



Assembly Allows Innovative Funding of Transformational Projects

The County Assembly has approved the Laikipia infrastructure bond issue paving way for the Executive to venture into innovative financing of transformative projects across the county.

This is a significant step in Laikipia County's strategy to grow its economy from 100 to 400 billion shilling in the medium term by supporting 5,000 SMEs, provision of water for production to triple agricultural production and well planned urbanization through the Smart Towns Initiative.

Other areas expected to boost the growth of the county economy are increasing manufacturing and processing five-five folds, start mining and electricity reticulation.

The county government has limited resources to undertake large projects at once to achieve accelerated growth and growth and the bond funds will enable it to speed up development projects to realize benefits early then pay later.

Issuing the infrastructure bond is just part of Laikipia's innovative financing strategy for development. The projects will generate revenue to repay the loans and accelerate growth of new businesses, jobs and higher incomes;

On Tuesday, the Assembly passed a corrigenda motion that sought to include the Infrastructure Bond issue in the Debt Management Strategy Paper. The following day the MCAs amended the Budget before passing it.

This nod by the legislature pave the way for the Executive to implement the projects. These include desilting of Wangwaci dam and Ilpolei dams and development of 11 smart towns namely; Doldol, Naibor, Kalalu, Nanyuki, Matanya, Wiyumiririe, Nyahururu, Karuga, Kinamba, Mowarak and Pesi.

Only, Nanyuki's Veronica Ikunyua, Sosian's Jacob Edom, Igwamiti's Joseph Kiguru and nominated MCAs Catherine Nyawira, Irene Wacuka and Catherine Kibue were opposed

county issuing the infrastructure bond.

But majority of the MCAs praised the initiative saying it will benefit and transform the people of Laikipia greatly. Here are some quotes by a section of the MCAs as they debated the bond:

Hon Zamzam Salma Hussein:

This is not an issue Governor Ndiritu Muriithi but an issue of funding development projects that will greatly transform the lives of our people. Am more interested in Doldol town and Il Polei dam that will benefit from this funding.



Hon Chris Mark: Why should we deny Laikipia people development? What could we be doing in this House if we are not supporting development?



Hon George Karuiru: I challenge my colleagues (opposed to the Bond) to go through the process of issuing the infrastructure bond to understand it. Some counties are begging to be allowed to issue such a bond. The bond is not to personally benefit the Governor but all the people of Laikipia. It will enable Wangwaci dam in my ward to create more jobs which is in line with the President's Big 4 Agenda.



Hon Roberto Murage: The infrastructure bond will ensure the continuity of development which has been slowed down by covid-19 pandemic. Let's be sincere with ourselves- every ward will be a beneficiary of this bond issue. It's sad that some of my colleagues are opposing this bond yet their town are benefitting immensely. Ngo-bit people should know that I am supporting it for the sake of Wiyumiririe which has been given 93 million shillings.



Hon Daniel Nyausi: We're in devolution whose essence is to devolve development to the viollage level. The infrastructure bond will enable use devolve further down, that's why we want to make Doldol a smart town. This bond will enable use fix the gully is that has cut access of doldol almost impossible.



Hon Stephen Kagundu: We were initially opposed to this bond, but it's only fools who don't change their minds. Those members still claiming the bond will lead to the increase of business licenses should know that they are the same one who approve the Finance Bill.



Sharubo Kaparo: The 15,000 Segera people that I represent are in need of development. The bond is beneficial to them and am grateful to the governor for this idea. I'll not waver in supporting development no matter the propaganda and hate directed to me.



Hon: Kanyutu Kimani: The training that we underwent on the process has made understand the infrastructure bond. Our bond issue is guided by the county's revenue collection in the last three years.



Hon Mary Samken: Contrary to what was being claimed, Governor Ndiritu Muriithi has not violated any law by issuing this bond. I have decided to support it because of interests of Laikipia North people whom I represent.



Hon Mutahi Muritu: The bond will modernize Matanya which is my town

County, Equity Championing in Fruit-tree Growing Venture



One of the beneficiary fruit-tree nursery in Laikipia

The Government and Equity Bank are running parallel initiatives in conservation of environment targeting Laikipia youth keen on earning a living from tree nursery projects.

The County Department of Agriculture is undertaking a project to promote the growth of High value fruits such as avocado, mangos, and citrus. The project will benefit 2,750 farmers across the county who will be trained and provided with 27,500 fruit Seedlings.

This initiative targets to have 170 acres under fruits production with expected production of 22 million fruits at peak in six years if 80% survival rate is achieved.

The project will enhance the productivity and profitability of fruit crops in Laikipia and improve the socio-economic condition of the targeted fruit growers. High value fruits will also be a source of nutrition that is essential in the maintenance of good health for community members.

The department has been implementing projects that will diversify agricultural activities in the county to increase income to farmers and create jobs at ward levels.

Agriculture is the main economic activity of Laikipia hence the efforts to support farmers to adopt smart farming methods to increase crop productivity.

To achieve this, the department is already engaging 20 fruit nursery operators which have been established in all wards to sow seeds and

supply them to farmers. They have been equipped with tools and equipment. The selected nurseries have been registered and certified by Horticultural Crop Development Authority and Kephis.

The nurseries will enable the county to have a regulated system for the production of quality fruit seedlings. It will also help the operators to be self-sustaining by selling seedlings to other farmers.

“As we provide water for production, this area of fruit trees will benefit from an adequate water supply,” CEC Agriculture Wangari Wachira said.

Each of the nursery operators received a water tank of 2,300 litre-capacity, one hose pipe, and wheelbarrow, grafting knife, secateurs, and slasher.

Celebration

Equity Bank is running a program in Laikipia of buying such trees from youths growing them. It will therefore provide an opportunity where youth in the county can get involved to earn an income.

The bank has been championing growing of trees and fruit trees in the county which was launched during the 35 years celebration of the bank’s existence. According to Equity Nanyuki Branch Assurance and Environmental Champion Officer, Peter Ndekei, the bank branch intends to plant between 500,000 to 1 million trees annually.

Through the program, it is planting trees in forests, farm and institutions to contribute to increasing forest cover in Laikipia while mitigating climate change.

Great Venture

Ndekei challenges young people in Laikipia to form groups and start tree nurseries which are certified by Kenya Forest Service. Once they grow seedlings, they can contact Nanyuki branch office who are always willing to buy the seedlings which they supply all over Laikipia for growing.

“Since this is a continuous project, young people have the assurance that we will buy the seedlings in large quantities,” Ndekei said.

He added that they do follow up once they plant trees to ensure they mature as their strategy goes beyond just planting- putting seedlings into the soil and just leaving at that. Their project covers growing which is a long-term investment that involves watering and caring for the tree to maturity.

“We always ask farmers to leave some space when growing trees and when the trees thrive, we bring them fruit trees to plant in that space,” Ndekei added.

According to him, this is a great venture that young people can get involved in as Equity Bank does not put a ceiling on the amount it will be spending on buying trees and fruit trees.

Lessons from Unique Beef Cattle Fattening Venture by Creative Doctors

For the past one year, David Gakuo and his business partner Betty Gikonyo have reaped benefits of venturing where no one else in Kenya had dared to.

The two veterinary doctors saw an opportunity in the beef industry and grabbed it. Dr Gakuo and Dr Gikonyo have established the first commercial feedlot farm in Kenya, where livestock are fed and fattened up in a process known as finishing before they are sold off to the highest bidder.

The two set up an intensive system of beef production that focuses on feeding cattle for 90 days on concentrate feeds till they reach the desired market weight.

The feedlot system is a universally used practice in beef production but had never been introduced into the country for commercial purposes until the two doctors took it up.

“We offer a unique opportunity to save beef farmers from huge losses. The toughest part for most farmers is to ensure the animals reach the desired market weight and fetch good prices,” says Gakuo. Their farm is located in Milimani village, Kieni Constituency.

Most beef farmers in Kenya are pastoralists based in arid and semiarid areas prone to harsh climatic conditions.

This leaves farmers vulnerable to losing their prized livestock and end up selling high value animals at throwaway prices.

“We ask farmers to sell to us their cows when they are a year old instead of staying with animals that put pressure on the pastures and then during the dry season it is too late to save them,” Gakuo says.

Livestock Markets

Gakuo travels to various livestock markets where he buys cattle for between Sh.18,000 to Sh.30,000 depending on the breed. Most of these are normally emaciated or underweight.

The animals are then transported to his farm in Kieni where they are vaccinated and isolated for two weeks before they are introduced to the paddock where the rest of the animals are kept.

“We make sure the animals are not carrying any harmful diseases so that they do not infect the rest of the herd. They are then tagged and weighed before the feeding programme starts,” Gakuo says.

Gakuo and Gikonyo have two paddocks, each occupying an acre and with a capacity of 400 cattle.

“Unlike ordinary farmers who combine grazing on pastures and animal feeds, the feedlots are zero grazing units that focus on animal feeds with the intention of fattening the animal,” Gakuo says.

Gakuo says while the product of dairy cows is milk and beef, for beef cattle the product is the



calf.

Each year, a healthy beef cow should calf, which means if you have five cows, you should have 10 animals by the end of the year. The number will keep increasing each year.

However, increasing your herd potential will only happen if you make room for these animals by avoiding straining the resources at your disposal.

Gakuo has come up with his own formula to ensure maximum results within 90 days. He has also set up a feeds factory which produces and sells his own brand of animal feeds.

“We came up with a formula for animal feeds which contain high energy, optimum protein, vitamins and minerals by combining, grains, cotton seed oil cakes and commercially manufactured supplements,” he says.

Intensive Feeding

“Making our own feeds and establishing the factory, allows the business to save on money and adds revenue to the company,” he says.

After three months of intensive feeding, Gakuo sells an animal at between Sh.60,000 and Sh.90,000 depending on the breed.

“The market for high quality beef products is lucrative because there is a high demand for meat, locally and internationally. We never have a problem selling our animals,” he says.

Since May last year, Gakuo has bought and sold close to 2,400 animals.

“We restock every month and we sell the animals at the same rate, so it is a source of steady income. We plan to expand the farm from two

acres to six acres of land with six paddocks,” he says.

Gakuo insists that the beef industry offers an opportunity to create jobs and ensure food security for all Kenyans, especially in arid areas.

“Currently, we are forced to import cotton seed oil cakes from neighbouring East African countries since they are a crucial ingredient for our animal feeds. The cotton industry should be revived to save us from this extra cost,” he says.

He says ranchers and pastoralists who have large tracts of land but fail to make the most from their animals can benefit from their venture.

Quality of Meat

“High quality breeds are the next important step in improving the quality of meat. Farmers need to be facilitated to access the best animal breeds and artificial insemination methods in the region,” Gakuo says.

The veterinarian says the feedlot industry could offer beef farmers even those in harsh climatic areas to improve the quality of their animals and ensure they earn more money in the market.

This article was first published through courtesy of ‘Profitable Business Ideas’ WhatsApp Group administrator.

Siraji Sacco to Support Contract Poultry Farming Again

A Laikipia cooperative society is advancing loans to farmers to venture into contracted chicken rearing.

As a contractor chicken keeper, the farmer will invest and build chicken rearing infrastructure and work closely with a chicken production and processing company that Siraji Sacco will bring on board.

Laikipia County Revolving Fund has advanced the sacco Kshs 7 million for onlending to its members under the chicken rearing venture.

Just like in any other business, the farmer will be given working capital by Siraji Sacco to buy the stock or improve the breed.

“We have a good working relationship with the county revolving fund and we will be partnering to support small scale farmers by availing affordable credit through our micro-credit department,” CEO Siraji Felix Ochieng said.

The County Government Department of Trade, Tourism, and Cooperative has previously supported the sacco by availing funds through Laikipia County Revolving Fund in 2020 for a similar project.

Farmers groups were given improved kienyeji chicks from Kuku Yetu Company to rear them and resell when they mature. As of March 2020, the farmers had been supplied with 22,000 chicks but due to travel restrictions during the lockdown, they could not supply the chicken to Kuku Yetu Company which is located in Nairobi. This necessitated a survey to devise ways in which to mitigate such recurrence in future

The company was responsible for technical support and bought the chicken directly from the farmers. The money would be deposited directly into the account of the farmers after deduction of the loaned amount.

The re-launch of the project is intended to increase the consumption of chicken meat, create employment and increase the earnings of residents in the county. The farmer will be providing day-to-day care of the birds, land, and housing on which they will be raised.

The benefit of chicken contract farming is that it eradicates about 95% of the risks from farmers. The move is expected to motivate farmers to rear quality chicken in a sustainable way by giving the top priority to earn



more during the selling time.

The guarantee of the market is a huge incentive as there will be no cases of farmers be-

ing unable to sell their chicken or having to sell at a loss. It will also enable small-scale farmers to diversify their business.

County Environment Team Plants Trees at Ewaso Narok Forest

County Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources during tree planting exercise at Ewaso Narok Forest in Rumuruti Sub-County. Ann Wambui, Environment Officer in the Department led her colleagues in planting over 2,000 seedlings of indigenous trees in this important wetland area.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry in National government has published a notice of intention that will seek to gazette the wetland into a protected natural resource. Ewaso Narok forest is crucial as it serves thousands of residents downstream. Wambui said that continuous tree planting will address challenges of global warming.



Bora Soaps Catering for All

By Muriithi John

One of the surest ways of ensuring there is a market for products is through production of the most basic- something that many if not all people require.

It is through such a realization that saw Kelvin Danga from Rumuruti come up with the idea of manufacturing locally made bar soap.

"The rich, as well as the poor must use soap in their daily activities. This is what made me come up with the idea of soap," said Danga, a degree holder in Clinical Medicine from Egerton University.

Though one may say that the knowledge he acquired from the university has nothing to do with soap production, the medical background makes the innovator come up with products that are healthy and that do not have severe side effects.

This is a business that he started in 2018 after realizing a ready market. Danga's business has a capacity to produce one tone of bar soaps daily, each weighing 1kg.

Other than the bar soaps, he also produces liquid soap and sanitizers. All of these are Kebs certified.

"We produce three products; bar soaps, liquid soap, and recently started producing sanitizers because of the demands from COVID-19. When the pandemic hit our country early last year, there was a huge demand for sanitizers and thus we seized the opportunity," Danga said.

Being among the 1,400 SMEs that the Laikipia Innovation and enterprise Development Programme is handholding, the business has benefitted from various exhibitions that link the entrepreneur to the market.

His main market includes supermarkets and wholesalers mostly in Rumuruti and Nyahururu because of their proximity. However, the sale of sanitizers goes up to Maralal in Samburu County.

Competition from the imported products is the main challenge that the business faces as they sell at very low prices.

Danga explains that the first two years were very promising but since then things have become tough each day.

"2018 and 2019 were good for business. However, things got tough from 2020 when fuel prices rose. If only I get some grant to boost my work..." he said, explaining that he gets his main raw material from Mombasa. The transportation cost is also high.

"I usually hire a lorry to transport my Palm oil for soap production as matatu transportation is impossible owing to the fact that it comes in drums. Upon the rise of fuel in the country last year, the price of one drum rose by five thousand," lamented the entrepreneur.

His business has employed ten workers but the drastic change in economic situation has forced



Danga to reduce the number to four.

The county government has partnered with several banks and accumulated over Ksh. 3 billion to cushion against the hardship brought by COVID-19. The government is paying five per cent of the interest and the enterprise to pay the rest.

The devolved unit is aiming at helping SMEs to scale their produce for mass production

through also encouraging consumption of locally produced goods.

The CEREB bloc is also in talks to ensure free trade within the region and elimination of double taxation when moving goods from one county to the other.

Danga also owns a medical centre called Sky Medica Centre.

Reach Danga on 0710656037



Laikipia's GIS Lab, Urban Development Strategy Impress Wajir County



A team from Wajir Department of Lands and Urban Development visited Laikipia County on 17th and 18th August 2021.

The team had come to benchmark and share experiences on structure of municipalities, adoption of GIS, and development control and approval processes.

It comprised Physical Planner, Wajir Municipal Manager, GIS Technician and Procurement personnel.

On the GIS lab, the team were taken through the process of establishing a GIS lab, how to set it up and also how the same operates.

Wajir County does not have such a laboratory and were eager to learn from the already established one in Laikipia county.

The team was also taken through the benefits other departments get in terms of data management. Wajir county representatives also learnt how to digitize the Registry Index Maps (RIM).

The delegation agreed to hire the right personnel and establish a modern GIS lab to get the benefits like those Laikipia is enjoying.

On matters physical planning, the team was taken through the process of planning of towns. This is done through controlled projects

and organized structures.

The team was interested in understanding the ongoing process of enhancing efficiency and credibility of the approval process in Laikipia in the context of rapid urbanization and competing interests.

It is through proper planning that Laikipia is rolling out the smart towns initiative that has all the basic structures like drainage and sewerage, public lands and other utilities. Land subdivision also requires proper planning to avoid unnecessary slums.

Laikipia county road designs also must factor non-motorized movement. The pavements and pedestrian walkways in turn reduce the congestion in the roads and also reduce the number of road accidents.

Understanding the efficiency in terms of structure and timelines is key in developing plans as the team was briefed.

The team was glad to learn and witness the development taking place in Rumuruti, as the government plans on relocating the headquarters from Nanyuki.

Rumuruti is a proof of how to manage a municipality. It is demonstrating that with all resources and establishment of physical planning and the help of a GIS lab, it is possible for Wajir county to develop and help manage a municipality as well.

Representatives from both counties committed to continue sharing experiences with the aim of enhancing service delivery to the citizens.



Kandutura Borehole Handed over to the Community

By Murage Gacheru, Sosian Ward

Handing over of Kandutura Borehole located in Sosian Ward to the Community took place on 25th August 2021.

The County Government of Laikipia collaborated with Habitat for Humanity to make water available to the community of Kandutura.

The county government donated the land where the borehole was drilled while Habitat for Humanity drilled the borehole.

The borehole has also been equipped with 18 solar panels to enable continuous pumping of water.

Habitat for Humanity also constructed water kiosk with four water points, two male toilets with a urinal, and two female toilets. Fencing of the site has also been done for security purposes. This water will be provided at no cost to the community.

A well-trained committee is in place to manage and maintain the borehole.

Thanks to the collaboration between the County Government of Laikipia and Habitat for Humanity, now Kandutura community has access to sufficient clean water.



Drilling of borehole at Kamandura, Tigithi Ward



County government of Laikipia is striving on improving the livelihood of residents by continually implementing water for production projects. Currently, the Department of Agriculture is finalizing the drilling a borehole at Kamandura area in Tigithi ward that is expected to have capacity to produce 20M3 per hour.

The project will benefit 200 households who will be connected by reticulation system covering a radius of 5 kms. According to project manager Julius King'ori, once they complete the drilling, they will embark on surface casing o the borehole which involves cementing in place to protect and support the wellstream. The scope of work comprises installation of solar

powered pump, construction of water tower and fencing of the site. The county government is developing sustainable water supply projects for increased production in agriculture sector and increase acreage under irrigation. This will increase the capacity of farmers in the county to access and utilize water for crop, livestock production. According to Laikipia County Labor Report 2021, majority of Laikipians at 66% are in agricultural sector. The County Government intend to ensure that the sector becomes profitable to farmers as it is evident it is a major employer

Rumuruti Municipal Board in Process of Developing a Sewer Line

By Joshua Kinyanjui

Rapid growth of Rumuruti municipality which is the official headquarters of Laikipia has attracted a lot of investments.

Individuals and corporate investors have found a place to grab available opportunities with conducive environment that is promising as they seek business growth.

The population of Rumuruti has grown immensely. The town is centrally located hence accessible from all part of Laikipai County. The area has generally warm climate with adequate amount of rainfall even in the driest month of the year.

Investors are set to get into the smart towns providing room for opportunities to hundreds of youths with jobs. The county government is determined to make sure it establishes friendly business zones in urban centres.

The growth and development of Rumuruti town as one of the smart towns in Laikipia has put pressure on waste management for the population living there.

Rumuruti Municipal Board is in the process of constructing a sewer line on behalf of Rumuruti municipality.

This project will also promote the agenda of the county of enhancing the smart town initiative. This project will cover an estimated area of about 30km² to serve a 50, 000 people approximately and cost 332 million Kenya shillings. The project will attract investors who will enhance growth and development of Rumuruti and Laikipia at large through the collection of revenue from the investors.

The town has no sewerage infrastructure despite having supply of water from Nyahuwasco. The residents have been using open channels and septic tanks which have not been effective keeping the town clean.

Lack of an appropriate place to dispose the waste at Rumuruti has made Nyahururu Water and Sanitation Company transport the waste to Nyahururu waste water treatment plant which has been expensive to carry for 40km away.

The project is aimed at addressing environmental pollution through efficient management of water waste generated from Rumuruti town. Urban centres with is enough water supply should be provided with sewerage services. The income earned from the infrastructure will cater for its maintenance and operational costs.

The sewer line will enhance sanitation and hygiene in the town which is one of its core mandates eradicating the water borne diseases. That means the project will support the health sector in reducing morbidity caused by poor sanitation. Individuals living at Rumuruti will benefit through the reduction of waste water management process.

