

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



GOVERNMENT OF MAKUENI COUNTY



STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

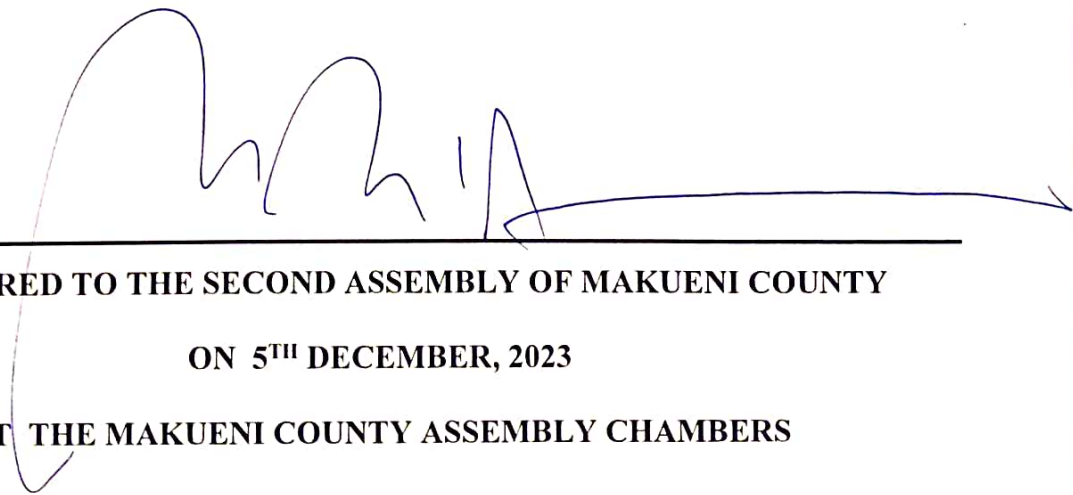
5TH DECEMBER, 2023

STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

**THEME: REFLECTIONS ON THE SECOND YEAR OF THE THIRD CYCLE
OF DEVOLUTION**

BY

**MUTULA KILONZO JUNIOR, CBS
GOVERNOR, MAKUENI COUNTY**



DELIVERED TO THE SECOND ASSEMBLY OF MAKUENI COUNTY

ON 5TH DECEMBER, 2023

AT THE MAKUENI COUNTY ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS

H.E The First Lady, Anita Mutula

The Deputy Governor of Makueni, Her Excellency Lucy Mulili

The Speaker of the County Assembly, Hon. Douglas Mbilu

The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Francis Mwanja

The Clerk of the County Assembly Mr. Kevin Mutuku

The Leader of Majority Hon. Kyalo Mumo

The Leader of Minority Hon. Jades Kalunda

Majority Whip Hon. Magdalene Mulwa

Minority Whip Hon. Meshack Kalii

Chairs of the County Assembly Sectoral Committees

Members of the County Assembly

Members of the County Executive Committee

Chief Officers

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am grateful to God for the opportunity to address this August House as I reflect on the achievements, opportunities and progress of implementation of devolved service delivery in the second year of the third cycle of Devolution in Kenya. I am thankful to the people of Makueni for this opportunity to serve them and to the County public service for being their team leader alongside the Deputy Governor in discharging my duties as spelled out in the constitution, especially Article 174 (f) of the constitution of Kenya, 2010, **that identifies my role in promoting social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services to the people of Makueni.**



2. This has been made possible by the County Executive Committee Members, Chief Officers and other staff. Particularly dedicated officers at the lowest levels waking up every morning to diligently discharge services. I have enjoyed working with this Assembly that constitutes of great minds, serving with boundless energy, resilience and selflessness. This has ensured ensure that the people of Makueni are served by those I have entrusted the work upon.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

3. Allow me, before I delve into the core content of this address, to request the House to be upstanding as we observe a moment of silence in honour of our Makueni citizens, men, women and young people that have lost their lives in the ongoing El Nino rains through mudslides and swollen rivers (**minute of silence**). Thank You. May the Almighty God comfort all affected families. We continue to urge our citizens to be vigilant and avoid swollen rivers and adhere to alerts and early warnings by our county emergency and response team.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

4. I am most privileged to be the team leader in the journey to make Makueni a progressive and vibrant county where the well-being of every citizen is a top priority. I am persuaded by our clarion call “**Wauni wa Kwika Nesa na Ulungalu**” which is a service mantra and not any longer a campaign slogan. I have woken daily up to go to work motivated by the desire to eradicate poverty, underdevelopment, inequalities and unemployment among the youth. This is a clear pathway to attain **a Prosperous Value Based County with a High Quality of Life**.

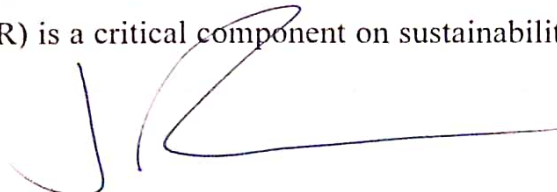
5. Pursuant to the provisions set out in Section 30 (2) (k) of the County Government Act, 2012, I hereby give an account of the state of devolution by presenting the progress report of the all sector performance under my leadership. The address also highlights my unwavering commitment to deliver transformation by resolving development challenges facing the county.



Mr. Speaker Sir,

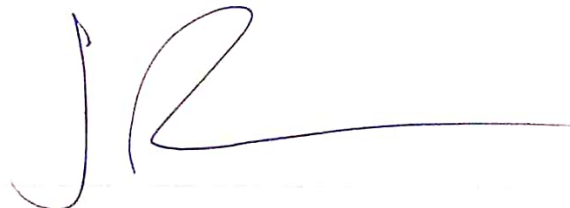
FISCAL REFORMS AND PERFORMANCE

6. The County Gross Product at current price dropped from **Kenya Shillings One Hundred Twenty-Three Billion. (Ksh. 123 B) in 2021 to Kenya Shillings One Hundred Twenty (Ksh. 120 B) in 2022**, a drop of 2.5 percent occasioned by the impact of COVID-19 to the county economy and the nation at large. During the same period, the county also experienced depressed rainfall for more than four seasons leading to a prolonged drought. This led to the county overall poverty rates increasing from 34.5 percent in 2015 to 45.5 percent in 2020 and dropped to 39.1 percent in 2021.
7. **On Own Source Revenue (OSR) mobilization;** In FY2022/23, the total County **Kenya Shillings Eight Hundred Ninety-One Million (Kshs 891 Million)** up from **Kenya Shillings Seven Hundred and Forty-Nine Million (Kshs 749 Million)**. This achievement accounted for Eighty Two percent (82%) of our total revenue target, highest achievement since 2013. This is exemplary performance from our revenue team under the leadership of the Executive Committee Member for Finance. The Financial Year was an electioneering year and despite the transition challenges, the team managed this performance. We are organizing a rewards and recognition meeting for the team before end of the year.
8. In the current Financial Year the County government has projected to generate OSR a total **Kenya Shillings One Billion Two Hundred Million (Ksh. 1.2 B)**. We are progressively on the journey to this ambitious yet achievable target, as of 30th November 2023, we have collected **Three Hundred and Twenty Three Million, Five Hundred and Twenty Four Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty Three Shillings (Ksh. 323, 524, 423)** which is a seventeen percent (17%) increase compared with **Two Hundred and Seventy Five Million, Seven Hundred and Thirty Seven Thousand, Five Hundred and Forty Shillings (Ksh. 275, 737, 540)** the same period last year. Own Source Revenue (OSR) is a critical component on sustainability of our



development, our resolve is to ensure OSR account for **twenty percent** of our budget by 2022 up from current **eight percent**. To attain this, we have made the following efforts;

- a. Institutional reengineering of revenue administration from geographical approach to functional. This led to establishment of six Revenue Divisions to coordinate various revenue streams namely; business licencing; reporting and reconciliation; policy and strategy; land based revenue; unstructured revenue and; AiA and entities revenue.
- b. Leveraging on technology to improve revenue administration through partnership with Safaricom in the deployment of *MyCounty App*, the first of its kind innovation in the country.
- c. Entrenching cashless mode of payment for county taxes, fees and charges
- d. Data driven revenue mobilization in which we have undertaken a comprehensive Census of Business Establishment. This will form a comprehensive revenue payer's database which is in line with international best practice. The exercise collected data from 24,771 active businesses.
- e. Unified billing to ensure all the payments due to the county are made once. This will be made possible by creation of self-service portal and customer accounts to ensure you can pay your fees and taxes from the comfort of your handset. We will soon bring to this house a policy proposal to institutionalize the concept of unified billing, the ultimate beneficiary will be the citizen.
- f. Entrenching Ward as the basic unit for revenue administration
- g. Sensitization of rate payers on the need for voluntary compliance.
- h. Training and capacity building of the revenue team, in August this year we had a comprehensive training programme by the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a long horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

9. These measures have led to improved revenue performance and we appreciate the support by the County Assembly in encouraging our citizens to voluntarily pay revenues. On land based revenue, we have the highest amount of arrears amounting to over **Kenya Shillings, Three Hundred Million (Ksh. 300 Million)**. On this note, I urge all land owners to register their properties and pay the rates due. The rates for a plot of fifty by hundred is only four thousand in urban areas which is a small proportion of the value of the plot. True Wauni is in the little things such as fidelity to the law in the implementation of County Finance Act.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

10. I am grateful to county assembly for the timely approval of our **county planning documents and frameworks**. I applaud you for approving the third generation County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2023-27), the Annual Development Plan (ADP) 2023/24 as well as FY 2023/24 budget. We are committed to ensure there is a strong linkage between policy, plans and budget. Our nation is known for preparing first class policy documents but poor in implementation, as a county we must overcome this development jinx. The CIDP III whose overarching goal is *A resilient economy for sustainable development*, will officially be launched on 14th December 2023.

11. To ensure effective budget execution, each department has established and operationalized Budget Implementation Committees. These committees chaired by the respective Accounting Officers provide a mechanism for budget tracking and implementation. In 2022, Makueni County was rated the second-best county with respect to **transparency in budgeting and implementation** based on County Budget Transparency Survey (CBTS) which is carried out annually by the International Budget Partnership Kenya (IBP Kenya). In prioritizing people in our development, our vision is to ensure that our citizens participate not only in prioritizing the budget but also in development outcomes.



12. **On data and evidence based decision making.** British Mathematician, Clive Humby declared that ‘data is the new oil’ and in deed in this digital economy era, we must adapt and continuously innovate to remain competitive. We have continuously prepared annual County Statistical Abstract (CSA) with the 2023 series being launched in two weeks’ time. I am happy to report that we launched the inaugural Ward Statistical Profiles 2022, the first of its kind in the nation. The disaggregation of data to the lowest level helps inform critical decisions in resource allocation.
13. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) who have been a key partner in the journey of strengthening county statistics function. Under this arrangement, the county will benefit from exchange programmes and specialized components such as survey design, data collection, data processing, analysis, storage and leverage on the infrastructure of KNBS to undertake county specific surveys and data collection. This collaboration will be transformative in the next five years, we will indeed set a new benchmark, all for the benefit of our citizens. We will equally empower the demand for quality data by all users including the citizens.
14. In fulfilment of requirements of Section 137 of the Public Finance Management Act 2012, we **operationalized the County Budget and Economic Forum (CBEF)**. The CBEF serves as a think- as well as means for consultation on financial and economic management. The forum was inducted by the Commission on Revenue Allocation, developed its own code of conduct. I am happy to report that the forum will soon be visiting selected development projects for review and assessment.
15. On **implementation of Sustainable Development Goals**, Makueni County was awarded by SDGs Kenya Forum as the best county in the implementation of programmes and projects that were in line with the SDGs. Our resolve to ensure our development is equitable and leave no one behind is unwavering. **Our development approach is to develop local home-grown solutions to global challenges. Indeed, we are thinking global while working locally.**

16. **Improved Financial Discipline:** The Government of Makueni County has put various measures to ensure fiscal discipline. I am delighted to report to this house that in the FY 2022/23, **we achieved 92 percent, the highest ever absorption since 2013.** This was not a mean achievement with 2022 being an electioneering and transition year with barely seven months of working time. We have streamlined county payment system, no need for endless queues, suppliers and staff are now paid while the comfort of their daily businesses and work.
17. We have ensured the strengthening of the **Internal Controls and Systems** through the establishment of the **County Audit Committee** that provides oversight over the operations of the government. The committee presented to me its inaugural report, I therefore call on all the accounting officers to ensure they comply. Strengthened internal systems will improve efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of public services. I am committed to provide adequate resources to the committee to execute its mandate since sustainable development is founded on good governance.
18. In adherence to the doctrine of separation of powers, **the County Assembly has exemplarily** executed Articles 185(3) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. This has contributed to the excellence in fiscal discipline, accountability and value for money. I have noted County Executive Committee Members being invited to the various County Assembly Sectoral Committees for scrutiny of programs, projects and activities. This is in addition to the field oversight activities on the various programmes, projects implemented by the departments. I urge the Assembly to continue being vigilant and in particular emphasis should be given to conditional grants and other grants.
19. Under the department of devolution, **the establishment of project management committees** has ensured the people's participation throughout the project implementation. When citizens get involved through social accountability mechanisms they can monitor and hold public officers and elected leaders to account for how public resources are spent and their performance in the delivery of services.

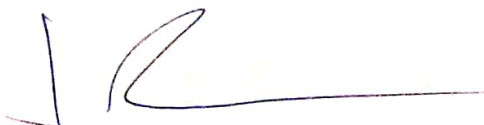
We will in the new year, reengineer the Ward Development Committees whose term has now lapsed, together with a proposal to establish Village Councils as provided for in the County Governments Act, 2012.

20. We appreciate the role played by national government state departments and agencies. My government has collaboratively worked with the **institutions responsible for overseeing its expenditure** such as: the Senate – on the extent of national revenue allocated to county governments; Controller of Budget – with regard to allocation of finances as per the county budget; and EACC – with regards to integrity of government officials and corruption risk assessment and the Office of Auditor General on effectiveness on use of public resources. This has ensured improvements in the efficiency of devolved service delivery.

PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

Mr. Speaker Sir,

21. It is said that staff are the key asset any organization will have; **I am convinced that our staff are not only the key asset but the only asset we have. Therefore, the only thing we have is each other**, we can only deliver as a team. Ensuring the county public service is highly motivated, enthusiastic and enjoying a conducive working environment is my top priority. I have noted gaps in public service, the County Executive has discussed this and a plan led by the County Secretary is currently holding meetings to address the gaps. *Wauni wa Kwika Nesa na Ulungalu* is a service mantra that we will entrench and institutionalize the culture of **Kujituma**.
22. The complexity of modern day world poses a challenge to old held silo approach in delivery of services. The demand to be competitive and responsive as a county government to the citizens, **we must collaborate internally** and therefore the adoption of the **One Government Approach** to devolved service delivery. In delivering citizen centred services, departments and Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGAs) are coordinated through the Department of Devolution.



23. A citizen just needs to walk to an agriculture office at the ward level and they are served on revenue or education matter. We are many departments and agencies but one government. **Our primary client, the citizen just doesn't care which department, they expect services** from the county government. We are in the process of developing a one government approach coordination framework that will be tabled in this house for consideration.
24. Within the period the government has been able undertake various **staff recruitments and promotions**. Within the health sector, the government has recruited 31 staff, while 141 of common and non-common cadres have been promoted as new 510 positions have been advertised for promotion. Under education, 111 CTTI instructors converted to Permanent and Pensionable employment terms while 150 CTTI instructors have been certified by NITA. At least 499 ECDE teachers have been converted to Permanent and Pensionable Employment Terms. We have allocated Kshs 65 Million in the just approved Supplementary Budget Estimates for conversion of the ECDE teachers to the correct Job Group.
25. We will progressively ensure all outstanding staff gratuity is fully paid within two years. These measures and attendant budget will be key towards motivating our staff. The past is just the PAST. We must move on. To enhance career progression, we have reviewed the staff establishment in order to address gaps in various departments. The document has been considered by the County Executive Committee and is currently being reviewed by experts.
26. My expectations are that every officer strives to care and do their job diligently. Work is sacred, work is a form of worship, if only we treated and cared about our work the same way we cared about deity and worship. Proverbs chapter twenty-two and verse twenty-nine states '*show me someone who does a good job, and I will show you someone who is better than most and worthy of the company of kings*'. It is important to appreciate officers who have gone beyond call of duty to diligently deliver services. We have many committed officers, allow me to highlight a few;

- a. Stella Mulinge, a nurse in Kaiya dispensary in Kilungu ward has worked out of her way to ensure that all NHIF claims are made and follows through to ensure the monies are disbursed, as a matter of fact Mr. Speaker, she is the officer with the most improved NHIF reimbursements.
- b. Mercy Musau the nurse officer in charge at Kathulumbi dispensary, Kalawa ward having worked the entire day, she had to attend to a delivery the whole night and following day we found her discharging duties.
- c. Christine Bahati Nzuki, the Ward Revenue Officer in Kathonzweni ward, went an extra mile in entrenching cashless payment in market entrance fee, livestock and stock movement fee, the most unordered streams in the markets. The performance has improved from full cash collection to over 70% of the collections being done through M-Pesa and 100% cashless collection in livestock yards.
- d. Engineer Michael Maluki, a Superintendent Roads Engineer working in Mbooni Sub County has championed roads runoff water harvesting. He was selected among three Green Roads for Water winners together with Pedro Moreira from Portugal and Pawan Jarki from Asian Development Bank of the open call for good green roads practices. His work involves engaging communities in making cut-off and mitre drains and rehabilitating gullies to achieve desired outcomes of climate resilience and improved community livelihoods.

27. These few examples demonstrate commitment and dedication to service. These efforts, give us hope that we can transform the way we work and deliver services. I have instructed the County Secretary to ensure all hardworking officers are commended for their efforts. At the same time, we must also sanction poor performance, **everyone must reap what they sow**. We must orient our performance to focus on the client and realize it is NOT business as usual. Under my leadership,



we will reward performance not based on time in the government but by the contribution towards transforming livelihoods of citizens.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Mr. Speaker Sir,

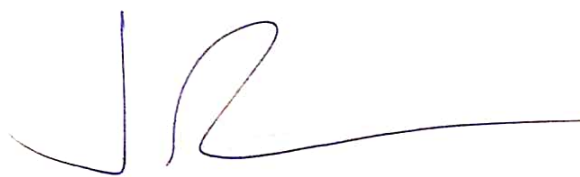
28. The government's resolve to work with our partners is not about begging for support neither is it about privatizing the government, as many might think. Rather, development cooperation is the way to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In fact, forty percent (40%) of the county development expenditure is funded by partners. I am currently in a team of Governors trying to unlock resources stuck at the National Treasury from Development Partners. Parliament is currently mediating on the Additional Allocation Bill and we request for this process to be expedited. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the funds from Development Partners have not been disbursed yet we are approaching the end of the second quarter.
29. In the same spirit, the government has been deliberate and systematic in building sustainable friendship, first with the National Government and its agencies for they are the largest sources of development funding and second, with other friendly bilateral and multilateral organisations in development practice. A good example is the gazettement of Kiu Catchment in Makindu as a wetland which I will elaborate later in this address.
30. Jointly with our friends, the government has co-created the priorities in the CIDP III. We invited them to give us their best practices and ideas in consultative meeting when we were compiling this important planning document. We have adopted and nurtured sectoral way of working with our partners where, we not only share what each partner is doing in the devolution space in Makeni, but we have systematized joint work planning and implementation of projects. Early in the year, the departments of Agriculture, Water, Education and ICT and Lands will have a first of its kind meeting



with the World Bank in an attempt to find a single approach of identifying and implementing projects. A similar meeting will happen with the Netherlands Embassy early in the year 2024.

31. This way of working is aimed to position Makueni as a favoured destination for external support and investments and will continuously influence our partners' policies, practices, and programming towards us. This way, we shall be able to tap into their vast resource envelop and address our CIDP III budget gap approximately Ksh.38 Billion. Across sectors, the government has continued to work with long standing partners. Notable examples include:

- a) World Bank, the UKaid, the USAID, the African Development Bank and the Food Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Agriculture, Lands, Environment, Urban Development, Medium, Small and Micro-Enterprise sectors;
- b) JPiengo, ThinkWell and Nutrition International in health services. You are aware that this year, courtesy of ThinkWell, we hosted Bill Gates, the Chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on Primary Health Care delivery.
- c) Rural Electrification and Renewable Corporation (REREC), Kingdom Brothers, Strathmore University and World Resource Institute in the energy sector.
- d) EIDU Kenya, Camara Kenya, Safaricom and Ajiry Centre in ICT sector; and
- e) Polish Embassy and the Movement for Community Led Development in the emergency preparedness and devolution sectors.



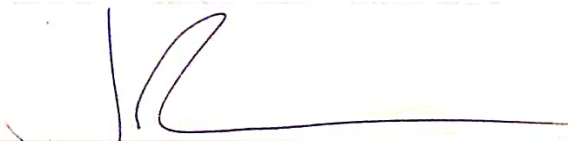
Mr. Speaker Sir,

32. The County Government held the Second Annual Partners' Conference on 15th November 2023 in which the County Assembly participated. During the above Conference, the County Government presented the following needs to the partners and I can confirm to this house that some bilateral discussions have already begun.

- a) On 28th November, 2023, I hosted H.E Mr. Maarten Brouwer, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Kenya, Somalia and the Seychelles who came to explore areas of mutual partnerships and cooperation. We are fronting the health and renewable energy sectors to them.
- b) The World Bank are interested to discuss with us how we can jointly scale up the Ward Development Planning Model for adoption country-wide.
- c) The KCB Foundation have equally come forward to discuss with the Department of Agriculture their support to the sector.

33. Our collaboration with the National Government has resulted in various interventions which are implemented jointly with the county government. These include;

- a) Reclamation of 980 hectares of Kiu Wetland in Makindu Ward where we have planted 120,000 of trees of the county's target of 344 Million trees by 2032. The catchment requires additional trees and fencing which various partners have offered to do. The consultations on the gazettelement of Kiu Catchment as a Wetland have started today. The law requires NEMA to conduct public engagement and follow a plan of nearly 8-9 legal steps that will protect this Wetland as part of Chyulu Water Towers. I have so far attended two meetings at the Ministry of Environment after the Tree Planting Exercise.
- b) Construction of Utini-Yikita (UYI) Earth dam in Masongaleni Ward in collaboration with the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA). The dam will benefit over 65,000 people and 500,000 livestock. The total cost for the project is Ksh. 55 Million with the NDMA contributing Ksh. 40 Million,



the County Government Ksh. 10 Million and the community Ksh. 5 Million which will be in kind.

34. Both the Executive and the County Assembly must effectively play the facilitative role of building sustainable partnerships in our devolution system. We need to strengthen the institutional and human resource capacity to attract grants and investment funds. All of us have a responsibility.

WATER AND SANITATION

Honourable Members,

35. Water remains our key priority area in our 10-point development agenda with the main target to increase accessibility, affordability and quality of water for household consumption and use in agricultural and industrial activities. So far, we have developed and rehabilitated more than 50 water projects which has led to increase in general water access in the county from 40% to 46%. Access to clean potable water for domestic use has increased from 14,000 cubic meters to 30,000 cubic meters. This has reduced distance to nearest water source from approximately 5 Kilometres to 4 Kilometres.

36. **On Use of Modern Technology.** We have installed Automated Water Dispensing Machines in 23 Water Kiosks which has not only reduced Non-Revenue Water but also saved time taken fetching water. This has also significantly reduced loss of revenue since there is no handling of cash.

37. **Water Governance** is a key component in management of water schemes. Continuous capacity building and training of water service providers as well as water committees on water resources management has boosted sustainability of our water projects. In the past we have witnessed vandalism of water infrastructure in various

areas, through this County Assembly we had Water Act and the attendant regulations approved, this will go a long way in entrenching sustainability of water projects.

38. My administration has further operationalized the Makueni Rural Water Board (MARUWAB), recruited Board of Directors for Kibwezi Makindu Water and Sanitation Company (KIBMAWASCO) and Mbooni Water and Sanitation Company (MBONWASCO) to improve water management in furtherance of our universal water access agenda.

39. **Our Commitment** as anchored in our County Integrated Development Plan (2023-2027), my administration commits to: increase access to improved water sources from 46 percent to 70 percent; reduce the average distance to improved water sources from 3 km to 2 km; improve Urban and Rural Water Governance; proper liquid waste management; Strengthen the sector policy, legal and institutional frameworks.

TRANSFORMING THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

40. In a county where seventy-eight percent (78%) of the households are involved in agriculture and agriculture accounts for 27.7% of the Gross County Product, the County Government has continued to implement food security. Specific achievements in this sector are:

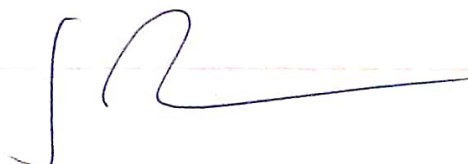
41. **Grain Value Chain.** The county operationalized seven satellite fertilizer depots at Kikima, Tawa, Mukuyuni, Kasikeu, Nunguni, Kithumani and Kitise. These depots have received and distributed 17,870 fifty kg bags of assorted planting and top dressing fertilizer to farmers this year in addition to 31,384 bags distributed to farmers from the main depots at Kibwezi, Emali and Wote depots. The department will in due course engage members of this House in order to find suitable locations and budgets for opening more of these facilities. These facilities will require personnel and

infrastructure to operationalize and the National Produce and Cereals Board will at a later date transfer these facilities to us.

42. Some 160,564 MT of assorted seeds (maize, beans, cowpeas and green grams) have been distributed to 88,104 beneficiaries over the last two seasons. I noted with concern about the uptake in Kitise store and have requested the department to continue sensitizing the residents of the value of these facilities.

43. The Makueni Integrated Grain Value Addition Plant in Makindu is now fully installed with machineries for grain drying, cleaning, sorting, polishing, grading and packing. The plant will purchase grains from farmers in the region for processing as well as offer the above services to interested farmer groups and individuals. Installation of a retail packaging unit that will enable the plant pack the products in smaller units of 1 to 2 Kg is underway. The capacity of approximately 10 metric tons per day makes this facility a very useful asset for Makueni and possibly the South Eastern Region. We have engaged consultants through the Sustainable Urban Economic Development (SUED) programme to look at the possibilities of engaging partners in this and the Makueni Fruit Processing Factory. I am aware that the Assembly has been invited to discuss the proposals by the Consultant on the Makueni Fruit Factory. The Departments of Agriculture and Lands (where the Wote Municipality falls) should expedite these discussions.

44. **Fruit Value Chain Development.** The Makueni County Fruit Development and Marketing Authority (MCFDMA) purchased 997,520 kg of mango and produced 538,945 kg of puree valued at Ksh 38,804,040, of which 222,800 Kg valued at Ksh 24,534,928 has been sold. After a struggle and use of diplomatic channels, we have managed to operationalize the ready-to-drink (RTD) line. We intend to launch the line early in the year.



45. To enhance mango production in the county, various trainings have been conducted with the aim of equipping farmers with new technologies. In collaboration with KEPHIS and ICIPE, we are working with farmers to establish Areas of Low Pest Prevalence (ALPP) targeting 10,000 farmers covering an area of 4,000 hectares in eight wards. This will add to the existing 4,770 hectares previously established. In addition, we are in discussions with the Agricultural Food Authority (AFA) to set up a Cold Chain and Pack House in an effort to access international markets for our Horticultural and Fruits Value Chain.

46. **Industrial crops.** Jointly with the National Government, we have distributed 10,000 coffee seedlings to farmers in Mbooni and further enhanced access to subsidized fertilizer programme through the satellite depots near the farmers. These farmers participated in drafting the Coffee Development and Marketing Strategy (DCDMS) as well. We have recently taken coffee farmers on a visit to a Mr. Charles Mutwiri in Meru County. The farmer who is also a director of New KPCU produces up to 40 kilograms per coffee tree.

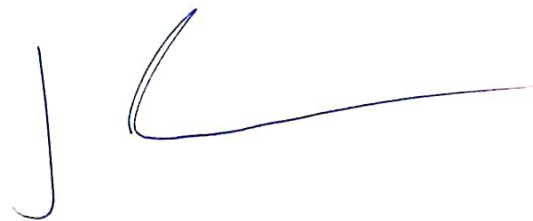
47. The New KPCU recently visited the Mulima Coffee Factory in Mbooni and paid farmers Ksh.4.7 million on the spot against their produce through the Cherry Fund. It is unfortunate that the South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc (SEKEB), cannot access Ksh. 124 Million set aside for this region because most coffee farmers have abandoned the cash crop. I urge the Agricultural Committee of this House to visit the One –Acre Model Farm set up at Mulima for benchmarking.

48. **Agricultural Mechanization Services.** Approximately 1,463 acres of land were tilled in preparation for planting, 14,317 bales of hay were made and 98 farm ponds excavated. Our government procured one farm tractor, two grass mowers, two hay rakes and one baler. These machines will help revolutionize and modernize agriculture in the county.

49. Veterinary Services. In order to secure livestock assets, the government has continued to contact strategic livestock vaccinations across the county. A total of 250,678 heads of livestock were vaccinated against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Pestes de petit Ruminantes (PPR), and Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia (CCPP). About 2,968 dogs were vaccinated towards control and elimination of Rabies. In order to support the development of the dairy value chain in the County, the government has continued to support breeding programme where 3,066 dairy cattle were artificially inseminated.

50. Livestock Feed Development. The government has prepared and launched the Makueni County Animal Feeds Development Strategy. The strategy supports the Dairy value chain as feeding accounts for between 60 – 70% of the cost in the venture. I urge the Agriculture Committee to interrogate the above strategy. At the same time, the government provided farmers with **20,700 kg of grass** and distributed 215 Galla breeding goats to 112 farmers in Kikumbulyu South Ward. The Strategy identifies a population of nearly 1,700,000 chicken in Makueni. We should exploit the potential by providing markets to the Poultry Value Chain.

51. The Cooperative Sector. The cooperative sector gained 686 more members thus growing its membership from 36,990 to 37,676. The sector also registered a 4.3% growth in member deposits from Ksh. 353,421,025 to Ksh. 368,471,002, while loans disbursed to members were Kshs 248,675,191 with repayments done amounting to Ksh. 155,454,474.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical stroke followed by a large, sweeping horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

HEALTH SERVICES

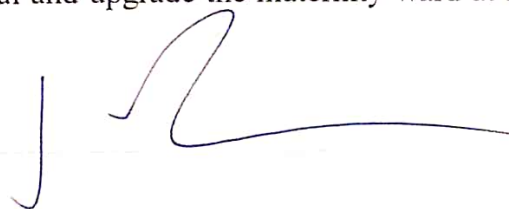
52. **Health Infrastructure.** Since assuming leadership, my administration has constructed to completion three new health facilities and upgraded, renovated and equipped 67 others to improve the quality of health services to our people. This brings the total facilities to 241 up from 238 the total number of health facilities in Makueni. The new health facilities are Kiou Top Dispensary in Kasikeu Ward; Kwa Ndava Dispensary in Nguu Masumba, and Kyanginywa Dispensary in Kikumbulyu South.
53. With support from Safaricom MPESA Foundation, the department of health services completed, equipped and commissioned Tawa Sub-County Hospital integrated maternity wing consisting of antenatal ward, labour ward, postnatal ward, delivery room, theatre and new-born unit. We have made a deliberate policy decision to limit construction of new health facilities. Instead we purpose to equipping the existing facilities as a matter of priority.
54. **Automation of Health Services.** To enhance accountability and transparency of health products and technologies management, the county government acquired a digital health commodities management system, Maisha Meds, which was piloted in 13 health facilities. The pilot phase was a huge success. We should have walked this route a long time ago! I am delighted to report that we have embarked on a journey to fully automate and integrate all services within the healthcare system.
55. We are in the process of establishing an end-to-end automation of health services through a County Integrated Health Management Information System (CIHMIS). The system will ensure patient management, health products tracking and revenue management in all health facilities. This will greatly improve transparency and accountability. To this end, we engaged the ICT Authority (ICTA) to undertake a feasibility study on the automation.

The report has revealed a series of gaps in technology and a multiplicity of interventions that are not linked to each other. The Health Department was operating in serious silos. We must put an end to this.

56. We have made great strides towards healthcare innovation. Through Proximie- a telemedicine technology platform, our health workers are able to use cameras in theatre for remote support, teaching and audit of operations. The department has had several opportunities to showcase this innovation to the world. The Department has trained and started offering fistula repair services. Since March 2023, the department has screened 120 women and carried out 41 successful surgeries. This has brought joy to women and families that had lived with stigma and discrimination from the society.

57. **On Community Health Promoters**, we have since collected the new kits for the community health promoters. The Department of Health is currently expediting the training of the 3,625 CHPs in order for them to make use of the advanced equipment in the bags. We thank the First Lady for accepting to be the champion of the CHPs. I have undertaken to ensure their monthly stipend is issued without delay. The county has budgeted a stipend of Ksh. 2,500 per month with the national government promising to match the same. This will ensure health services are taken to the community.

58. **Health Partners.** The department of health boasts the largest share of our partnerships in the county. I wish to recognize the robust engagement with several partners in several areas of our health system such as maternal health, reproductive health, neonatal health. One of these partnerships which I must highlight is by ENI-Kenya Bv, our next door neighbours at Kwa Kathoka have agreed to equip our neonatal unit at Mother and Child hospital and upgrade the maternity ward at Kambi Mawe dispensary.



59. To increase uptake of services, the department has crowned the County First Lady, H.E Anita Mutula as the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health plus Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) Champion. This has put the office of the First Lady in a pole position for advocacy to increase resources and service uptake in our health facilities. Through her advocacy, the county hosted the National celebration of World Prematurity Day on 17th November 2023 at The Makueni Mother and Child Hospital.

MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND HARNESSING NATURAL RESOURCES SUSTAINABLY

Mr. Speaker Sir,

60. In the face of climate change, it is imperative to enact resilience building strategies that safeguard our community and ecosystems both in the short term and long-term. To this end, in the Financial Year 2023/2024 the County Government allocated Ksh. 66 Million shillings for climate action plans. We have also undertaken a Participatory County Climate Risk Assessment through which **900 community members** were trained on climate risks and established **30 Ward Climate Change Planning Committees** for enhanced coordination, planning and implementation of locally-led climate actions.

61. In order to address the challenges of rain-fed agriculture and enhance food security, the government is putting more focus on irrigation. Kikome Irrigation Scheme in Kitise/Kithuki ward targeting to put 50 acres under irrigation; Kathambalani in Kitundu/Kithungo targeting 35 acres and Mbavani in Kalawa which is at feasibility study stage and targeting 500 acres are some of the irrigation schemes we are currently implementing.



62. As part of climate change adaptation and resilience building, we are implementing **Roads for Water (Green Roads) Initiative** which aims at harvesting road run off water for agricultural use. This is executed mainly through youth engagement and manual labour where more than 200,000 cubic metres of water is harvested from our roads every rain season.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

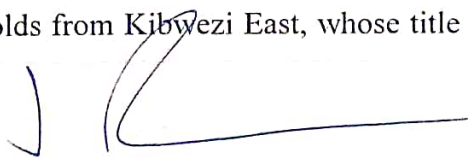
63. As I address you this afternoon, COP28 climate conference is underway in Dubai, with a clarion call of fast-tracking the transition to a clean-energy future. In keeping abreast with the rest of the world, we have adopted green energy for water pumping through solarization of water projects. We no longer install diesel pumps in our water projects.

64. Other notable achievements in this sector are the planned establishment of an Energy Centre at Kisingo CTTI in Makindu Ward to enhance our renewable energy use and awareness promotion. Similarly, an Energy Plan developed with the help of Water Resources Institute (WRI), Strathmore University and UK Pact is nearly complete. We will soon forward it for your approval. This plan will not only change the way we use energy to power our facilities but will open doors for funding by several investors who are waiting anxiously to see the approved plan and policy.

LANDS AND PHYSICAL PLANNING

Mr. Speaker Sir,

65. The government has secured title deeds for 595 public utilities across the County that include for ECDE centres, health facilities, churches, water facilities and cattle dips. These are ready for issuance in the near future. In addition, the government surveyed and compiled a register of 751 households from Kibwezi East, whose title deeds will



now be processed. I am happy to report that we have the title deed for the over 100-acre piece of land at Kwa Kathoka, famously known as KALRO land. In Wote Central Business District, the government surveyed 116 plots and submitted to the Director of Surveys- Kenya for approval. Once approved, the survey will enable the processing of leasehold titles for the property owners.

66. The Local Physical and Land Use Development Plan for Makindu Township has been finalized and is awaiting approval by this Assembly. This plan will form the basis for development control and urban development projects conceptualisation and investment. I urge you to expedite its approval. It is a tragedy that the last approved Plan was done in 1978. As a result of not having the Plans, a lot of uncontrolled development has taken place without any benefit to the public. Makindu town is a historical town and its planning will open it up for investments and other opportunities. We missed the opportunity to upgrade the informal settlement under the Kenya Urban Support Program (KUSP) as we waited for the approval. The efforts were evident when we were requested by the National Government to fix the airstrip at Makindu.

67. The government has facilitated the establishment of the Irish Village on a 40 acre land in Malili, Kiima Kiu/Kalanzoni Ward by Eire-Kenya Housing Cooperative Society for Kenyan Diaspora residents in Ireland and United Kingdom. The facility will comprise of member's holiday homes, social amenities and a commercial centre, fully serviced. The County Government is also facilitating the development of SUPASTOP on a 20-acre parcel of land in Sultan Hamud which upon completion will comprise accommodation and a commercial centre, fully serviced.

68. The government has in the last one year established the Sultan-Emali municipality, installed a management board and devolved staff to perform their mandate. The Wote Municipality has developed its Urban Economic Plan, built fresh produce markets in

Emali and Mukuyuni and conducted a pre-feasibility study on the Makueni Fruit Processing Plant with the help of the World Bank and UKaid. We are in the process of finalizing the recruitment of a new Wote Municipal Board. The activities in the two municipalities will help them qualify for funding by the World Bank. I urge the responsible Committee to expedite approval of proposals touching on the two municipalities.

TRANSFORMING THE COUNTY ECONOMY THROUGH TRADE DEVELOPMENT, INDUSTRIALIZATION, TOURISM AND CULTURE

Mr. Speaker Sir,

69. Trade and Industrialization is a facilitator of economic growth and development. We have taken measures to improve the work environment and the competitiveness for the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises which dominate the sector in the county. The establishment of Soko Makueni online platform provides online marketing and traders' information. The platform promotes visibility of the County, County produce and products and advances the commitment to delivery of service to the people of Makueni. To date, the platform has mapped 213 categories of county products, uploaded 79 active ones and registered 30 vendors whose products are ordered online. The platform shall officially be launched in the new year.

70. The establishment of the **Kenya Small Business Development Center** under the partnership of USAID and the Strathmore University Business School facilitates public and private-sector-led development and enables Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to participate fully in the economy and create jobs. The project takes the best practices in business development and advisory services from the United States' Small Business Development Center (SBDC) model and transfers them to a local network of county-based business centers. To date, the center has been able to offer



services on need interventions and closing the gaps to 124 businesses who have received one-on-one confidential business advisories. The businesses have reportedly shown results through capital infusion (Accessed finance), businesses formalized, access to new markets (both local and international), new products line introduced, jobs created and retained. Out of the 124 sessions, 22 youth have benefited directly from the centre.

71. Through capacity building, the center has been able to train 159 young people. This team has benefited in areas of business planning & management, bookkeeping, assessing the financial needs for their business, business proposal writing, idea generation, digital marketing, access to government procurement opportunities among others. Further, the center, in its first year of operation has managed to facilitate 5 businesses in adopting modern technologies and 98 in improving business management practices in entrepreneurial skills in.

72. The County Government has **developed market centers** for facilitating business increase, customer base and revenue, leading to overall growth and success. The Emali Fresh Produce Wholesale Market which houses 30 wholesale stalls, 96 retail stalls and two open market sheds is a game changer. Additionally, the County government has improved its ease of doing business by lighting the market and construction of key market infrastructure (well paved roads, water harvesting infrastructure, breastfeeding center).

73. Further, the state-of-the-Art Mukuyuni Business Centre is not merely a collection of stalls but a beacon of hope and opportunity for businesses in the region. The Business Hub is solar-powered with lactation rooms, cold room and 132 vendor stalls. It has rainwater harvesting and waste management systems aimed at preserving the environment as well as an aggregation center that empowers the local community by providing job opportunities, nurturing entrepreneurship, and promoting local

products. My vision for Mukuyuni and Emali Business centers is to transform them into integrated business centers with banks, M-Pesa Shops, Government services such as licenses, identity cards, Kenya Revenue Authority clearance certificates among other e-service points.

74. In our efforts to support and develop cottage industries, MSMEs and Jua Kali sectors in the county and linking them to markets, the government has undertaken the following programs:

- a. Supported 2 MSMEs to attend Kenya International Investment Conference. Participating MSMEs cumulatively were able to establish 29 new business contacts that would help streamline their supply chains and access to international markets.
- b. In collaboration with Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA) carried out an outreach program to assess producers'/ cottage industries' level of preparedness in export trade. 26 MSMEs across the county were assessed.
- c. In Makueni Small Business Development Center and KenTrade carried out export market readiness/ trade facilitation training for 27 MSMEs.
- d. In collaboration with the department of ICT, Agriculture, Makueni SBDC, Ajiry center, ILO-SIYB, Crescent 360 carried out a Business Idea competition dubbed Plug Mtaani – which attracted 81 youth innovators across the county

75. The tourism industry in the county has a huge potential to transform the county economy. The Department participated in the 3rd annual East Africa Regional Tourism Expo (EARTE) on 20th -22nd November 2023. This has born 12 partnership engagements in the promotion of tourism in the County. As a way of ensuring Makueni County becomes a major tourist destination, the County Government launched Makueni Tourism Circuit to open up the impressive tourist destination that rewards travelers with the utmost safari experiences.



Makueni County is not only a wilderness of semi –arid land as most call it but also a home for unique cultures of the Angulia people (a sub-tribe of the Akamba people), caves, Chyullu hills, Masamukye hot springs, Makongo viewpoint, among other wonders.

76. In linking the county to the national landscape within the tourism sector, I seek to advocate for the already available infrastructures such as Standard Gauge Railway, the upcoming Makindu airstrip, and the Mombasa Nairobi highway that opens the region to the outside world. This is the way to make Makueni County a tourist destination in the country. The establishment of a Makueni Tourism Association shall midwife the development in the sector.

77. We have made investments in agro processing which depict a shift from highly agrarian dependent economy to industrialization. There still remains a huge potential for expanding the manufacturing sector by establishing industrial parks along the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) corridor as well as a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) park through private investments. We are currently in conversation with Export Processing Zone (EPZ) Authority to establish an EPZ satellite zone in Nguumo Ward.

78. The Directorate of Culture, Music and The Arts is currently hosting the 96th Edition of The Kenya Music and Cultural Festival and Competitions at Wote Technical Institute in Makueni where over 13,000 participants from 29 Counties are already in Wote to showcase their cultures and talent. More are still registering to participate. Don't miss this once in a lifetime event in our County Headquarters.



YOUTH AGENDA

Mr. Speaker Sir,

79. Arts, Music and Culture Promotion and Development. The creative economy plays a vital role in job creation for young talented citizens as well as strengthening community identity and tourism promotion. So far, 98 artists including bands and choirs have recorded their music at the Makueni Recording Studios in the last one year, where nascent talents have been nurtured to marketable products.

During the same year, we managed to set up another studio at the Ajiry center for recording and podcasts through a partnership with Mastercard Foundation. This center will now be taken over by the Department of Education and ICT because we have seen the potential of this facility to our youth.

80. Sports. Our young men and women in the sporting industry have elevated the county as a sporting giant in the making. Through strategic investments and collaborations with different players in the industry, three of our girls (Mutanu Michael, Catherine Wausi and Jennifer Musembi) were scouted by GASPO FC, the 1st Runners up club in the FKF Premier league. To boost the expertise in sports administration and management in the county, we partnered with National Olympic Committee of Kenya and trained 139 participants in Sports Administration and Management. The participants were drawn from our Ward Sports Councils, Departmental staff, County federations and County Assembly.

81. As you all know we had an exemplary performance in Berlin, Germany, during the World Special Olympics games. This performance attracted Special Olympics-Kenya, Special Olympics International and NIKE- one of the top world sports apparel manufacturer where we earned a sponsorship to train 250 coaches in Special Olympics. The training is aimed at rooting Special Olympics to the grassroots in order to give an opportunity to people with Intellectual Disabilities. This partnership will

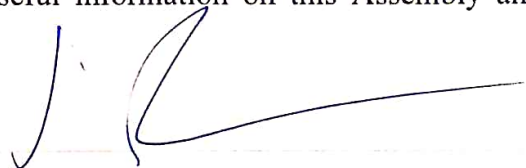
see a one of its kind county-wide girls' football tournament which will be an avenue to enhance participation of the girl-child in sports and more-so in Special Olympics. We have also engaged the team that approves marathon tracks in the country. The plan is to hold a **county marathon** along our scenic roads, the Makongo route or the Makindu Route.

82. **Ujuzi Teketeke Programme.** To create more opportunities to the youth for self-employment, we are implementing a program dubbed "**skills on the go**" which attaches a youth with a master craftsman for a period of 2 months. The youth is trained on their area of specialization and afterwards tooled to help them establish own businesses. Under this programme, 93 successful apprentices were issued with tools of work in the current Financial Year.

DIGITIZATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INNOVATION

Honorable Members,

83. Innovation is one of my four pillars of achieving development in Makueni. We have so far managed to apply Information Technology to transform the management and operations of Makueni County. These trials have enhanced service delivery and increased access to our government services. One of our transformative achievements is the adoption of MyCounty App through a partnership with Safaricom. The App provides a unified platform for revenue collection and digitization of all county governments operations and services where residents can access them from any part of the world. Some of these services include; paying for parking fees, business permits and land rates as well as engaging the county leadership through *Sema na Governor* segment. The App also offers useful information on this Assembly and other important features of Makueni.

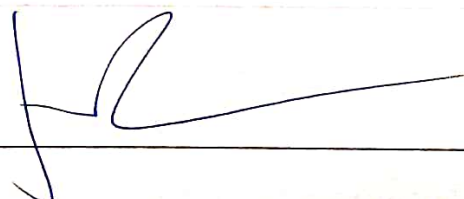


84. As a government, we are committed to ensure automation of key government processes and functions. The county is characterized by many fragmented systems that are not integrated and others unable to integrate. Under the automation key flagship project, a unified approach to automation will be utilized. **We have done Integration of LIMS (Lands Information Management System) to the E-Revenue Management System:** This has led to Increase in own-source revenue generation for the county, more accountability and prudence in handling revenue collections.

85. **We have digitized internship application through the Makueni Online Attachment Application Portal (ivas.makueni.go.ke).** The IVAS (Internship Volunteerism Attachment System) provides a convenient online platform for application, processing and placing applicants for industrial attachment. With IVA System, the industrial attachment experience has become more efficient and accessible reducing the processing time for attachments to less than 1 hour. The platform which was just launched **in June 2023, has 1946 registered users, has received 710 applications and has awarded 419 beneficiaries industrial attachment opportunities.**

86. **Another innovation to highlight is the Makueni County VTC Information Management System:** This has brought about transparency and efficiency in management of the 59 VTCs with key focus on student enrolment, funds disbursements, revenue generation and asset management among others. The system Launched in August 2023 has been able to **enroll 4,577 trainees and generate reports on trainee distribution per Centre, Fees Payment among other statistics**

87. **We Revamped our County Website:** We introduced mini-sites for departments which have created space to establish departmental libraries for information and



knowledge management. The County has gained more visibility through the optimization of the County website, social media accounts, live updates and communication of County Programmes and development projects. Due to publication of public information in the County website in line with access to public information requirement, development partners have continued trooping into Makueni County.

88. Still in this sector, we have developed **Soko Makueni**, an online marketing portal aimed at marketing Makueni county products, produce and services. We have also developed, tested, and deployed the County Electronic Meeting Attendance system (**E-Attendance Register**) using QR code technology which is a great way of making registration process for any event quick, easy and flexible. This will eliminate common event registration mistakes, like human errors often associated with manual registration and audit queries. The ICT Department also developed a **Plot Registration Portal** which has eased the plot registration and profiling process. Two weeks ago, we had the pleasure of participating in the Kenya Innovation Week – Commonwealth edition.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

89. Due to the strides that we have made as a county in ICT & Innovation in the last one year, We are happy to have received National recognitions. On the 23rd November 2023, The Commission of Administrative Justice (Office of the Ombudsman) gave me the Huduma Ombudsman Award in its Fourth Edition, where we were recognized and received **ugatuzi award category for leveraging on Technology and innovation for enhanced service delivery and social accountability**. On 24th November 2023, the Government of Makueni County during the 15th Edition of CIO Africa CIO100 dx⁵ Annual Digital Symposium awards, emerged among the best digital industry champions. The County earned the distinguished CIO100 Gold Mark Award, in recognition of excellence in enterprise ICTs adoption.

90. The **MAKUENI TECH and INNOVATION HUB** was Nominated and later awarded the National Innovation Award in the category, **COUNTY GOVERNMENT INNOVATION HUB OF THE YEAR 2022**. The hub continues to offer a conducive innovation ecosystem for innovators, entrepreneurs and programmers ranging from students, the youth, college students. The hub has processed and empowered over **1,100 innovators** since inception. Seven (7) innovators who are beneficiaries of the innovation hub participated in the Plug Mtaani Programme which **three (3) were nominated to proceed to the national levels** with a chance of winning **Ksh. 10 Million in award**.

Overall Winner was Faith Mumo of Iviani Farm, 1st Runners up was John Mwendwa Kioko of Residence Technologies and the 2nd Runners up was Judith Mwende Mutunga of Ustawi Nutritional Care.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION IN THE COUNTY

Mr. Speaker Sir,

91. Opening of Mtito Andei Resource Centre increased the number of ICT Centres to 14 and has ensured continuous offering of ICT skills including: basic computer training, online work training, google digital training and thus sustaining communities which are digitally empowered, increasing employability and opening the communities for online work and sprucing up the county digital economy.

92. In technical education, we have increased CTTIs capitation. In FY 2022/23, 4,496 CTTI trainees benefitted from capitation worth Twenty Three Million, Eight Hundred and Twenty Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Seventy Eight Shillings (**Ksh. 23,823,278**) to ease fees burden. In the current FY 2023/24, a capitation amount of Ksh. 20 Million is allocated targeting 4,417 trainees. This disbursement is already ongoing. We have also implemented various infrastructure development projects in

the CTTIs like construction of dormitories, workshops and equipping with assorted tools.

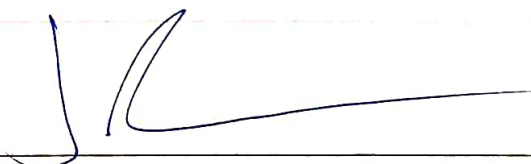
93. In **ECDE**, we have constructed classrooms, offices and stores in 34 ECDE centres, trained 2,144 ECDE teachers on Digital Learning, a key component of CBC and distributed 2,058 digital gadgets to support Digital Learning in 1,197 ECDE Centres in the County through EIDU Kenya support. Across board, we awarded 100 **scholarships** to Form Ones and 81 to University students in 2023. Additionally 1928 learners also benefitted from **Bursaries** in the FY 2022/2023.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Mr. Speaker Sir,

94. The advanced October- November-December (OND 2023) rains have led to prolonged period of intense rainfall, causing disruption of essential services in all Sub Counties within Makueni County. Specifically, since the onset of the El Nino rains, there has been reported cases of drowning, vehicles swept away, collapsed/severely cracked houses, flooded farmlands/homesteads, mudslides, landslides, sunken toilets in schools and homesteads, cut off and severely eroded roads, eroded spillways, breached earth dams, formation of deep gulleys on roads among others. These emergency cases have occurred in over 100 villages in Ukia, Kilungu, Kithungo/Kitundu, Kiteta/Kisau, Kako/Waia, Kalawa, Kikumbulyu North, Kikumbulyu South, Nguu/Masumba, Emali/Mulala, Mbitini and Mukaa wards.

95. I would like to appreciate commendable efforts by dedicated citizens who were brave enough to rescue drowning victims and retrieve bodies in the recent floods disasters. These citizens acted swiftly and were the first responders putting their lives in line for the betterment of the community. These efforts, Mr. Speaker, cannot go unrecognized,



this is the true institutionalization of the service mantra of *Wauni wa Kwika Nesa na Ulungalu na Kwituma*. Those of us entrusted with various responsibilities, if we served selflessly like these heroes, we will attain socio-economic transformation in less than a decade. With this dedication we will embody the philosophy of serving with integrity. The community members are;

- a. Peter Muasya, a driver at Sultan Hamud risked his life and jumped into braved flooding waters to rescue two people in a car that was being swept by fast flowing river.
- b. Ruth Mbithe Mulandi, the lady who singlehandedly dived to retrieve the body of one of the ladies who a drowned in the now famous Muooni River.

96. To date, the impact of the advanced rains has led to setting up of **5 evacuation centers** distributed within the hot spot areas (areas prone to floods & landslides). Three of these centers, **Kawese in Kilome, Kyakithuku, Kavata Nzou, Katulye in Kaiti are operational and Mikululo in Makindu, Kibwezi West Sub County**. The current population in the camps is at 300 households and the number keeps increasing day by day. Continuous assessment is currently ongoing to establish the full impact of the emergency situation. We have procured food and non-food items that are being distributed to the already established evacuation centers as per the demand. The government shall ensure timely procurement of more food and non-food items to sustain the already established evacuation camps and the anticipated evacuation centers to be established latter.

97. In collaboration with Red Cross, an Emergency Command Center has been established at Wote Fire Station for coordination of all emergencies during and after the ongoing rains. I urge communities, individuals and visitors in the county to note that there is low visibility and wet road surfaces across the county and especially along the Nairobi- Mombasa High way. We must avoid the temptation to cross into flooding, raging or even surging waters by all means. We advise residents in areas



experiencing or threatened by these floods, landslides and mudslides to relocate to safer grounds. We request the assembly to help us on this matter.

98. I am aware that various roads and dams have been destroyed by the above rains. The department of roads and water have prepared a list of dams and roads that have been damaged for discussions on how to repair them. However, all is not lost. Ndukuma dam; our signature dam is reportedly full, as well as Kyamakuthi, Kwamboo and others. The department of agriculture is in the process of repairing the spillway at Kilombo dam. We will now consider the irrigation component of the dam as soon as we begin the next budget cycle. The water department is checking the spillway at Kamunyolo dam in an effort to ensure the erosion does not compromise the dam. I have seen a report on this and I hope it is tabled at the assembly soon.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

99. My government has collaborated with various donors including the Polish Centre for International Aid (PCPM) and the African Fire Mission with the purpose of strengthening our effectiveness in fire and emergency preparedness. These include the capacity building of the county emergency response teams and equipping them with essential aqua rescue equipment (SCUBAS, rescue boats, air compressor (very critical). The county has equipped Makindu Fire station with a Road Traffic Accident/Medical Vehicle (one of its kind in East Africa) that was fabricated in Kenya and equipped with hydraulic equipment- Spreaders, cutters and ram that enables easy extrication of accident and crashed vehicles. The Road Traffic Accident/Medical Vehicle -RTA is also fitted with medical equipment so that emergency care can be given to accident victims). I am proud to be the team leader of an award-winning fire and rescue team coordinated by Mr. Urbanus Kyalo..

100. In preparation for the forecast El Nino, the County Government procured food and non-food items. These items are projected to be inadequate given that the rains may

persist. However, the following needs continue to arise; Reconstruction of houses/toilets, supply of beddings/clothing/food & non-food items, construction of gabions/culverts, repair of affected roads, medical supplies among others. I wish to appeal to the National Government, well-wishers, Non-State Actors and people of good will to join hands with us to mitigate the effects of these emergencies.

101. Yesterday, Christian Aid, one of our partners offered a cash transfer of (5) Five Million Shillings to the affected victims in our camps. We applaud Christian Aid for their timely intervention.

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION, CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Honourable Members,

102. The County has strengthened the civic education framework through the establishment of the School for Devolution and Community Led Development. We are committed to improving the quality and nature of education through transforming it from mere civic engagement to capacity development/strengthening of our people. The school is one of its kind and the first in Africa, second in the world after Mexico. It facilitates a platform for enhancing devolution capacities, localization of Sustainable Development Goals at the community level and consultations for quality implementation of devolved functions.

103. The school focuses on training citizens, opinion leaders, community leaders, civil society, professionals and government officials from across the county and the country at large. We were happy to host governments such as the Republic of Madagascar and that of Zimbabwe to study and experience devolution and how it



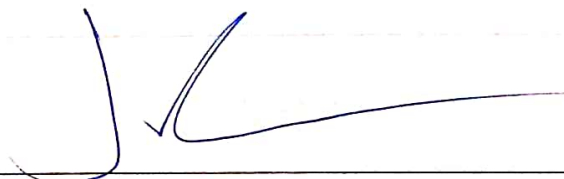
works in this great county. A few days ago, we witnessed the graduation of the first cohort of 35 students. The 2024 class is focusing on training 500 students drawn from various societal groups in the county as well as the county public service. The people of Makueni, organized groups and governments are welcomed to study with us through one to two days benchmarking, three to five-days short course or six months' certificate course on Community Led Development.

RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Mr. Speaker Sir,

104. The county government has established a Centre for Research, Documentation and Knowledge Management to facilitate research development, enhancing the culture of knowledge gathering, sharing and documentation. The resource library therein provides a student with an array of sector-specific reports, manuals, annual statutory reports, policy briefs, newsletters, speeches and many devolution-related knowledge assets. The Centre is open to the public service and communities. The operationalization of the centre under the department of devolution facilitates all departments to ensure a one-government-approach in research, documentation of all county best practices and knowledge. Currently, the centre is focusing on the documentation of participatory planning and budgeting alongside documentation of key programs such as our business centre model of market development and annual programs that create impact and new knowledge within the public service and the stakeholders.

105. We have set up a Central Records & Information Management Unit where we have been compiling our data towards digitization. In the same area, we have also sensitized 85 information handlers on records management and trained 25 champions drawn from all county departments on knowledge management.



106. In relation to indigenous knowledge, the county government organized Cultural fairs/exhibitions in collaboration with community cultural centres and groups which saw the Makueni indigenous Food Festival being held in June 2023 at Unoa grounds bring together 25 Akamba indigenous food festival exhibitors from all sub counties and other partners.
107. Scientific Documentation of Selected Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites in collaboration with the National Museums of Kenya led to the Dry Lands Natural Resources Centre (DNRC), Mbumbuni being supported to do an exhibition of the Akamba indigenous food at the Food for Thought Festival Held at the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) Headquarters in Nairobi from 6th to 7th October, 2023. This collaboration also facilitated 3 experts from the National Museums of Kenya in the assessment of three heritage sites namely Mau Mau Detention Centre in Kathonzweni, PCEA Mission Church in Kibwezi, and the Mbitini Catholic Mission Church in Mulala for possible rehabilitation and restoration and consideration for gazettelement.
108. The same collaboration facilitated 20 members of the Thome wa Tutini traditional music and dance group to perform at the Bomas of Kenya, Nairobi during the inaugural Utamaduni Day celebrations. The above documentation, knowledge sharing and management shall result in effective promotion and development of Arts, Music and Culture.
109. Makueni rolled out the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Documentation and Digitization (DoDi) in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage through the Natural Products Industry (NPI) Initiative; a Kenya Vision 2030 flagship project whose overall goal is to advance protection, promotion and valorisation (value addition) of Kenya's indigenous knowledge and associated assets.

The project delivered documentation of 63 traditional knowledge and cultural assets, and establishment of a fully equipped indigenous knowledge innovation bank. This bank will allow lawful access to the communities' traditional knowledge and all assets enabling our people to generate alternative wealth. Additionally, the project delivered training of 30 Champions of Culture, drawn from each of our 30 wards.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT AND LOCALIZATION OF SDGS

Mr. Speaker Sir,

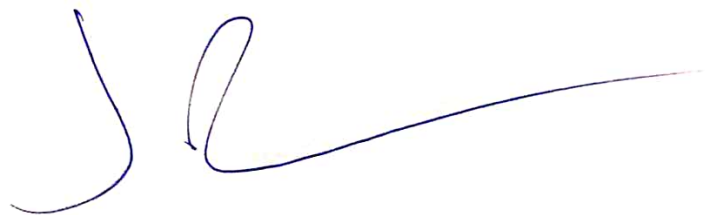
110. The County has continued to receive accolades for our robust citizen engagement framework across the world. Public participation allows the people of the county living within and outside the county to provide inputs and proposals on the policy formulation, development of draft bills, county budgets, development projects and programs in their villages and wards. Over the year, I have emphasized on the role of professionals and retired officers in all sectors in county decision making processes, in participating in project management and sustainability committees. The Mombasa and Nairobi diaspora participation forums have added value to the decision-making processes. The willingness of communities to participate has been highly appreciated.

111. Going forward, I seek to strengthen the inclusion of women, youth and People with various disabilities in our public participation framework. The establishment of the County Government Printer Services in the coming year will enhance access to information for the various categories including the braille, visual and sign language information. Further, we shall strengthen public participation in our municipalities, urban and peri-urban centres. I congratulate the people of Makueni for honoring their right to participate as well as their responsibility in making the promise of devolution a reality in the county.

112. In the new year, we shall re-engineer the county development framework detailing the establishment of development committees embedded in the county's public participation structures, whose terms of service has now lapsed together with a proposal to introduce village councils under the County Government Act of 2012. This will serve to enhance the people's participation, communication at the grass root levels and citizen oversight as well as social accountability in our efforts to ensure unified voice in decision making and the advancement of their sovereignty.

113. The *Miradi kwa Jamii program* (MKJ) has enabled the participation of the rural communities in economic gains of our county through creation of community tangible assets such as roads, forests, sand and earth dams, mitigation of climate change through construction of roads for water structures and tree planting initiatives, improved community volunteerism spirit that has enhanced community led development initiatives even when the works are done and dusted and the funds spent.

114. Over Kshs. 210 million has been injected directly to the village economy across the county with over 50,000 casuals being engaged in the last financial year alone. These initiatives promote an enabling environment for the implementation of the promise of the *Constitution of Kenya (2010)* (Article 174c), that 'gives powers of self-governance to the people and enhances their participation in the exercise of 'the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them'. *No one shall be left out in our development agenda!* We intend to use this strategy for repair of roads and dams destroyed by the ongoing El-nino rains.



ROADS AND TRANSPORT SECTOR

Honourable Members,

115. Makueni road network currently stands at 13,014.04 Kms as per 2020 road network reclassification data. Of this 933.51 Km is bitumen surface and 12,080.52 Kms are earth roads. Over the past year, road maintenance has been given priority as an enabler for economic growth. This investment has greatly boosted the growth of other sectors by improving connectivity and opening up remote rural areas to trade and investments. Some of the key achievements of the department in this sector are;

116. **Road Maintenance:** Since our roads are majorly earth roads and constitute the most used means of transport in the county, they need to be constantly maintained to ensure they remain motorable. To this end, the department has ensured effective road maintenance through grading of over 2500 Kms of roads, opening and widening of 370 Kms of new roads and gravelling of over 150 Kms of roads. The department has also Constructed 25 No drifts, installed more than 600 gabions and 1200 Mitres of culverts.

117. In **creation of employment**, more than 15,000 youth women and the vulnerable have been engaged in minor road repairs, mitre drain excavation and unblocking of culverts through the labour based programme - *Miradi Kwa Jamii* (MKJ).

118. The department of roads and infrastructure mapped all roads in the county and developed a **Critical Roads Network Inventory** that will help us plan better on our roads improvement and maintenance. Some of the notable major projects for this sector are; the 30Kms Kwa somba – Mulala –Kithumani – Kathii road connecting three sub counties Kibwezi West (Emali Mulala ward), Makueni (Mbitini Ward) and Kilome (Kasikeu Ward). Others are the 120 Metre long Ngwani drift, 100 Metre long Kako Kandulyu drift, Kyangwasi drift, Kamunyuni drift among others.

The department also undertook gravelling of major towns roads in Wote and Mito Andei towns among others. I urge the Assembly to consider and approve the inventory at the earliest possible.

119. After going through the draft final engineering design report of the East African Economic Corridor presented to us by KENHA, we carried out a review and attached our **feedback report/proposal** for incorporation by the Project Design Consultant. We urge the National Government to expedite completion of the ongoing and proposed roads upgrade projects under their mandate, which are key to economic development in the County. These include; the East African Corridor section Emali - Ukia road – Matiliku – Kilili – Kwa Philip road, Itangini-Ngoluni - Tawa road, Kikima- Mbumbuni – Kali - Kyambalasi, Sultan – Kasikeu -Kyambeke-Kikoko road and Katuaa – Nunguni road. I urge the department to share the proposal and our feedback with the Assembly.

120. In addition, collaboration with all sector players will be key in tackling the damage caused by the ongoing rains on our infrastructure. 29 roads in Kibwezi West Sub County, 38 roads in Mbooni Sub County, 39 roads in Makueni Sub County, 50 roads in Kibwezi East Sub County, 58 roads in Kaiti Sub County and 30 roads in Kilome Sub County have all been surveyed by our roads team and a report developed on the level of damage done by the heavy rains and flooding. Some have been cut off completely, others need gravelling while others have streams and gullies due to erosion.

121. We also urge the honourable members of county assembly to appropriate more resources to road repairs in the subsequent budgets as the ongoing floods have ravaged road infrastructure and rendered most parts of the county inaccessible and has also led to loss of life and property.

GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Honourable Members,

122. Makueni County's comprehensive social protection programs exemplify the county's commitment to addressing poverty and vulnerability. The department's multifaceted approach ensures the well-being of vulnerable groups such as the elderly and children, reflecting the county's dedication to a holistic and inclusive society. We have managed to Support PWDs, Orphans and Vulnerable Children & Senior Citizens. This has seen an increase from 1,664 in 2021/2022 to 2,100 on the number of elderly persons supported with food and other materials, 1,591 beneficiaries of small homes provided with foodstuffs, 2,241 OVC children supported with food materials, non-food materials , rescued, and offered psychosocial support.
123. We have also worked hard in reducing the number of Gender Based Violence Cases in the County. Our heightened advocacy had led to an increase of reporting of the cases from the community. So far, this year we have received a total of 834 cases reported, assistance and legal guidance given. We urge parents to be on high alert now that children are on a long holiday. I urge the departmental committee where these issues are domiciled, to arrange a meeting with the Judiciary in the New Year. This is an area that needs a collaborative approach.
124. The Makueni County Empowerment Fund [MCEF] {popularly referred to as "Tetheka Fund"} targeting youth, men, women, persons with disabilities, and community development groups cannot go unmentioned. Overtime, the fund has been faced with operational and administrative challenges. The County Assembly halted the funds disbursement in 2020 and an ad-hoc committee of the county assembly was established. The committee's recommendations pointed at an overhaul reform to the fund.

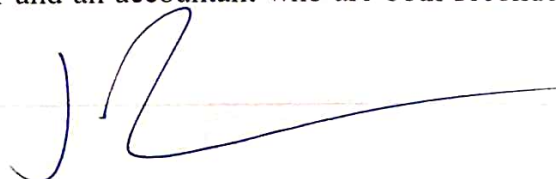
125. In July, the fund secretariat set out to effect these recommendations on the reforms. These reforms consist of deliberate changes to the structures and processes of the fund with the objective of getting it to run better. The structural change includes restructuring its architectural setup while process change included redesigning systems, setting quality standards, and focusing on efficiency and effectiveness of the fund towards meeting its objectives.

126. Towards this end, the funds regulations and guidelines had to be reviewed as per the ad-hoc committee's guidance. The two documents have been reviewed and subjected to stakeholder engagements including the County Assembly Committee on Gender and are now ready for debate and adoption by the County Assembly. We have engaged with Safaricom on the disbursement of the funds. Once an applicant qualifies and meets the requirements of the rules, they will receive the funds in a maximum of three (3) days after approval.

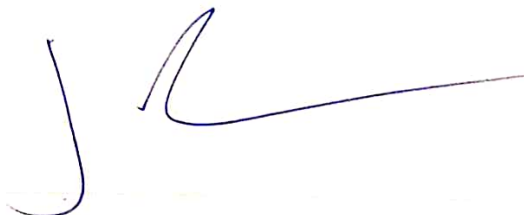
POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. Speaker Sir,

127. To conclude, I want to highlight on our achievements on policy and legislative agenda. The Office of the County Attorney (OCA) is now a fully-fledged department separate from The Office of The Governor. At the close of FY 2022/23, the department was operationalized as envisioned in the Office of the County Attorney Act 2020 assented to by the President in June 2020. Subsequently, the County Attorney was appointed in November 2022 and the County Solicitor was recruited in 2023. The office now has eleven staff including an administrative assistant, an intern, a legal clerk, a procurement officer and an accountant who are both seconded to the department.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'J' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

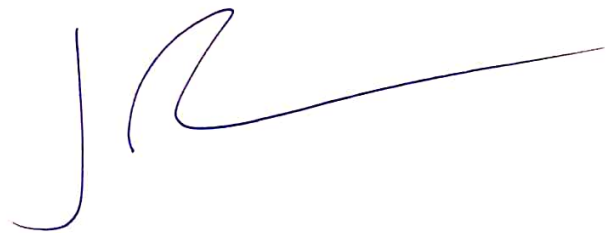
128. Bearing in mind the imperative of inclusivity, the office implemented the following Strategic Intentions during the Financial Year in review: Revision of County Laws; advising departments in the county executive; representing the County Executive in court; drafting, vetting and interpreting documents and agreements for and on behalf of the county executive and its agencies.
129. It is imperative to note that prior to the establishment of this office, all litigation was being handled by external counsel but currently this office is handling most of the court matters in-house. This has enhanced hands on and efficient management of court cases as well as significantly reducing government spending. So far, we have 109 active court matters which 24 of them have been completely handled by our In-House counsel.
130. The County Attorney on his own motion has instituted two matters to protect public interest which has never happened in this county before. One of these cases seeks to secure ownership of Kaumoni market land which has been fraudulently registered in the name of an individual. The County Attorney has also sought ownership of a public utility land in Mukaa ward pertaining Nzaini borehole.
131. A while back, Okiya Omtatah sued the County Government claiming that there is double taxation in Mtito Andei market where both Makueni and Taita Taveta Counties claimed to collect trade licence fees. **Orders were issued by the Court against Makueni County by appointing Taita Taveta to collect levies in a town where the residents elected a Member of County Assembly seated here in the Makueni County Assembly today, Hon. Francis Mulwa, The Deputy Speaker.**



132. When our government came into office, the County Government challenged the above orders. At the same time, the court directed National Lands Commission to investigate the issue as a historical injustice. The County Government has filed an appeal challenging jurisdiction of NLC to determine the issue because the courts in its own ruling said that it has jurisdiction to hear the matter and proceeded to issue orders. Both forums cannot act in contradiction. In any event, under Article 188, only parliament (National & Senate) can alter a boundary of a County. In my view, these orders issued by the Court are *Per Incuriam* and they amount to *Usurpation* of the role of parliament.

133. The County Government is determined to protect territorial boundaries of Makueni County as declared under the constitution.

134. The County Attorney has also taken lead responsibility for the revision of county laws. So far, the office has assisted county departments to draft 17 legislative proposals, bills, regulations and policies.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that ends in a small hook.

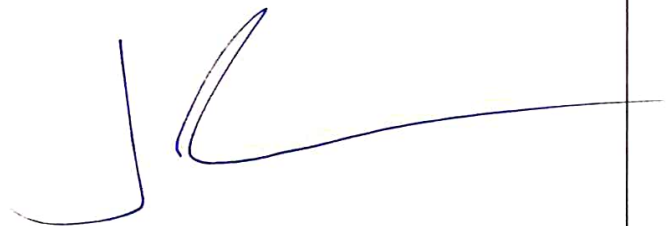
CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker Sir,

135. In conclusion, I want to reassure all of us that with your continued support, we will achieve more for the people of Makueni. To the citizens of Makueni County whose aspirations we work so hard every day to meet and deliver the promise, this report is just our first year of Passion to do good with integrity. **Integrity to us is an irreducible minimum value that we subscribe to as leadership, indeed, integrity is our most valuable currency.** I am determined to see that Makueni is transformed and our people be economically empowered.

136. My desire is to lead a transformative government, a government that listens, a government that cares for its citizens, a government that cares for its employees, a government that cares about the relationship with its partners. Governments are known to be cruel, insensitive, manipulative, too far, too bureaucratic and emotionless. **I however would like to lead a government that is human and that cares for the well-being of the citizens and the employees.** We subscribe to the philosophy of prioritizing people, because it is the people who drive success, innovation and transformation. We can change the narrative and make the government humane. This will require radical transformation and redefinition of the beliefs and culture we have held so dear.

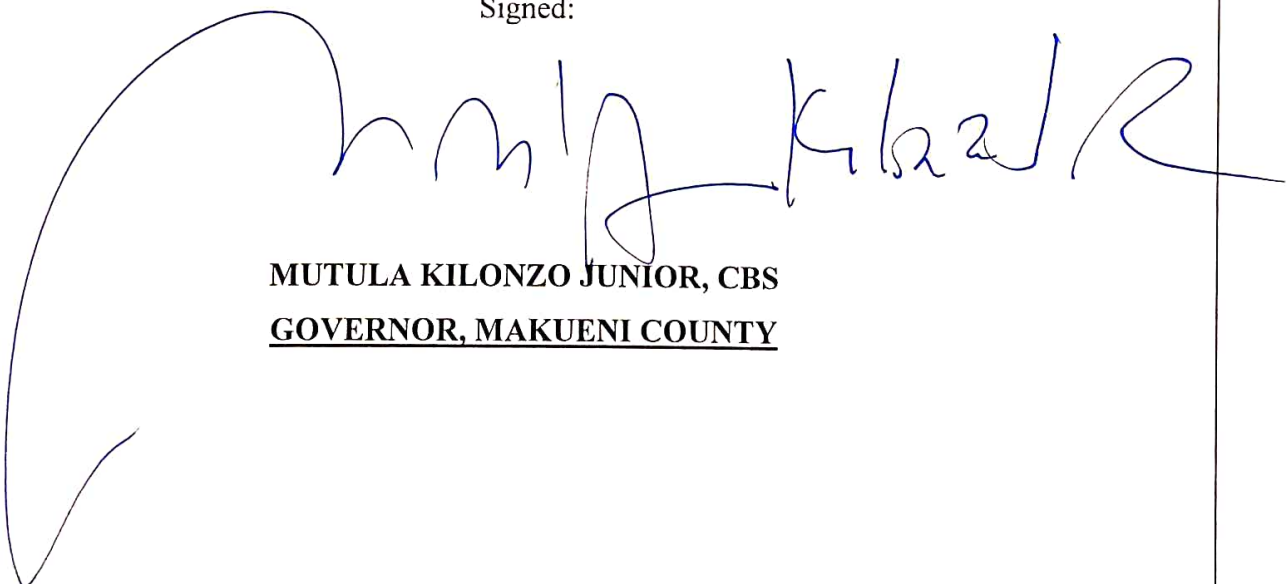
A commitment to transform the way we work; join me we together transform Makueni County. A renewed passion of ‘Kwituma’ integrated into our values of public service.



I wish everyone A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

God Bless Makueni County! God Bless Kenya!

Signed:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mutula Kilonzo Junior', is written over the printed name.

**MUTULA KILONZO JUNIOR, CBS
GOVERNOR, MAKUENI COUNTY**