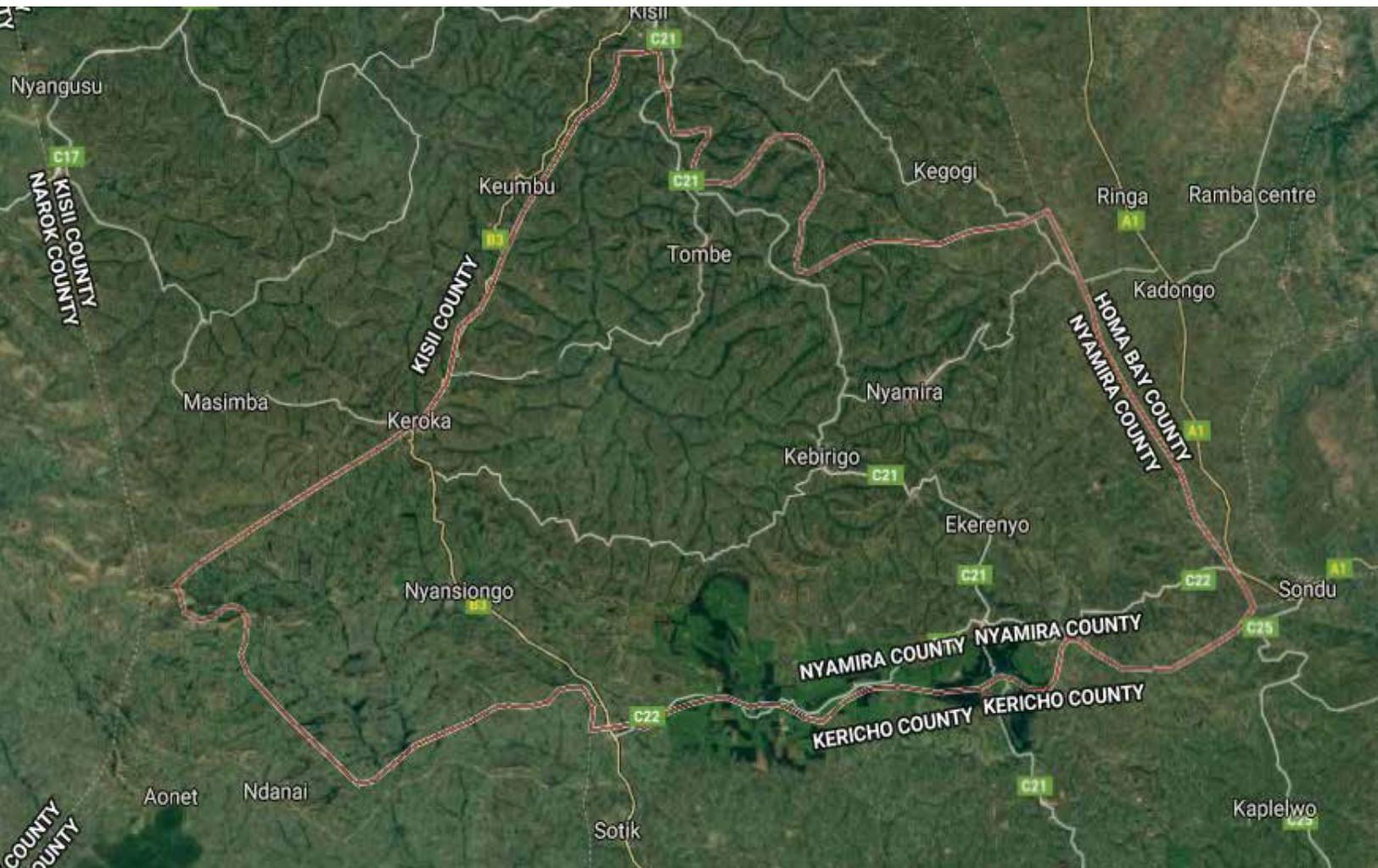




THE NYAMIRA County Weekly Bulletin

PREMIER EDITION



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Farmer says that, even with a backlash from colleagues in the neighborhood, he never gave up and has since been a supplier of the fruit within the village and nearby markets



Foreword

Welcome to our first edition of a series of our quarterly editions of this newsletter. The County bulletin team with the full support of the County Government of Nyamira leadership and general staff wishes our readers an insightful episode.

This will be the first official publication of the **County Weekly Bulletin**. We will have a quarterly edition **The County Drone** and finally a yearly magazine called the '**Full Drone**'. Our publications will be giving every reader a bird's eye view of our County both from the government and citizen's perspective.

While having our obligations intact and service delivery on progress, we also strive to keep our readers informed and entertained as well. We will be introducing much more exciting segments in the coming editions.

This newsletter is mainly done by the County communication team and we rely on our staff for the items published. I am encouraged by the growing interest from members of staff to contribute to the County publications. Remember we all hold information on behalf of our citizens and whenever possible we will strive to give it out willingly be it in

print or electronic.

At this juncture, I am pleased to extend my gratitude to the office of the County secretary and our CECs for giving us the kind of support we are enjoying. It is getting easier by the day getting material from our offices for our use and we can never be thankful enough.

Finally, it is important to note that most programs are well on course under the leadership of H.E John Nyagarama, the Governor of Nyamira County. The County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022 is approved. A sneak preview of the document will lay bare the elaborate and concrete plans the County leadership has in store for its citizens. We also have our Annual Development Plans and the Fiscal Strategy Paper 2018/19 also approved. All these point to ambitious targets for our officers who in turn are up to task.

Enjoy.

Edwin Manoti.

Team leader, County bulletin team.

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County to fully roll out E-procurement soon

By Editorial team

WITH THE NEW SYSTEM, NO PAPER WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AS THE PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE TAKES SHAPE

The County Government of Nyamira is putting up measures to digitize procurement services starting January 2019.

This in essence means all procurement services will be accessed online.

Speaking during the closure of a week-long training organized by the County government in conjunction with the national treasury, the County's Director of procurement Ms. Peres Mose said that following the presidential directive that all government procurement of goods and services be done online, there is need for constant training on e-procurement services.

"Starting January next year, all the pillars of procurement will be well served with e-procurement for we shall have laid the necessary foundations to that effect." Said Ms. Mose.

She added that in the new system, all the services that are related to procurement will be fast and transparent because all services will be accessed on the online portal including evaluation and tendering process.

During the training, national treasury's facilitator, under the Integrated Financial and Information Systems (IFMIS) department, Mr. Fredrick Musembi, took County staff through the procurement plan and requisition, sourcing all through to the approval stage.

Suppliers were sensitized on supplier management on self-registration, request of password, supplier classification, supplier and contact directory amongst others. Ms. Mose added that the e-procurement information training was key to her staff in terms of inspecting, returning and cancelling a contract.



Nyamira County Governor H.E John Nyagarama (centre) listens as national treasury's Fredrick Musembi (right) speaks on the new e-procurement platform procedures. Looking on is the County's Director of procurement Ms. Peres Mose (second left) and deputy chief of staff Kefa Mocheche(left). Ms. Mose and Mr. Musembi had paid the Governor a courtesy call in his office. Photo GPS

"These services were being done on paper in the past but with the digitization of services, there is need to sensitize all the staff on what is going on in government," added the County's head of procurement promising that her team will be up to the task to help make the system work for the betterment of services in the procurement sector.

She added that for efficiency in accessing digital systems, the national treasury will provide an internet portal through a gadget that will solve internet connectivity problems.

The training that took place from 8th to 12th October 2018 at Borabu hotel within Nyamira town, was also meant to unlock challenges encountered by procurement officers including but not limited to network strength.

Four days of the training were set aside to train County staff, while one day was set aside for suppliers who were taken through supplier sensitization on sourcing supplier responses and IFMIS membership registration. Other Key participants in the training were, finance director Dr. Philip Machuki, procurement and accounting officers and contractors.

Complete access to Government information is now a reality!

By Edwin Manoti

The Nyamira County government has intensified efforts to ensure all their citizens, stakeholders and development partners enjoy a near effortless access to information from its offices organs or even officers.

In a bid to ensure the above, the County Governor has instructed all directorates charged with information dissemination and access to stretch to their length and ensure that all angles are well reached.

“We are all keen on ensuring all citizens access information any time they wish to and from anywhere. We are instituting measures to guarantee proactive disclosures too” said the governor, H.E. John Nyagarama.

The three main directorates directly linked to access to information by the citizens of Nyamira are Public Participation and Civic Education, Information, Communications Technology and Communication and Public Relations. These directorates are domiciled in the department of Public Service Management under the attentive leadership of the department’s County Executive Committee Member Mr. Johnstone Obike.

Ambitious efforts are in progress to ensure compliance to the constitutional requirement of every citizen’s right to access information as stated under article 35 of the constitution of Kenya and the Access to Information Act. The County directors in charge of the mentioned units are developing a combined service delivery master plan to ensure seamless delivery of this provision.



A sneak view of part of the portal as it appears online to the user

Access to information trainings

A number of trainings have been organized for staff in various cadres to help in realizing the strategies aimed at improving information access. The head of digital and social Media, went for a Counties’ training program which was facilitated by the Commission on Administrative Justice – a constitutional body mandated to oversee this function. Recently, a team of Communication, ICT, Administration and Public Participation officers underwent another training Kisumu in relation to access to information.

These trainings are meant to build capacity amongst staff who are directly charged with the responsibility of ensuring that information is gathered and disseminated in time for the benefit of the public.” said Joash Onyonka, the acting director charge of corporate communication and Public Relations.

Adding that these sessions were all in a bid to build professional capacity in our officers and increase the collective capacity to our senior officers on matters proactive disclosures, complaints handling, knowledge and processes of information handling, Onyonka was quick to say that, more efforts are being put in place for civic education, for the citizens too need education on the significance of being an informed electorate.

County government information is a click away

According to the director of Public Participation & Civic Education Mr. Dan Onyancha, non-physical players are key components of the targeted groups. The online population is inexorable if we are to succeed in accessing our publics.

“The non-physical players are key in our quest to provide information proactively, we are soon establishing a platform through a link on the County government website. This will provide opportunity for people to give complaints and compliments with a click of a button” added Onyancha.

The E-Participation portal which is brain child of the Public participation staff supported by the able directorate of Information and Communications Technology under the leadership of MsSibiaNyamweya.

Ms.Nyamweya noted that her directorate is soon availing a bulk short message service (SMS) platform to all County departments for use in communicating to the populace.

“This platform enables citizens to receive short messages directly to their phones on planned government functions and major events” said Ms. Nyamweya adding that going forward, major programs aimed at enhancing access to information will be carried out. Digitization of all government records is one such area.

With technological advancements the County government of Nyamira is planning to digitize all its records and documents for easy retrieval, said the County’s secretary, Mr. Eric Onchana during an interview in his office.

“All government records and files are supposed to be scanned and stored in soft copy besides the hard copies for the world has gone digital and Nyamira (County) cannot lag behind by storing information manually.” Added Onchana, who is also the head of public service in the County.

Re-organization

Mr. Aori, recently, under instructions from the County Governor, restructured the directorate of Communication and that of Public Participation, a shakeup that saw officers deployed to sub-counties and to departmental level.

We now have Sub-County communication officers stationed at the headquarters of the sub-counties.

Similarly, we have Complaints, Compliments and Access to Information officers also stationed at the sub-counties. These officers provide official corporeal channels for any citizen to deliver their grievances. Feedback channels will be devised in due course to address the concerns raised through these efforts.

“The officers at the sub-counties must ensure all wards in their respective stations are accessed” said Mr.Onchana.



Public Participation and Civic Education for a Citizen-led Government

WITH PEOPLE POWER AS A TOOL STANDING BETWEEN PROJECT INITIATION AND COMPLETION, THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT LAYS BARE A CITIZEN-LED DEVELOPMENT CULTURE TO FOSTER GROWTH

By Dan Onyancha (*Director Public Participation and Civic Education*)

The County government of Nyamira has come up with capacity building plans, for the development committees where the capacities become the basis upon which poverty eradication measures and techniques are discussed.

The devolved unit is alive to the fact that poverty, dependency syndrome and community pulse cannot be overcome without the change of mindsets. Counties should invest in civic education and public participation as a way of facilitating mindset change and enabling the people to take charge of devolution.

The government has insisted that engaging the people through public participation is an easy way of helping grow confidence in the management of devolved resources. And that's why we have deliberately put in place mechanisms that will ensure the great people of Nyamira are at the center of County government programs.

"Counties need to invest in civic education, community capacity building and mindset change programs," said Prof Kibwana, a celebrated icon in matters of public participation. Mr Kibwana is also the Governor of Makueni.

Inspired by the great strides his Makueni counterpart has made in this area, H.E John Nyagarama, in a recent peer to peer learning in Makueni, wondered "what could be possible for humanity? Can we actually choose to create the future we most desire, or are we at the mercy of forces beyond our control? Where do we find an alternative to the dominant chorus of cynicism against devolution? How might we enliven civic engagement and revitalize social causes and governments of social good?"

Power is getting devolved and as similar, authority and the mandate is to community members so that they can plan and decide on the issues that affect them. Just like in Makueni, County governments have to relinquish to the development committees' powers to design priorities and even to execute what can be done at community level."

So far, County officials have benchmarked with Makueni County on best practices in the area of civic education and public participation; rolled out an ambitious civic education program across the County in partnership with Ajile and Harmonized Assistance for Devolved Institutions (AHADI) through Keeping Alive Societies Hope (KASH); trained various

officers on content and mechanisms of effective public participation; establishing a structured public participation framework; constituted and trained public complaints and complement committee; setting up compatible mechanisms of access to information for the public for qualitative and effective citizen engagement; held very effective public participation sessions in the past on matters related to planning and budgeting.

The government's next plan is to bring into light the County's top leadership of the County assembly and the executive in embracing the real ideals, principles, conditions and mechanisms of public participation by encouraging them to support in the establishment of requisite enablers.

Plans are also afoot to create a stakeholder's inventory for all sectors for ease of engagement as the County government fast tracks the Draft Policy and Bill on public participation to ensure that all these are approved, adopted and commenced within the shorted time reasonable.

Public participation is not just about gatherings in town halls and therefore should be handled systematically to provide the real needs and priorities for

the communities. We are aware that the people of Nyamira have the solutions for their problems. Our people only lack the capacity and opportunities to plan for themselves and defend what clearly belong to them. And precisely, this is what the government has realized and now wants to enhance.

We have also resolved to devolve the powers of participation to the communities and watch the poser of self-governance taking over in our government. This is achievable through our deliberate mechanisms of informing, involving, collaborating, consulting and empowering the citizens in our government programs.

Public participation will improve good governance,

By Joash Onyonka (Ag. Director communication and PR)

The constitution of Kenya gives Kenyans the power to design and decide their destiny.

This makes it illegal for any government, be it devolved or national to make unilateral decisions affecting the lives of Kenyans without engaging them beforehand.

Gone are the days when government bureaucrats and politicians started projects which ended up being rejected by the people even after millions of shillings had been spent to do them. Public participation is the basic principle of our democracy and has become one of the important conditions which are essential for the implementation of projects.

Development practitioners, however, see decentralization as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for involving cross-section of local people into development intervention.

Nyamira, is among the counties that have done their best in ensuring that this concept of public participation does not only exist in paper but in reality.

Bottlenecks to public participation

Although public participation is a brilliant idea, it can also be determined that consultation processes are not equally pronounced in all counties and communities. In many cases, support on behalf of the decision makers is lacking, as political and administrative bodies fear constraint of their authority.

International and regional agreements, as well as popular pressure to open up governmental decision-making processes, are spurring national governments to take steps to improve transparency, participation, and accountability.

With public participation, the knowledge, skills and resources among the people can be mobilized to increase the effectiveness of government initiatives. Equally, when people are allowed to take part in assessing problems, resources and opportunities, they acquire information and enhance their awareness of factors affecting their lives.



Public participation encourages people to take more responsibility for their actions and puts pressure on governments to address their issues more explicitly and effectively.

The promulgation of the constitution in August 2010 provides a strong legal foundation for the enhancement of participatory governance through devolved structures at County level.

Overall, this is an important milestone, but it is critical at this stage to take stock of the little progress we have made as counties. Participatory development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves.

Broader participation and engagement of key stakeholders, public transparency, and institutional accountability have gained greater importance. Lessons learned are extremely helpful in facilitating the successful

implementation of new policies and business processes. These experiences have demonstrated that policies tend to be more effective when there is stakeholder ownership of initiatives and new programs and projects that reflect their needs and views.

As demonstrated in World Bank sponsored programs, effective development requires the early and substantive involvement of all stakeholders in the design of activities that will affect them.

Indeed, there is high level of quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of development initiatives when stakeholders view their participation as meaningful.

In several occasions, a consensus among development partners and intended beneficiaries is always evident on the right of affected communities to participate in the activities. This strengthens the justification for implementing participatory approaches in development planning.

Nyamira County youth to smile to the bank

By: SIRUEL ONG'ERA

Tens of youth trained on how to access online jobs in Nyamira County have started reaping big, following a training program that was sponsored by the County government dubbed AJIRA.

The youth, who majority were jobless are now earning in thousands having successfully trained in various fields.

Thirty two year old, Innocent Nyamwaro. A resident of Nyamaiyaward, life for him was bare even when he owned a cellphone and laptop not knowing that he would be partly self-employed.

"It is amazing how this on-line work has positively changed my life following the training acquired from Ajira program," said Nyamwaro adding that with the skills he had gained from the training, he can engage in online jobs with ease from the comfort of his house.

A month ago, over 70 youth from the County were trained on soft skills in online work, content and article writing skills, account creation and using of the web to do research work.

After the online job engagement, Nyamwaro says all he does is to access his payment through mobile banking.

Having embraced the online jobs from clients sourced from all over the globe, is not only a hobby but also a recorded talent.

"It is a dream come true. Together with my peers, we no-longer lazy around politicking, angling for handouts from politicians or gambling with our free time. Ajira training program has extensively upped our skills development, a move that has made us properly march our online jobs with skills" Says Nyamwaro.

He is quick to educate fellow youth streaming into gambling joints that there are better engagements that can generate income other than gambling. "How I wish my fellow youth could embrace Ajira programme. We work under flexible terms of which none can imagine. On a bare minimum, am able to pick and choose clients at my leisure since most of them require our urgent services of which I decide on who to serve, which task to sign in for and how much I want to earn," remarks the youthful Nyamwaro.

His success story is not different from those of other youth in the County who trained and graduated from Ajira online programme two months ago.

Faith Kerubo Makori, from Ekerenyo Ward cannot be left behind as she tells her success story on how Ajira Online has turned her life around.

"Am able to not only earn cash doing online work at my free time, but also use the learnt online skills to pick and choose clients of my choice. Working online has since remained a plus to our family members. We have always relied on our Dad's pay especially, but now we are properly sorted using my online skills even as we keep waiting his monthly pay", says Ms. Makori.

Many other youth who trained under the program say they are able to earn up to Kshs, 4000 a day when doing various online assignments.

The graduates who have since remained busy are able to transact online business through digital marketing, work on job search and further mentor other willing youth who feel the need to embrace the online platform assignments.

Though, there has been a challenge of online connectivity within and around the County, graduates can still manage through and earn from their online works.

According to the Nyamira County Director of Information Communication and Technology (ICT), Ms Sibia Nyamweya. The training may be introduced to sub-County level to meet all youth no matter their region within the County.

“We shall ensure that our youth center is properly equipped with more computers and a reliable internet connectivity which should be accessible to our youth,” said Ms Nyamweya adding that, there is an urgent need to ask Ajira programme leadership to work on a continuous

partnership memorandum of understanding leveled at empowering more Nyamira youth willing to embrace Ajira.

According to the Nyamira County Secretary and Head of Public Service Erick Aori Onchana, the County government is creating all avenues in a bid to create job opportunities for the County’s youth.

“In our Annual Development Plans (ADP), the leadership of Governor John Obiero Nyagarama has prioritized matters of Youth Empowerment through job creations. Embracing of Ajira online programme is one such positive move”. Said the County Secretary.

Value addition makes farmers reap big

By Dennis Kirwa

After laying a strong foundation on ensuring sufficient food for residents of Nyamira County, the department of Agriculture, livestock and fisheries is seeking to boost its food production and encourage its citizens to do Agri-business in line with the County’s big four agenda and that of the national government.

Similar to the annual development plan, the department has earmarked several projects to ensure that the anticipated targets are reached at.

Poverty reduction and nutrition improvement using orange fleshed sweet potatoes is one of the ongoing project across the County’s 20 wards for the purpose of commercializing sweet potatoes production.

The World Bank has also funded the National Agriculture and Rural Inclusive Growth Project and County Contribution to National Projects and with Nyamira being a beneficiary, the project will seek to improve productivity and enhance profit levels among farmers.

In an interview with the department’s County Executive Committee Member, Ms Peris Mong’are, these strides

being made are solely meant to boost farm output and increase crop value which will in turn increase profits.

“We don’t want famers to seek alternative means of getting money, we are trying to maintain them, give them all the necessities that will generate profits in their income” Said Ms Mong’are.

Aquaculture productivity and promotion is another major area that is targeted to boost pond stocking in order to improve fish farming. On the other hand, the department is seeking to make improvements in poultry farming as well as equipping the famers with necessary materials for poverty reduction.

Artificial insemination and animal vaccination are to be improved for better milk production for Nyamira residents.

“We want to enter into zero disease and pests society and that’s the only way we can improve productivity”, said Mong’are.

Food security is among the major four pillars that the national government is pushing for, as it seeks to make lives for Kenyans better thus the County governments

are trying to implement this important agenda. Nyamira County government, through the department has since worked on this process of achieving vision 2030.

Commercial bee production is among the major successful in areas the department can be proud of. A total of 1,300 bee hives have been purchased between the years 2013/14/15/16, and distributed to beneficiaries. Commercial Pasture and fodder production project; Where a total of 8,000 bales of hay were produced between 2013 and 2014 while 15,000 bales of hay were produced between 2015 and 2016 earning farmers a total of 2.4 Million shillings and 4.5 Million Shillings respectively.

“The County government, led by Governor John Nyagarama, has also done promotion and commercialization of the Local poultry upgrading project across the County. On this project, a total of 2,100 birds were procured and distributed between 2013 and 2014 financial year while 5,000 birds were distributed between 2015 and 2016.”

“Since then the directorate has well satisfactorily implemented the commercial dairy Goat project. During the said period, a total of 360 dairy goats were procured and distributed to farmer groups while a total of 65 kids have been born thereby increasing the dairy goat population in Nyamira County,” added Ms. Mong’are.

The County has also supported the marketing of livestock products in the County by supporting establishment of a milk cooling facility at Kineni area of Esise ward as well as establishment of a honey processing plant in Nyamusi area of Bokeiraward. Besides, a number of dairy groups have been assisted with trainings and demonstration. Successful organization and implementation of the County wide heat synchronization and insemination program is another achievement that can be documented from the department.

A total of 8,000 cows were synchronized and inseminated in 2014. Between 2014 and 2015, a total of 20,000 cows were successfully inseminated. “We want to improve breeds among local farmers that will ultimately lead to increased produce per a cow. This will ultimately increase milk production for commercial use.” said Governor John Nyagarama when he launched the artificial insemination (AI) at Gesore primary school in 2013.



Six years into devolution, agriculture department has produced per- excellent

Dennis Kirwa



Between 2013 and 2015, a routine County wide vaccination of livestock was carried out where a total of 31,488 livestock and 1,222 pets were vaccinated. The department has also over seen the construction of two category B slaughter houses by private sector players at Nyamira town and Kebirigo markets.

Successful Meat Inspection services is another area of success in all the five sub counties. A total of 16,094 carcasses were inspected between 2014 and 2015. Since the start of devolution fish farming has seen a tremendous growth where 700 fish ponds have been constructed and stocked with 700,000 fingerlings. “We have trained over 2000 fish farmers on their farming before issuing them with fingerlings” said Ms. Mong’are.

The department has successfully distributed over 40,000 tissue culture bananas to 400 farmer groups across the entire County whereby 10,000 farmers were supported with subsidized farm inputs across the entire County. For better and improved products, 80 Green houses have been dispensed to farmers in Production of Horticultural Crops. Seven tones of Sweet potato vines have been as well issued to 50 farmer groups.

Vegetables farmers are now drying their vegetables for export and for long distance markets supplies after the government gave them 20 vegetable solar driers across the 20 Nyamira County Wards and as well 350 Kg of Local vegetable seeds supplied to 400 farmer groups for this production.

The County has also supported four pyrethrum nurseries with planting materials while four value chain farmer platforms have been formed in the County with their membership drawn from the wards and sub Counties.

Farmers training going to curb army worms

By Colleen Mayaka

Kilimo Bora Public Private Partnership, a community based organization is conducting farmer trainings and exhibitions in a bid to curb the fall army worm menace in Nyamira County.

In the recent past, farmers have decried low maize production due to the fall army worm invasion calling on the intervention of the government and other non-state actors to salvage the situation.

It is on this premise that “Kilimo Bora Public Private Partnership is chipping in by carrying out trainings and exhibitions to assist the farmers.”said the organization’s head

During one of the training sessions under the auspices of Highchem Limited which is an appendage of Kilimo Bora PPP, farmers received technical expertise on pesticide handling and were advised to work hand in hand with extension officers in order to conquer the war against fall army worms.



Mr. Onyancha (in white dustcoat) of Highchem Ltd conducting training and exhibitions at Kioge in Nyamira North sub-County

County cooperatives department gives water pumps and drying beds to coffee factories

By Christine Ogora

About 20 coffee factories have received water pumps and drying beds from the County Government of Nyamira.

“The water pumps and coffee drying beds will help reduce the production costs and ensure that the processed coffee is cleaner hence the cost of the products will be sold at a higher price” said Peter Muga, CeCm for Trade, Tourism and Cooperatives.

The cooperative directorate is to give cooperative advisory services between the societies, help the society’s annual general election in choosing their committee members,

carry out auditing in the cooperative societies, provide cooperative education to committee members and to enforce cooperative legislation.

Mr Muga, who handed over the water pumps to officials of the coffee factories at the County Headquarters announced that the County will donate six beds to each of the 20 coffee factories as part of the County’s efforts in improving the fortunes of coffee farmers.

“We are requesting various coffee management boards to employ casual workers as a way of creating employment

for our youth and reducing production costs. Through reduced production costs, farmers will get better returns," said Muga.

The donation of the water pumps and drying beds is the most recent efforts as the County Government of Nyamira continues in its efforts to revive various cooperatives. Coffee farming is still active in various parts of West and North Mugirango constituencies.

Recently, the coffee farmers asked the County government to assist them boost their fortunes.

"The department is in the process of drafting a bill of County cooperative enterprise fund to enable County

cooperatives societies to access low interest loans so as to raise the living standards of members and ensure all factories are equipped and are upto merit ."said chief officer Mr. Kerina

Girango cooperative society, in Gachuba ward, Masaba North sub-County is among the cooperative societies beneficiaries from the County government. The factory is the best paying coffee society as it complies with cooperative laws.

"It always conduct peaceful meetings and elections. They always emphasize with gender equality and no wrangles between committee and members have ever been experienced." added the chief officer.

Manga stadium to be complete in a year's time, says Nyagarama

By Christine Ogora

Manga stadium will be completed by next year, Nyamira County Governor John Nyagarama has promised.

During a visit to the stadium on Thursday the governor said that its very necessarily for the County to have this important facility in place by the said time.

"We going to consult for structural design and once we have it advertise the tender. We going to start in phases and my government in the sports department is going to mobilize resources towards the completion of the stadium." Nyagarama said.

The County already has built a perimeter wall and ablution block, constructed a gate house, opened roads for easy access of the stadium, done electrical works within, drilled a bore hole and ensured that there is septic

tanks for water storage and better drainage.

The County boss who was accompanied by County Executive Committee members Bernard Osumo, John Omanwa and Manga Ward MCA, Enock Okero said that the Executive will request the County Assembly to re-allocate the Sh19million meant for Nyamaiya Stadium and as well save some cash from other projects towards the completion of the Stadium.

"There is no need of having several incomplete projects. Let's finalize one major project and then deal with others," added the governor.

"We are going to our third phase after leveling the ground. In this phase we will construct a pavilion with good shades. We have proposed to have offices within.

Which will include; VIP, Boardroom, changing room, entertainment, 1st aid, referees, shower, media center, toilets both VIP and ordinary rooms, storage tanks and stores for sports equipment. "Said director of sports Ndambaka.

Ndambaka added that, they will put a security fence along the track and football pitch, construct security offices at the pavilion, make sure there is power backup once there is blackout in the middle of the matches and a kitchen where food will be prepared when necessary.

The County expects the completion to bring positive changes such as; tapping and nurturing talent, curbing of unsocial behaviors among the youth, business opportunities to emerge hence improving income to the society, generation of revenue to the County since the stadium will attract many businesses.

The Governor promised to invite the head of the state President Uhuru Kenyatta to visit the County to launch the project once it's completed.

Nyamira county Law office

By: Esther Asati (Director Legal Services)

County governments are a product of the devolved system of governance introduced in Kenya by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The process of devolution, creation of governance in County governments are all legal processes.

These processes do not operate in isolation but must align to international and national standards of good governance and development especially as contained in international law, the Sustainable Development Goals, national law, vision 2030 and the President's Big four agenda. To achieve these, the need for competent, robust and readily available legal services is paramount.

To meet this, the County government of Nyamira established the directorate of legal services, which is

the County Law Office, to provide legal services to the County government generally, its various agencies and officers at all levels. The directorate is currently headed by the director legal services.

The functions of the directorate include giving advisory opinion to the County Government, its agencies and officers, representing the County government in courts, tribunals and any other legal proceedings in which the County Government is a party, aiding the County government departments in drafting of policy, legislative proposals and Bills under articles 183 and 185 of the Constitution and overseeing the legislative process to ensure that the integrity thereof is upheld, guiding the County government in amendment and revision of County laws, negotiating, drafting and interpreting

agreements legal instruments, inclusive of contracts, agreements, Memorandum of Understanding, PPPs and correspondences and related matters and to conduct legal research and audit.

Since it was established, the directorate has made great milestones and is among the leading County law offices in the country. The directorate handles much of the County government litigation by drawing the requisite pleadings, appearing in court on behalf of County government and engaging Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism where appropriate and applicable.

The County Law Office has been able to guide the County government through the enactment of various pieces of legislations and the implementation thereof. It renders advisory opinion on various matters and handles, interprets and drafts various documents as the need arises.

The directorate launched the legislative drafting guide in conjunction with the Kenya Law Reform Commission and held a one-week training session training for trainers in legislative drafting and use of the guide. The guide is meant to and has been of great assistance in drafting of both policy and legislative proposals.

In conjunction with the Council of Governors legal department, the directorate invited top experts in legislative drafting for one week to train and guide members of the County Assembly and the County Executive Committee in Policy and Legislative drafting. This department was key in overseeing compliance with

the law during the assumption of office, constitution and transition of Government after the last General Elections under the Constitution, the County Governments Act, the relevant legal notice and other laws.

We were also instrumental in the process of identifying, verifying and validation of the Assets and liabilities of the defunct local Authorities in conjunction with Inter-Governmental Relations Technical Committee. From a single member of staff in 2014, the directorate has grown to six members namely; two clerical officers, a legal clerk, a secretary, legal counsel and the director legal services.

The overall objective of this directorate is to be able to continue to avail the best legal services to the County government for benefits of the citizens of this County. The directorate aspires to support the County government to uphold the rule of law, due process and other constitutional principles of good governance.

The aspirations of the directorate are to be able to continue to avail the best legal services to the County government of Nyamira for the benefit of the people of Nyamira County.

In this regard efforts have been beefed up to strengthen the directorate by recruitment of more lawyers to ensure that government legal matters are handled in house as in most government settings, legal audit is conducted frequently to ensure compliance and gauge progress, legal research is conducted continually to keep current, and partnerships with relevant government agencies strengthened.



In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same

Albert Einstein



Passion fruit farmer reaps big

FARMER SAYS THAT, EVEN WITH A BACKLASH FROM COLLEAGUES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, HE NEVER GAVE UP AND HAS SINCE BEEN A SUPPLIER OF THE FRUIT WITHIN THE VILLAGE AND NEARBY MARKETS

By Masaba North, Communication Team

Passion fruit farming and consumption is gradually gaining popularity in Nyamira as the fruit's production gets pace in the County.

This farming enterprise can easily be started with little capital yet the financial returns can be more due to high returns, less labor and the fruit occupies less space. It is possible to earn more when a farmer does direct marketing which involves approaching restaurants, supermarkets and hotels.

When Mr. James Gichana, a resident of Gesima ward, heard that there was a project in the department of agriculture for promoting passion fruit farming in the area that would help him raise enough school fees for his children, he wasted no time but ventured into the trade instantly. Mr. Gichana, states that he started the project in a small piece of land and gets a good yield in which a single tree produces 300 fruits per season.

In one good harvest, Gichana says he gets 80 kilos of the fruit. A kilo sells at ksh 80 in the local market. "I realized other farm produce beside passion fruits would not provide adequate income to effectively sustain my day to day activities. That is when I gave it a try" Said Gichana, adding that since he introduced the crop despite discouragements from fellow farmers, it has turned out to be such a successful story.

The small scale farmer says that although fruit farming is relatively new in the area, he has observed some benefits, such as providing jobs for many locals both directly and indirectly since they are employed to pick, grade and package the fruits. He has also been able to work from home as he does other businesses.

It has also been proven that this fruit is a perennial plant; once planted, its lifespan is long, often exceeding 3 years; all these depends on how the plant is managed. During this long growth period, a farmer will be performing farm maintenance practices



such as weeding, spraying with pesticides, and fungicides among others as he waits for harvest.

He added that, as much as passion fruits are grown on both open and field crops, they can also do well in a greenhouse. Gichana said that, the crop thrives well in an open space where there is interference from other similar fruits.

According to Masaba North sub-County agricultural officer Mathew Ikonya, the climate in Masaba north sub-County is favorable for passion fruits which does very well in high altitude areas. Mr Ikonya added that the crop is adaptable to a wide agro-ecological zone from low lands to the highlands. He advised that one needs to dig 1 ½ feet deep hole, mix the soil with manure, place the seedlings then you mulch and fertilize around the plant finally you water it.

Mr. Gichana further insisted that, this fruit has numerous health benefits and its rich in vitamin A and C, however, it needs proper care for it to yield high returns on top of that he invites extension officers to check on the passion fruit farmers and advise on their condition and whether they require any proper attention. Even though there is a ready market for passion fruits, Mr Ikonya suggested that there is need to provide a ready market for our passion fruit farmers, an issue he says his office is looking into.



Passion fruit plants in Mr. Gichana's farm

County upgrades markets to ease trade

By Christine Ogora

The County government of Nyamira, through the department of trade, tourism and cooperative societies has put in place infrastructure to various businesses County wide. The relevant department is continuously working to ensure that there is a conducive environment for business.

Magombo market, in Magombo ward is among the many markets that the County government has constructed. The market, whose foundation stone was laid on January 2015, was completed in December 2016 under the full funding of the County government.

The market that serves locals around is well fenced and lights installed to ensure security in the market and its environs to enhance 24hr economy. It operates daily, but Sunday and Wednesday being its official market days.

“The County government has plans in the current year to continue fencing new markets and enhancing security of the markets and the people. Through market committees

it’s easy to identify market allocations, challenges and progress of the market” said the department’s acting chief officer Mr. Kerina

Mosobeti market, in Bosamaro ward is another market still under construction. It borders Gesima ward and it’s along the Kebirigo / Kerokahighway which is under construction. The market therefore, is in a strategic position that will serve a wider population being at the border and the main highway.

Nyamira North, has Magwagwa market whose construction started in the year 2015 January and was completed by year 2016 December. It’s a County government project found along Chabera - Ikonge-Cheplat highway.

With the improved infrastructure, the County government has improved in terms of revenue collection. The markets are fenced and that makes it easier for revenue collection since there is the entry and exit point.



Ikonge market stalls from a distance

KEROKA TOWN IS CLEANER NOW THANKS TO WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANS

By Sandra Morangi & George Ombaba



Keroka town administrator Mr Zablon Kerina while on inspection tour in the town.

The County Government of Nyamira has made great strides in the management of its solid waste disposal in Keroka town. Five years ago, it was a common practice to find waste littered and dumped along the roads in heaps and all over town. This became major a challenge not only impacting negatively on the environment but equally affected the health and well-being of the residents living in the area.

The spiral effect of this situation was lack of revenue collection which led to poor service delivery to traders and residents of Keroka town. According to the acting director in charge of trade, Mr. John Kerina, strides have been made to try and make garbage collection easier.

“Solid waste management is the key to achieve 100 - day Rapid Revenue collection target that the County government set. This Service is a main component for revenue collection.” remarked Kerina, the acting town administrator. Considering that Keroka town has been giving positive revenue reports over the years, it is the right of the citizens and tax payers to receive services.

“As you move around Keroka town you will notice major improvements in terms of better waste management and organization of market traders and matatu operators,” says Kerina adding that upon the enactment of a deliberate strategy enforced over the years, there has been a remarkable change of strategy in doing things in Keroka town.

In 2017, the County of Nyamira partnered with African Development Bank where the County government acquired two tractors and twenty-four skips to assist in this process.

They also facilitated training to environment officers on solid waste management. The town administration came up with a system that built a conducive environment for cleaning officers to operate from.

To that effect, the town administrator says that enforcement officers were then deployed to oversee and control dumping in parts of the town that were notorious for waste accumulation. At Nyasore, a dumpsite was leased by the administration for the waste disposal.

Despite the challenges in terms of collection equipment, the little they have is well utilized to help in waste collection and continually keep the town clean. That is according to Mr. Colloneli Obure, an officer stationed in Keroka.

“Supervisors of the enforcement and environment officers require training in supervisory skills. He also suggested that more tools and equipment are a requisite for better service delivery.” Added Mr Kerina.

Waste management is a major problem that must involve all stakeholders at diverse levels, from households, traders, manufacturers, private sector and governments. All it needs is focused attention, good governance and the implementation of systems that ensure changes outlive just one administration.



Poultry farming a fortune for the physically challenged

By Masaba North team

The residents of Masaba North sub-County in Nyamira have ventured into Poultry farming as an alternative source of livelihood, given the high nutritional benefits it offers to its consumers.

The practice plays a critical role in food security which is among the County's Big Four Agenda by supplementing in the County's bread basket.

Poultry farming has not only played an important role in the development of the economy of the County government of Nyamira, but has also led to its sustainability. This is because farmers engaged in the practice are breeding the improved type of domestic birds which take a few months to grow and thereafter generate income through the sale of eggs and the chicken for their meat.

Nyagwekuraself-help group for the disabled is one team of industrious individuals who have come together to practise poultry farming within Nyamira County.

The group, that comprises of physically challenged members, is going places with their venture, thanks to the County government of Nyamira's unwavering support. The group which is found in Nyansira Village, Rigoma ward has twenty six members who conduct their meetings on Thursdays every week.

Phyllis Kerubo, the secretary to the group says that the group was recognized by the County government of Nyamira through its poultry rearing project in 2014 when it supported them with the supply of fifty birds initially.

"We had challenges with controlling the disease because we were new in the business, that led to the death of their birds reducing them in number." Said Kerubo. She however is quick to say that after this experience, the County Government of Nyamira through the department of Agriculture sent its officers to reach out and teach the members about the various diseases affecting poultry and how to control them.

"The knowledge we have since acquired has enabled us to improve on the practice raising the number from thirty to fifty-three thanks to the immense support received from the County government which has given us the exposure needed to grow. Kerubo, said that in a month they collect approximately 300 eggs of which some of these eggs are used to hatch chicks and they sell the rest for income.

"Once we sell, the money is deposited in the group's bank account to cater for future needs. But we leave some eggs for our home consumption because they provide proteins for us especially now that we are physically challenged." Says Kerubo. The farmers have asked the County government of Nyamira to offer them financial assistance to increase the number of the chicken especially now that they are well equipped with poultry farming skills. She says this will enable their project to grow to the next level.

The group looks forward to getting a cooler and modern slaughter slabs within public markets so that once poultry is slaughtered, it is preserved for sale even at a later date.

Housing Agenda in Nyamira

By Evelyne Bosibori

In line with the Big Four Agenda, the Department of Land, Housing and Urban Development provides critical anchorage between Nyamira County and the National Government in the provision of affordable housing schemes. The physical planning and housing directorates have proposed parcels of land across the county that can be ideal for housing.

Manga Town Housing Scheme Proposal

Approximately 10 acres of Land have been identified at Manga Sub County for construction of residential houses. This is currently the most ideal parcel of land next to Manga Ridge. It also doubles as Nyamira County's main tourist attraction potential site and with proximity to the County Headquarters in Nyamira Town. Manga provides optimal opportunities for expansion and provision of basic infrastructure and recreational places that shall be ideal for residential neighborhood amenities. Notably, other County Departments are working on infrastructure like roads, stadium, and health facilities that support such housing schemes. Manga center also has a Local Physical development Plan adequate proposal for divergent but ideal development zones.

The department under the directorate of physical planning also strategizes to carry out zoning plans for various parts of the county so as to create harmony in terms of operations of the big four.

We will develop a land policy to address land issues and encourage land incentives such as reducing costs incurred on land amalgamation and also have deductions of calculated off percentages of cost for rental residential developers in a planned development area. This will encourage developers to invest in housing projects.

DEVOLUTION DEFINED

By Elyvalet Yegon

Devolution in Kenya came through the promulgation of the new constitution. The aim of devolution was to decentralize power from the national government to the devolved units. Nyamira County is among the 47 counties in Kenya that were established under Article 6(1) of the constitution.

In accordance with the law, Nyamira County citizens participated in the first general election in March 2013, following the promulgation of the constitution. They had an opportunity to practice their right to selection of leaders in national and for the first time County governments.

Nyamira County is headed by the governor H.E John Nyagarama. The governor has powers to appoint the

members of the County executive. Like majority of the counties, Nyamira County has ten County executive members who assist the governor in running the County. The senatorial office is also an important part of devolution. The senate was established with several functions (Article 96) including protecting the interests of the counties and their governments, participating in law-making functions of parliament by considering, debating and approving Bills concerning counties. It further determines the allocation of national revenue among counties and exercises oversight of the same.

There are four constituencies in Nyamira namely; North Mugirango, West Mugirango, Kitutu Masaba and Borabu.

However, it has five sub-counties. This arises from the fact that Kitutu Masaba is a very vast constituency hence the need to split it into two for ease of administration. In any case, the national government has two deputy County commissioners in Kitutu Masaba. Ideally, the County government should be more devolved than the national government (Article 176). The citizens elect four members of parliament from each constituency to represent them in the national assembly, whereas a sub-County administrator is appointed by the County public service board for administrative purposes for the County. Nyamira County has 20 wards each represented by an elected member of County assembly, and an additional 16 nominated MCAs. Just like the national assembly, the County assembly plays the legislative, representation and oversight role in the County. Village units, the lowest level of decentralization in County government are yet to be established in Nyamira County.

To strengthen devolution, the constitution created an intergovernmental relations technical committee whose major mandate is to promote consultation and cooperation between national government and County governments and also inter-counties relations. It is through this Act that the Summit and Council of Governors were created respectively.

Although devolution has been in existence for over five years, there are still some grey areas that detract from the efficiency of the devolved system. For instance, The Summit, platform created for consultation and

cooperation between national and County governments has not been clearly defined in the constitution on how to carry its mandate; hence the critical relationship between the two governments has been a push and pull and therefore, affecting the efficiency of the devolved system of governance.

Among the main challenges witnessed across board in the implementation of this new system of governance is underfunding. Most devolved functions for instance agriculture which is fully devolved have not received equally similar amounts of resources given to the County governments. This reason has made counties grapple with shuttling between the struggle to pay salaries as well as run huge salary budgets at the expense of running development programs.

Another serious issue so far witnessed is the low number of qualified critical personnel in some key areas such as physical planning, architectural, Engineering and medicine fields. This problem mostly affects the remote counties. Most of these professionals practice their trades in big cities around the counties where they get to pursue private practice along normal employment.

The future of devolution looks great. We all need to lay more focus on the smallest devolved units and put more resources towards the development agenda. We need to build more capacity on government staff and listen more to what the citizens want rather than tell them what we have for them.

Did you know that?

- *The national language of Kenya is Kiswahili.*
- *There shall be No State Religion*
- *A person shall not be denied emergency medical treatment*
- *An "older member of the society "means someone who has attained the age of 60 years*
- *Control of air pollution, noise pollution, other public nuisances and outdoor advertising is a function of County governments.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity to first and foremost, express my heartfelt appreciation to our governor H.E. John Nyagarama for his kind of leadership style. Working in a comfortable environment is the best thing that ever happened to us. I therefore, register my sincere gratitude for your positive transformation of Nyamira county.

Our County Secretary, Eric Onchana thanks for believing in us, your constructive criticism has seen us do better than before. You have motivated us in so many immeasurable ways, we pray and hope that you will empower us more.

The editorial job can be very challenging. These challenges force us, as a team, to look within, and focus on how to produce the best journalistic products for you, our readers. It was with mere enthusiasm, co-operation and spirit of the entire bulletin team that we have made the production of this newsletter a grand success. Along with the editors, we have beefed up our team with communication heads from sub-counties, we are indeed indebted to you for working through strict timeliness.

I must admit this is a formidable team, to say the least. I'm proud of the editorial team we have in place, and I'm excited about what the future holds, online and in print.

Despite the many hurdles, we are, and always be, focused on quality content over quantity.

It would be inappropriate if I fail to mention the tireless efforts of our overall supervisors, Mr. Kefa Miller and Mr. Joash Onyonka, you appointed this team, thank u so much for your passionate participation and input, this accomplishment would not have been possible without them.

Finally, you will see more announcements and improvements soon. I welcome any form of criticism from our readers, kindly feel free to share with us. This is a journey we have just started and I believe we will come out strong and energized. We look forward for other fantastic productions in the coming months.

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