

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE GOVERNOR, H.E MUTULA KILONZO JUNIOR, CBS,
DURING THE 1ST MAKUENI COUNTY VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS SKILLS
EXHIBITION ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT SPRINGHILL KWAKAKULU CTTI,
EMALI/MULALA**

Preliminaries; Greeting; and acknowledgement.

It is a profound honor to stand before you today at the **1st Makueni County Vocational Training Centers (CTTI) Skills Exhibition**. Today is not just another day on the calendar; it is a day of **reflection, celebration, and inspiration**. It is a day that we gather to recognize and honor the talents, skills, and innovations that are emerging from our vocational training centers—a day to reaffirm our commitment **to empowering our youth and building a brighter, more sustainable future for Makueni County and Kenya at large**.

In the words of the great **Nelson Mandela**, "**Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.**" Today, we are witnessing the power of that weapon. Our youth are not just learning; they are building, creating, innovating, and transforming. This Skills Exhibition is a testament to the potential that lies within each of them, and it serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative impact that vocational education can have on our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen.....,

I firmly believe that we are standing on the cusp of a new dawn in Makueni County. A dawn where the future is no longer something that happens to us, but something that we actively shape through deliberate, purposeful actions. This Skills Exhibition, hosted right here at the Springhill CTTI in Emali, symbolizes our commitment **to awakening a sleeping giant**—vocational training and skills development.

For the first time ever, 17 of our 61 Vocational Training Centers will showcase their talents and innovations.



From traditional crafts like carpentry and masonry to modern technologies such as solar installation and motor vehicle mechanics, from fashion design and garment making to performing arts, we are witnessing a powerful fusion of tradition and modernity. And this is just the beginning.

Ladies and gentlemen.....,

Our journey here in Makueni is not happening in isolation. It is part of a broader, global movement towards sustainable development—a movement that seeks to build a world where no one is left behind. Today, as we celebrate the progress we have made, let us reflect on how our efforts align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Goal 4 of the SDGs calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. By investing in our vocational training centers, we are ensuring that every young person in Makueni has the chance to acquire the skills they need to thrive in a competitive world. These skills are not just about securing a job; they are about creating opportunities, fostering innovation, and building sustainable communities.

Goal 8, which advocates for decent work and economic growth, is also central to our mission. Today, we see before us the fruits of our labor, this year over 900 students graduated from various Vocational Training institutions equipped with skills in masonry, motor vehicle mechanics, solar installation technology, hairdressing and beauty, fashion design, and garment making technology among others. These young professionals are not just joining the job market; they are joining it as change-makers, ready to innovate and lead.

Ladies and gentlemen.....,



Allow me to share some of the significant strides we have made under my leadership and through the tireless efforts of our dedicated teams:

1. **Governance and Financing:** In the financial year 2023/24, we appointed 61 visionary leaders to serve as chairpersons for our Vocational Training Centers. These leaders are tasked with ensuring good governance, quality training, and sustainable development.

Additionally, in the last 2 years we have provided **Ksh. 40 million** in capitation and extended bursary support worth over **Kshs 9Million** to our needy trainees marking the first time our county has extended such support since devolution.

2. **Graduation of Skilled Professionals:** This year, **over 900 trainees** graduated with skills that are not only relevant but also essential for the socio-economic development of our county and our country. These skills span diverse fields such as carpentry, solar technology, fashion design, motor vehicle mechanics, and many others. We are proud of these young men and women, who are now ready to take on the challenges of the modern world.
3. **Infrastructure Development:** Our commitment to building and improving our vocational training infrastructure is unwavering. We recognize that the foundation for quality education lies in well-equipped institutions, and we are investing heavily to ensure that our centers meet the highest standards. In the last 2 years we have undertaken **25 infrastructure improvement projects** spanning from (workshops, Tools & equipment, dormitories, electrification among others) **worth over Kshs 68 million.**
4. **Government Automation and Innovation:** The Government of Makueni County has embraced automation as a cornerstone of our strategic plan. From the County Core Revenue Management System (ZiZi RMS) to the County Integrated Health Management Information System (CIHMIS), and from the Project Monitoring and Tracking System (PMTS) to the Vocational Training Centers (VTC) Management Information System, we are leading the way in digital governance.



These initiatives have not only improved efficiency, accessibility, and transparency but have also reduced corruption and operational costs. They have made us a model for other counties to emulate.

Ladies and gentlemen....., As we celebrate these achievements, it is important to remember that none of this would have been possible without the collective efforts of our dedicated teams. I extend my deepest gratitude to all the departments in the Makueni County Government. **Your commitment, hard work, and dedication are the driving force behind our progress.**

A special appreciation goes to the **Department of ICT, Education and Internship for their outstanding work in planning this Skills Exhibition.** Your efforts in coordinating this event have not only made today possible but have also created a platform to showcase the talents of our youth and connect them to opportunities.

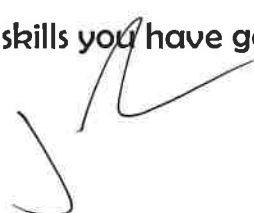
To our partners, stakeholders, and the residents of Makueni County, thank you for believing in our vision and for walking this journey with us. Together, we are building a county that is not just skilled but also inclusive, innovative, and ready for the future.

A Call to Action: Shaping Our Future Together

As we leave here today, let us remember that the journey does not end here. Let us continue to work together, harnessing the power of education, innovation, and entrepreneurship to build a Makueni that is not just a place of potential, but a place of realized dreams.

Let us inspire our youth to dream big, to challenge the status quo, and to be the change-makers that our world so desperately needs. Let us remind them that they are the architects of our future, the torchbearers of our progress, and the champions of our sustainable development.

To all the talented trainees gathered here today, I want to encourage each one of you to take a bold step forward and use the skills you have gained in our Vocational



Training Centers (CTTIs) to build a brighter future for yourselves and our community. **Now is the time to come together..., form and register your own companies, turning your skills into thriving enterprises.**

My government is committed to supporting the youth in business under the **AGPO category. In the current year we intend to surpass last year by allocating the category more than the requirement of 30%.** Seize this moment, come together, and let's build a prosperous future—together, we can make it happen.

Closing Remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, the future of Makueni County is bright, but it is up to us to make it shine even brighter. Together, let us continue to empower our youth, drive sustainable development, and build a prosperous future for all.

Thank you all. God bless You, God Bless Makueni County.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. M. M.', written in a cursive style.

