comprehensive waste management system, costing KES 2 billion over the next 4 years.
- Allocate half a billion shillings for Natural Resources Management projects in the county.
- Rehabilitate lake transport, refurbishing jetties in Kendu Bay, Homa Bay, Mbita, and Sena. Reintroduce steamer transport and establish sustainable Blue Economy projects, requiring an investment of KES 2 billion.
- Develop Homa Bay County as a prominent tourist destination within the Western Kenya Tourist Circuit, with a budget of KES 500 million.
- Invest KES 2 billion in the County Aggregation and Industrial Park at Riwa, Karachuonyo.
- Establish three fish processing plants in Suba North, Suba South, and Rachuonyo North, with an allocation of KES 100 million. Additionally, allocate KES 50 million for Omena drying facilities in these sub-counties.
- Upgrade slums in Homa Bay, Oyugis, Nyandiwa, and Rusinga, with a budget of KES 50 million.
- Allocate KES 2 billion for the Affordable Housing Project, expanding to Mbita and Oyugis, in addition to the ongoing project in Homa Bay Town.
- Install renewable energy plants on the islands of Kiwa, Ringiti, Ngodhe, and Takawiri, with an investment of KES 400 million.
- Allocate KES 170.6 million for Gwasi Spring Development, KES 150 million for the Rusinga Water Project, and an additional KES 500 million for the Carbon Trading Project, to address climate change challenges.



- Allocate KES 200 million for the County Integrity and Accountability Support Project, aimed at promoting ethics and integrity.
- Construct a new county headquarters in Arujo, costing KES 300 million, and establish ICT and Innovation Hubs in each sub-county, with a total budget of KES 450 million. Additionally, spend KES 260 million on Youth and Women Empowerment Centers in Rodi, Ringa, and Adiedo.
- Construct and upgrade all EYE (Early Years Education) centres in the county, with a budget of KES 960 million. Additionally, allocate KES 500 million for the school feeding program over the next 4 years.

AGRICULTURE: ENHANCING VALUE ADDITION

GOVERNOR FLAGS OFF DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION GRANT ITEMS TO FARMERS



Governor Wanga flagging off the soil testing exercise.

By Lawrence Magware

Under the Agriculture Sector Development Support Programme (ASDSP II), Governor Gladys Wanga recently launched an initiative to provide agricultural value chain grants to farmers in Homa Bay County. The program, developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Cooperatives in collaboration with 47 county governments, aims to address food and nutrition security while promoting manufacturing. The grants, worth KES 6.7 million, will be distributed to farmers in the horticulture and aquaculture sectors. The funds will be used to improve soil health, enhance post-harvest management, promote proper utilization of farm inputs, and enhance the quality of farm produce.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to enhance the capacity of different actors within the priority value chains in order to overcome the challenges that hinder the commercialization of agriculture. By supporting farmers in key sectors, the program seeks to contribute to the overall development of the agricultural industry and the well-being of farmers in Homa Bay County.

Further, the Governor launched a private sector-led Rapid Soil Testing campaign in Western Counties. The USAID-funded Feed the Future Kenya Crops and Dairy Market System (KCDMS), targets smallholder farmers and aims to transform

agricultural market systems and create an enabling environment for agribusiness by encouraging government-level reforms that foster investment and benefit farmers in the western region.

In alignment with the vision of building resilient and thriving communities, the County Government of Homa Bay through the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project distributed KES 17 worth of cheques to cotton, poultry, dairy, and banana farmers to enhance their agricultural production, raising income levels, ensure food security and improve nutritional outcomes in the county.



SUPERVISORS, ENUMERATORS TRAINED IN READINESS FOR FARMERS' REGISTRATION



By Abnery Pajero Okora

The County Government of Homa Bay has started training supervisors and enumerators for the new profiling and mapping of agricultural stakeholders and value chain actors slated to start in early September.

The training marks the commencement of the farmer registration exercise conducted jointly by the county and national government, facilitating the collection and documentation of vital information regarding farmers and their farming enterprises. Deputy Governor and Agriculture CECM Hon Joseph Magwanga said 8 senior supervisors, 24 assistant supervisors, 40 supervisors, and 503 enumerators had been picked for the

month-long exercise, where they project to register over half a million farmers.

Speaking at Kabunde Social Hall while opening the three-day training for supervisors who will thereafter train the enumerators, Governor Gladys Wanga said it was important to bring them up to speed with what is expected of them during data collection, adding that she expects, at the bare minimum, a total of 400,000 to shall have been registered at the end of the exercise.

She said that by doing so, the government will be able to better understand the needs and challenges faced by farmers in a bid to assist them in making sound decisions aimed at boosting production and incomes.

The Governor said the registration will not only help in the distribution of farm inputs but also help shape agricultural policies, saying that Homa Bay County should now begin thinking of what agricultural crop or value chain it should be known for as a production and market leader.

“It is through the same database and platform that farmers will receive information on techniques to apply on their farms and available markers,” she said.

CLIMATE CHANGE: HOMA BAY COUNTY UNDERTAKES A CLIMATE CHANGE TRAINING PROGRAM.



County employees undergoing CCA training in Homa Bay Town

By Collins Ogutu

The County Government of Homa Bay's Directorate of Climate Change concluded a 2-day training session for Ward Climate Change Committee members to sensitize them on their roles and structures.

While presiding over the official closure of the training, the CEC member for Water, Environment, Sanitation, Irrigation, Energy, Forestry, and Climate Change Dr. Joash Aloo stressed that climate change issues are key to the County's Development agenda and urged them to be at the forefront in initiating and implementing climate change initiatives at the grass root level. He also emphasized that the training signifies the County Government's commitment to addressing climate change issues and equipping local communities with knowledge and tools to mitigate its effects to adapt to the changing climate and safeguard the well-being of Homabay County residents.

The training carried out in the 40 Wards across the County highlighted local effects of climate change including decreased crop production leading to hunger, conflicts, soil erosion, and the spread of diseases caused by flooding. Additionally, the Committees were taught how to construct vulnerability assessment matrices and educated on hazard maps

to monitor climatic conditions in their respective areas such as strong winds, unreliable rainfall, long dry spells, increased temperatures, and heavy rainfall.

Climate change Director Roy Odongo implored the county residents to adapt to the impact of climate change by adopting climate-smart agricultural practices protecting the environment through proper and efficient waste management and preserving the available resources for future generations. The Ward Climate Change Committee consists of nine members drawn from the forty wards totalling 360 members across the County. The Ward Committees were constituted after the enactment of the Homabay County Climate Change Act 2022.



HEALTH: COUNTY MOVING A GEAR ON HEALTHCARE

FIF PAYING DIVIDENDS

By Billy Onyango

The recently enacted Homa Bay County Facility Improvement Fund has begun paying off. In his routine support supervision tour of Rachuonyo County Hospital in Oyugis, Health Chief Officer Dr. Kevin Osuri launched some of the infrastructural development made possible by the hospital's own revenue through the FIF model.

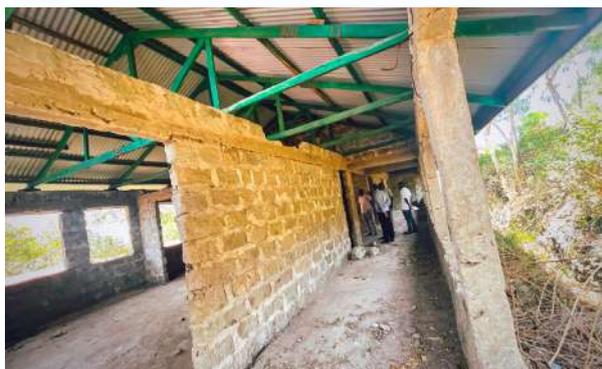
Other than the secure gate that befits the hospital, the facility is also funding on its own the expansion of its laboratory, doing a new administration block, and erecting a concrete perimeter wall.

Magunga Level 4 Hospital in Suba South is another success story in utilizing the FIF by having its pharmaceuticals in a consistent supply through the fund.

Homa Bay County in May joined five other counties among them Makeni, Kisumu, and West Pokot in enacting the legislation that seeks to safeguard health facilities from over-reliance on external funding. The FIF Act gives the hospitals the mandate to spend their revenues at source.



COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITIZE COMPLETING STALLED INFRASTRUCTURES ACROSS HEALTH FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY.



Stalled maternity unit at Obanga Health Center, Gwasi North
By Lawrence Magware

Health facilities in the county with infrastructure development stalled from the previous regimes will have such completed or renovated to have such facilities operate optimally. This, the government will do before considering initiating new projects for those facilities.

While on support supervision in health facilities in Suba South sub-county, County Chief Officer for Public Health and Medical Services Dr. Kevin Osuri revealed his department's plan, saying that it would be unsound to continue wasting public resources on stalled projects. "If a facility has a maternity wing or something like that not being utilized because it was never completed by whoever started it, we are going to complete them and put them into good use to serve our people."

Magunga Level 4 Hospital has a maternity unit which was started in 2003 and has never been completed to date. Obanga Health Centre has no operational maternity ward yet a 20-bed both male and female maternity has been lying fallow since 2016. Kisegi Level 4 Hospital has a 1980s-era multi-purpose block that is not being utilized due to its dilapidated state. These, among others, will be redone to good use by the facilities.

ENDING TRIPLE THREAT: ZEROING-IN ON ERADICATING HIV

By Atieno Otiemo

Homa Bay Governor H.E Gladys Wanga made an impactful appearance at the Maisha Conference 2023 closing ceremony in Mombasa, joining esteemed leaders such as Ms. Mary Muthoni, HSC, PS for State Department for Public Health and Professional Standards.

Governor Wanga, who also serves as the Vice Chair of the Health Committee of the COG, took on the role of Champion of the Triple Threat and Triple Elimination Initiative. This initiative, first initiated in Homa Bay, aims to reduce new HIV infections, teenage pregnancies, and gender-based violence by 75% by 2027.

Governor Wanga emphasized that the country's ultimate goal is to eradicate AIDS by 2030. She believes this objective can be accomplished through strategic partnerships and active community engagement.

"By joining forces, we can create a future where these preventable challenges are eradicated, allowing everyone to thrive," expressed Governor Wanga.

During the ceremony, the PS for Health, Ms. Mary Muthoni, praised leaders from both levels of



Governor Wanga and author Dorothy Onyango, with other delegates, display copies of the author's book 'Beyond Public Confession' during the conference

government, development partners, CSOs, and the community for their significant progress and unwavering commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

She highlighted the remarkable success achieved through ongoing efforts, including the Maisha conference, which was organized to unite all health partners in their endeavours.

They were speaking at the 7th Maisha Scientific Conference whose aim is to provide a platform for policymakers, scientists, communities, and partners to share knowledge and insights gained over almost four decades of addressing the HIV response.

SGBV POLICY: COUNTY BEGINS IMPLEMENTATION

By Lawrence Magware

The County Government of Homa Bay has begun the dissemination of the Homa Bay County Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy to the stakeholders and community gatekeepers as it moves to curb SGBV within the county. The dissemination workshop began in early August at the inter-departmental level and before it roped in sub-county stakeholders from all 9 sub-counties in Homa Bay. This program is sponsored in conjunction with PATH International.

The policy framework developed by the County Government of Homa Bay is coherent with the international, national, and regional legislative and policy frameworks to which Kenya is a signatory as provided in Article 2(6) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The policy seeks to protect women, men, boys, and girls against sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and violence based on gender and social status, and other aggravating overtures based on one's gender.

The Homa Bay County SGBV Policy framework will strengthen mechanisms and strategies that enhance accountability, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of sustainable SGBV programs



and projects while enhancing partnerships for a comprehensive response to increasing incidences of SGBV in the county.

It also proposes to adopt a robust and comprehensive referral mechanism that will be integrative and collaborative by ensuring that the survivors' and perpetrators' rights are properly entrenched in the community set up for the purpose of rehabilitation and restoration.

HOMA BAY SETS UP A NEW FUNERAL PARLOUR

By Collins Ogutu

Safe keeping of the departed loved ones in a morgue continues to be the most respectable and fashionable manner of paying last respect not only in the African culture but also globally. The County Chief Officer for Public Health and Medical Services Dr. Kevin Osuri today presided over the groundbreaking of a spectacular ultra-modern funeral parlor at Homabay County Teaching and Referral Hospital.

The comprehensive project, which is estimated to cost KES 48 million, will be completed in the next six months.

Speaking during the event, Dr Osuri stressed that the new facility once completed and operationalized will meet the needs of residents in preserving their loved ones with dignity.



Artistic impression of the new funeral parlour

"The project aims to decongest the current morgue because it has 112 body capacity, unlike the current 8 body capacity." Stated Osuri

SPORTS: HISTORY HOME AND AWAY

HOMA BAY FETED FOR A FIRST-EVER PODIUM FINISH AT THE KICOSCA, DESTINED FOR EA

By Lawrence Magware and Livone Molo



The Homa Bay County Choir on stage at Meru TTC with a folk song

Homa Bay County received a special mention at the closing ceremonies of the 10th edition of Kenya Inter-County Sports and Cultural Association games in Meru after the choir finished second to give Homa Bay a maiden top finish in any discipline at the annual event and a ticket to represent the country at the East Africa Local Authorities Sports and Cultural Association events in Rwanda in November this year.

Host governor who is also the reigning KICOSCA patron Hon Bishop Kawira Mwangaza commended Homa Bay and heaved praises on her counterpart Governor Gladys Wanga on the kind of transformational leadership she has offered since taking over last year.

“For quite a long time, everyone thought once you have heard of Kisumu and sometimes Kisii then you are done Nyanza, but today you have not heard of Nyanza until you hear Homa Bay. My friend is doing wonders there,” said Governor Kawira as

she joined jubilant choir members in celebrating finishing second in the folk songs category behind Narok.

As the week-long games and performances drew to a close, bringing to an end one of the biggest sporting activities in the country, Homa County had at least something to carry home. The Rift Valley football derby between West Pokot and Nakuru offered a scintillating hurra with the North Rift County pipping their central counterparts to also win their first trophy.

Homa Bay County was making another stab at the inter-county competitions in Meru where they presented football, netball, and choir. Both football and netball bowed out of the competitions at the quarter-final stages, a remarkable improvement from the previous edition in Kisumu where the netball team was hounded out at the preliminary stage while football could not go past the first knock-out round.

FOOTBALLING HISTORY FOR HOMA BAY COUNTY

By Lawrence Magware

A return to the topflight and a debut for the other was a pulsating match at the Raila Odinga Stadium - Homa Bay, the first competitive fixture played at the country's newest stadium, ending in a disappointing 0-1 loss to hosts Shabana.

Shabana FC and Murang'a SEAL played to the billing, cheered on by a fervently charged crowd in a fully packed stadium, with the cast including host governor H.E Gladys Wanga and her Kisii County counterpart Simba Arati. A rather academic first half ended with goalscoring chances few and far between, both teams coy on getting fully out of the blocks but a glorious Shabana's Denis Wafula waste of the first clearest chance for his side, hesitating to shoot when it was easier to do so provided the main highlight.

The second half was livelier, Shabana dominating from the onset with the inter-linking play of their front trio of

Wafula, Nehemiah Onchiri, and Brian Machira posing a consistent headache to the Central Kenya representatives' rear-guard but all guilty of wasting chance after chance after Batts Awita drilled a powerful shot from the area to gift Murang'a SEAL a dream start to FKF Premier League. This event marked another milestone for the administration



Governors Wanga and Simba Arati were among thousands who spectated Shabana FC when they played Murang'a SEAL at Raila Odinga Stadium

of Governor Gladys Wanga, being the first ever Kenya Premier League match played in the county and a pointer that the governor is all out to position Homa Bay County as highly competitive among the community of other counties as possible.

BLUE ECONOMY: COUNTY CONSOLIDATING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT, COURTING PARTNERSHIPS

By Lawrence Magware

The County Government of Homa Bay is on a mission to modernize its blue economy and fisheries in order to unlock the potential that lies within the lake resource. While well aware that to improve the living conditions of the county residents who derive their livelihoods from the lake, the Department of Blue Economy and Fisheries is already exploring mechanisms for sustainable exploitation of the lake resources besides optimizing the utilization of the water and the catchment areas for wealth creation and increasing fisheries productivity and output. To this end, the department and the government at large are consolidating stakeholder management in the sector, roping in sector players such as the Beach Management Units and the umbrella network as well as other state and non-state actors within the sector.

In furtherance to maximizing this potential, the county government of Homa Bay and the State

Department for Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Blue Economy are set to partner in managing, harnessing, and utilizing the resources of Lake Victoria for the betterment of the local economy. This was revealed during a courtesy call on Governor Gladys Wanga by the Blue Economy team from Nairobi led by Mr. Rodrick Kundu, Director of Fisheries at the State Department for Fisheries Kenya. They lauded the county government under the stewardship of Governor Wanga for the efforts and interventions around the blue economy that have already been initiated. Mr. Kundu and his team were in the county as part of the assessment on landing site projects along the lakefront counties. While appreciating the state for seeking to work with the counties to improve blue economy outcomes, Governor Wanga mentioned that the County is moving with speed to put up modern fish landing sites and urged the State to expedite their facilitation towards the same, to follow on to the commitment by the President on the lake-front regeneration projects that need to be launched later in the year.



Homa Bay County
P.O. Box 469 - 40300, Homa Bay.
Governor@homabay.go.ke

Endless Potential