



Laikipia

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WEEKLY
BULLETIN

Rumuruti Edition

Investment Opportunities in Rumuruti



By Githuku Mwangi

Rumuruti Investment Forum which will be taking place on February 26, 2021 presents exciting growth opportunities for engineering, agro-processing firms, hospitality and real estate sector.

The forum will provide a marketing platform for firms manufacturing inputs, farm machinery, irrigation kits and accessories and processing equipment. In addition, it will enlighten farmers and business people on the business case for setting up manufacturing plants in Laikipia.

The main objective of the forum is to promote manufacturing of irrigation kits and accessories, farm equipment and value addition of high value produce in Rumuruti town. It will generate partnerships to accelerate attainment of the Government's goal to irrigate 50,000 acres and add value to at least 50% of the produce within Laikipia.

In its strategy, the County Government of Laikipia under the leadership of Governor Ndiritu Muriithi targets to grow its economy fourfold - from the current Ksh100 billion to Ksh400 billion by prioritizing manufacturing, commercial agriculture, tourism and mining as the key investment sectors.

Manufacturing is the anchor sector necessary to raise productivity per capita at farms and businesses, increase incomes per capita through value addition and accelerate higher utilization of local raw materials to produce tools, machines and inputs in Laikipia.

At this forum, the Government will present projects under the 'Water for Production' initiative that offers partnerships to private sector to buy and process the produce under a structured scheme.

Mowarak

The anchor partners are Nyahuwasco and Nawasco that will manage water and irrigation infrastructure and collect the tariffs from farmers to pay off the investment and maintain the irrigation system and water pans through regular desilting.

The department of Agriculture will advise farmers on appropriate agronomical practices. The farmers are supporting this initiative considering the benefits of lower irrigation costs, longer lifespan of water pans due to regular de-siltation, lower post-harvest management losses and value addition.

This initiative presents opportunities to engineering firms in the manufacture of irrigation kits and installation, post-harvest management and processing facilities adjacent to production areas. Availability of more than 2,000-acres of land in Rumuruti Municipality for a serviced Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and reliable energy source are important motivation to the investors. Laikipia North TTI at Mowarak presents engineering firms with another opportunity to access the latest models of lathe machines to fashion out components, accessories, tools and machine parts fast and in large quantities. The institution has



A farmer arranges tomatoes in boxes ready for sale at Theria Village in Laikipia West, Laikipia County. Photo/Steve Njuguna

advanced equipment to machine and make commonly used farm equipment, tools and accessories needed for irrigation and in other sectors.

Feedlots

The area around Rumuruti has many water pans with vibrant tomato and vegetable production businesses around them placing it among the top three tomatoes suppliers in the country. Other popular horticultural crops for the local market are vegetables, pineapples, herbs, drying facilities, among others. This is an opportunity for producers, processors, packaging firms, refrigeration, specialized storage, bank, and agro-chemical firms to bet on Rumuruti. All of them will be in the room. An expected outcome of this linkage is the signing of supply contracts by tomatoes and vegetables processing firms with farmers and establishment of processing plants at Rumuruti's Special Economic Zone.

The county has in place innovative financing options for transformative projects. Through the Laikipia Leasing Programme, the county government is accelerating development and maintenance of rural roads. This is enhancing transportation of farm commodities to the market. In addition, the county government has mobilized more than Kshs3 billion for lending to SMEs under the economic stimulus programme. It is also preparing to float an infrastructure bond to fund investment in the water pans/dams for irrigation and infrastructure for mid-size and large towns such as Rumuruti. There are also immense opportunities in establishment of feedlots and beef processing in Rumuruti for both domestic and international markets. The county government through the department of veterinary services are working to establish disease free compartments out of feedlots and

ranches. A feasibility study and business plan for the integrated production, processing and distribution under the Laikipia Beef SPV is ready.

The Government has also undertaken analysis of affordable housing demand in Rumuruti, designated the land parcels, proposed house types/pricing options and an investment vehicle to partner with private sector. Investment in affordable housing is necessary to meet the demands of workers in Rumuruti and farms, as well as visitors. Rumuruti investment forum is the first in a series of focused fora that Laikipia will run for key commercial centres and towns in Laikipia. It is a build-up of the public sector modernization program that this Government has been undertaking to deliver services at the same level of quality and efficiency like the best run private sector firms.

Innovative

Laikipia's strategy is to go beyond enablers such as roads, markets and houses by hand-holding the farmers and business people to grow their enterprises for society to get a favourable return on investment in the infrastructure.

Since mid-2018, the Government has run a vibrant innovation and enterprise development programme to identify and support innovative enterprises to grow. The lessons learnt and interest generated in the last three years are now being applied across all government departments, where enterprise development is the service delivery model. Beginning this financial year, all departments have identified businesses in their sectors to provide the necessary infrastructure and advise. The frontline staff have been trained to become business development officers.

Mr Githuku Mwangi is Senior Advisor, Economic Affairs

From a Remote Route Manyatta, Rumuruti Has Grown to a Vibrant Investment Destination



Rumuruti town before its upgrade

What is known as Rumuruti Municipality today was once a remote cluster of manyattas and traditional structures for cattle. It was the only settlement surrounded swathes plain land.

Located between Nyahururu and Maralal, white settlers plying the dusty road appropriately referred to this isolated route as ‘remote.’ But the word proved too heavy for the indigenous African tongues which only corrupt it to “Rumuruti” in reference to the isolated settlement between Nyahururu and Maralal.

The British colonialists would later use Rumuruti as an administrative post.

Today, Rumuruti town sits at the heart on Laikipia county hence the reason for it becoming the county’s headquarters, retaining its administrative roles as it was in the past.

It is the gateway to the northern part of Kenya through the Nyahururu — Maralal highway. This attracts more people to rest in the town while in the long journeys.

For many years, old Swahili type buildings dotted the town’s centre. Since its designation as the county headquarter with the advent of devolution, the old structures are increasingly being replaced by modern vertical buildings. Until recently the town had dusty streets with the only Rumuruti- Nyahururu road having the tarmac. Last year the County Government of Laikipia paved most of the town’s street using the long-lasting cobblestone technology under its Smart Towns Initiative. These efforts which are still ongoing, include the drainage system as well as sewer sys-

tem, solar street lighting, modern bus park and street addressing system.

The highway to Maralal is now tarmacked as it is the Rumuruti-Ndurumo-Sipili-Kinamba route. It is now accessible to people from extreme borders of Laikipia County.

Things have drastically changed for Rumuruti in the last decade or so. The pace of investment has accelerated over the last three years.

Its population has grown from 32,993 in 2009 to a projected population of 42,585 this year. To many, Rumuruti remains the place with the best “Nyama Choma” joints in the country. Some people travel from Nyahururu and Nanyuki and other neighboring

counties to specifically have a share of the delicious meat. Its warm climate is quite appealing especially during cold season.

The town also holds one of the Kenya’s biggest livestock markets. The livestock market attracts people from far and every Thursday for livestock buying or selling. It’s an economic lifeline for many.

Its economy is also fueled by a vibrant tomato production in area such as Thome, Marura, Survey, among others.

As a result, various classes of hotels have been built to house the visitors and allow them time to extend their visit.

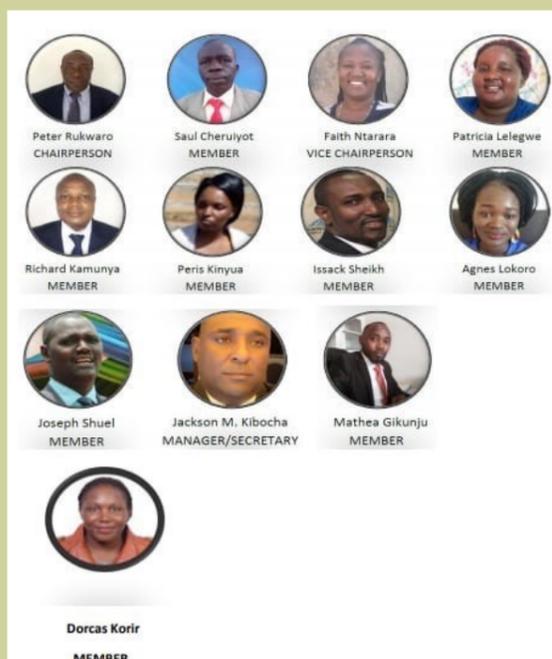
Business has been thriving in the area as more people rush to bridge the gap existing as more people moving to the area. Banking services are now available in the town as most of the main banks in the country take the opportunity to capture the large population.

The long journeys that Rumuruti residents have been making in search of judicial services are soon coming to an end as a magistrate court is set to open in a matter of days. As a municipality, Rumuruti is headed by the Municipal board comprising members selected in accordance with UACA 2011. The County Executive Committee Member and the Chief Officer for Urban Development form part of the 12-member team. The Smart Town Initiative has transformed the remote place to a modern urban area. All these are deliberate efforts by the County Government of Laikipia as the management directs all stakeholders in ensuring investment and growth in local production. It is only through manufacturing and consuming materials produced in Laikipia and by Laikipians that self-sustenance will be a reality.

Rumuruti Municipal Board, Mission and Vision

OUR VISION

To be the most preferred municipality to work, live and invest



OUR MISSION

To improve the livelihood of our community by providing quality and substantial services, creating and enabling environment for business investment and promoting equity and cohesion

Rumuruti Investment Forum to Bring Out Opportunities Available in Rumuruti

The County Government of Laikipia will host the Rumuruti Investment Forum on February 26, 2021. Deputy Governor John Mwaniki is spearheading the efforts towards a successful forum. Our writer, Nahashon Maina caught up with DG for an interview on why such a forum is significant for Laikipia.

Q1. Why is Rumuruti investment forum important?

This will showcase Rumuruti municipality as an investment destination. What has prompted us is that Rumuruti is the gazetted county headquarter.

We want to plan the town in a way that the municipality attracts investors who are going to add value.

Q2. What will the forum entail?

As Laikipia, we are very keen in promoting industrialization and other aspects such as developing an airstrip, manufacture of motorbikes or iron sheets.

We have minerals. We want to look at how all these minerals once extracted can become processed here to finished products.

We are in the process of establishing a Special Economic zone in conjunction with Special Economic Zone Authority.

Basically, this SEZ is a demarcated area where those who set up industries there enjoy certain incentives such as tax relieve, access to credit and export market.

Q3. Who will be participating in this fo-

rum?

We have spoken to various investors both local and foreign. We have people in the hospitality industry, banking sector eager to provide financial services in Rumuruti, pension funds industry players.

Others who have shown interest are KCB bank, Kenya Airport Authority and National Youth Service.

Q4. Any specific targeted investment firms?

We are looking at real estate developers so that they can be able to do housing projects and agro-processors to establish factories.

Also have want to discuss with those wishing to start a tomato processing plant since the area around Rumuruti has a huge horticultural undertakings and therefore be able to add value to these produces.



We are also keen to have discussion with leather producers. You know Rumuruti has the biggest livestock market in the county that takes place every Thursday hence an opportunity for leather production.

Q5. What are the expected outcomes?

We expect to have two to five concrete deals that people will start investing in. We have had preliminary engagement and some investors have shown interest in doing business in Laikipia.

Q6. Is there a tracking system put in place to follow up projects/commitments that will come out of the forum?

Through Laikipia County Development Authority (LCDA) which is our investment arm, we are very keen to ensure that we hand hold these potential investors to conclusion.

This will be a big forum and we expect to have many participants. We are keen to ensure that at least 5 deals are actualized in terms of implementation.

Q7. What measures has CGL put in place to accelerate investment in Rumuruti?

Rumuruti municipality has been kind enough to identify land for the purpose of establishing industries and parks. They have been facilitating the process. We have also had the expansion of utilities and services in water, sewer, roads and street lighting. We will continue to improve them. The land and physical planning department has ensured there is smooth flow and that space is available for those who show interest in investing in Rumuruti.



Ongoing works under Smart town initiative in Rumuruti town

Continuous Improvement of Business Environment Driving Investment in Rumuruti

By Jackline Mariga

Today, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, 30% of Kenyans live in towns and this proportion is expected to grow more rapidly in the coming years.

Laikipia's ratio of urban to rural population mirrors the national trend.

Urbanization creates opportunities. It increases economic activities, creates employment and reduces the cost of services. It can also make services more easily accessible, facilitates social integration and enhances the quality of life. However, if badly managed, it can lead to environmental degradation, growth of slums, high cost of living, and an increase in social problems such as crime. Laikipia County has shown its commitment to sustainable urbanization through the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) and initiatives such as the Smart Towns. The issuance of Rumuruti Municipal Charter and the appointment of the board further proves this commitment.

Smart Towns Initiative is a program that started under Governor Ndiritu Muriithi. It took off in the financial year 2018/2019.

The program targets at least 10 towns in Laikipia County, Rumuruti being one of them. The programme involves all the department

from Trade, environment, health and Infrastructure and administration. Rumuruti town has received total transformation in terms of its look. Previously the town was not that attractive due to poor infrastructure especially poor roads within the town. Being one of the towns under this program residents here are happy about the rehabilitation. The aim of Laikipia County Government is to grow its economy and to support its residents in growing financially. This has been achieved here in Rumuruti since the number of businesses has grown due to the transformation. Some of the shops and market areas in Rumuruti were inaccessible during the rainy seasons. The transport sector

also suffered due to poor road network. But that is all in the past.

The change has brought attractiveness to the town. This has led to increased investment in the area which also double as the county headquarter. The town's economy is expected to grow at unprecedented rate in the coming years. The town through the Smart Town Initiative has seen construction of good drainage. Some of the streets that have undergone a complete makeover under the initiative are; Solomon Kiguru and Kihika Kimani streets and the bus park. Some are still receiving the transformation, for example Government Road (parking), Nyama Ki-ma Street.



Leasing Programme Increasing Rural Connectivity in Rumuruti Ward



By Nahashon Maina

Roads in Rumuruti continue to be rehabilitated through the leasing programme. The programme has ensured good rural transport connectivity and total transformation of people livelihood.

This is expected to open up the region for investment as the town expands to accommodate the growing population. The opening up of the rural roads is a vital economic enabler with significant

impact on citizen's social economic status.

While urbanization of Rumuruti will create market for farm commodities, good road network will create easier movement of farm produce to the town.

Various sectors in Rumuruti will reap the benefit as witnessed by the continued influx of investment in hospitality industry resulting in unprecedented growth.

Rumuruti will be hosting an investment forum on February 26 which will focus on ready investment opportunities. Multi million shillings establishment such as El Paraiso hotel and Route Hotel have opened doors in the Rumuruti town. The area is also becoming a serious player in horticulture and floriculture industries. Opening up the region will ensure that the venture flourish as it will be easier for growers to deliver their produce in time.

Laikipia is thriving on innovation across various sectors to grow its economy fourfold. Its Leasing programme has proved to be a viable alternative as compared to buying vehicles and

other assets.

The equipment enable the county to undertake development projects at a lower cost. It has also ensured that roads in Rumuruti are rehabilitated within a short time while increasing the number of graded and graveled roads. Rumuruti ward is now proud of having better road connectivity which will improve movement within the area. The residents now have easier and better access to services delivery. Road improvement work in Rumuruti ward commenced September 25, 2020. The specific graded/opened roads as of November 2020 are as follows:

- Rumuruti – Hospital Road – 0.6 Km
- Kiambiriria – Annex - 1.3 Km
- Mbora - Hospital – 2.2 Km
- Rumuruti KAG Church – 1.4 Km
- Runda – Westland – 1.3 Km
- Muthaiga Rd – 1.6 Km
- Westland Rd – 2.1 Km
- Muthaiga Villa Rd – 1.4 Km

Tarmacked Rumuruti-Sipili-Kinamba Road -a Testimony of Transformation



The Rumuruti-Maralal Road

Laikipia's landscape is changing fast. Scores of shiny greenhouses are popping up in the countryside; replacing what has been rolling plains of grazing land, shrubs and bushes.

Driving along the newly tarmacked Rumuruti-Sipili-Kinamba road in the west, vast swathes of land adjacent to the tarmac, which for ages have only been used for grazing, have been fenced off and cleared for commercial development.

The completion of this transformative transport infrastructure a year ago has spawned new businesses. Expansive greenhouses have mushroomed as investors capitalize on ease of movement provided by the tarmacked road to access virgin land to unlock their immense potential.

"With no permanent rivers, the horticultural entrepreneurs are using under-ground water. That's why as a government we are now focusing on harnessing water for production to bring in even small-scale farmers on board to increase acreage under irrigation," Laikipia county executive for water Njenga Kahiro said.

Laikipia is the latest frontier of horticulture investment. According to the county's 2020 statistical abstract, the land under irrigation has increased 15 times in a span of two years from 258 hectares in 2016 to about 5,000 ha in 2020.

Dozens of shopping centres are springing up along the highway, as some entrepreneurs seek to meet housing demand for the growing number of labourers working in the horticultural farms. Thanks to the robust road network, horticulture firms are now able to source labourers from far-flung areas with ease, to the convenience of the workers who are picked and dropped by buses at just a walking distance from home.

In its latest survey on overall county business environment for MSEs, the Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research Analysis (Kippra) ranked Laikipia among the top five.

Luoniek shopping centre on the extreme north-western edge of the county seem to vindicate this survey as it has seen the number of licensed retail businesses grow from 50 to 120 in less than three years. The county's new appeal for investment is not only in the horticultural sub-sector.

In 2019, the county tourism grew by 51,022 to 203,912 from 152,890 in 2108. The international tourism increasing by 33 percent during the same period and local tourism by nine percent. For instance, the annual Nanyuki-Luoniek Amateur Fun race which involves drive across the scenic Laikipia North in a convoy of vehicles to promote corporate tourism.

Several new hospitality establishments have upped the stake for the growth of the county as a tourism destination. High end Luxury hotels firm Elewana has added Lodo Springs Hotels

as its 15th establishment in its portfolio. The establishment is located within the 70,000-acre Loisaba Conservancy owned by America's The Nature Conservancy. Mugie Conservancy has also opened Governors Camp Hotel. Other key investments in the Laikipia tourism landscape include a Shs1 billion hotel coming up on a 200 acre piece of land at Iingwesi Group Ranch in Laikipia North and a new 48-room hotel coming up in Nyahururu town.

The robust business activity is attributed to efficient business licensing regime and cleaning up and digitization of the Nanyuki lands registry.

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF LAIKIPIA


 Laikipia County Development Authority
 

Modernizing the Largest Livestock Market in the Region



Rumuruti Livestock Market is undergoing modernization to accommodate more livestock

**By Muriithi John and
Isaac Malakwen**

Rumuruti Livestock Market is touted as one of the biggest livestock sales market in Mount Kenya and Central Rift regions supplying many counties including Nairobi with the best meat. It takes place every Thursday, attracting sellers from as far as Turkana and Samburu, and buyers from as far as Meru to Marsabit, and even Somalia. This is arguably the largest and best organized market in region, and unquestionably one of the county's exclusive

attractions.

Statistically, the number of cattle sold a month at this particular market is 1,500 on average; an equivalent of 18,000 cattle annually, generating in excess of Kshs 5 million in revenues to the county besides being a source of livelihood to the many traders involved in the livestock trading business.

On the other hand, the sheep and goats market trades over 4,000 animals in a month; an equivalent of 48,000 animals in a year and generat-

ing over Kshs 5 million Kenya shillings annually to the county.

The County Government of Laikipia is in the process of modernizing the livestock market to take a higher capacity as the demand increases. This will be operational by mid-March, there will be an accommodation of 1,800 cattle, and 2,500 for sheep and goats.

"The market will attract more customers with better prices which will ultimately result to better lives for the people in Rumuruti," said Mr. Pius Butich, the Laikipia County head of production.

According to Mr. Butich, the market will have a modern weighbridge to help the sellers in getting better prices for their animals. The machine will also help in ensuring the exchange runs faster and efficiently.

"The new machine will ensure that the livestock farmers will get better prices equivalent to the actual weight of the animals. This will improve the quality of living for the people," he said. Adding that the new market will also be linked to the National Livestock Marketing Information System- a system that helps in comparing livestock prices in the country.

Rumuruti Cereals and Fresh Produce Market Attracts Many

By Isaac Malakwen

At the heart of Rumuruti town, lies Rumuruti cereals and fresh produce market. The market operates on a daily basis and has an open-air market on Thursdays, the same day that livestock trading takes place.

The County Government of Laikipia has over the years invested heavily in improving the business environment. Most notably, in the recent past two sheds alongside shelves have been constructed besides the leveling and murraming works.

The government has also constructed lockable gates at every entry point to ensure security of traders and their products.

The lighting systems has also been improved to ensure extension of working hours by the traders.

There is a well-established modern roofing to protect the fresh produce from the scorching sun or rain. Drainage has been put in place to ensure no flooding and enable smooth movement of the customers.

The market serves the municipality residents and those from the surrounding regions.



Traders in Rumuruti Cereals and Fresh Produce Market

The cess collected from the Rumuruti cereals market exceeds one million shillings every financial year.

The county government will be improving the stalls surrounding the market in the near future to accommodate more traders to have better

Why a Tomato Processing Factory in Rumuruti Would Be a Sure Bet



Top: Farmers in Laikipia waiting to sell their tomatoes. Right: a tomato farm adjacent to Wangwaci dam also in Laikipia

By Jackline Mariga

Rumuruti is one of the areas known for horticulture farming specifically tomatoes. As it is known tomatoes are not easily preserved and hence get bad easily. To address this, the county government has been encouraging the private sector to establish a tomato processing factory in Rumuruti. There is deliberate intention by the government to incentivize investors in the processing of farm produce to increase incomes and safeguard against heavy losses by horticultural farmers. Such a project would revolutionize the farm-

ing practices and boost the economy of Rumuruti leading to improved standards of living. The major benefit of this factory will be to ensure that farmers are protected from after harvest loss due to rotting of tomatoes. This will involve installing a cooling plant for storage and preservation of their produce hence preventing them going into waste. The effect of good storage will cascade down to the farmers who will be assured that their produce is processed. Farmers around this area suffer losses especially when the markets are flooded with the commodity. This is because they do not have a way of preserving their yields until the market gets better. Sometimes they end up selling at a loss since they do not

have any other way out. When selling their tomatoes quite a number of times there is an intermediary between the farmer and the buyer (brokers). The building of this factory in this area will get rid of the broker and hence the income that the broker receives will remain with the farmer. Tomato growing will no longer be a gambling affair where one is not sure whether there will be profit. This is because the market will be a guarantee despite the amount produced. The manufacturing industry will definitely create employment to the people around this place.

40 MW Solar Plant in Rumuruti to Offer Cheaper, Reliable Electricity



Top: HE. Governor Ndiritu Muriithi signs a memorandum of understanding with officials of Kenergy Renewables which has a 40MW solar power plant (left) in Rumuruti.

Availability of reliable and affordable power supply is a key enabler of the industrialization process. The coming to Rumuruti of Kenergy Renewables Company and other investors in green energy will do exactly that. Kenergy Renewables company has set up a 40 MW solar photovoltaic power plant in Rumuruti town. This will accelerate uptake of investment opportunities in the town as pri-

vate power producer will remove the monopoly of the reliance of Kenya power in electricity distribution. The county government of Laikipia is also ready to enter into a deal for the independent power producers to provide cheaper energy to industries within the Special Economic Zone and other manufacturing clusters. This investment has come as the County Government of Laikipia is taking up the function of electricity and gas reticulation. Through various incentives, the county expects more investment projects to come in.

The Kenergy plant will be set up in 300 acres of land it will take up to 10 months. It will create 100 direct jobs for the residents during the construction phase and absorb 20 persons for employment once it is operational. The Ksh 6 billion investment will ensure that county benefits from provision of clean energy and move from thermal energy sources that are usually costly. Rumuruti is emerging as a possible hub for agro-processing and associated sectors due to availability of land, energy, water and above all raw materials. It is easy for investors to start from here since land is cheaper and available. The investment on solar power plant is expected to relieve the consumer in Rumuruti who continues to bear the brunt of unstable electricity prices owing to the fluctuating oil price in the international market.

County Facilitates Establishment of a Court in Rumuruti

By Muriithi John

A magistrate's court will open in Rumuruti any time from now after the County Government of Laikipia provided a space its old offices.

The county staff who used the offices have now been relocated to new county headquarter building to allow the magistrate's court to start operating.

Retired Chief Justice David Maraga promised the establishment of a court in Rumuruti in response to a request by HE Governor Ndiritu Muriithi during the official opening of the new Nanyuki court building.

The County Government of Laikipia has been encouraging close collaboration between all levels of government for seamless service delivery to citizens.

"It is important for close collaboration between the different levels of government because we serve the same citizens," says Governor Muriithi.

The establishment of a magistrate's court will help Rumuruti residents from making long journeys to access justice at Nyahururu law courts.

"There is no big deal in giving out some of our offices or spaces to allow for national government operations which will benefit the same Laikipia people who are served by the county government," says Rose Maitai, the CECM for Administration.

"We aim at bringing services closer to our people and save them the hustle of making long journeys in search of those services," she added.

The CECM said the court will be operational in less than three weeks' time. This is not the first time the County Government of Laikipia is providing working space for the functions of the national government. The Nanyuki Law Courts have been operating under county offices in Nanyuki before completion of their offices and vacating last year.

After the judiciary moved out from the county government's offices in Nanyuki, the premises are now occupied by the Teachers Service Commission- another national governments' facility. In Rumuruti, the national land registry offices sit on the property belonging to the county government. The residents enjoy closer services realized only after the mutual agreement by the two governments. Whereas the national entity provides the services, the devolved government provides the physical

structures and the working areas.

The municipality is taking a wing in the new county government's offices in Rumuruti.

According to the CEC, plans are underway to ensure that all the relevant personnel get a working space for smooth running of all sectors.

"The sub-county administrator and the municipal manager are working together to ensure all workers are allocated space to work comfortably," she said.

The main reason for allowing for the use of county offices for other functions is the delay that would occur if the other party was to construct their own buildings in the county before they start offering the services. The mutual relationship between the two governments thus allows for the services to be offered earlier before the structures are erected.

Though there are two levels of government, the '*wananchi*' are the same. Therefore, there is need for the two to operate in a mutual manner and ensure the people reap maximumly from the corporation. The governments are not in competition but are seeking to establish service delivery techniques without duplication of roles from the two levels of governments, and without tampering with devolution.

Rumuruti ICT Hub Empowering Laikipia Youth

By Margaret Njeri
and
StellahAnn Wanyoro

Rumuruti ICT Hub is a project of the County Government of Laikipia. It is located at the Deputy County Commissioner's grounds next to Rumuruti Lands Registry.

Its mission is to assist and empower youth to be self-reliant and responsible citizens.

The hub sits in a quiet and serene environment suitable for work or even study. This provides a good working environment for office workers wishing to work outside the offices and homes.

With availability of free internet, the centre attracts at least 50 young people every week.

The free internet enables students from various universities to study online classes and carry out their research projects.

It also helps in solving academic problems once an individual posts it to the hub and gets immediate assistance. Upcoming artists in the music world also know and study new music trends.

The Rumuruti ICT Hub seeks to support the government's initiative that is known as Ajira Digital Program by creating a quality environment for the youth of Laikipia county to involve themselves in digital



work. The initiative is meant to promote a mentorship collaborative and learning approach to finding digital work.

The guiding principles of the Ajira Digital Program are:

- Value the private sector generation
- Sustainability-orchestrate the ecosystem to self-regulate and grow organically
- Eliminate brokers-generating more value of the youth.
- Promote the domestic economy-realization of a knowledge econ-

omy.

We are focused on efforts to position Kenya as a choice of labor destination in terms of Business processing Outsourcing for multinational companies as well as creating entrepreneurship online.

The Rumuruti Hub creates a good platform for young Laikipians to benefit from the government's initiative Ajira Digital Program.

The Hub has totally been appreciated by Rumuruti residents as it creates access to internet and online activities via the Hub. It's totally a smart technological move to