



# Laikipia

The official newsletter of the County Government of Laikipia

WEEKLY  
BULLETIN

## The Lapsset Factor on Laikipia's Economy

By Muriithi John

**G**overnor Ndiritu Muriithi was in Lamu last week to witness the commissioning of the first berth of the Lamu Port.

His was not just about attending the Presidential function, but because he could see the big picture of Laikipia's role in the Lapsset corridor economy.

"Laikipia is right at the centre of the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia and Mombasa-Nairobi-South Sudan-Ethiopia transport corridors," he told guests during the launch Toyota Kenya branch in Nanyuki.

Cargo destined for Ethiopia from the Port of Mombasa can be transported on the SGR up to Nairobi and the revived metre-gauge railway to Nanyuki for haulage by road to Southern Ethiopia.

Laikipia lies on the inter-section of the Lapsset Transport Corridor where one branches off to Ethiopia and the other to South Sudan.

This makes Laikipia the preferred investment destination of major corporations especially those eyeing the huge Ethiopian market with a population of 112 million people.

Nanyuki is now emerging as logistics hub within the Cereb and northern Kenya regions.

Vivo Energy has constructed a depot for distribution of its petroleum products within the Cereb region and northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia markets. The multi-national firm is the anchor client of Kenya Railways' refurbished metre-gauge line.

Over the last one year several financial institutions have opened their branches in the county; including New Fortis Sacco and Solution Sacco in Nanyuki town and Tower Sacco.

The latest entrant in Laikipia is Toyota Kenya which opened a branch in Nanyuki last week. Toyota Kenya also deals in agricultural equipment which looks quite strategic as the county is focused on increasing the area under irrigation as part of its strategy to grow its economy four-fold by fo-



cus of production and manufacturing.

"It is a momentous day for us as Toyota Kenya Family as we reaffirm our commitment to invest in Laikipia County and the rest of Mount Kenya region," assured Toyota Kenya Managing Director, Arvinder Reel.

Governor Ndiritu Muriithi's government is targeting to grow Laikipia's economy from the current Kshs100 billion to Kshs400 billion within the medium term. The shift of focus to enterprise development will help many firms seize the opportunity coming with the opening of the Lapsset transport Corridor.

To accelerate the development key enabler projects, the government has turned to innovative financing such as equipment leasing and infrastructure bond that will make the county take

full advantage of the Lapsset corridor.

Last week the county received the second batch of leased road-construction equipment that will enable it improve 700 kilometres of road network in the next one year. To enhance easier movement of people and goods.

The county Government continues improving business environment by developing smart and clean towns with proper drainage and ample parking spaces to reduce congestion. Street lighting has also played a key role in attracting investors as now it is possible for businesses to remain open for longer hours. The coming of the multi-billion international organization Toyota Kenya in the County also gives confidence to other local and international investors that Laikipia has the requisite potential that needs exploiting.

Nanyuki town, and generally Laikipia county is strategically situated at the centre of economic blocs-Cereb and Amaya Initiative Triangle- that further gives more reasons why investors should take advantage and continue investing within the county.

The new investment comes with great benefits to Laikipia people through creating jobs for the locals that never existed. The Business also will solve the problem of moving for long distances in search of quality car spare parts. Local mechanics will also upgrade their skills after getting more training from Toyota Kenya now that they are closer.



# Development Must be Judged by its Impact on People

In 2014, the County Assembly of Laikipia passed a law that established the Laikipia Development Authority (LCDA). Apart from the subsequent appointment of a chief executive officer, nothing more was done to the agency. The County Public Service Board never bothered to employ staff. The organization existed only in law. When Governor Ndiritu Muriithi came into office, he repurposed the LCDA and appointed top notch board members led by Centum CEO James Mworira to steer it. The LCDA had a simple brief from the Governor: to be a catalyst for development processes in the county. On this issue we talked to the LCDA CEO **Jesse Mbuti** on the progress so far.

## As the CEO of Laikipia County Development Authority (LCDA), how does your typical day look like?

My typical day starts with a 30 minutes jog to keep not just the body but also the mind fresh. Getting to the office, I get updates from the four sectors under my docket: Branding, Ease of doing business, investment in transformative projects and social projects.

I remedy any areas that require my intervention mostly through virtual meetings and teleconferences.

The rest of the day is spent making approvals for LCDA activities, mentoring SMEs and staff and also implementing strategy with the other county departmental heads especially on the area of branding, marketing and enterprise development where I have great passion. I am an owl and will always surrender after midnight.

## What is the role of LCDA in the county's transformation?

Our key role is making business propositions for all county projects. Often Government projects are misconstrued to be return free, where investments are just done without expectations of a return on investment. We strive to reinforce Government's commitment to focus on the outcomes and the impact of projects rather than just physical outputs that do not improve the livelihoods of Laikipians.

We believe that every shilling invested in a project in Laikipia should deliver value to the citizens- even if it will be in form of enabling residents to be more productive and to acquire more value for their produce.

## What services and incentives does the authority provide to potential investors?

We handhold investors who seek to invest in Laikipia. We act as the Mega County Huduma centre and walk with customers through the approval processes and in case of bottlenecks we engage the relevant departments to ensure seamless and hustle free investment channels for investors. As a corporate member of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, we act as the pro bono advocate for the private sector in government dealings.

We are in the process of creating a special economic zone in Rumuruti and are supporting interested investors with business planning advice, linkages with financiers, and ground visits with the assistance of the county surveyors.

Under the land banking initiative, we are working with interested investors to put all the commercially viable but currently idle land into proper land use.

## Tell us about the investment arm of LCDA, Lainvest

Lainvest is a registered Public Limited Company

that has a share capital of kes 10,000,000. The aim of establishing Lainvest is to help LCDA go to the market and raise funds to assist in development efforts of the county government. For instance, in the forthcoming Affordable Housing project with County Pension Fund, Lainvest will be going to market seeking investor funds and this will form the government's contribution to the housing project in Nanyuki. The investors will get a return on their investment following the gains from the sale of the units.

## What are the investment opportunities available in Laikipia that investors can inject their capital in?

Sure. Great investment opportunities exist in the areas of irrigated agriculture, value addition and housing.

Lobere Dam and Wangwaci Dam project are a USD 980,000 project each in Laikipia west with a ready offtake market in metered water for production.

Ngobit dam and Tiemamult dam combines an opportunity worth 1.5 billion dollars while The Nanyuki Bulk Water project is a 6 billion project and also with ready off takers for both domestic and commercial water users.

Rumuruti has a ready opportunity for sewer connection, a project worth shs330m Kenya shillings that is ready for a PPP engagement.

The opportunity for affordable housing is also ripe with opportunities already mapped out in 12 locations with over 100 hectares of land at the disposal of the investors. We are currently requesting for proposal, design, finance, supply, installation training and commissioning of a solar photovoltaic power production plant for the two main county hospitals in the county a project we recommend interested investors to put forward their bids.

We are at in advanced stages of making Rumuruti a special economic zone and this will uplift its investment profile. The Rumuruti municipality Board has put aside 2,000 acres of land which presents a huge opportunity across the sectors of infrastructure development, light and heavy industrial manufacturing, the livestock value chain tourism and hospitality among others.

The opportunities are as vast as the flexibility of the potential investors and we welcome them for roundtables to chart the way forward.

## Laikipia has hosted two investment forums so far. How important are they and what are their outcomes?

The first was actually an economic symposium where we wanted to really understand the drivers of the Laikipia economy. Lead economists and business moguls and institutions who led the discussion had a consensus that Laikipia's economy is largely driven by agriculture. It is in the backdrop of this information that we have structured



our infrastructure Bond gains to address the areas of Water for Production and infrastructural development because we believe that this will be the 20% that will unlock 80% of the Shs400 billion growth in the economy that we seek as a Government.

The second and most recent was an economic forum whose objective was actually also in the direction of promoting agriculture and agriculture mechanization. Having understood our economy and the key macro-economic drivers, the economic forum was actually a call for investors to come and join the Government in its industrialization journey in readiness of Rumuruti as a county headquarter.

The results of the two engagements is that we have increased interest in land as a factor of production from various local and international investors, the property prices are going up and the demand for accommodation space has been sustained even with the challenges of Covid and movement restrictions. No wonder the town is having several construction projects that are ongoing at the moment even with the current situation.

## What impacts do you want to see in the next five years?

Through the enterprise development efforts I anticipate to achieve the kind of development postulated by Amartya sen in his writing on development as freedom that "Development must be judged by its impact on people not only by changes in their income but more generally in terms of their choices, capabilities and freedoms in a long-term and sustainable basis". Quite an old reference to quote but very relevant today! I also want to put in place a proper inventory of all government assets in Laikipia and proceed to get investors to increase most of these facilities' current economic value 100 fold mainly through the land banking initiative.

This will trickle down to more development budget for the county and therefore impact the economy directly and indirectly. The outcome will be more employment opportunities, more disposable incomes and generally better livelihoods for laikipians.

## Your parting shot?

How we focus of energies today is the foundation of the future we are helping to create!

## Laikipia Eyes 700 km of Improved Roads After Arrival of More Equipment



By Muriithi John

**L**aikipia targets to improve an additional 700 kilometres of roads after receiving the second batch of leased equipment.

The county has about 7,000 kilometres of road network in constant need of rehabilitation and maintenance.

Since receiving the first batch in September 2019, the government has been able to open up and grade 848.8 kilometres and gravel an additional 388.59 kilometres by mid-May 2021.

The new machines will help in covering more kilometres and open up roads within Laikipia. Each ward could have between 50-60 kilometres of roads improved under the leased equipment programme.

The new machines include two graders, one excavator and one dozer and have come to add to the road construction and maintenance machinery in the county from the first batch that consisted of an excavator, five tippers, two water bowsers and two rollers.

They enable the establishment of five road construction brigades which will lead to faster pace of doing the roads as each brigade will now focus on three wards.

The government has made a considerable save on the money by going the leasing way compared to the normal contracting. Constructing one kilometre costs around Ksh. 1.2m while leasing only costs half the amount.

Leasing is one of the innovative financing options employed by the County Government of Laikipia as it seeks to grow its economy four-fold within the medium term.

Leasing guarantees almost 98% availability while paying in bits as the budget does not allow for cash purchasing.

The downtime of the equipment is limited as the government notifies the leasing agent immediately there is a breakdown and they quickly respond. Were it not for the rains, there would be a 100% utilization of the equipment for the five-year contract period.

The government also ensures job creation to the locals in terms of machine operations.

However, the government does not deny other contractors job opportunities. Some construction works are still done by local contractors, including bridges after engaging KIHBT in training on the best road construction designs.

The County government is in the process of leasing medical equipment after the infrastructure leasing proved to be viable.



*From political promises to action...*



## Pillar xi: Developing Smart and Green Towns

The County government of Laikipia has consistently maintained a good progress in fulfilling the promises made to the people during the 2017 General Election.

Governor Ndiritu Muriithi's election manifesto was anchored on 12 pillars that included (i) Proper Governance and Accountability, (ii) Job Creation: 30,000 Jobs, (iii) Farming Becomes a profitable business, (iv) Access to clean and Reliable water, (v) Access to Quality and Affordable Health Care, (vi) Employable youths and Entrepreneurship, (vii) Opportunities and Talent Development for young people, (viii) Protection of Life and Property, (ix) Upgrade of roads and Building bridges (x) Light-up of homes and Markets, (xi) Develop Smart and Green Towns, and (xii) Destination Laikipia.

In our tenth installment of 'From Political promises to Action' we are focusing on Pillar Number Eleven.

### (ix) Develop Smart and Green Towns

The County Government of Laikipia has accelerated the upgrade urban centres in the county into smart towns. The urban centres are undergoing planning to be able to attract investment and create employment opportunities to residents.

Smart town initiative have gone a long way to promote Laikipia as a better place to invest as well as to live in.

Well planned towns will promote entrepreneurship spirit enabling residents to leverage on the opportunities thereby increasing their operations. The smart town initiative will create many avenues that business people can use. It will also contribute to the ease of doing business.

Already, several urban centres; Nanyuki, Nyahururu, Rumuruti, Sipili, Kinamba and Wiyumiririe, Oljabet are witnessing total transformation under this initiative. Others in the line are Doldol and Naibor. They now have well planned streets with pedestrian walkways and adequate parking bays.

The purpose is to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people by enabling local area to develop. It will also address growing urbanization by promoting sustainable development practices.

The department of infrastructure is also in the process of preparing the county spatial plan (CSP) and maps covering all towns and market centres. It has also undertaken digitization of Part Development Plans (PDP) of all towns and market centres. The consolidation of departmental data for CSP into GIS Database will be instrumental in ensuring that any work done in the county conform to guidelines set.

This will ensure that development projects especially in urban centre are sustainable and take into consideration others aspects of making the town smart and conducive to live, work and invest in.

In addition, the department has already submitted to the county assembly eight spatial plans for approval.

Well planned urban centres that are people-friendly will promote the entrepreneurial spirit and attract more investment.

In total the county government have paved 33 streets in Nyahururu and Nanyuki in the last three years. Others have also been carpeted and rehabilitated. The cobblestone technology used in Rumuruti and Nanyuki towns parking bays and walkways will be long lasting.

Smart towns will also ensure that they are well planned in preparation of population growth that put strain on the existing infrastructure.

Apart from that, the department is also working to ensure all roads and streets in Nanyuki, Nyahururu, Kinamba, Rumuruti, Wiyumiririe, Oljabet, Naibor and Doldol are named. This will be



crucial in ensuring they are available on Google map. Already 54 streets in Nanyuki and 31 streets in Rumuruti have named.

This has been achieved by creating streets and address system which displays a number for each plot. In addition, 960 businesses within Nanyuki CBD have been geo-referenced.

The county has also developed and implemented solid waste management plans for major towns. Last year, more than 81,000 tons of waste was collected and disposed in County owned dumpsites. This is towards achieving clean, smart and livable towns and market centers across the County. The waste management plan has adopted innovative methods of recycling and selling to manufacturing industry to use in making compost which improves soil fertility.

# 100 Laikipia Entrepreneurs Undergo Supplier Development Training

More than 100 Laikipia entrepreneurs have gone through supplier development training supported by the County Government of Laikipia. The entrepreneurs include farmers, business owners, youth, women and people living with disabilities.

The training involves various procedures and requirements needed for one to do business with the government.

The training also incorporates how to access the County Enterprise Fund, Uwezo funds, women enterprise Fund as well as economic stimulus funds.

After undergoing a successful training session, the trainees receive certificates that indicate their worthiness in a specific field.

The Supplier Development programme will ensure the suppliers are capable of delivering. Ngobit, Ol-Moran, Rumuruti, Segera and Salama are among the wards that have benefited from the training.

According to the Laikipia head of Supply Chain Management Josphine Kamau, the need to train the entrepreneurs is to ensure that the youth, women and people living with disabilities also qualify to transact business with the govern-



ment.

Through these trainings some young people have been able to streamline their business and acquire all the needed to win tenders.

Several people have reported positive feedback after going through training, winning tenders and expanding their businesses using the money from the tenders.

The training mainly entails:

- How to register businesses
- How to get the required documents for specific supplies

- Procurement procedures

- Record keeping

- Verifications of the company/business name like the KRA tax compliance, AGPO certificates, NCA certificates, business permits among others.

- Getting experience as a supplier.

It also helps in minimizing audit queries as all the people involved follow the right tendering procedures having met all the requirements.

## Laikipia Maps Mining Sites to Promote Manufacturing



By Chris Kimanga

**A**rtisanal and Small-scale Mining (ASM) refers to informal small scale or subsistence mining activities carried out using minimal machinery or usually by hand.

ASM is commonly conducted by individual miners, at times not officially employed by a mining company, or small enterprises working independently with limited capital investment, minimal technology, labor-intensive processes and low production volumes.

Section 93, Sub-section 3(b) of the Mining Act 2016 mandates the Laikipia County Directorate of Mining and the State Department of Mining to “compile a register of the artisanal miners and specifying particulars”. Pursuant to this constitutional mandate, a mapping exercise was undertaken of artisanal miners in Laikipia East and West Sub-counties from 12th and 13th April

2021. The mapping exercise was aimed at documenting artisanal miners and their operations, technology in use, land ownership, environmental, safety and social impacts for policy and decision-making purposes.

Artisanal miners mapped primarily included those undertaking the following activities;

Quarrying – extraction of rock boulders and masonry stones from the earth’s surface

Crushing – breaking down of rock boulders mechanically or manually into hardcore, ballast or quarry dust.

Sand Harvesting – extraction of river sand.

### Geographical Scope

The first phase of the mapping exercise covered 3 wards namely Nanyuki, Umande and Segera Wards where we mapped 15 sites. 4 sites in Umande Ward were observed to be abandoned. The locations of the sites mapped are accessible via the Google map link. (<https://goo.gl/maps/4kszyBLUFQaEK8tQA>)

### Objectives

The specific objectives of the exercise were; To create an artisanal mining register, identify the location(s) where artisanal activities are carried out, identify the technology (tools and equipment) in use, identify social, safety and environmental impacts, establish the level of infrastructure and utilities in each site, identify land ownership and establish the state and nature of enterprises.

### Recommendations

- \* Nanyuki road construction (two crusher plants in Nanyuki Ward and in Segera Ward), Modsan Quarry

- \* Equitell Quarry

- \* Elburgit Quarry

Rock Works Energy Quarry

Mapping of all artisanal miners will enable the following;

Formation of an Artisanal Mining Committee – The committee will consist all relevant stakeholders and will regulate, monitor and oversee all the activities of artisanal miners in Laikipia County.

- Axle Load Control – Virtual and static weighbridges to be set up at designated places for to regulate and enforce compliance to axle load weights.

- Enforcement and monitoring – Policies and legislation to be put in place to regularize the artisanal mining sector.

- Training on best practice in environmental, social, occupational health and safety in artisanal mining.

*Mr Kimanga is the county director in charge of Mining and Energy*

## Guest Page



By Mwai wa Kihu

**W**e agreed to go back at 4 pm to meet Macira. There was one thing that was cast in stone;

whatever happened that day, nothing on Mother Earth would make us change our mind about going back to Nairobi. It is not like we had a choice; we had completely run out of funds.

Macira was exactly what Kinyua had told me he was; a very jolly and generous man who made our last three hours in Mombasa basically a farewell party that made us forget all our problems and anxieties.

After hearing the A to Z of our life in Mombasa, he quickly came up with an immediate plan. We go through the railway station, cancel the trip and proceed to a place he called Mathira for a drink and discuss later when we would leave for Nairobi. Of course we told him we will have to skip item 1 and head straight to Mathira for the drink. We had to be on that train at 7 pm.

At Mathira, it was all stories, laughter and the dear bottle. This party had a strict time limit, so we drank with efficiency. This was a Mathira Diaspora joint. There was almost a competition of buying us (honourable guests) booze. It was soon after mid-month pay and our benefactors had cash.

It was a very sad parting at 6.30 pm for the dash to the railway station but we were in a preferred condition – we were wet in the belly with Tusker. We passed via our residence for a supersonic speed farewell; the girls were almost in tears as their heroes disappeared in the horizon, marking the end of our fairy tale relationship.

In the train, we sat and started reflecting on our first sojourn in Mombasa. It looked silly because we were now telling each other stories as if we were not together in their creation. It felt like we had been there for a year.

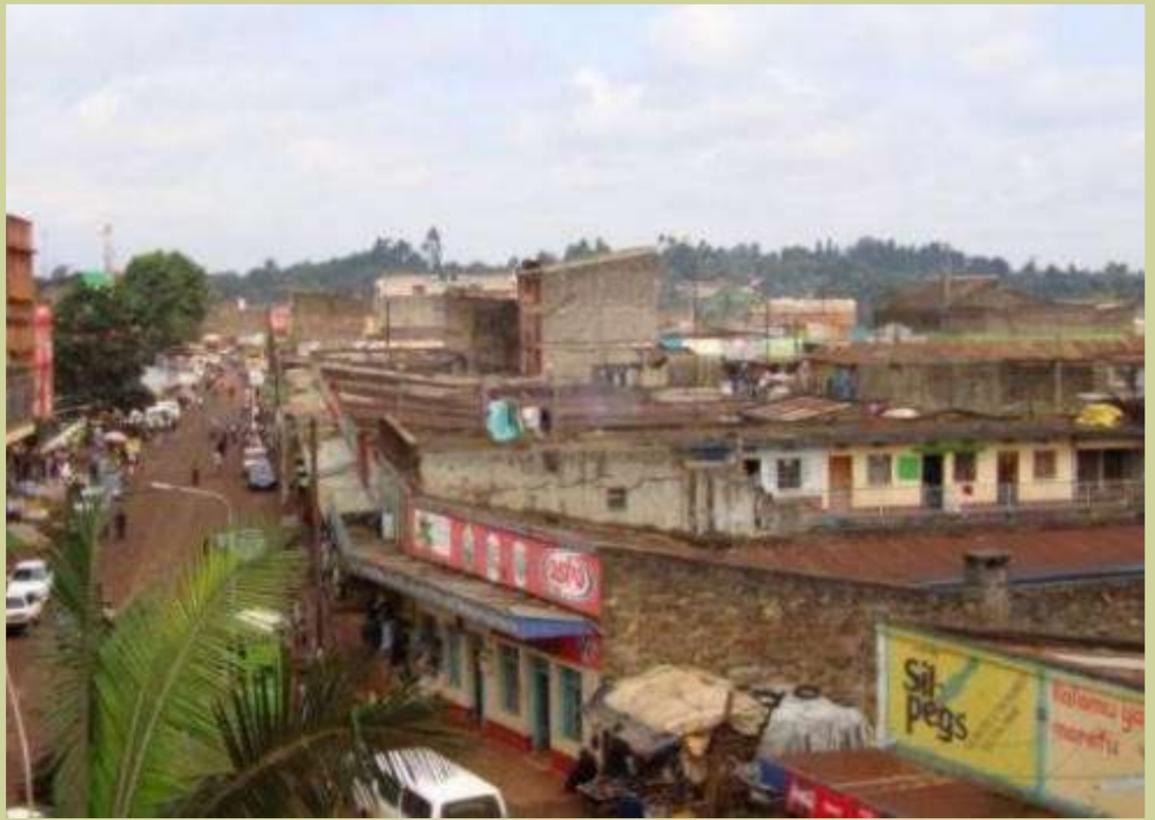
The beer was settling and playing its rightful role. We were soon generously telling others (new friends/strangers) our stories. Some appreciated the stories enough to buy us a beer or two.

At some point we had a moment to look at our financial situation just as we had done on Day One when we had put all our money together. Guess what, the total amount left was only Kes. 4.00. Not bad; we were on the train and it was taking us all the way to Nairobi.

It is amazing how being so far (Mombasa felt like being overseas) made Nairobi look like the final destination. I ventured that we could even have a drink each and a cigarette or two and still have change. Kinyua reminded me the Nairobi Railway Station is not the end our journey.

I told him not to worry about that. My very generous sister, Njeri, was in Nairobi; a student in the prestigious Kenya Science Teachers College (KSTC). They were students with a difference. They were paid monthly salaries/allowances. So, she would take care of the fare for the rest of the journey. The motion to have a final beer was unanimously passed.

We had Kes. 0.60 (sixty cents) when we left the railway station in Nairobi. We were advised that we needed to go to Kenya Bus Station and take the bus written Route 2A for Thogoto and alight at KSTC. We found the bus but the conductor told us we needed 50 cents each for the fare. We asked him how far 30 cents each could take us and he told us



A section of Karatina town

## Not Yet A Field Marshal ....Part 5

### ..... I Was a Navy Officer for Two Hours

Kenyatta National Hospital (formerly King George Hospital).

We said that was fine; we would walk the balance of the journey, which we did. We had agreed we would tell my sister the total truth to secure her sympathy and hence the funding, but also remind her that the prodigal son was not asked too many questions.

I had written her a letter about the navy interview invitation before I left Karatina, but, like everybody else, she was in the dark as to what had been happening.

By the time we finished the story, we had a small crowd of her close friends as our audience and she was in tears and claiming that we looked malnourished. We told her it was only because we had not eaten the previous day and she should not make our adventures sound like a sad story since we had enjoyed every minute of our time in Mombasa.

She still cried. It was like her kid (last born) brother had died or resurrected. There was nothing unusual about that. We used to say she always had her tears too close to her eyes and they would flow out on very varied occasions and situations. I hope she will not be mad with me or cry when she reads this disclosure of her character, assuming they have access to Facebook in Heaven, where she resides these days.

It was tea time at KSTC when we arrived. We had a generous helping and we were told we had to wait for lunch and leave for Tea Room Matatu Stage thereafter. Between the tea break and lunch, Kinyua and I explored Dagoretti Corner.

Lunch was some experience. We could not imagine students could eat this well; five star level. I was happy that this is the college I had chosen as second choice before we did the exams whose results we were awaiting.

Njeri could not trust we would find Tea Room on our own, even after we told her that we were now experts in urban matters of survival. So we got a VIP escort from her and two of her friends. At Tea Room, she even paid our fare directly to the driver. I guess she was afraid we might detour if she gave us the fare money. Yet she still gave us a lot of extra cash as we parted ways. I reminded Kinyua I had told him

she was a generous sister anybody would be happy to have.

We reached Karatina very late in the afternoon. We were now no longer the rural boys who had left the place more than a week before. We were so highly urbanised that Karatina had never looked that small. We realised we were urbanised when we found ourselves talking to Karatina people in Kiswahili; not just plain Kiswahili, but one with a touch of coast accent.

You must forgive those Kenyans who speak English with a twang after attending a graduation or visiting USA for Christmas holidays only.

Since we owned the money we got from my sister jointly we resolved we had to stay together long enough to use it all. This was how. We would have a final farewell party. Our families did not know we were back. When we arrived, the market women who could probably convey the information had gone home. People left in town were either town dwellers or drunkards who will go home after bedtime.

Now, there was a place called Lamu Lodge in Karatina. We argued that, since our coast sojourn had not taken us to the real Lamu, this was the place to stage the party and sleep there to clear the jointly owned money, then we would go home in the morning in the familiar state of penilessness. The now familiar planning genius was once again evident.

It was a night to remember. To-date, it is the only night I have ever slept in urban Karatina. I stayed another night in town, outdoors, a week later, waiting for the newspaper with the exam results - another story you need to hear.

And that is how the adventure that was put in motion by the navy ended. We were back to our normal chores as we awaited the exam results. The field marshal in me remains unleashed.

*Mr Kihu is Investment and Management consultant and CEO, Kenya Productivity Institute [mwaikihu@fechim.com](mailto:mwaikihu@fechim.com)*

# Local Engineering Firms to Make Driers for Grain Warehouses



By Nahashon Maina

**T**he government is engaging local engineering firms to make maize driers for the newly constructed warehouses in Laikipia West instead of importing the machines.

Top on the list of the firms is Mwireri Engineering which is based in Daiga division of Umande Ward. The firm exports driers to several African countries among them Rwanda, Uganda, and Nigeria. The county has constructed two warehouses at Kinamba and Mutanga and upgrading another in Sipili.

"We want to give priority to local manufacturer, who will work closely with Dedan Kimathi University to ensure the entrepreneur meets the specifications of driers required," chief officer Emily Kioko said.

This will promote local industry as Laikipia has the capacity to design the driers using local skills. Laikipia produces approximately 1.8 million bags of maize per season. The new facilities will enable farmers to increase production since they have better storage facilities that will cushion them against post-harvest losses.

It's important to have in place well established facilities to store the produce for a long time. The warehouses will have, proper storage facilities, proper grain handling equipment, proper records, and good disposal system.

Mwireri Engineering is among over 537 SMEs under the Laikipia Innovation and Enterprise Development Programme.

Poor storage methods usually lead to attack of maize by weevils or aflatoxins when maize is not dried to the correct moisture content. Equipping of these warehouses will help farmers to preserve their produce longer as they wait for market prices to stabilize.

"The maize coming from farmers has high moisture content and our aim is to reduce it to the acceptable global levels," Ms Kioko said.

The warehouses will have a combined capacity of 38,000 bags. The facilities will also have ablution,

office space and input shops to compliment the operation of the storage of the maize.

The warehouses will be operated by three cooperatives which include: Sipili Cereals Growers Cooperatives, Msinduka Cooperative and Ng'arua Cereals Cooperative Society.

The input shops are expected to be supplying farmers with vital supplies such as fertilizers and certified seeds.

The county government has also engaged cooperative managers in a training process in order to ensure better management of the facilities to maximize their operation and usage. This is to ensure that they are operational throughout the year by supporting other sector of the economy. "We want to ensure better storage of farmers harvest while at the same time creating employment opportunities to our citizens," said Ms Kioko.

The warehouses will also motivate farmers in the areas to store their produce there since it will protect them from fluctuating market price of the maize. This will in turn increase their earning which will help to improve their livelihood.

The warehouses are also expected to support cooperatives in the value addition chains by establishing ventures that will produce commodities such as maize flour and animal feeds.

"The warehouses will be certified to ensure that farmers can get financial assistance in term of loans using the stored maize as collateral," Ms



Kioko said.

This benefit will be possible by ensuring that warehouse receipt system is operational. This will help farmers to mobilize agricultural credit by creating collateral for the members as they await to dispose their maize produce to the market.

It will therefore become easier for the farmers to walk into a financial institution and borrow money using the produce stored in the warehouse.



One of the newly constructed grain store in Mutanga, Marmanet ward

## Laikipia's Unity of Focus As Webinar Leadership Discussions Start



Prof. Nick Wanjohi



Prof. Nyokabi Kamau



Prof. John Kanjogu



Dr Stanley Kamau-Moderator



Mr James Githiri-Webinar host

The first of a series of leadership webinars organized by the county government, has revealed of a common desire by over 400 participants to transform Laikipia into county with the best quality of life. The webinars kicked off on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021, with facilitators mainly from the academia. They included Prof Nick Wanjohi of Adec consulting, Prof. Nyokabi Kamau of Centre for Parliamentary Studies, Prof John Kanjogu of Laikipia University School of Education and the moderator Dr Stanley Kamau.

Laikipia has taken the bold step to empower individuals holding or aspiring to leadership positions within and outside the political landscape in the county with the objective of having uniformity of vision, efforts and activities aimed at realizing economic development.

Productive leadership is key to community empowerment and transformation, both of which are undeniably the central drivers of socio – economic and practical development in the society.

It is envisaged that the webinar participants will come up with a Laikipia County leadership capacity building action plan. Through implementation of the action plan, Laikipia will undoubtedly be led by informed and committed leaders with a passion to develop a vision on how to transform Laikipia into a manufacturing, middle income county with a per capita income of 12-15,000 USD.

“Empowered leadership will be capable of initiating and enhancing the desired social transformation in the county,” the webinar host Mr James Githiri said. The high impact webinars target experts in the field of leadership development, private sector leaders, community leaders, religious leaders, civil society actors and sitting and aspiring political leaders in the county. The inaugural webinar themed *Leadership and creating a compelling visioning* focused on how leaders in Laikipia county could develop a shared, unified compelling vision for bringing the needed change in relation to improving the lives of people through

manufacturing, mass production and general improvement of productivity. A number of socio-economic game changers guided the discussion. They included jump-starting and sustaining manufacturing, leveraging ICT-starting with the high speed fiber in key towns, mass production of goods, upscaling innovation and enterprise development, attaining of universal healthcare coverage in the county, wealth creation and water for production. The second webinar will be held in the next two or three weeks will be themed around *The demands of modern / contemporary leader by the wider society, the constitution and other legal instruments in the country, principles underpinning ethics and probity and campaign financing*

Other webinars will include such topics as: *The Interplay between political, religious and cultural leadership; Building a Political Culture and Activism and political leadership.*

## Why County Assembly Should Move Fast to Approve Bond Issue

By Murungi Ndai

The Second generation County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2017-2022) was developed in 2017/18 financial year, providing a five-year peoples' priority as captured from various public participations conducted. The CIDP captured the expected programmes whose expenditures stood at Kshs. 59.8 B against a projected revenue of about Kshs30B over five years signifying a deficit of Kshs 29.8B. To bridge the Kshs 29.8 B gap, the CIDP highlighted a number of financing options as captured in Article 5.5. 4 of the document which include Leasing of machinery and equipment and the issuance of infrastructure instruments. In 2019, the County Government successfully initiated and implemented the leasing programme which has since seen the speed of road construction and quality improve three-fold. As a means of financing the gap further, the county started preparations to issue an Infrastructure Bond. Among the efforts that we have made include mainly the fiscal responsibility through; improving own-source revenue,



ensuring development budget is above 30 percent of the total revenue, capping the wage bill at 35 percent, openness and transparency and timely and accurate reporting, among others.

These efforts have seen the audit opinion of the county improve during the period to only one item below the unqualified opinion. Additionally, the county government conducted a credit rating with the Global Credit Rating Company attaining a BB+ rating which is stable in the short run and has emerged as position two in the Kenya County Budgets Transparency survey 2020. The County Executive embarked on stakeholders' engagement to help identify and seek approval towards financing its capital infrastructure projects through a bond. Two key areas that would trigger

economic development of the county were identified. They include the upgrade of towns and market centres and access roads; and water for production and domestic use. A list of 16 projects were identified, a cash plan developed, feasibility studies done and economic analysis completed. The County Executive Committee in a meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021, approved the projects and consequently the CECM –Finance forwarded the projects to the Assembly on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 for the deliberation and subsequent approval. The County Executive through the office of the governor has had various engagement with the County Assembly for concurrence and better understanding of this innovative financing option. In this regard, the County Assembly should approve the Infrastructure Bond financing expeditiously to subsequently present the same to the National Treasury for guarantee for these projects to kick off in a timely manner.

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