



# Laikipia

The official newsletter of the County Government of Laikipia

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BULLETIN

## Laikipia's Unique UHC Model Arousing External Interest

**T**he Laikipia has made progressive implementation of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) which has attracted attention of both the national government and other counties.

Laikipia has the highest life expectancy in the country of 72 years against the national average of 66.7 years and with the second lowest under five mortality rate.

Back in 2017, the Laikipia county launched the Community Health Strategy (CHS) an important component of the healthcare system which incorporated the Community Health Workers/ Volunteers (CHVs) to carry out the enrollment of the residents to the UHC.

Laikipia UHC model is different from others in the essence that it brought on board private entities such as Jubilee Insurance and Amref Health Africa to facilitate in the enrollment of medical insurance cover to the Laikipians and emphasizes more on preventive aspect than on curative.

This makes CHVs quite essential in UHC. Leveraging on CHVs grassroots network and mobile phone technology, the county has managed to enroll 67 percent of the households to NHIF.

### Telemedicine

CHVs have designated area over coverage and they are able to enroll families to NHIF. At the same time they are able to collect socio-economic data of the household. It is this data that was used to distribute food aid to vulnerable families at the height of Covid-pandemic and also to identify families that qualify for medical cover subsidy. At 67 percent, Laikipia is the best in the country in NHIF enrollment.

This ensures that every resident with a medical cover card can afford quality healthcare. Apart from committing more resources towards preventive aspect, the county is deliberately building the diagnostic capacity of dispensaries as well as streaming the referral system.

This has seen dispensaries like Wiyumiririe, Kalalu, among others equipped with mod-



ern lab equipment. The dispensaries also have maternity beds to ensure safe delivery of mothers.

HE Governor Ndiritu Muriithi was invited to two international health forums in Rwanda and Vietnam to discuss the unique model of UHC.

The model saw representatives from the national government come to benchmark on its best utilization to be enrolled country-wide.

"The governor has been encouraging citizens to enroll in NHIF whenever he meets Laikipians. He is always updated on what is going on in the health department, not because of COVID-19, but that has been his character," confirms Dr. Mogoi.

Other counties have benchmarked with Laikipia on matters quality health provision, automation of hospitals and interconnection with referral hospitals.

The county is soon shifting to telemedicine. This successful implementation has witnessed interest from other Counties' health departments which have paid visit to benchmark on how best they can manage the UHC. Of importance is that the UHC is one of the big 4 agenda of President Uhuru government.

"We are running the best health system in the country with great human resource base," CO Dr. Donald Mogoi affirms.

Under the UHC model, it has enabled the hospitals to provide quality services, ensure majority of the Laikipians are covered and offer financial protection to them.

"This week we hosted Uasin Gishu delegates who came to learn what progress we have made in UHC investment in secondary health care," adds Dr. Mogoi.

### Social economic data

The county has invested in Health Management Information System (HMIS) which is the hub of running the hospitals. It is managing every step of the patient from the registration, treatment to discharge.

The HMIS has enabled the hospitals in the county to improve on their diagnostic capacity by keeping track of all the information of a patient.

The utilization of the IT has ensured efficient services as the hospitals are able to connect to the Community Health Workers who, other than help in NHIF enrollment are collecting the social economic data which is critical in decision making at all levels.

This interconnectivity from dispensary level, health centres and sub county hospitals is crucial in caring for the patients. The internet connectivity at the dispensary levels ensure that nurses can register pregnant women at the village level.

# More than 30 Counties Have Learnt from Laikipia



*Uasin Gishu County representatives with Laikipia Governor H. E Ndiritu Muriithi and other staff members when the team visited on a three-day benchmark exercise*

By Muriithi John

**M**ore than half of the 47 county governments have been on benchmarking visits in Laikipia in the last three years.

Peer Learning is a critical ingredient of the country's devolved system of governance.

Amazingly, even the national government has also come to learn from County 031.

In only a period of three years, the transformation Governor Ndiritu Muriithi's administration, have borne fruits that other counties would like to plant in their homelands.

The main areas of attraction have been growth of own source revenue, equipment/vehicle leasing programme, UHC, rural water management and smart town initiative.

Some counties have stayed for several days, while others have visited more than once.

In February 2020, a senior official of the national government visited to learn of how Laikipia manages to run its UHC model as one of the Big 4 agendas. The national government is in the process of implementing our model that focuses more on health insurance scheme. The county has been invited to discuss the model in two international conferences in Rwanda and Vietnam.

The most recent delegation was from Uasin Gishu County, who were on a mission to learn on best revenue collection techniques, utilization of the best UHC model, leasing programme, among many other areas. The team of ten camped for three days from 14 to 16 December 2020, and had an opportunity of going to the ground for a practical experience of running things in Laikipia. The leasing programme has opened lots of economic activities even in the extreme areas in villages through expansion of roads and making all-weather and durable road networks.

Barely a week before, Turkana County representatives were in the county benchmark

on techniques or increasing revenue collection while offering appropriate developments to the citizens. The one-day event took place on December 8, 2020.

Last year, Makueni County delegation were in the county again on revenue collection model used in Laikipia. The team led by Makueni County Director of Revenue, Stephen Thiongó, described the model as the best and called upon other counties to adapt it as well. Laikipia engages all departments in revenue collection which saw the board surpass the target mark of 800 million in 2018/2019 financial year. The target for this year is 1 billion.

A team from Vihiga County visited on a peer learning mission on technology and model that Laikipia uses that has seen it become the leading in NHIF enrollment in the county. The team was impressed by the M-Jali App that CHVs use to enroll people from extremes of the counties to NHIF cover while collecting vital information to be used in decision making. Thus far Vihiga county has well utilized the learnt technology.

Wajir, Narok, Marsabit, Wajir, Kiambu, Meru, Nakuru, Bungoma, Migori, have not been left behind but have come for learning from use on various matters pertaining running health facilities.

Isiolo County health staff members have been in Laikipia on a benchmark mission on renal

operations. Laikipia's renal unit is the cleanest and busiest in the region, attending to half of the patients from the surrounding counties. In fact, some patients get referrals from the private hospitals or from other level four and five of the neighbouring counties.

Generally, all regions have in the country are well represented in learning from Laikipia and have learnt from all the eight departments.

Leasing helps in reducing the downtime of the machines which makes working to run throughout the year. It also ensures maximum utilization of the workforce.

The revenue board has ensured an increased base of tax collection by collecting small amounts to many people unlike heavily taxing a small population. The results from the taxes are evident with increased development from Smart Towns initiative, drilling and equipping of various boreholes, solar lighting in streets, building of modern markets, among others.

Laikipia is the only county that hand-holds innovators with great creation and takes them for free trainings and exhibitions, while facilitating them to commercialize their innovations.

Peer learning among counties is allowed and encouraged as it is one of the surest ways of having a better and developed country. Kenya would be indeed a better country if all counties embrace Laikipia in all areas.

*Laikipia County Revenue Board members with a delegation from Makueni that came to benchmark in October 2019*



# Train Ride to “Mwisho wa Reli” Adds Excitement to Destination Laikipia



*Travelers in one of the train coaches heading to Nanyuki for a weekend out.*

By Nahashon Maina

**T**here is something spectacular about a journey by train. It creates an aura that cannot be experienced with any other types of journey. Most noteworthy, the charm of such journey is unmatched. It offers an unforgettable rich experience.

Such is the experience one has when taking a trip on the newly revamped Nairobi - Nanyuki railway line. It creates a nostalgic feeling travelling in such a line with an epic history bound for the famous “mwisho wa reli”. It is just magical.

Sometimes the magic is inside on a train, you can meet people, eat and roam around the coaches with the sound of steel wheel swishing on steel rail beneath you.

Sometimes the magic is outside, in the landscape of central region the train traverses, an adventure, an experience, an insight into the heart of one of the most economically productive regions in the country.

The Nairobi-Nanyuki line commenced passengers’ operations on December 11 through the partnership between the Kenya Railways and Laikipia County Government. The trip by train is geared to attract more visitors to Laikipia as the destination of choice during this festive season.

On this particular day, the train left Thika station at 2 pm with passengers on board

offered free ride. As the intercom crackles announcing the departure, it seemed like everyone was talking and even the silent few were smiling ready for the adventure that was awaiting ahead.

As the train snakes through the Del Monte pineapple plantation, its contours are stunning during the boundless blue sky of the afternoon. This line offers beautiful sightseeing. “I am so happy to be on this train, 61 years old Ann Nyawira says, this is my first time to board a train even though I was born and raised in Nanyuki”.

She was able to travel with other family members for a journey initially planned for her alone. She was to board a matatu from Nairobi to Nanyuki.

“Once I heard the announcement on the radio, the plan changed. I am accompanied by my sister, my two daughters and 5 grandkids on this train,” she adds grinning.

Now and then passengers would stand up and peep out through the windows admiring the stunning landscape the train was traversing on its way to Nanyuki. It was evidence it conjured a sense of wonder and excitement as many of them took photos and videos.

The line covers the spectrum of central Kenya’s natural splendor, crossing rivers and burrowing through the terrains of Murang’a County and rumbling across the epic Laikipia plateau.

Many passengers on the train expressed their optimism for the return of train services noting it will attract many travelers as it offers

affordable mean of transport especially during this festive season.

“I postponed my journey on Thursday and decided to travel the following day on the train,” Francis Kibara a businessman in Karatina says.

The revamped line is seen as a good investment by the National government and Laikipia county. The partnership between the Kenya railways and Laikipia County through the Department of Tourism, Trade and Cooperatives, has been reduced fare for one-way trip to Kshs 200.

This is expected to attract more passengers who wish to have a memorable moment by taking the train trip. It will also market the county for tourism.

“This is a good investment, John Kariuki a businessman from Thika asserts adding that it will attract those travelling for business and leisure.

Another passenger Antony Letena say that he was motivated to go for a weekend out in Nanyuki with some friends as the cost of travel was low for a large group. He laments that during this period of COVID-19 matatus have hiked fare and people are discouraged from travelling en masse.

The County Government of Laikipia is banking on the revamped railway to increase visitors for both domestic and foreign tourism. The train will offer tourist with an opportunity to enjoy the scenic view of the landscape when travelling.

The train will departure from Nairobi railway station at 8 am every Friday and arrive in Nanyuki at 2 pm. The return journey to the capital has been scheduled for Sunday at 8 am and arrive in the green city under the sun at 2 pm.

## County Attorney and Health Chief Officer Take Oath of Office



County Attorney Alexander Muchemi taking oath of office last week

By Nahashon Maina

**A**lexander Muchemi and Dr. Donald Mogoi took oath of office in a ceremony that took place on December 16 at Governor's compound.

Mr Muchemi is the first county attorney and has been the legal adviser to Governor Ndiritu Muriithi for the last three years.

This is in line with the enactment of The Office of the County Attorney Act No. 14 of 2020 which requires each of the 47 counties to establish the office. The act states that, there is established in each county the Office of the County Attorney, which is an office in the county public service.

It adds that, The County Attorney shall take and subscribe to the oath or affirmation as set out in the First Schedule to this Act before assuming office.

Also taking the oath was the acting Chief Officer Health Dr. Donald Mogoi. He was the Health director until his promotion to the CO

docket in acting capacity.

Both officers are the appointees of the Governor with the approval of the County Assembly.

These officers are expected to embrace a culture of high performance.

"This oath bides you to commit, conduct and

perform to the highest standards," Governor Muriithi said.

The governor added that Laikipia residents elected his government through a social contract where they swore to serve them to their best abilities.

"We were elected on a platform of promises, you are swearing to that contract, adding that, it is our responsibility to ensure we live up to that oath".

The Governor reiterated his commitment of ensuring county officers exhibit high performance and they deliver to the people of Laikipia.

On his part, the Deputy Governor John Mwaniki reminded the two officers that they must commit by taking on the responsibilities to serve the Laikipia citizens.

"Make a mark in performing your duties and let what you do in office be remembered in history," DG Mwaniki asserted.

He noted that the Governor is committed to build an accomplished workforce with new culture of doing things.



Dr. Donald Mogoi taking oath of office as the Chief Officer, Health and Medical Services.

## Government Condoles with Majengo Fire Survivors

**T**he County government of Laikipia condoled with the family that lost two children; a girl aged 4 years and a baby boy aged 1 year and 8 months to a fire incident that occurred at 9 pm on Monday night in Majengo Slum.

The fire blazed 16 households who were unable to salvage their belongings during the night incident. Quick response by the County Fire Department prevented further spread of the fire in the slum as they were able to contain it within a short time. The cause of the fire is still not clear.

The Department of Security and Disaster Management stepped in to assist the affected families by providing each household with a mattress, blankets and cooking utensils. the exercise was led by Laikipia East County Administrator, Grace Kinyua.



# Kaki Incubators Solving Agricultural Problems



By Muriithi John

**H**ow well do you utilize your education qualifications? Do you view lack of certificate, diploma or degree as a failure in life? Well, Geoffrey Kago's story will change your perception.

Mr. Kago is the man behind Kaki Village Enterprise that manufactures incubators for different birds and making other innovations. Lacking a university degree does not limit the man from doing research and producing the right incubators, yet he never went beyond high school. He facilitated his high school education in Nyeri High School. In honor and respect for the former president Mwai Kibaki, whom they shared the same school and who inspired him to do great things, the school helped him in coming up with his business name.

"Having been in a school where the visionary man former President Mwai Kibaki gave me enough motivation to reach for greatness. Kaki is a combination of my name-Kago and Kibaki for the respect and motivation-hence Kaki Village Enterprise," said Mr. Kago.

According to Mr. Kago, there is need to make innovations that will help people. You have to have a problem-solving technique in your mind when coming up with any innovation, which is not dependent on the level of formal education.

The man made his first innovation while in Form III for helping farmers in pumping water for irrigation. While IV, he made an incubator which became the top in the national science competition which gave him more motivation to advance in more innovations. His favorite subjects were sciences and agriculture.

However, Kago became much disoriented after his high school education as there was

no money for him to proceed in the formal education, despite having produced a good grade. He resulted to hawking, masonry works and any other activity that would help put food on the table.

Kago never gave up on the need to solve problems facing the society and felt that he was not doing enough while on the streets. In 2004, he participated in innovation exhibition at the Nairobi International Show where he emerged position three which motivated him to commercialize his incubation technology. The organization begun hatch ostriches, quails, ducks and guinea fowls chicken, geese. He was among the pioneers of the qual business around 2010.

The uniqueness in the Kago's machines to hatch birds which to him was like a hobby attracted many to an extent that the then Kenya Wildlife Services' director paid him a visit. Kago's work impressed him and thus facilitated the entrepreneur to acquire a certificate

permitting him to hatch various wild birds.

As a researcher and a determined entrepreneur, Kago shifted to researching on plants when the quail business become overwhelming with everybody starting their own. He had to be unique.

For five years, from 2013-2018, he embarked on research on organic farming and best practices for crop growth. He was employed by Uganda President Yoweri Museveni as a farm manager where he further learnt best farm practices.

Coming back to Kenya he decided to work with farmers in Laikipia in such regions as Karandi, Gitwamba, Kanyuka dam, and Gatirima dam. Producing 100% farm products like fertilizers and pesticides.

One unique product from the business is a pesticide that manages 220 different types of pests and warms attacking farm products, which according to Kago works better than other pesticides in the market.

"Unlike other conventional pesticides that manufacturers make for a specific worms or pests, our product controls a total of 220 different organisms. Instead of buying 220 pesticides which is expensive, just buy one that works like the 220 other products," said Mr. Kago.

Kaki Village Enterprise has since grown to work on helping farmers make better use of their farms through planting based on their soil. Through consultation services, the organization does soil testing and advising farmers which crops will thrive on different areas and seasons.

The firm has provided direct job opportunities by employing ten permanent workers and over 20 occasional labourers.

Mr. Kago is thankful to the county government for enrolling him in the Laikipia Innovation and Development Programme.

"This is a unique county that is keen in the thriving of county entrepreneurs. Other counties should embrace the same.



Some of the Ostriches from the Kaki Village Enterprise hatcheries

# Kienyeji Chicken Demand Presents New Opportunities to LW Farmers



*Improved Kienyeji Chicken at Mr Kanyingi's farm in Laikipia West. Demand for the indigenous bird is presenting business opportunity to the farmers in Laikipia west*

By Mollin Mwangi

**H**undreds of farmers in Laikipia West have identified business opportunities fueled by growing demand for indigenous (*Kienyeji*) chicken. And they do have a good reason to do so.

Last year, rearing of indigenous chicken earned farmers in the sub-county Kshs 61.1 million from sale of 135,860 trays of eggs. This pales the Kshs 4.7 million earned by those who reared exotic chicken after selling 15,700 trays of eggs.

To turn indigenous chicken rearing into viable businesses, the county department of Agriculture identified farmers and who formed

the groups and trained them on the improved *Kienyeji* chicken farming, how to nurture SMEs through business development models including writing of business plans in order to also earn money from the venture.

This shows that the demand of eggs from the indigenous chicken was very high as compared to the one from exotic chicken.

The county department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries have partnered with the Catholic Dioceses of Nyahururu - Caritas which is implementing a livelihood project with improved indigenous chicken as one of the components.

The project was launched at Ndaragwiti village in Ol moran ward at the farm of one farmer Mr

Kanyingi who has approximately 350 chicken. Approximately 9,500 improved *Kienyeji* chicks from KARLO were distributed to 22 farmer groups each with an average of 20 farmers. The farmers were drawn from four wards; Githiga, Olmorran, Marmanet and Sosian.

The National Government under Climate Smart Agricultural Productivity Project in collaboration with KALRO- will supply the chicks to the farmers.

Six lead farmers, were also identified from the six wards and contracted to be supplying farmers with day old chicks to rear them, to enable the project to be self-reliant on the supply of hatching eggs. They received 2,400 chicks from KARLO. This also help in training the farmers who would visit the farms to learn more about chicken farmers. The project also procured four (4) incubators with capacity of 528 eggs each to the farmers.

The County will also procure and distribute 1000 improved *kienyeji* cocks to farmers in the county. This will help improve the productivity of chicken in the County. The improved *kienyeji* chicken lay more eggs in a year as compared to the *Kienyeji* chicken.

Mr. Njenga Kahiro emphasized on how better breeds from KARLO will improve productivity, as chicks also grow at a faster rate and weigh more than the *Kienyeji* chicken. The improved *Kienyeji* chicken are also tolerant to diseases.



Nyahururu diocese Bishop Joseph Mbatia receiving one day-old chicks from Dr. George Kia of Karlo Naivasha

# Laikipia Emerging as A Favorite Holiday Destination



Fairmount Hotel in Laikipia, one of the many favourite holiday destinations in the county

By Nahashon Maina

**L**aikipia county is experiencing an increase in demand for holidays homes. To meet this demand, multibillion facilities are coming up to cater for the services. Such establishments include Maiyan Homes, Loisaba Bush Camp and Governors Camp hotel.

The number of hotels in Laikipia county has tripled in the last three years from 36 in 2017 to a total of 103 as the end of 2019 according to Laikipia County Statistical Abstract 2020. It also states that arrival of tourist at Thomson falls, Nyahururu jumped from 118,915 to 188,909 during the same period.

It also states that the number of accommodation and food services activities increased by 2334 in 2019 from 871 at the end of 2018.

This has ensured that the county is no longer acting as a transit route for tourist, it has be-

come one of the most sought-after safari destinations.

One of the things that is pushing the demand up, is that Laikipia offer unmatched number of wildlife sanctuaries which make Laikipia plateau just magical. It also plays host to the highest population of endangered species in the country such as Black Rhino, Grevy's Zebra, Reticulated Giraffe.

It prides for its expansive view right from snowcapped Mt. Kenya to the spectacular views into the great Rift Valley with its magnificent escarpment.

This has promoted the county as a leisure destination leading to influx of visitors.

Tourist are offered diverse experience from visiting wildlife conservancies, game drive marathon, guided safari walks to camping. Laikipia has also become a leader in ecotour-

ism, a case in point is the Iing'wesi Group Ranch.

They are dedicated to conserving the land and wildlife while preserving and sharing its culture and heritage with other people. The Kshs.1 billion hotel in the ranch offers a serene environment with unique wildlife and cultural experience.

The ecotourism is playing a vital role in the hospitality industry and will contribute to creation of employment among the residents.

Tourism sector constitutes a central components of the county's growing economy and it will propel the county to the level of competing with well-established hotel elsewhere in the country.

The growth in the hospitality sector will provide an avenue for the local goods and services providers which will ensure that wealth is created and left in the economy of the county.

The growth of hospitality industry is a good sign of investors' confidence they have bestowed on Laikipia as the leisure destination. It is a place where they can stake their money since the area has immense potential for growth.

In spite of the prevailing condition of low tourist number due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the rate of construction in the industry has not slowed down with expected ump start in near future.

Agriculture sector which is the leading economic activity in the county is set to benefit from this growth since they will be best placed to supply their produce to the hotels.

## Efforts to Re-Wild Endangered Mountain Bongo Gain Momentum

**T**he Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy (MKWC) has commissioned the fencing 800 acres of Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary geared towards the re-wilding process of Mountain Bongo.

The patron of MKWC, Humprey Kariuki says that they have been able to increase the Bongo which were 18 three years ago to current 50 with aim of ensuring they continue to multiply. Mountain Bongo are critically endangered subspecies of the Bongo, one of the largest forest antelopes with a reddish-brown coat, with black, white and yellow- white markings.

Listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species, this rare and most beautiful Kenyan antelope has seen its population decline due to unrestricted hunting, poaching and loss of habitat and diseases.

MKWC prides in having the only breeding program worldwide with the presence in a semi wild environment. The MKWC has partnered with Ministry of Tourism, Kenya wildlife

Service and Laikipia County government to re-establish a viable and self-sustaining population in the Bongo's native habitat.

The ministry of Tourism has launched a National Recovery and Action Plan for the Mountain Bongo 2019-2023 that offers strategy of the re-wilding process. It establishes National Bongo Task Force to guide the partners on measure to be undertaken in the re-introduction of the Mountain Bongo to their indigenous habitats.

"We target to have over 800 acres as per our strategic plan, CS Tourism Najib Balala says, we must have enough space for the Bongo".

The fencing of the sanctuary will ensure that the Mountain Bongo are protected from their natural predators.

Competing interest like Agriculture, Human settlement and climate change led to the decline of the Bongo, CS Balala notes adding that once the fence is finished by the end of September next year, the Bongo will be re-



leased to their natural habitat.

Laikipia DG John Mwaniki says that the county can benefit from increased tourism activities if the Mountain Bongo are conserved.

"Laikipia is a leading destination of tourism and can reap heavy benefit from wildlife, there is therefore need to conserve our wildlife and environment," DG Mwaniki emphasis.

The Ministry of tourism has taken measures such as engaging armed and experienced rangers to man the Mount Kenya forest as well as supporting community-based projects and education aimed at sensitizing people on the need to conserve the Bongo.

# From Health to Tourism and Transport, Nanyuki's All Set for the Next 100 Years



By Jesse Mugo

**N**anyuki derives its name from the Maasai phrase “Engare Nanyuikie” which translated means “the River of Blood”.

The town has made great strides and as it celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year, major milestones have been achieved.

From 73 registered landowners in 1921, the town has seen the number of inhabitants grow to over 72,000 according to the Laikipia County Statistical Abstract 2020. The business and the general economy of the town has grown in leaps and bounds.

Nanyuki has also seen the growth of medical health sector both in facilities and the quality of health care.

Nanyuki Teaching and Referral Hospital, the largest medical Centre in the county by size and workload was founded in 1930's as Nanyuki Natives Dispensary.

This dispensary has grown to the current status where it is treating an average of 500 patients per day. This is after having acquired the teaching and referral status in July 2012.

From the streamlining of community health strategies and engagement of community health volunteers in provision of key preventive interventions, the County Government of Laikipia has invested heavily in the medical sector.

Other high impact interventions have been supplementation of vitamins and iron. Immunization and other child preventive interventions have been strengthened through opening of new immunization facilities across the county.

These efforts among others have yielded fruits and placed Laikipia as the best county to live in, with a life expectancy of 72 years against a national average of 66.7 and recording the second lowest infant mortality rate. (The analysis was based on data from the economic survey 2018, GCP 2019, Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS) 2015/2016 and the statistical review of progress towards the mid-term targets of the health sector strategic plan 2014-2018.)

## Tourism

Other recent achievements for the town is the revival of the Nairobi-Nanyuki railway that has slept unutilized for close to thirty years. This fits well with the smart town initiative by the county government of Laikipia



A photo of street of Nanyuki town taken recently. The town has grown in all aspects

where the last mile connectivity from the railway station has been well taken care of by the deliberate move to upgrade the town into a smart town. The town has well-labelled streets, paved pedestrian walkways and proper drainage. The railway line opens up Nanyuki as a town to the flow of tourists and investors. It has also opened up opportunities for businessmen to take advantage of the close to 20 billion CEREB economy that has been well covered by the railway system.

With the prospects of further extension of the railway line to Isiolo, the opportunities that presents themselves to the residents of Nanyuki and the entire region are vast. This is because it will not only connect with Isiolo on the northern side and take advantage of the Isiolo International Airport but also connect to the LAPPSET corridor.

Nanyuki town has also grown as tourist destination over time. Various social economic groupings flock the town either for business or leisure. The town boasts of being home to two golf courses and the best conferencing destination away from the distractions of the city. It also offers a serene environment for people to meet and wind off after the boardroom decisions are complete.

The facilities in the town are very exclusive and in the natural setting that in some facilities the only interruption to meetings will be the chirping of birds or the beautiful stares of giraffes wondering why they never get invited to these boardroom meetings. Nanyuki also offers a variety of weekend and nightlife activities. No wonder traffic is now shifting towards Nanyuki over the weekends as local and international tourists join the motorcades

going to explore the hidden gems of Laikipia.

## Beef Production

From only 73 land owners in 1921, Nanyuki has grown to be a great player in the beef industry with both small holder farmers and big ranches undertaking the lucrative venture. Laikipia as a county has been known to produce the finest and highly prized premium beef.

With several community and individually owned ranches, the County remains a key producer of beef both for local and external markets. With its vast area of 9,462 square kilometers, Laikipia offers a great opportunity for both local and international investors to invest in the beef industry using feedlots and rangeland management practices. The Laikipia County development authority plays a huge roll of connecting potential investors with land owners and also guiding on the set up of the beef rearing business.

As the town gets to its second century, the future is very bright because the county has recently discovered the presence of minerals and precious stones. This will not only fuel the development of the town but also attract huge investments in the manufacturing sector.

The ongoing expansion of the Nanyuki Airport coupled with the deliberate move by the county government to make it easy to do business in Laikipia county will be a great motivation for investors to flock the town and start its next centenary journey of success that is clearly mapped out.

*Mr Jesse Mugo is the CEO Laikipia County Development Authority*