

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



GOVERNMENT OF MAKUENI COUNTY



SPEECH BY H.E. MUTULA KILONZO JUNIOR, CBS, THE GOVERNOR OF MAKUENI COUNTY, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 63RD MADARAKA DAY CELEBRATIONS

DELIVERED DURING COUNTY CELEBRATIONS ON 1ST JUNE 2026, AT NGUUMO, KIBWEZI WEST SUB COUNTY, MAKUENI COUNTY.

THEME:

“EDUCATION, SKILLS AND THE FUTURE”

DATE: 1ST JUNE, 2026

**The County Commissioner,
Deputy Governor,**

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**Honorable Members of National Assembly,
The Speaker,
County Executive Committee Members,
Hon. Members of County Assembly,
Distinguished Guests,**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Hamjambo!

1. Today, beneath the enduring skies of this proud land and in the shadow of our sacred hills, we gather not merely to commemorate a date in history, but to honor a living promise, a promise born on the 1st of June, 1963, when the people of Kenya took their destiny into their own hands.
2. That promise is called Madaraka, freedom to self-governance, authority, and the power of a people to determine their own future or **wiyathi wa kwitawala**.
3. Here in Makueni, this occasion carries profound historical and spiritual significance. Long before the drums of independence echoed across Kenya, the people of Ukambani had already begun resisting colonial oppression with courage, resilience, and an unbreakable belief in self-determination.
4. We remember the fearless heroes and heroines from this region whose leadership transformed the sacred Kilumi dance into a powerful movement of resistance and unity. There many Kamba leaders whose political mobilization challenged colonial injustice and defended the dignity of ordinary citizens. Although their actions have not been captured well in our history books, their bravery will be remembered.
5. Their sacrifices remind us that the freedom we enjoy today was neither accidental nor inexpensive. It was earned through courage, sacrifice, unity, and vision.
6. As we commemorate Madaraka Day 2026 under the theme, "Education, Skills and the Future," we are reminded that the next phase of liberation lies in empowering our people through knowledge, innovation, opportunity, and broad-based prosperity.
7. Ladies and Gentlemen, in this spirit of education and the future, we are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of 16 young lives in the Utumishi Girls Academy in Gilgil fire incident. In another incident in our county, three people including a father and his son, lost their lives last week after drowning inside a septic tank in Makindu. In the Utawala incident, these were children full of promise, whose dreams and hopes for tomorrow have been painfully cut short.

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8. This tragedy reminds us of our solemn duty to ensure that every learning institution is a place of absolute safety and care. As a nation, we must never allow such a loss to be repeated. I now ask that we all rise and observe a moment of silence in honour of the departed souls.

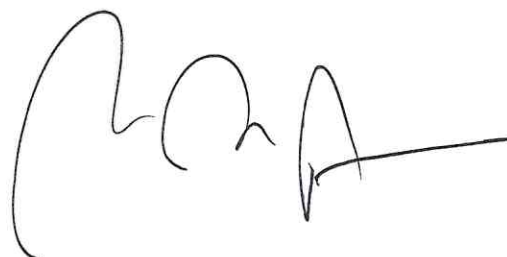
Pause for silence...

May their young souls rest in eternal peace, and may their families find comfort and strength.

9. **Fellow citizens-** The responsibility of our generation is therefore clear: to transform freedom into prosperity, opportunity, and a future worthy of the sacrifices made by those who came before us. That is the enduring spirit of Madaraka.
10. Here in Makueni, the promise of Madaraka is reflected in the steady transformation of our communities. We see it in expanded access to education, improved infrastructure, stronger healthcare systems, and the empowerment of our people through devolution and shared development. Allow me now to highlight how my administration has continued to build this spirit of Madaraka in our County:

Fellow Makueni Residents,

9. Since FY 2022/23, the County Government has constructed 195 modern ECDE centres across the county at a cost of KSh 513.9 million, significantly expanding access to quality early childhood education while providing safer, more conducive learning environments for our children.
10. To strengthen the quality and sustainability of these services, we have converted 959 ECDE teachers to permanent and pensionable terms. This landmark achievement has enhanced job security, improved teacher motivation, and ensured the consistent delivery of quality early childhood education across the county.
11. As part of our continued commitment to the sector, we will progressively recruit additional ECDE teachers to meet growing demand, reduce teacher-to-learner ratios, and ensure that every child receives the attention and support needed to thrive.

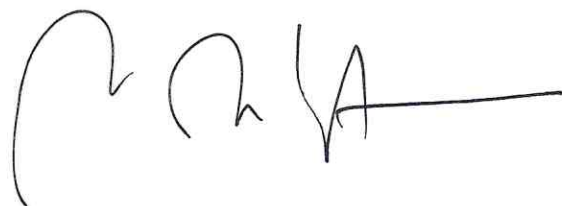
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12. To strengthen professionalism and improve learning outcomes in early childhood education, we provided instructional materials worth KSh 12.1 million to ECDE centres across the county. These investments ensure that both learners and teachers have the tools necessary for effective teaching and learning.
13. We are equally investing in the holistic development of our children through co-curricular activities, talent nurturing, and cultural empowerment. The County Government has invested over KSh 30 million in supporting learners' participation in music and cultural activities, with Makueni emerging among the top-performing counties nationally.
14. In today's rapidly evolving world, digital literacy is no longer optional; it is essential. Digital learning has now been introduced in all public ECDE centres, preparing our children not only for present challenges but also for future opportunities in a technology-driven world.
15. To ensure that no child is denied education because of poverty, the County Government has invested KSh 105 million in scholarships since FY 2022/23. Currently, the programme supports 202 students in secondary schools and 317 students at university level, enabling bright and needy learners to continue pursuing their education and aspirations with dignity and hope.
16. Digital learning has now been introduced in all public ECDE centres across the county, equipping our young learners with essential digital skills and preparing them not only for the challenges of today but also for the opportunities of a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world.
17. To further strengthen this initiative, we are actively engaging development partners and stakeholders to support the continued equipping of our ECDE classrooms with modern digital learning tools and infrastructure. Through these partnerships, we aim to ensure that every child, regardless of location, has access to quality and inclusive learning experiences.
18. In addition, through our engagement with the Council of Governors, we have held discussions on the establishment of a sustainable model school feeding programme for ECDE learners. Once these consultations are concluded and an appropriate framework is agreed upon, we will roll out school feeding programmes across all public ECDE centres in the county.
19. Fellow Citizens, as we strengthen foundational learning, we are equally committed to equipping our youth with practical skills for employment, enterprise, and self-reliance. **As the late Kofi Annan once said, "Knowledge**

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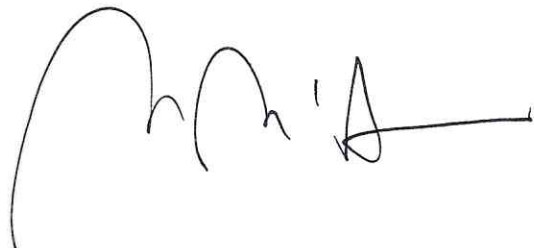
is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress.” Through the Makueni-KCB Foundation 2Jiajiri Programme, 900 young people successfully completed vocational and entrepreneurial training, marking a significant milestone in our journey toward youth empowerment and economic inclusion.

20. Among these graduands, 264, with 11 from Nguumo Ward attained First Class Honours in various technical courses, a clear demonstration of the immense potential within our youth when opportunity meets determination. Through the KSh 60 million partnership between the County Government of Makueni and the KCB Foundation, vocational institutions received modern equipment, upgraded workshops, ICT laboratories, and improved water and electricity infrastructure.
21. To support graduates transitioning into employment and entrepreneurship, the County Government provided starter toolkits—including modern welding kits, electrical installation kits, carpentry toolkits, tailoring and fashion design kits, plumbing toolkits, salon and beauty equipment kits, agribusiness starter kits for poultry and horticulture production, and ICT/digital entrepreneurship kits to support online work and innovation—to First Class Honours graduands and establish the Makueni 2Jiajiri Alumni Network to strengthen mentorship, networking, and market access.
22. Fellow Citizens, as we commemorate Madaraka Day, we celebrate not only the freedoms we inherited, but also our collective responsibility to strengthen institutions that serve the people with integrity, efficiency, and accountability.
23. When this administration assumed office, only the Car and Mortgage Fund consistently attained Unqualified Audit Reports. Today, I am proud to report that in FY 2024/25, our government achieved seven clean audit reports, including the Executive Financial Statements, Receiver of Revenue Accounts, Emergency Fund, Climate Change Fund, Car and Mortgage Fund, Bursary Fund, and the Makueni County Empowerment Fund. These achievements affirm our commitment to restoring public confidence through transparency and sound financial stewardship.
24. This progress reflects our deliberate journey toward full audit compliance and prudent governance. We have consistently met statutory obligations and maintained timely compliance with Senate audit processes. As Abraham Lincoln once observed, **“The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done but cannot do**

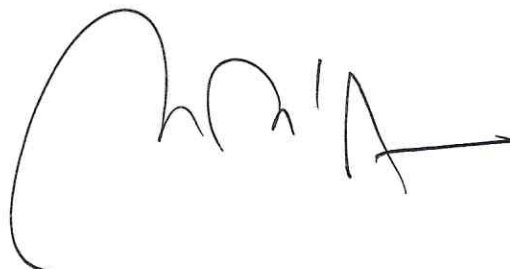
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at all, or cannot so well do for themselves.” Good governance therefore demands discipline, honesty, and accountability in the use of public resources.

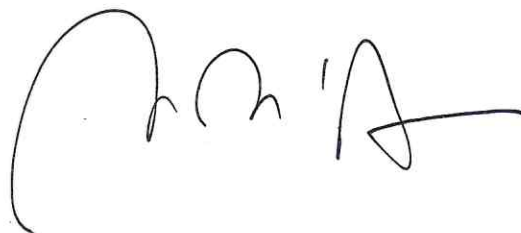
25. Our unwavering commitment to fiscal discipline and prudent financial management continues to yield impressive results in county revenue performance. Own Source Revenue (OSR) has grown from KSh 891.6 million in FY 2022/23 to over KSh 1.35 billion in FY 2025/26, representing an overall growth of approximately 46 percent.
26. This remarkable growth has been driven by the digitisation of revenue collection and service delivery through the ZiZi Revenue Management System, the MyMakueni App, and the Makueni Ardhi System. These platforms have strengthened efficiency, enhanced transparency, and significantly reduced revenue leakages.
27. Additionally, we have continued to strengthen the digitisation of our revenue systems and processes. Public Service Vehicles, through their Saccos, now use a self-service portal for vehicle registration and monthly parking fee payments, enabling better fleet management, improving collaboration between the County Government and the PSV sector, and enhancing revenue collection. In addition, permits and licenses are now issued electronically and delivered directly to clients' phones upon payment through cashless platforms, improving convenience, efficiency, and cost savings for our residents.
28. Today, we celebrate the outstanding contribution of our Wards to the growth of Own Source Revenue across the County. I particularly recognize Wote/Nziu Ward, which has generated KSh 64 million, and Emali/Mulala Ward, which has raised KSh 43 million. Kasikeu, Makindu, and Ukia Wards have each contributed KSh 18 million, while Thange and Mtito Andei Wards have generated KSh 16 million each. These achievements reflect the commitment of our wananchi, the confidence of our business community, and the success of the reforms we have implemented to strengthen revenue collection, accountability, and service delivery.
29. As we consolidate these gains, our objective remains clear and unwavering: to finance at least 20 per cent of the county budget through Own Source Revenue. Achieving this milestone will significantly strengthen our financial independence and expand our capacity to deliver quality and timely services to our people. I, therefore, urge the County Assembly, the business community, and all citizens to continue supporting these reforms so that together we may fully embrace the spirit of Madaraka-self-reliance, responsibility, and shared prosperity.

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30. The Finance Bill 2026, which provides the framework for financing our next budget, has carefully taken into account the prevailing economic challenges facing our citizens and introduces no new taxes. The adjustments contained in the Bill are limited to the alignment of Social Health Authority (SHA) charges as prescribed at the national level. These contributions will facilitate timely reimbursements to health facilities as we continue to roll out Universal Health Coverage.
31. Allow me to particularly acknowledge the contribution of Kaunguni, Ilatu , Syumile, and Ndovoini health facilities in Nguumo Ward, which together received a cumulative KSh 6,551,078 in SHA reimbursements between July 2025 and March 2026. In accordance with the approved utilization guidelines, 40 percent of these funds has been allocated to the purchase of essential medicines and health commodities, while 60 percent has supported the engagement of casual workers, infrastructure improvements, and other operational requirements. This investment is expected to enhance the availability of medicines, strengthen facility operations, and improve the quality of healthcare services provided to our communities.
32. My administration has also taken cognisance of the deterioration of roads in areas affected by copper mining activities. In response, we propose the introduction of a cess on copper prospecting and mining operations, particularly in Kamunyu in Mtito Andei and Kathekani in Kibwezi East, and Makindu in Kibwezi West. The proceeds from this cess will be dedicated exclusively to the rehabilitation and maintenance of the affected road infrastructure, thereby ensuring sustainable local development and protecting community access and mobility.
33. In addition, our administration remains committed to prudent financial management and has consistently ensured the timely payment of employees' salaries, notwithstanding delays in Exchequer disbursements. As we strengthen revenue systems and expenditure discipline, we shall continue enhancing the county's financial sustainability and our ability to deliver quality services efficiently and consistently to wananchi.
34. Fellow Kenyans, for generations, water scarcity defined daily life across many parts of our county. Women walked long distances before dawn in search of water. Children missed school, livestock perished during droughts, and entire communities lived at the mercy of erratic rainfall. Yet, as **Leonardo da Vinci wisely stated, "Water is the driving force of all nature."** Guided by our manifesto commitments, we have prioritised securing water for every household while strengthening environmental sustainability.

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35. In response, we have undertaken a comprehensive programme to rehabilitate, expand, and modernise our water infrastructure. This includes the restoration of key earth dams such as Uyi in Masongaleni, whose rehabilitation restored its 150,000-cubic-metre capacity and significantly improved water availability, supported by a solar-powered treatment and distribution system. We have also constructed a modern treatment facility at Mulima Earth Dam in Mbooni Ward, while West Ngosini and Kyamakuthi Earth Dams have been rehabilitated and desilted to enhance water access for thousands of households.
36. We have further strengthened storage and resilience through the rehabilitation of Tabora Earth Dam in Nguu/Masumba Ward in collaboration with the National Government, as well as the desilting of Sekeleni Earth Dam in Nguumo Ward to restore its full storage capacity. To further enhance water security, we are also proposing the construction of Mwiini Dam in Nguumo Ward and Ilingoni Earth Dam in Kibwezi South.
37. In addition to water harvesting infrastructure, we have expanded bulk water supply systems across the county. The 68million Athi-Tunguni Water Project was rehabilitated and expanded through upgraded filtration systems, a 250,000-cubic-metre storage facility, and a 27-kilometre distribution network serving Kikumbulyu North, Nguumo, and Makindu Wards.
38. The County Government of Makue ni is participating in the Performance for Results Programme under K-WASH, implemented through the State Department for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation in collaboration with the World Bank. Through this programme, the County has qualified for KSh 144 million, which will be used to enhance household water access, improve institutional water supply, and promote sanitation interventions in rural areas, including the attainment of Open Defecation Free (ODF) status across the County. In addition, the Kibwezi-Makindu Water and Sewerage Company (KIBWASCO) has also qualified under the same programme and will receive KSh 47 million to strengthen its service delivery capacity. These funds will support household water distribution from various projects, including Athi-Tunguni, Mang'elele, and Ilengeni water projects.
39. Ladies and gentlemen, Nguumo Ward is served by one of the region's most sustainable water resources -the Umanyi Springs. For decades, this water has been tapped and distributed across the ward through an aging piping infrastructure that can no longer adequately meet the demands of our rapidly growing population.

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40. To address this perennial challenge, we propose to allocate KSh 17 million for the development of a direct rising main under the ALGON-Kiunduani Water Pipeline to supply water to Kiunduani Market. This strategic investment will not only improve access to clean and reliable water but will also spur business growth, attract investment, and create employment opportunities for our people. We remain committed to the progressive expansion of this infrastructure to meet the water needs of the people of Kaunguni, Muuni, Syumile, and Ndovoini areas, as we work towards building a more prosperous and water-secure Nguumo Ward.
41. We are also planning the extension of water supply to the Syumile Water Point from Miundani kwa Matuku at a cost of KSh 8 million. In addition, the Sekeleni/Ndovoini borehole project under FLOCCA is set to commence within the next 20 days.
42. Here in Kibwezi West Sub-County, we continue to prioritise reliable and affordable access to clean water. Distribution networks for the Kwa Kathoka and Kyandulu boreholes have significantly improved access for hundreds of households that previously depended on seasonal rivers and costly water vendors.
43. We have also expanded groundwater access through the drilling of multiple boreholes, including Mulala, Yikivumbu, Kakili, and Kalima under KCEP-CRAL, as well as Yinzau, Syengoni, and Kanaani boreholes supported by Fadhili Trust. In addition, Fadhili Trust has rehabilitated Ithamba Aume, Kwa Munguti, and Mikuyuni boreholes, further strengthening water reliability across the sub-county.
44. I am pleased to announce that we will rehabilitate the Katheani Borehole in Makindu Ward, as well as the Makindu KIBWASCO borehole, to further strengthen water service delivery in the area.
45. The Kiboko Twaandu Water Project is currently underway through a matching grant partnership between the County Government and World Vision. Under this arrangement, World Vision has contributed KSh 79 million, while the County Government has provided KSh 7.5 million. The project will cover the Kiboko Town reticulation system, Mbiuni area, and Ngaakaa, with further extension through FLOCCA planned towards the Nthia area. Once completed, the project will significantly improve access to safe and reliable water for households, institutions, and businesses in these areas.
46. Under FLOCCA, the Yandia Water Project has been completed at a cost of KSh 12.1 million. In addition, we are extending the Kiboko Twaandu Distribution and Livelihood Project from Mbiuni to Nthia, currently at the procurement stage at a cost of KSh 10 million, to further enhance household water access and livelihoods.

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47. In Kikumbulyu South, the Ngandani Water Distribution Project is currently at the procurement stage, valued at KSh 10 million. In Kikumbulyu North, the Athi-Tunguni-Kilisa Water Distribution and Livelihood Project is also at the procurement stage, with a similar investment of KSh 10 million, aimed at expanding access and strengthening resilience.
48. The Athi-Tunguni-Kilema Water Project remains one of our flagship interventions in Kibwezi West. It has significantly improved access to treated water in Nguumo Ward, particularly in Ngulu Sub-Ward and surrounding areas of Makindu and Syumile/Ndovoini. We are now implementing Phase II, which involves pumping water to elevated storage facilities at Kilema Hill to enable gravity-fed distribution, while integrating solar-powered systems to ensure long-term sustainability.
49. In addition, ongoing investments in Kakili Borehole, Yikivumbu Borehole, Kikuu Kwa Malika Water Project, and Kikuu Katangini Water Project continue to expand household access to safe and reliable water, while improving livelihoods across the county.
50. Beyond infrastructure, we are strengthening governance and accountability in the water sector. This includes the operationalisation of the Makueni Rural Water Board, registration of 92 community water schemes, and the adoption of smart technologies such as digital meters and automated water kiosks. These reforms are improving efficiency, transparency, and sustainability in water service delivery.
51. Despite these gains, we continue to face serious challenges, particularly vandalism of critical water infrastructure. Projects affected include Kwa Wala Borehole, Kwa Kakui Earth Dam, Kinyongo Water Project, Kwa Kisela Water Project, Kwanzooni Water Project, Kithokosyo Water Project, and the Kwanzongo FLOCCA Water Project in Kibwezi East. These incidents of vandalism undermine service delivery and threaten hard-won progress.
52. Let me state firmly that my administration will not tolerate criminal acts aimed at sabotaging development and denying wananchi essential services. Any individual found vandalising public infrastructure will face the full force of the law. I call upon wananchi, community leaders, and security agencies to work together in protecting these vital public investments.
53. Fellow Citizens, agriculture remains the backbone of Makueni's economy, supporting approximately 76 percent of our households and contributing significantly to our Gross County Product. It is for this reason that we continue to

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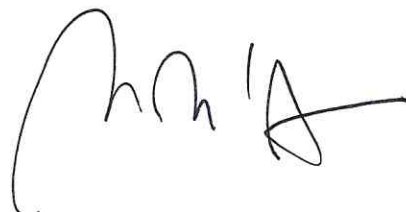
prioritise interventions across the entire agricultural value chain, to improve productivity, strengthen sustainability, and increase farmer incomes.

54. To strengthen food security at the household level, we distributed 31,506 metric tonnes of certified maize and bean seeds to 15,753 farmers across six wards ahead of the October-November-December 2025 planting season, thereby boosting staple crop production and preparedness against food insecurity.
55. In the same spirit of improving access to affordable inputs, we operationalised 11 fertiliser satellite depots in partnership with the National Cereals and Produce Board. Through this system, we distributed over 8,889 bags of subsidised fertiliser, achieving more than 80 per cent uptake by farmers across the county.
56. To further modernise service delivery and enhance efficiency in the sector, we developed the Kilimo Makueni Management Information System (MIS), a digital platform that enables farmers to register, access extension services, and receive timely agricultural information. The system is now fully integrated with SOKO Makueni allowing seamless data exchange and strengthening market linkages for our farmers.
57. In the mango value chain, we distributed over 15,000 fruit fly pheromone traps to 4,084 farmers, alongside training on integrated pest management, export compliance, and market access. These interventions have significantly improved productivity and strengthened the competitiveness of our mango farmers, even in the face of market challenges.
58. Recognising the need for structured markets and value addition, we have also moved to address post-harvest losses and price instability. In this regard, I established a special task force to implement targeted interventions across key value chains.
59. The task force has already submitted its report and established implementation units, which will engage farmers within the next 30 days to ensure the effective operationalisation of the Fruit Processing Plant, with the aim of enhancing value addition and reducing post-harvest losses. The units will also spearhead the development of modalities for the revival of previously restricted export markets, in collaboration with national government agencies, in order to restore access to high-value international markets for our farmers.
60. Further, it will develop structured local market linkages to absorb the 39 percent market share previously held by Urban Fresh Markets, thereby stabilising demand for farmers' produce. It will also promote forward contracting between farmers

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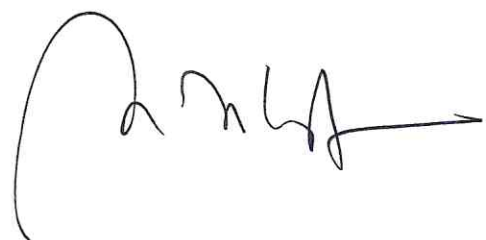
and processors ahead of production cycles, particularly before the mango season, to guarantee predictable off-take and reduce market uncertainty.

61. At the same time, we are proposing to finance cooperatives to improve access to affordable financing through the Makueni County Empowerment Fund, enhancing their capacity in production, aggregation, and value addition. The County has approved the roll out of the fund to 44 groups on pilot basis after the Assembly approved the new Regulations. This will be done through Safaricom in a manner similar to MShwari platform.
62. To further strengthen post-harvest management, the County Executive Committee has also approved the construction of a KSh 93 million Pack house and Cold Room at Wote, known as the Makueni Horticultural Cold Room and Pack house, with a cold storage capacity of 70MT and an aggregation and packing capacity of 200MT per day. This flagship project, jointly funded by the County Government and development partners, will commence within the next month.
63. In addition, we have prepared the Kavuthu, Kalongo, and Kalawani cold rooms and pack houses in order to support mango farmers during the harvesting season. These facilities will provide accessible storage and aggregation points, helping farmers reduce losses and secure better returns from their produce.
64. Beyond production and markets, we continue to promote value addition and diversification. Through the Edible Oil Crops Promotion Project, we distributed 6,251 kilograms of sunflower seed to 694 farmers, covering over 2,084 acres, thereby reducing dependence on imports and improving household incomes.
65. We have also expanded apiculture as a viable income diversification venture. Through targeted training and distribution of modern beehives, over 1,005 farmers have been trained, increasing honey production while supporting environmental conservation.
66. In the dairy and agro-processing sub-sector, under the National Agricultural Value Chain Development Project, we installed 30kWp solar power systems at the Makueni Dairy Farmers Cooperative Plant and at the Kathonzweni Dairy Farmers Society.
67. To cushion dairy farmers and cooperatives against the effects of the prolonged drought, we provided grants of KSh 850,000 each to 10 dairy cooperatives across the county. In addition, Kikima Dairy Cooperative received KSh 1.1 million to support value addition through the production of mala and yoghurt, with these products expected to enter the market within the next month. This investment will enhance market opportunities, increase farmer incomes, and strengthen the

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dairy value chain. Further, Kathozweni , Kitise Rural, and Mukuyuni dairy cooperatives are set to benefit from the installation of modern milk cooling facilities, which will reduce post-harvest losses, improve milk quality, and enhance the competitiveness of our dairy sector.

68. Further, the County has launched a major livestock vaccination programme targeting 150,000 cattle against Foot and Mouth Disease and 100,000 goats against Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP), to safeguard livestock health and protect farmers' livelihoods.
69. At the same time, Cooperative development has also recorded remarkable progress, with the digitisation of 39 SACCOs, far exceeding the initial target of 10. This has strengthened financial management and increased community savings from KSh 276 million to KSh 303 million.
70. We have further strengthened farmer institutions by enrolling 2,998 Common Interest Groups and Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups, mobilising 4,212 members into SACCOs, and supporting 122 agripreneurs to enter structured value chains.
71. To enhance sustainability, we are currently implementing 30 farm ponds under the NAVCDP Marwa Irrigation Food Resilience Project in Kiima Kiu Kalanzoni, expanding water harvesting and irrigation infrastructure to support year-round agricultural production. In addition, the County is set to receive 100,000 cashewnut seedlings from the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) for the October-December planting season to boost oil crop development and strengthen agricultural diversification.
72. In addition, through the Agriculture and Food Authority, we supported the distribution of 10,000 coffee seedlings through cooperatives, contributing to the ongoing revival of the coffee sub-sector and expanding income opportunities for farmers.
73. These achievements are not just numbers. They represent transformed livelihoods across our county, from women in Kitise managing beehives, to youth in Mavindini embracing agribusiness, and dairy farmers in Mbooni improving productivity through modern breeding services.
74. On this Madaraka Day, I reaffirm that our resolve is unwavering. Together, we will continue building a food-secure, adaptive, and prosperous Makueni County.

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75. Fellow Citizens, my administration remains firmly committed to achieving Universal Health Coverage by strengthening primary healthcare, expanding specialised services, upgrading infrastructure, investing in healthcare workers, and leveraging technology to make healthcare accessible, affordable, and accountable for every resident of Makueni. For us, healthcare is not a privilege for the few; it is a fundamental right that belongs to every citizen.
76. In furtherance of this commitment, the County Government launched the Makueni Universal Health Coverage Programme, otherwise known as Mutulacare, a transformative initiative specifically designed to support the most vulnerable households through facilitation of healthcare access for indigent families. The programme seeks to reduce financial barriers to healthcare while ensuring that disadvantaged members of our society can access essential medical services with dignity and protection from catastrophic health expenses.
77. I am pleased to report that significant progress has already been achieved under this programme. To date, the County Government has identified 11,206 vulnerable households eligible for support. Out of these, data for 9,292 indigent households has been successfully validated, and annual health insurance premiums fully paid at a total cost of KSh 54,715,652. I am encouraged to note that many beneficiaries have already accessed healthcare services through this programme. Our plan is to progressively expand coverage to ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community can access essential and affordable health care services.
78. The programme rollout is currently underway alongside the issuance of official Makueni Universal Health Coverage cards to enrolled beneficiaries, ensuring seamless access to healthcare services across the county. Through MakueniCare, we continue protecting vulnerable families from catastrophic medical costs while expanding equitable healthcare access.
79. Fellow Citizens, as part of efforts to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes, Makueni County has embraced the Safer Births Bundle of Care Programme, an evidence-based initiative designed to strengthen emergency obstetric and newborn care through continuous training, innovation, mentorship, and quality improvement in our health facilities.
80. The programme incorporates modern lifesaving technologies and simulation-based training to equip healthcare workers with practical skills for responding effectively to labour, delivery, and newborn emergencies.

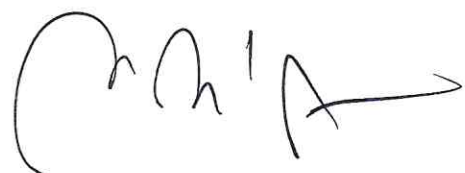
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81. Originally piloted in Tanzania, the programme has demonstrated significant reductions in maternal and newborn deaths across participating facilities. By adopting such innovative interventions, Makueni County continues strengthening maternal and child healthcare services while safeguarding the dignity and wellbeing of mothers and newborns.
82. Fellow Citizens, in our continued efforts to improve child healthcare services, the County Government has entered into a strategic partnership with the State of Israel to strengthen pediatric emergency and trauma care. Through this collaboration, specialist healthcare workers from Makueni have undergone advanced training in pediatric emergency medicine, equipping them with critical skills to respond effectively to child emergencies and trauma cases.
83. The training, facilitated by experts from Hadassah University Medical Centre and the Hebrew University from Israel, was conducted through a workshop at the Makueni County Referral Hospital. This partnership places Makueni on the international map as a leader in health innovation and healthcare capability development.
84. On health infrastructure, we have upgraded, renovated, and equipped 173 health facilities across the county. We have constructed 12 maternity wards and 15 staff houses, while also completing five new health facilities, increasing the total number of health facilities from 238 to 249. Through strategic partnerships with organisations such as Safaricom Foundation, World Vision, ENI, and VAMED, additional maternity blocks, hospital wards, and staff housing units have been constructed and equipped, significantly enhancing maternal, newborn, and emergency healthcare services. Among the notable completed projects is the Family Care Unit at Sultan Hamud Sub-County Hospital, while other key health infrastructure projects are ongoing in Kibwezi and Mukuyuni. Further, through our partnership with VAMED, the construction of new maternity blocks at Kikumini, Nguu Masumba, and Kako Waia health facilities will soon be completed, further strengthening access to quality maternal healthcare services across the county.
85. At Mbooni, we transformed the former isolation centre into a fully-fledged Family Hospital complete with a theatre, laboratory, emergency wing, and mother-and-child unit. Digital reforms have also strengthened efficiency and accountability through automation of health commodity management and revenue collection systems. First Lady, Anita Mutula, through the Anita Mbinya Foundation, donated to hospital 50 fully dressed hospital beds, 50 bedside cabinets, 25 baby cots, and hospital curtains to support the operationalisation of the facility. The

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County Government will invest KSh 24 million to further equip the hospital this Financial Year.

86. In addition, my administration has introduced telemedicine and digital consultation platforms to reduce referral delays and lower travel costs for patients in remote areas. The TIBABU digital health platform has further improved real-time Social Health Authority claims processing and enhanced revenue management.
87. Community health services have also recorded remarkable progress. We engaged 3,675 Community Health Promoters who have collectively visited over 202,000 households, strengthening disease surveillance, referrals, and grassroots health awareness.
88. Specialized healthcare has equally achieved historic milestones. For the first time in Makueni's history, neurosurgical services were established at Makueni County Referral Hospital, where 86 successful neurosurgical procedures have already been performed.
89. Cancer care services have significantly expanded, with thousands screened for breast, cervical, and prostate cancer. Today, 2,832 patients are receiving treatment at the county oncology centre, while chemotherapy and palliative care services continue restoring hope and improving quality of life for affected families.
90. As part of our continued commitment to supporting our people and ensuring that no resident is denied emergency healthcare because of financial constraints, I am pleased to announce that, through the provisions of the new Finance Bill, all internal ambulance transfers for Makueni residents within the county will be offered free of charge effective 1st July 2026. To enhance accountability, efficiency, and patient safety, the County Government, in partnership with ENI, will implement a comprehensive ambulance tracking system. This initiative will help monitor ambulance movements, curb fuel misuse, drunk driving, promote responsible driving practices, and ensure that emergency response services are delivered effectively and efficiently. This intervention reflects our government's enduring commitment to providing compassionate, accessible, and people-centred healthcare for every household across Makueni County.
91. Fellow Citizens, to enhance accessibility, stimulate economic growth, and connect our people to opportunity, my administration has continued investing heavily in infrastructure development. In the current financial year alone, we have opened an additional 121 kilometres of new roads, graded 1,300 kilometres, gravelled 50 kilometres, installed 550 metres of culverts, and constructed nine drifts, further



strengthening rural accessibility. Key flagship projects include the construction of Muangini Bridge in Kasikeu Ward, Kitende Drift in Nguu Masumba Ward, Kithioni Drift in Ilima Ward, and Kyambui Drift in Wote Nziu Ward. These interventions improve inter-ward connectivity while also serving as water harvesting structures that enhance sustainability and support nearby communities.

92. To strengthen sustainability in road infrastructure, the County Government has constructed 15 strategic drifts alongside extensive drainage systems comprising 2,853 metres of culverts, 1,104 gabion boxes, and over 200 scour checks.
93. Sustainable maintenance of our road network remains a key priority for my government. We have rolled out a structured maintenance programme focusing on spot murrming, construction of mitre drains, and improved drainage systems to keep all roads motorable throughout the year. This programme is being implemented through a multi-agency approach involving county contractors, county machinery, and the National Youth Service (NYS), under a partnership I initiated a year ago.
94. Through this partnership, we graded over 350 kilometres of roads last year, and this year we are targeting over 500 kilometres of road improvement works across nine wards.
95. Recognising the impact of climate events on infrastructure, we have also rolled out a Rapid Response Initiative (RRI) to repair damaged roads and restore transportation networks across the county, ensuring uninterrupted movement of people, goods, and services.
96. Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to present the following key projects that my administration has undertaken in this great ward, in addition to the Ward Development Allocation. They include: improvement of the 19 km Kanyangi-Sekeleni-Syumile road at a cost of Ksh. 9 million, the murrming of the 6 km Kibarani-Kiuwani kwa Nzioki road, and graveling works at Kibarani Market to support trade and improve mobility. Within the year, the lorry parking areas in Kiunduani and Mbuinzau Market will also be gravelled to further enhance business operations and improve accessibility.
97. Fellow Citizens, reliable energy remains the backbone of development. In partnership with the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC), the County Government has implemented 42 electrification projects, benefiting approximately 2,154 households and institutions, with an investment of KSh 198.9 million. Currently, 17 projects are ongoing, targeting an additional 869

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households and institutions, while further projects under procurement will expand access through solar floodlights, transformers, and grid extension works.

98. To enhance security, promote public safety, and stimulate economic activity, we have installed 369 grid-connected streetlights, 51 solar-powered streetlights, 11 solar high-mast floodlights, and several integrated market lighting systems across trading centres, including Kikima, Kisayani, Kikumbulyu South, Masumba, Machinery, and Kinyambu. Recognising the transformative impact of these investments, we have further allocated KSh 10 million in the 2026/27 Financial Year to ensure that all markets across the county are adequately illuminated. This will improve security, extend business operating hours, and create a more conducive environment for trade and investment.
99. Through technical support in renewable energy scoping and design, the County Government has also implemented 92 renewable energy projects across water, health, agriculture, trade, FLLoCA, and gender sectors, with a combined capacity of 1.34MWp and a total investment of KSh 154.5 million, significantly improving service delivery through clean and reliable energy.
100. In ICT and digital transformation, 50 per cent of county government services have now been automated through 17 digital systems accessible via the county e-services platform. Community Information Centres established in Darajani, Kiangini, and Mtito Andei continue expanding digital literacy and access to e-government services.
101. Fellow Citizens, sports continue to play a transformative role in uniting communities, empowering youth, and nurturing talent across Makueni County. Through the highly successful Ligi Mashinani Programme, over 1,500 teams participated across all Wards, creating one of the largest grassroots sporting movements in our county's history.
102. The MKJ SUPA Cup was successfully held across all six sub-counties, culminating in exciting county finals in Wote. Outstanding players from the tournament represented Makueni County during the 11th Edition of the Kenya Youth Inter-County Sports Association Games in Laikipia County, where Team Makueni delivered an exceptional performance.
103. On infrastructure development, the County Government rehabilitated 12 playgrounds across the County and continues upgrading additional facilities to provide safe and modern sporting spaces. We are also constructing Kakuswi Stadium in Kiteta Kisau Ward as a flagship project under a public-private partnership.

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104. Upon completion, the modern 3,000-seater multi-sport complex will feature a standard football pitch, volleyball and basketball courts, and a high-yield borehole serving both the facility and surrounding communities. In addition, we have plans to improve the Sultan Play Ground, upon realization of funds
105. To strengthen governance and efficiency in public markets, the County Government successfully conducted elections in 90 markets during the year under review, building on over 200 market committee elections undertaken in FY 2024/25. These democratic structures continue to enhance accountability, transparency, and service delivery in our markets.
106. Construction of the KSh 74 million Nunguni Modern Market is ongoing and on track for completion in December 2026. Once completed, the facility will provide safe, modern, and well-organised trading spaces, easing congestion and improving the business environment. In addition, my administration has approved the construction of an ESP Modern Market in Wote Town, following a joint request with the National Government. To enable implementation, we have undertaken a humane and consultative relocation of timber and cloth traders currently operating within the project area. Further, to ensure continuity of trade and protect livelihoods, the County Government allocated funds for the construction of temporary trading structures to accommodate affected traders for the next 12 months during the construction period.
107. Fellow citizens, markets remain central to our local economy and the livelihoods of our people. We are therefore calling on the National Government to expedite the construction of Kasikeu, Mutulani, and Makindu markets, as residents continue to face challenges due to inadequate trading facilities. At the County level, we are planning the construction of a new modern market in Malili to support growing commercial activity along the corridor. We are also awaiting approval for the construction of a new market in Kathonzweni and kibwezi.
108. In line with our commitment to improving sanitation, environmental management, and public health within our trading centres, the County Government has continued implementing an extensive market cleaning and solid waste management programme covering 215 markets across the county.
109. This programme is not only about maintaining clean markets; it is also a deliberate economic empowerment intervention targeting vulnerable households and unemployed youth. Every month, the programme employs 548 market

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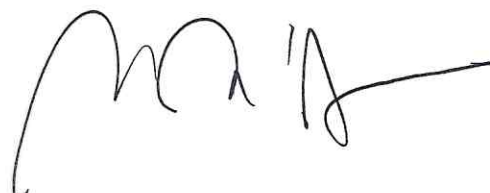
cleaners on a three-month rotational contract in accordance with the Kenyan Employment Act. Through this rotation model, the County Government creates maximum employment opportunities for our citizens, meaning that across the four quarters of every financial year, approximately 2,192 residents benefit directly from temporary employment under the programme.

110. To uphold dignity and fairness for these workers, the County Government ensures that all market cleaners are paid KSh 436 per day, with their full monthly dues processed and paid before the 28th day of every month- and importantly, before payment of all other County Government employees. This reflects our belief that government must remain humane, responsive, and people-centred, especially toward those whose labour sustains the cleanliness, order, and functionality of our markets and towns.
111. Fellow Citizens, Makueni County has already demonstrated strong commitment to structured urban governance through establishment of Wote Municipality in 2019, Emali-Sultan Hamud Municipality in 2023, and Mbooni-Kee Municipality in 2025.
112. Additionally, we have begun the process of establishing the Makindu-Kibwezi Municipality and the Mtito Andei-Kambu Municipality. This strategic initiative is necessary to create an urbanisation spur in the eastern part of Makueni County. The municipalities will support planned and orderly urban growth, attract investment, improve infrastructure development, and strengthen accountable urban management along the Mombasa and Kitui economic corridors.
113. Fellow Citizens, sustainable development cannot thrive where injustice, conflict, and weak governance persist. For many years, land ownership and succession disputes remained a major source of conflict within families across Makueni.
114. Through the Office of the County Attorney, we launched a countywide legal empowerment programme focusing on land rights, succession laws, and amicable dispute resolution. I am pleased to report that over 7,000 residents have since been sensitised and empowered on their legal rights.
115. Beyond public awareness, the County Government has provided free legal support to more than 1,000 vulnerable households by assisting them to file for Letters of Administration and providing legal representation during court proceedings.
116. Fellow Citizens, the transformation we celebrate today has been made possible through strong and strategic partnerships. Development is never the work of

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government alone; it requires collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility among citizens, development partners, the private sector, and communities.

117. Through partnerships with organisations such as DANIDA, PATH, JHPIEGO, World Vision, Safaricom Foundation, AMREF, and many others, we have strengthened healthcare, agriculture, trade, energy, and disaster response systems across the county.
118. Our landmark partnership with Morocco's Marrakech-Safi Region valued at KSh 264 million continues positioning Makueni as a model county for regional collaboration, innovation, and sustainable development aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063.
119. To empower Persons with Disabilities, we have distributed over 864 assorted assistive devices in partnership with Hope Mobility and issued 1,055 packs of adult and paediatric diapers through government and partner support. In addition, 7,500 Persons with Disabilities were mapped, assessed, and registered to facilitate certification and access to government services, thereby enhancing mobility, dignity, independence, and economic participation.
120. Under our community empowerment programmes, 277 organised groups across the 30 wards received support materials, including tents, chairs, PA systems, and water tanks, to strengthen livelihoods and income-generating activities at a cost of KSh 70 million. In addition, 384 vulnerable households, including persons with disabilities, are set to benefit from the Ultra-Poor Graduation Programme, aimed at supporting them to build sustainable livelihoods and improve their living standards.
121. The County also re-engineered and digitised the Makueni County Empowerment Fund to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accessibility. The Fund, whose pilot phase begins in early June, will provide affordable credit to organised groups of vulnerable men, women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities, thereby promoting financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, and household resilience.
122. In child protection and Gender-Based Violence response, the County operationalised the Makueni County Child Rescue Centre and conducted sensitisation forums and campaigns in partnership with stakeholders to strengthen awareness, prevention, and survivor support services across the county. The government has hired a manager to operationalize the centre and we requesting for national government to gazzatte the Centre.

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123. In partnership with Huduma Kenya, national government agencies, and our local administration, we undertook a bold initiative to take government services directly to the people at the ward level. Through this integrated Huduma Mashinani outreach programme, 76,399 citizens were served across all 30 wards, with 24 government services delivered under one platform over the last five months. Countywide, the programme facilitated the issuance of 10,561 birth and death certificates, 8,904 national ID registrations, and 3,138 IEBC voter registrations. Here in Kibwezi West Sub-County alone, the programme recorded 1,909 birth and death certificates processed, 2,329 national ID registrations, and 615 IEBC voter registrations over the same period.
124. Ladies and gentlemen, as we mark this occasion, I wish to express my deep concern over the situation in Mavindini/Kathonzweni/Kitise areas where we have witnessed a worrying rise in human-wildlife conflict. Tragically, this has led to the loss of three lives in recent weeks. This is a painful and unacceptable reality for any community to endure. I, therefore, call upon the Kenya Wildlife Service and all relevant authorities to act with urgency and resolve, and to put in place lasting measures to protect lives and prevent further tragedy. We further call for urgent, timely, and adequate compensation for all wildlife conflict-related cases in Makueni County, to ensure that affected families receive the support they deserve without delay.
125. Fellow Citizens, Madaraka calls upon us to transform political freedom into economic opportunity, social justice, accountable leadership, and shared prosperity for all.
126. To the young people in our County: your talent is your power, your discipline is your strength, and your future is bright. This County believes in your dreams, your innovation, and your immense potential.
127. To our farmers, traders, teachers, healthcare workers, religious leaders, development partners, civil servants, and all wananchi of Makueni, I express my deepest gratitude. The progress we celebrate today is the product of your resilience, sacrifice, hard work, and patriotism.
128. Even as challenges remain - from climate change and unemployment to rising costs of living and increasing healthcare demands - we face the future with confidence because the people of Makueni have never surrendered to adversity.
129. As we celebrate this Madaraka Day, let us renew our commitment to unity, integrity, accountability, and service to one another. Let us reject division and corruption, and instead choose patriotism, collaboration, and progress.

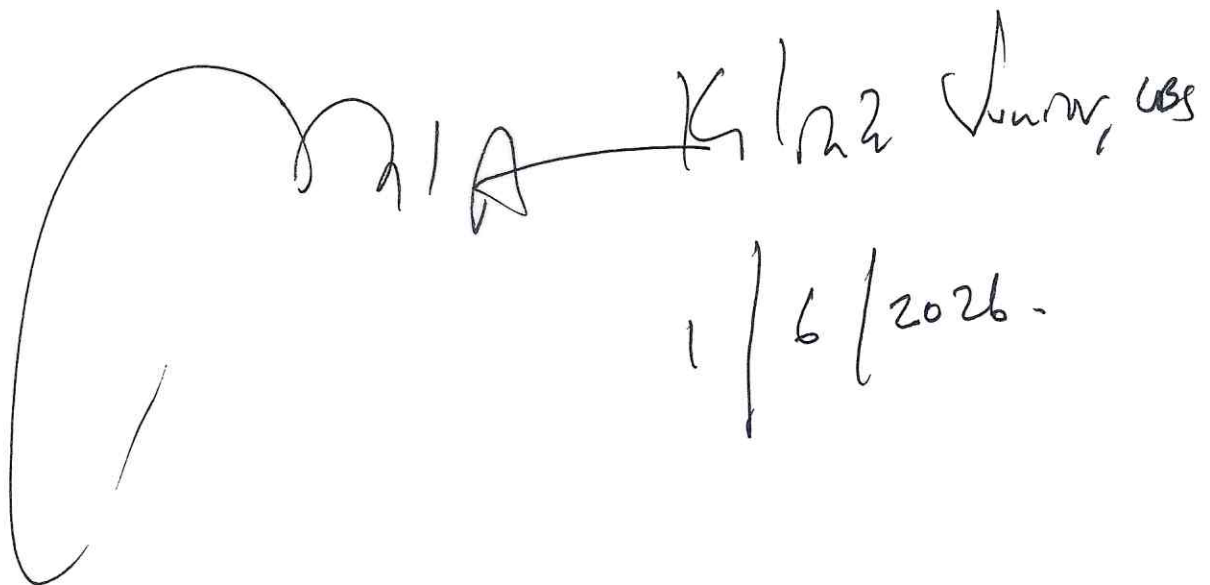
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130. The Bible reminds us in Psalm 133:1: **“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity.”** Indeed, unity remains our greatest strength and our surest foundation for sustainable development and lasting peace.
131. As we conclude this year’s Madaraka Day celebrations under the theme **“Education, Skills and the Future,”** let this be our solemn pledge: that we shall continue building a Makueni where no child is denied opportunity, no youth is denied hope, no family is denied dignity, and no community is left behind.
132. Let us move forward with courage, faith, and confidence in our shared future. The journey of building a prosperous, resilient, and united Makueni continues, and together, we shall succeed.

May God Bless You All.

May God Bless Makueni County.

And May God Bless the Republic of Kenya.



Kalua Juma, CBS
1/6/2026.