



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

## ANNUAL STATE OF DEVOLUTION ADDRESS BY H.E. ANNE WAIGURU, EGH CHAIRPERSON COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2024

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***Excellency Governors,***

***Members of the Press,***

***Fellow Kenyans,***

I stand before you on behalf of the Council of County Governors (CoG) to deliver the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) State of Devolution Address (SODA).

But before I proceed, it is with deep sorrow that we, the Governors, convey heartfelt condolences to the parents and relatives of the twenty-one (21) children who perished in a dormitory night inferno at the Hillside Enderasha Academy in Nyeri County earlier this month. We pray for comfort and strength to the affected families. Let us now take a moment of silence in remembrance of the deceased pupils. May God rest their souls in eternal peace.

*(a moment of silence)*

On behalf of all the County Governments, allow me now to share the strides Counties made in the Financial Year (FY) 2023-2024. This address is an assessment of our collective progress as Counties, and a testament to the resilience of our devolved system of governance since inception in 2013.

## 1. AGRICULTURE

According to the 2024 Economic survey, the agricultural sector grew by 7 per centum contributing 21.8% to the GDP. Maize production in the Counties surged to 47.60 million bags, marking a significant 38.8% increase from the previous year's 34.30 million bags. This remarkable growth in maize production highlights the sector's resilience and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at boosting staple food crop yields. Similarly, rice production experienced a notable rise of 19.1%, increasing from 192.30 thousand tonnes in FY2022/2023 to 229.10 thousand tonnes in FY2023/2024, further enhancing food security. Tea production also saw a positive trend, with a 6.6% increase from 535.00 thousand tonnes in FY 2022/2023 to 570.30 thousand tonnes in FY 2023/2024.

During the FY 2023/24 Counties invested 27.2 billion in agriculture which is 6.9% of the total spending by Counties. Busia, Isiolo, Nandi, Kitui and Tharaka Nithi managed to allocate more than 10% of their budgets to agriculture. To support mechanization, Kirinyaga County purchased one new tractor, adding to the existing 199 in agricultural mechanization stations. In animal husbandry, 3,328,177 animals were vaccinated, and 137,190 artificial inseminations were conducted to improve livestock health and productivity. Additionally, 10,152 breeding stocks were distributed, and infrastructure improvements included the construction of 32 new cattle dips and the rehabilitation of 108 existing ones. To promote chicken farming, 247,959 chicks were distributed, while 30 milk coolers and 88 cold storage facilities were built to enhance the aggregation and preservation of milk.

Efforts to enhance crop production and agroforestry saw the distribution of 1,040,324 bags of fertilizer to 97,100 farmers, alongside 51,644 agroforestry and fruit seedlings, 709,000 coffee seedlings, 470,000 tea seedlings, 9,000 coconut seedlings, and 366,539 avocado seedlings. To support aquaculture, 611,999 fingerlings were distributed. The dissemination of 160,628 tonnes of assorted seeds further contributed to increasing agricultural productivity. To enhance irrigated agriculture, 723 irrigation kits were distributed, and 13 greenhouses were provided to facilitate technology transfer. Post-harvest management was improved through the construction of 30 food stores and the rehabilitation of 9 hay stores, ensuring better storage and reducing post-harvest losses.

Climate resilience and sustainable agricultural practices were emphasized to mitigate the impacts of climate change, thereby contributing to food security and the economy. A total of 4,839,182 farmers were reached through extension services, and 79,776 farmers received training in the 31 Agricultural Training Centers (ATCs), equipping them with knowledge on modern farming techniques and climate-smart practices. The Counties maintained 6,684 agriculture extension workers.

## **2. ARID AND SEMI-ARID LANDS AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT**

In the period under review, severe flooding, droughts, landslides, and disease outbreaks profoundly impacted multiple Counties, causing widespread displacement of populations, infrastructure damage, and livelihood disruptions. Our data highlights the following key points:

- i. Fatalities: 315 total.
- ii. Injuries: 188 reported injuries across Counties.
- iii. Displacement: 291 camps were set up across 25 Counties for displaced persons.
- iv. Schools Affected: 1,647 (primary and secondary) schools were damaged or disrupted across Counties.
- v. Health Facilities Damaged: 64 across 12 Counties.
- vi. WASH Facilities Damaged: 5306 across 20 Counties.
- vii. Agricultural Damage: Crops on 298,673 acres and 9,637 livestock lost across Counties.
- viii. Sectors Most Affected: Transport, Housing, Education, Health, and Agriculture.

Driven by the commitment to protect lives and livelihoods, Counties were able to put in place response measures as follows:

- i. Emergency Response and Relief Efforts: Counties swiftly mobilized resources to provide emergency relief to affected households, including food supplies, medical assistance, and temporary shelters, benefiting over 51,282 households.
- ii. Infrastructure Rehabilitation: Immediate steps were taken to repair and restore damaged infrastructure. Counties allocated significant portions of their development budgets towards disaster response and infrastructure rehabilitation.
- iii. Disaster Risk Management Policy, Legislative and Institutional Frameworks in the Counties were developed:
  - 62% of Counties have enacted a Disaster Risk Management Act.
  - 48% of Counties have a Disaster Risk Management Policy.
  - 74% of Counties have an operational County Emergency Operational Plan.
  - 32% of Counties have allocated the mandated 2% of their annual budget to the county emergency fund.
  - 80% of Counties have a functional Department of Firefighting.
  - 85% of Counties have a functional Directorate of Disaster Management with substantial budget allocations, up to Ksh.83 million.
- iv. Livestock Vaccination and Health: Counties undertook extensive livestock vaccination campaigns to prevent disease outbreaks following the floods and droughts, with over 2,961,484 livestock vaccinated across several Counties.

### **3. HEALTH**

#### **Human Resources for Health**

Cumulatively, there are **62,965** health care workers in public facilities and **37,614** in private facilities across the 47 Counties. The total health work force across the 47 Counties has improved by **3%**, from **66%** in 2022/23 to **69%** 23/24. Of the core health workforce employed, nurses make up to **48%**; followed by clinical officers at **14%** while medical doctors and specialists up to **6.9%**. The other carders account for **31.1%** of the health workforce.

Further, the Counties employed an additional **455** doctors, and released a total of **890** doctors for postgraduate training. They also employed additional **618** clinical officers and **1568** nurses. And on promotions, for the last three years, Counties have honored promotions for **1,715** medical practitioners. In the year under review, concerted efforts by the National and County Governments resulted to the execution of the return-to-work formula for doctors and clinical officers leading to the end of industrial action by health workers.

#### **Health Financing**

Health financing is critical in supporting attainment of all health system building blocks and subsequently realization of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). County Governments have allocated an average of 30% of the total County budgets to the departments of health and remain committed to increasing this allocation gradually. 34 Counties have aligned with the Facilities Improvement Financing Act, 2023 to ensure 100% retention of hospital revenues to defray costs. This is an increase from 27 Counties in the previous year.

With the transition from National health insurance to Social Health Insurance, the Council notes that about KSH. 12 billion is owed to Counties by the NHIF now (SHIF) for services rendered to citizens. The delay in payment of the arrears is a contributor to disruption of health service provision.

#### **Service Delivery**

Analysis of key performance indicators on maternal and child health shows progressive improvement in this financial year. Specifically, skilled birth delivery is at 89%, and antenatal care coverage is at 54.0% an improvement of 2.6%. A total of 10,778 neonatal deaths were reported in health facilities across the 47 Counties, a 1.2% improvement from the last year reported neonatal deaths.

Notably, fewer maternal deaths were reported in the health facilities in the FY 2023/24 at 11,990 compared to the previous year at 12,144 deaths/100000. Additionally, the proportion of children under 1 year who are fully immunized is at 79% a drop by 3% from the previous year where immunization was at 82%. This was occasioned by the reported stock outs of vaccines in the health facilities as well as variations in completeness of reporting in the KDHS for various Counties.

The current approach on improving service delivery is through strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC) and referral services through Primary Care Networks (PCNs). Cumulatively, for the year under review, 41 Counties have established a total of 151 PCNs an improvement by 70% from the previous financial year which were 89 PCNs across the Counties.

The community health program has significantly increased access to preventive and promotive services to the grassroots level. County Governments committed to providing monthly stipend to the 107,831 CHPs in the last financial year. In terms of reporting on community health services, 45 Counties have rolled out electronic community health information systems (e-chis) to support data collection and reporting at community level.

Lastly, during the 10th Extra-Ordinary Summit held on the 18th of December 2023, the two levels of government agreed on a remuneration mechanism of a 50:50 matching fund to be disbursed to the Counties as a conditional grant to facilitate an increment in the stipends that CHPs receive.

### **Infrastructure**

The WHO recommends a radius of 5 km to access health services. County Governments have enhanced access to health care for more citizens with more facilities within the 5 km range. There are 14,710 operational health facilities, both public and private. Public facilities are 6,700, 45% of the total, while private facilities account for 8,010, 55% of the total facilities.

The majority of public health facilities (93%) are Level 2 and Level 3, while Level 4, 5, and 6 facilities account for 7% of all public hospitals. Additionally, there has been a 4 % increase in the number of hospital beds distributed across 47 Counties from 39,220 beds to 40,814 beds.

Over half of the health facilities (64%) across the 47 Counties have basic ambulatory services, while 31% of health facilities across the Counties have access to advance life support ambulances.

#### 4. FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The total projected revenue for budget implementation in the FY 2023/24 amounted to Kshs.564.5 billion, with Kshs.203.48 billion (36%) allocated to development expenditure and Kshs.361.05 billion (64%) to recurrent expenditure. This met the fiscal responsibility principle under the PFM Act, 2012 requiring allocation of at least 30% of the budget to development expenditure. The total revenue consists of: equitable share allocation of Kshs.385.4 billion; additional allocations from both National Government and Development Partners amounting to Kshs.46.36 billion; projected Own Source Revenue (OSR), including Facility Improvement Funds of Kshs.80.78 billion; and Kshs.42.26 billion of unspent funds carried forward from FY 2022/23, along with Kshs.9.69 billion balances in Special Purpose Accounts. Out of these allocations, a total of Kshs.354.59 billion has so far been disbursed to County Governments as equitable share, equivalent to 92% and Kshs.29.07 billion of the Kshs.46.36 billion additional allocations from development partners representing 62.70% of the total allocation.

However, the National Treasury did not disburse Kshs.30.8 billion of equitable share relating to the June 2024 allocation for FY 2023/24. Additionally, the National Treasury did not disburse the following conditional grants by the close of the financial year:

1. Supplement for construction of County Headquarters amounting to **Kshs.454 million**
2. Conditional grant for transfer of Library Services amounting to **Kshs.162.85 million**
3. Allocations for Court Fines amounting to **Kshs.108.66 million**
4. Allocation for Mineral Royalties amounting to **Kshs.2.93 billion**
5. County Aggregation and Industrial Parks (CAIPs) Program conditional grant amounting to **Kshs.3.3 billion**.

This negatively affected the Counties' budget implementation for the last financial year leading to further accumulation of pending bills.

On OSR performance, in the FY 2023/24, County Governments generated a total of Kshs.58.95 billion from their own sources which was 72.8% of the annual target of Kshs.80.94 billion. This includes Facilities Improvement Funds (FIF) collection amounting to Kshs.16.66 billion. Overall, the OSR performance is a 55.91% increase from last year's collection of Kshs.37.81 billion. Further analysis of OSR as a proportion of the annual target indicates that 10 Counties surpassed their annual targets. They are Turkana at 241.2%, Vihiga at 136.3%, Kirinyaga at 118.4%, Lamu at 116.2%, Nandi at 113%, Wajir at 110%, Garissa at 108.2%, Nyeri at 106.1%, Samburu at 104.1% and Murang'a at 100.2%.

With respect to the settlement of pending bills, as at the end of the FY 2023/24 Counties reported partial settlement of pending bills. However, as of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the outstanding pending bills for County Governments amounted to Kshs.181.98 billion. Nairobi City County accounted for 65% of the total pending bills at Kshs.118.44 billion with Elgeyo Marakwet, Nyeri,

and Lamu Counties accumulating the lowest at Kshs.1.49 million, Kshs.7.39 million, and Kshs.39.53 million respectively. The high pending bills are largely attributed to delays in disbursing the equitable share by the National Treasury.

Regarding County Planning, all 47 Counties finalized their third generation County Integrated Plans (CIDPs) and are currently implementing. The CIDPs set out the Counties' economic development blueprint for the next five years (2023-2027) and are aligned with National Planning through the Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV) and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Additionally, the Counties have embarked on institutionalizing the Statistics function to enhance evidence-based decision making in planning. The Council of Governors in close collaboration with National government agencies has been supporting Counties come up with policies and guidelines to aid County Planning. They include Statistics Policies, Monitoring and Evaluation policies and guidelines for development of County Statistical Abstracts.

The eighteen sectoral committees at the CoG succeeded in achieving their targets through the strong partnerships with National Government Ministries and Departments, Development Partners, Private Sector and Civil Society Organizations. The Council held high-level meetings with different partners leading to co-creation of projects and joint implementation across sectors of Health, Agriculture, Water, Finance and Economic Affairs, Statistics and Data among others. We have witnessed improved coordination and joint implementation of projects thus minimizing duplication.

In the period under review, the CoG coordinated the establishment of the Resource Mobilization unit in Counties and the formation of an active caucus that provide room for deliberation and learning among Counties on partners' requirements, reporting and priority areas enhancing County resource mobilization efforts. The Caucus will continue to facilitate donor mapping for ease of coordination and engagement.

## **5. LANDS, HOUSING, URBAN DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ENERGY**

### **County planning and Development**

County Governments and Municipalities have been able to prepare County Spatial Plans (CSPs) and Integrated Development Plans (IDePs) for their urban entities to guide developments within their territories. In the period under review, three (3) County Governments approved their County Spatial Plans making it 18 Counties with approved County Spatial Plans. In addition, 11 Counties have their draft plans at the respective County Assemblies undergoing approval while 21 are undergoing preparation by the respective County Executives.

This year the CoG reports that **28** extra Counties have established functioning GIS labs, bringing the total to **37** Counties with functional GIS to aid in making informed decisions on effective utilization of resources, equality in distribution of development and space-based planning.

### **Urban Governance and Management**

In the FY under review, an additional **17** municipalities were granted municipal charters therefore making the cumulative number of municipalities to be 107. The Municipalities have subsequently established urban governance boards and administrations for the management of the urban areas for delivery of quality infrastructure and services to the citizens.

### **Roads**

In efforts to enhance mobility, County Governments were committed to develop road infrastructure within their regions in the FY 2023/24. County governments currently manage over 182,000 Km of the total road network in the country. As of now, 70% of this network is in fair condition and County Governments endeavor to ensure the percentage increases to at least 90%.

To achieve this goal, Counties tarmacked 2,156 Km and graveled 12,842 Km of roads in the FY 2023/24. Additionally, County Governments opened up 17,122 Km of rural roads, a 21% increase from FY 2022/23. Further, County Governments constructed additional 2,436 km of non-motorized transport pavements to ensure safe mobility of pedestrians. In addition to these county-wide efforts, Cities and Municipalities through the Kenya Urban Support Program (KUSP) played a key role in urban infrastructure. These include the construction of 234 km of



storm drains, 209 km of Non-Motorized Transport infrastructure, 212 km of bitumen roads, 9 bus parks, 21 recreational parks, 23 markets, and 8 fire stations.

### **Informal Settlements**

33 County Governments are participating in the implementation of the second Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project with **88** settlements benefiting from security of tenure and **95** benefiting from infrastructure upgrading.

### **Road Safety**

In the wake of rising road carnage, 38 County Governments established and operationalized County Transport Safety Committees that will steer road safety initiatives at the County level. The remaining 9 Counties have appointed their members and submitted to Cabinet Secretary in charge of Transport for gazettelement.

### **Housing Development**

In line with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformative Agenda (BETA) on Affordable Housing, County Governments have signed the Intergovernmental Memoranda of Understanding with the National Government wherein the Counties have identified land for comprehensive planning and affordable housing project implementation. This has seen several affordable housing projects launched in several Counties in order to address the housing deficit in the country and delivery of affordable and decent houses to the low- and middle-income households.

### **Energy**

County Governments are committed to realize the SDG 7 of enhancing universal access to affordable, reliable and clean energy. In the period under review:

- i. 46,779 households benefited from clean cooking technologies up from 13,581 in 2022.
- ii. 4,000 street lighting infrastructures were installed across the Counties.
- iii. 503 renewable energy projects were implemented where 33 Counties are now utilizing solar power for street lighting, mini –grids, back-up power in hospitals, and in water pumping.

In seeking to expand their presence under the function '*electricity and gas reticulation and energy regulation*', Counties are keen on working with state agencies such as the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy (REREC) in implementing the Matching Fund program so that more and more remote areas within the County can benefit from electrification projects.

## 6. TRADE, INDUSTRY, COOPERATIVES AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

### Trade Development

Through the development of policies and legislation, County Governments influence investment decisions, production levels, trade dynamics, prices of goods and services, and overall trade environment. In the FY under review, County Governments actively supported trade development and regulation by providing essential infrastructure, incentives, business-friendly policies, and both human and financial assistance to businesses and investors.

117 new markets were constructed in 28 Counties, recording a 35% increase in the number of markets constructed within the year. Additionally, 113 markets were renovated in 34 Counties. However, this was a decrease by 34% from the number of markets renovated in the FY 2022/23 due to claw backs on this County function.

Creation of a conducive business environment through the automation of business registration services and licensing has been a priority. By the end of the financial year, 36 Counties had successfully automated their business registration services, simplifying the process for SMEs to formalize their operations. Additionally, 30 Counties had implemented electronic unified single business permits, effectively streamlining registration procedures, lowering fees, and expediting licensing processes. These initiatives have enabled entrepreneurs to establish their businesses swiftly and comply with regulations efficiently. Consequently, the number of businesses issued with trade licenses increased by 32% to record high of 506,855 enterprises registered within the Financial Year.

To enhance the capacity for SMEs, County Governments intensified their efforts of capacity building SMEs on various aspects including registration and renewal processes, financial management, and business opportunities among others. At least 30,763 SMEs were trained within the financial year, an increase by 66% in the number of SMEs trained in the financial year 2022/23.

In addition, County Governments facilitated access to finance by SMES with at least 32 County Governments establishing County Business Enterprise Funds and other financing programs to support MSMEs. A total of Ksh. 1.005 billion was advanced to 3,149 groups of SMEs in the period under review. This was a decline by Ksh. 723 million (41%) from the amount issued and groups who benefit in the previous financial year. The decline was attributed to the delays in exchequer releases. Financial support to MSMEs was in the form of grants, loans, and revolving funds specifically tailored for these enterprises. These funds have enabled entrepreneurs access capital for business expansion, purchase of equipment, and upgrading technology. In addition, other Counties have put in place MSME Credit Guarantee Schemes to

support access to finance, including partnership with financial institutions to offer credit at a subsidized rate.

## **Investment and Industry**

With the establishment of the investment units, County Governments are able to map and market investment opportunities, track and monitor the investments while offering after-care services to the investment activities in the Counties. Some of the recent investment promotion initiatives include:

- i. Establishment of County Aggregation and Industrial Parks in 42 Counties, with construction of necessary infrastructures in advance stages.
- ii. Setting up of 28 gazetted Special Economic Zones, with 9 of these zones being gazetted, including Riwa, Rivatex, Premier Foods Industry, Mt Elgon Orchards, International Controls, Mitchell Cotts Freight Kenya, Kingsway Industrial Park, Sagana Agro-Industrial City and Rock Plant SEZ.
- iii. Enhancement of necessary infrastructure including roads, water, and sewage systems, upgrading towns to municipalities, and installing street lighting for MSMEs.
- iv. Hosting investment conferences, trade shows, and exhibitions in 5 Counties include Homa Bay, Kakamega, Nandi, Embu and Nairobi.
- v. Establishment of business incubation centers and innovation hubs to support startups and small businesses in Counties such as Isiolo, Kiambu, Kisumu, Makueni, Meru and Nairobi.

## **Cooperatives**

Through the support from partners, at least 21 Counties have developed cooperative legislations to guide the execution of the cooperative function. There are 20,175 cooperative societies that have been registered with at least 1,801 cooperatives being registered within the FY 2023/24 alone. In addition, County Governments built the capacity of at least 4,332 cooperatives within the year under review.

## **7. TOURISM AND WILDLIFE**

### **Enactment of Requisite Legislation, Policies, and Regulations**

A total of 19 Counties, including Bomet, Bungoma, Elgeyo Marakwet, Embu, Isiolo, Kericho, Kiambu, Kilifi, Kisii, Makueni, Nakuru, Kakamega, Nairobi, Narok, Nandi, Samburu, Tana River, Trans Nzoia, and Uasin Gishu, enacted tourism-related Acts, policies, and regulations.

Additionally, 10 Counties, namely Baringo, Bomet, Elgeyo Marakwet, Isiolo, Laikipia, Nakuru, Narok, Samburu, Uasin Gishu, and most recently West Pokot enacted wildlife-related Acts, policies, and regulations.

Narok County's initiative in developing the Maasai Mara Ecosystem Management Plan, Greater Mara Ecosystem Management Plan and a Physical and Land Use Development Plan sets a notable precedent for effective management of conservation areas, serving as a potential model for other Counties to emulate.

### **Sustainable Wildlife Protection and Community Involvement**

Counties across Kenya have made notable strides in sustainable wildlife conservation and management by engaging communities. Initiatives include establishing community conservancies, which provide economic benefits and help to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts through measures such as fencing. Capacity building and employment opportunities have been extended to communities surrounding wildlife protected areas, like the annual 10% revenue allocation from Lake Bogoria Reserve. Counties have also focused on education and awareness, with programs aimed at reducing poaching and human-wildlife conflicts. For example, sensitization campaigns, community training, and partnerships for establishment of wildlife conservancies have been actively pursued. Nakuru County for example has formed associations and committees for environmental conservation, while other Counties like Siaya and Kilifi have implemented tree planting and habitat restoration projects. These efforts collectively enhance local conservation practices, bolster community involvement, and promote sustainable tourism.

### **Gazetted Tourism Sites across the Counties**

Counties have identified, and promoted numerous tourist sites, showcasing the country's rich natural and cultural heritage. Notable sites include Shaba National Reserve in Isiolo, Samburu National Reserve, and Marsabit National Park, as well as cultural treasures like Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga, Fort Jesus, and Thimlich Ohinga World Heritage Site.

Coastal regions feature attractions such as the Gasi Women Boardwalk and Shimoni Slave Caves. These sites not only protect Kenya's heritage but also boost local economies through tourism, underscoring the importance of their preservation and promotion.

Counties have taken significant steps to promote themselves by hosting annual tourism and cultural festivals. All the 47 Counties mapped out their tourism attraction and products that were compiled into one booklet by CoG. A total of 37 Counties have established annual cultural events. Notable events include the Lake Ol'bolossat Conservation Marathon in Nyandarua County, the URA Gate Cultural Festival in Tharaka Nithi, the Lamu and Turkana Cultural Festival, Kisumu Fish Fiesta, Maa Cultural Festival, Tobong Lore Cultural Festival in Turkana and the Mulembe Fiesta in Kakamega County.

With effective promotion, strategic marketing, and targeted investments, these diverse tourism attractions have the potential to generate substantial revenue for the Counties. By capitalizing on their unique resources and enhancing visitor experiences, Counties can stimulate economic growth while preserving and promoting their cultural and natural heritage.

### **Infrastructure and Facilities for MICE Tourism in Kenya's Counties**

The M.I.C.E (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) segment is a rapidly growing sector within the tourism industry. Counties recognize the potential of M.I.C.E tourism and have implemented various strategies to attract this lucrative market.

Counties have developed various infrastructure and facilities to support tourism, enhancing their appeal as business and conference destinations. Notable venues include the Ekaales Centre in Lodwar, and the Machakos Convention Center. Counties like Baringo and Kilifi boast conference centers such as Lake Bogoria Spa and Kilifi Conference Centre, respectively. Additionally, educational institutions and social halls, such as Pwani University Resource Centre and Kathwana Social Hall, provide further options for conferences and events.

Hosting prominent events like the Homabay International Investment Conference, the Kakamega Investment Conference and the Nandi Trade Expo demonstrates the Counties' commitment to attracting M.I.C.E tourism. The Council has entered into a collaboration with Kenyatta International Convention Centre to build capacity of County Governments in MICE tourism and to facilitate joint bidding of international MICE events.

However, while County Governments have made commendable progress in implementing their local tourism functions, it is important to acknowledge the existing challenges that need to be addressed. Challenges such as budget constraints, inadequate funding, and insufficient infrastructure development intersect with issues like human-wildlife conflict, invasive species, and climate change. Further the lack of clarity on the functional assignment with respect to tourism policy development and local tourism remain an impediment in the development and sustainability of the sector. Nevertheless, amidst these challenges lie opportunities, including

the establishment of national reserves, leveraging cultural heritage for tourism, and engaging in eco-friendly initiatives. With diverse tourism products like beach tourism, sports tourism, and cultural experiences, there is a huge potential for growth. The unbundling process once completed will delineate the roles of both levels of government and facilitate synergy.

## **8. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

### **Environment**

The uptake of the Environment function at County has tremendously improved with the Counties prioritizing the sector in terms of setting necessary policy and legal frameworks, allocation of budgets to environmental development issues. 29 Counties have developed the County environmental and coordination policies and Acts to tackle matters environment, air and noise pollution control, restoration, waste management, sand harvesting including coordination and consultative structures for overall environmental management at the County level across sectors and actors.

As such, in accordance the Environmental Management and Coordination Act of 1999 (Revised 2015), County Environment Committees (CENCOMs) are mandated with the responsibility of proper management of the environment as well as developing County Environment Action Plan (CEAPs) within the County. Currently, there are 25 operational CENCOMs while 13 CENCOMs have served their terms and 9 CENCOMs not operational. There has been a significant support accorded by County Governments to reconstitute and operationalize the CENCOMs by undertaking trainings and allocating them sufficient budgets.

### **Solid Waste Management**

The Constitutional provision of the right to a clean and healthy environment underpins the importance of effective and sustainable waste management in the country. County Governments bear the responsibility for refuse removal, refuse dumps, and solid waste disposal. Consequently, the implementation of robust policy and legal frameworks and measures becomes crucial. In this regard, 35 Counties have enacted Acts, Policies, and Regulations specifically addressing solid waste management.

Further, Counties have demonstrated commitment to the promotion of sustainable waste management and circular economy practices for green growth. Notably, there has been improvement in waste infrastructure. Over the period under review, Counties established material recovery facilities (MRF) increasing the number of facilities from 53 to 62 on various scales, 15 Counties have sanitary landfills in place an increase from 12 Counties in FY 2022/23. There was an increase in waste recycling companies from 187 to 243.

In the FY under review, to facilitate efficient waste collection and transportation, County Governments acquired County waste infrastructure and installed more than 400 waste transportation equipment including tractor drawn trailers, skip loaders (system) with skip bins, bulldozer machines and trucks both from Counties and private sector with a majority of

them collecting waste daily. Further, Counties are embracing circularity with 223 waste recycling companies promoted and operating in Counties and 47 E-Waste collection centers established. For example, construction of standard MRF in Taita Taveta, organic waste and reuse facility constructed in Kakamega County; promotion of Public-Private-Partnership in waste material recovery in Meru County; partnerships with Produce Responsible Organizations (PROs) on take back schemes; recycling and value addition trainings and adequate budgetary allocations for waste management in Kiambu County; and sludge waste to energy (decentralized treatment facility) in Turkana County.

## **Climate Change**

County Governments have implemented several initiatives to effectively mainstream climate change responses into development planning, decision-making, and implementation. These include:

- Enacting climate change-related legal frameworks: A total of 45 Counties have enacted requisite legislations, policies, and regulations specifically addressing climate change and its impacts.
- Conducting Participatory Climate Resilience Assessments (PCRAs): 45 Counties have undertaken PCRAs to evaluate their exposure to climate-related hazards and social vulnerability. These PCRA reports resulted to development of 45 County Climate Change Action Plans for implementation in five years. These plans serve as blueprints for guiding climate change-related initiatives and programs within each county.
- Creation of County Climate Change Funds: Counties have allocated a minimum of 1.5%-6% of their development budgets to climate change response, which will be utilized in financing climate change programs and activities in accordance with the County Climate Change Acts up to the ward levels.
- Establishing Dedicated Units and Committees: To ensure effective coordination and implementation of climate change initiatives, 47 Counties have set up specialized Climate Change Units. Additionally, 95% of Counties have established County Climate Change and Ward Planning Committees to identify and prioritize investments that strengthen climate resilience.

Further, Counties have implemented various climate innovations and best practices which have been documented by the Maarifa Centre. These initiatives can be accessed at the Maarifa e-platform <https://maarifa.cog.go.ke/publications/compendium-county-best-practices-and-innovations-climate-change> and include practices on, among others: restoring degraded landscapes and utilizing renewable energy for water supply in Vihiga County; real time climate information and innovation hub at Homabay County; sustainable rangeland restoration in Kajiado County; and conservation of the Maasai Mara National Reserve in Narok County.

## **Water**

A total of 37 County Governments enacted water-related statutory instruments, an increase from 34 in the FY 22-23. Additionally, 23 Counties developed County Water Master Plans while 17 Counties developed the County Water and Sanitation Strategy and Investment Plans. This progress signifies the Counties' commitment to aligning their water management approaches with the broader national water policy objectives.

County Governments are responsible for establishing Water Service Providers within their jurisdictions to ensure the provision of water services to their populations. Currently, an approximate of 124 County Owned water service providers are operational and 5790 informal water service providers operating both in urban and rural areas. Additionally, County Governments have undertaken significant infrastructure development projects to enhance water access, including the construction, maintenance, and repair of water supply facilities. As such for the Financial Year 2023/2024, County Governments developed a total of 4224 new water projects and rehabilitated a total of 3,657 water supply facilities. The number of boreholes, water pans and small dam increased to 15,485 from 12,105 functional boreholes, 6065 water pans and 1168 small dams. As such, the distance to improved water facilities reduced to 3km.

## **Forestry**

In the period under review, a total of 18 Counties enacted Forestry related Acts, Policies and Regulations with recruitment of 145 Forest Managers. Further, additionally 10 Counties namely Kilifi, Elgeyo Marakwet, Kajiado, West Pokot, Nakuru, Mombasa, Baringo, Nairobi, Trans Nzoia, and Uasin Gishu, took significant steps by administering certificates of origin and movement permits for farm forestry products. This proactive approach contributed to the Own Source Revenue generation by the Counties.

Among the diverse strategies aimed at combating climate change, tree growing stands out as one of the most effective methods. Demonstrating an unwavering commitment to this cause, County Governments have undertaken rigorous tree growing exercises to mark significant events such as the International Day of Forests, World Environment Day, and as a build up to Devolution Conference 2023.

For the Financial Year 2023/24, all 47 Counties collectively planted a total of 41,440,523 million trees an increase from 25,436,417 tree seedlings with monitoring growth a key focus by all the Counties. Counties also took initiatives on rehabilitation and afforestation including identifying ecological significant areas for protection and restoration and establishment of Community Forest Associations (CFAs).

For example, Nandi County established CFAs- one per gazetted forest, that is, North Nandi Forest CFA, Kobujoi Forest CFA, Tindiret Forest CFA, Kapchorua Forest CFA, Cerengoni CFA and Kimondi Forest CFA. Counties also supported community groups and individuals in setting up of tree nurseries. Further, Counties identified and zoned critical ecological areas for conservation. Example: Kuje wetland, Kapnawai wetland, Kipsiti gulleys, Kipchorian river,



Tionsoiyet wetland in Kericho County, Kibiri and Maragoli Forest in Vihiga County, Gambela wetland, Kinna forest, Lorian swamp and Isiolo river (riparian section) in Isiolo County.

These efforts reflect the substantial progress made in reforestation initiatives and underscore the determination of County Governments to achieve the 30% tree cover by 2032.

## **Mining**

In the period under review, 10 County Governments developed mining related Policies, Acts and Regulations. These are: Baringo, Kakamega, Nyandarua, Makueni, Taita Taveta, Nakuru, Machakos, Trans Nzoia, Vihiga and Kitui. Case example is: Kakamega Natural Resource Management Act to regulate low value minerals, Makueni County Artisanal policy 2023, draft Nyandarua County Natural Resources Management Policy, draft Nyandarua County Quarrying and Sand Harvesting Bill among others. Additionally, 27 Counties established artisanal mining committee(s) in the Financial Year 2023/24.

## 9. BLUE ECONOMY

The Blue Economy is crucial to Kenya, leveraging its coastline and inland waters like lakes and rivers for economic growth and sustainable development. It supports food security through fisheries and aquaculture, boosts commerce via maritime transport, and enhances tourism, creating jobs and revenue. Additionally, it contributes to energy production from renewable resources. By adopting sustainable practices, Kenya's Blue Economy fosters economic prosperity while preserving marine and freshwater ecosystems, combating climate change, and conserving biodiversity, ensuring environmental and economic resilience for the nation's future.

Establishing and developing effective legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks for the Blue Economy is essential for structuring and guiding the sector. In the FY 23-24, Counties enacted various legislations focused on the Blue Economy. An example is the Homa Bay Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Act, 2023 and Homa Bay Lakefront Corporation Act, 2023.

Training and skill development programs in the Blue Economy sector are crucial for equipping individuals with the knowledge and expertise needed to manage and optimize marine and aquatic resources. Based on this, there are 257 registered students taking up training/ acquiring skills in Blue Economy with Kisumu County having 100 registered students, Kwale County having 50 registered students, Bungoma County having 24 registered students, Kilifi, Mombasa and Taita Taveta Counties having 20 registered students each, and Kisii and Busia having 13 and 10 registered students respectively. These students are registered in the County TVETs, VTCs and Bandari maritime academy.

Licensing fishers, fishmongers, wholesalers, processors, aquariums, and aquashops in Counties enables accurate data collection for better resource management, prevents illegal and unregulated activities, and promotes fair trade practices. There are approximately 15,571 licensed fishers across the 34 Counties and approximately 6,235 licensed fishing vessels.

Fish markets provide a basis to monetize fisheries and act as a means of livelihood to the local fishermen. The total number of constructed fish markets is 20 whereby Meru County and Kajiado County take the lead with 10 and 5 constructed fish markets respectively.

Proper budgeting for this sector in Counties is important to ensure sustainable resource management, enhance economic growth, and support the livelihoods of communities dependent on fishing. In light of this, Mombasa and Kilifi Counties are leading in adequate allocation of finances to the sector with budgets of 185 and 104.39 million shillings respectively.

Fisheries and aquaculture development programmes are a key factor to ensure sustainability of the Blue Economy Sector at the County level. Counties have a total of 42 development

programmes with Kakamega and Busia having 5 development programmes, and Kisii, and Kisumu having 3 programmes.

Lastly, Counties have come up with innovative ways to conserve blue economy. Some notable examples are: Taita Taveta County which has utilized aquatic macrophytes for alternative source of income for women fishers, Kiambu County which has formed and supported dam conservation youth groups and cold-water sport fishing, Mandera County which has a joint management unit on the trans boundary water resource, and Kwale County that has restored Degraded Coral Areas among others.

## **10. EDUCATION**

### **Pre-Primary Education**

In the FY 2023/2024, County Governments earnestly worked towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 target 4.2 that by 2030 all countries should “ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”. With regard to access and equity in preprimary education, data for the school year 2023 shows that:

- Enrolment in pre-primary education 1 and 2 in both public and private went up by 2.22% to 2,842,838 in 2023 school year from 2,780,926 in 2022 school year. The current boys’ enrolment is 1,413,119 while that of girls stands at 1,426,719. The gender parity index is 1.002 meaning gender parity has been met at this level of education. The increase in enrollment is attributed to increased incentives and investments in pre-primary schools by the County Governments.
- Additionally, there has been a 2.8% increase in the number of pre-primary centers from 46,023 in 2022 to 47,326 in 2023. In the last three financial years 18,291 classrooms have been constructed by the County Governments, with 4,516 classroom constructed in the FY under review.
- The number of ECDE teachers employed was 74,557 with 48,895 employed by County Governments while 25,662 employed by private providers of pre-primary education. Based on the pupil enrollment data, this translates to a pupil teacher ratio of 38:1.
- In terms of financing, cumulatively, County Governments allocate approximately 6.2% of their budgets to the overall education function. Specifically for pre-primary education, County Governments allocated approximately Kshs. 8,684,309,657 translating to an average of 33.2% of the County budgets. This means that Counties made an average spend of Kshs. 4,090 per learner in the pre-primary level of education. However, this is below the recommended per learner spend of Kshs. 73,721 creating a funding gap of approximately Kshs. 6,968,349,319 that should translate into a capitation grant to County Governments.

### **Vocational Education and Training**

In a quest to fill the current skills gap in the job market and address unemployment issues by equipping the trainees with necessary skills for employment and meaningful engagement with the labor market, in the financial year under review County Governments:

- Continued to manage 1204 Vocational Training Centers with an enrolment of 160, 894 across all the institutions. Additionally, there are 4,797 vocational trainers employed by the Counties.
- Invested approximately 2,382,689,900 Kshs in the sector with 1,284,314,355 Kshs allocated for the construction, rehabilitation and equipment of the centers.

## 11. GENDER, YOUTH, SPORTS, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL SERVICES

In FY 2023/24, County Governments allocated a total of ksh. 918,298,717 towards gender programming. County Governments utilized the allocations to conduct trainings and sensitizations, GBV prevention and response programmes, policy development, marking of international UN days pertinent to the sector, provision of grants and credit facilities, income generating activities as well as construction of rescue centers and safe shelters. During the period under review, there were 14,056 beneficiaries of the AGPO programme in all the 47 Counties being 6296 men and 7760 women. 34 Counties have gender responsive laws and policies. County Governments have also made progress in advancing women leadership at the County level. Presently, there are 234 women occupying key executive positions in all the 47 Counties.

### Gender

In FY 2023/24, County Governments allocated a total of ksh. 918,298,717 towards Gender programming. County Governments utilized the allocations to conduct GBV prevention and response programmes, trainings and sensitizations, development of Gender responsive laws and policies, marking of international UN days pertinent to the sector, provision of grants and credit facilities, income generating activities among others. County Governments also utilized the allocations to establish Gender Based Violence Recovery Centres, rescue centres and safe shelters. Some of the Counties with these facilities include: Machakos, Kakamega, Kirinyaga, Uasin Gishu, Nyeri, Wajir. Additionally, during the period under review, there were 14,056 beneficiaries of the AGPO programme in all the 47 Counties being 6296 men and 7760 women. 39 Counties have gender and development policies and legislations while 26 Counties have SGBV policies and legislations.

County Governments have also made progress in advancing women leadership at the County Level. Presently, there are over 235 women occupying key executive positions in all the 47 Counties. Notably, during the period under review, the Council developed the **G7 strategy**, an action plan for the Council of Governor's women's caucus aimed at ensuring the successful re-election, smooth transition, and increased political participation and representation of women in decision making. Notably, it provides a platform for mentoring other aspiring women leaders from the grassroots level.

### Youth

In FY 2023/24, County Governments allocated a total of ksh. 1,516,987,928 towards youth programming. The allocations were utilized to establish youth innovation centres, conduct youth trainings and sensitizations, develop youth policies, mentorship programmes, economic empowerment through AGPO, youth talent development, bursaries, youth dialogues, purchase of assorted equipment to support income generating activities for the youth among others. During the period under review, a total of 10664 youth benefitted from the AGPO programme. County Governments have also ensured the inclusion of youth in

decision making processes. Presently, there are over 112 youth occupying key County Executive Positions in all the 47 Counties. 33 Counties have youth responsive policies and legislations.

## **Sports**

County Governments allocated a total of ksh. 3,859,704,685 towards Sports programming in FY 2023/24. The allocations were utilized in the purchase of assorted sports equipment, sponsoring youth to participate in tournaments, facilitating participation in inter-county games e.g. KYISA and KIKOSCA, development of sports policies and Acts and establishment and management of sports facilities. There were 376 operational Sports facilities in FY 2023/24. Additionally, there were 95 rehabilitated sports facilities. 21 Counties have sports related policies, Acts, guidelines and regulations.

***NB: Sports facilities here refer to the fields, play grounds, sports complexes, community grounds and stadia.***

## **Culture**

County Governments allocated a total of ksh.815, 779,365 towards culture initiatives in FY 2023/24. Counties utilized the disbursements on establishment of cultural centres, observance of cultural events, facilitating youth to participate in drama and music festivals, development of culture and heritage policies; among others. Presently, there are 588 Historical sites across the 47 Counties. Additionally, there are 46 recognized (UNESCO recognized) heritage sites, and 242 sacred sites across the Counties. 16 Counties have legislated on Culture.

## **Social Services**

The total budgetary allocations for social services programmes across the Counties for FY 2023/24 was ksh. 1,194,485,839. County Governments utilized the allocations to purchase assorted PWD devices, mark international day on disability, provide social development grants to the women, youth and PWDs, tracing and reunification of street children, corrective surgeries for PWDs, development of social protection policies, provision of bursaries to PWD learners, support to the elderly and resettling the vulnerable among others. 28 Counties have policies and legislations on social services. Further, 30 Counties have PWD responsive Acts and Policies.

Notably, the assessment and registration of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) is now happening at the County level, following the devolution of the Director of Medical Services (DMS) signature to County medical officers. Previously managed by the National Government, this shift has significantly reduced the time and effort required by PWDs to access these services thereby improving service delivery.

## **12. LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

### **Intergovernmental Relations**

#### **i. National and County Governments Coordinating Summit**

As the apex intergovernmental Relations body established under section 7 of the Intergovernmental Relations Act, the Summit convened on 18th December 2023 to deliberate on key issues affecting both levels of the government. This presented an opportunity to take stock of the collective achievements and challenges affecting both the National and County Governments. Key among the resolutions made included:

- a. The need for the Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee (IGRTC) to ensure that the transfer of functions exercise is completed. Further, the summit resolved that there was need to fast-track the exercise on valuation of assets to necessitate the legal transfer of assets to the County Governments.
- b. On County Aggregation and Industrial Parks (CAIPS), every County Government was expected to sign all the necessary intergovernmental agreement with the National Treasury within fourteen days to activate the disbursement of the allocated National Government funding to the Counties.
- c. On the Road Maintenance Levy Fund (RMLF), a consultative process would be instituted involving both levels of the government and Parliament to unlock the existing legislative gaps.

#### **ii. Council of County Governors Meetings**

Pursuant to section 21(2) and Clause 4 of the schedule of the Intergovernmental Relations Act the CoG held five (5) meetings to discuss key matters affecting County Governments including; Draft County Government (Amendment) Bill 2023, County Aggregation and Industrial Parks, division of revenue, the doctors' strike, Management Equipment Service (MES) among others.

Further, the third generation of Governors held their elections during a full Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 whereby they elected the Executive and Committee chairs. Through a unanimous decision, Excellency Governors agreed to retain the leadership of the executive as was in the past year as follows:

- a. H.E Anne Waiguru- Chairperson
- b. H.E FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi- Vice Chair person
- c. H.E Stephen Sang- Whip

## **Citizen Engagement and Public Participation**

The CoG with the support of the World Bank was able to convene the County officials in charge of civic education on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The forum presented an opportunity to identify various emerging issues, gaps and challenges in the sector. Further, there was experience sharing amongst the County officials on the status of public participation in their respective Counties and a sensitization on the Project Management Committee (PMC) guidelines.

## **Access to Information**

The CoG has continued to collaborate with the Commission on Administrative Justice to train County Governments on the Access to Information and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). For the period under review, fifteen (15) County Governments were sensitized on Access to Information at a meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2023. The sensitization focused on critical issues including the obligation of Counties, legal underpinnings on Access to Information, limitations and opportunities among others. A total of four Counties have Access to Information Laws in place namely Embu, Kiambu, Kisumu and Kwale.

## **Unbundling and Transfer of Functions**

During his inauguration speech, His Excellency the President pledged to complete the transfer of all devolved functions to the County Governments. On November 27<sup>th</sup> 2023, through Legal Notice number 16170, the Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee (IGRTC) officially delineated the functions designated for the National and County Governments.

However, on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the IGRTC revoked the said gazette notice and the Summit therefore directed that the IGRTC involves all the stakeholders before the said notice can be re-gazetted. This was done commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 and all the stakeholders were engaged in the process. IGRTC forwarded the draft sector-based legal notices for review. During the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of IBEC held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the Deputy President while chairing the session indicated the need for IGRTC to gazette the unbundled functions. IGRTC undertook to publish the same in May 2024.

Conclusion of the above process will have a significant effect in the division of revenue between the National and County Governments as the Counties anticipate that resources will follow the devolved functions to allow optimal implementation of the same. During the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of IBEC, the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) committed to undertake the costing of functions within 3 months to ensure resources follow functions in division and appropriation of revenue.

## **Inter-County Disputes**

With a view to enhance inter-County dispute resolution, the CoG has developed internal guidelines for handling inter-County disputes. Further, the CoG prepared Intra-County Dispute



Resolution guidelines during the period under review which are embedded in the Inter-County Dispute Resolution Guidelines as prepared in the previous Financial Year. This is cognizant of the fact that conflicts often arise within the County Governments, particularly between the County Executive and the County Assembly.

### **County Policies, Laws, Regulations and Administrative Instruments**

In the period under review, key policy, legislative and administrative instruments were developed aimed at improving service delivery at the County level across various sectors as given in the examples hereinbelow:

- i. Laws on County Health Services- Migori County Health Services Fund Act, 2023; Nyeri County Community Health Services Act, 2024; and Wajir County Facility Improvement Financing Act, 2023.
- ii. Laws on Agriculture- the Kajiado County Crop Agriculture Act 2023; Kiambu County Food Safety Bill and Policy, 2023; Kiambu County agro ecology policy 2024; Migori County Food and Feed Safety Bill, 2024; Homabay County Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Act, 2023; Homa Bay County Irrigation Bill, 2024 (awaiting Cabinet approval before committal to the County Assembly); Migori County Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund Bill, 2024; Turkana county Agricultural policy and Bill, 2024; Turkana County livestock marketing Bill, 2023; Turkana County livestock and saleyard Bill, 2023; Kakamega County Agriculture Policy; Kakamega County Dairy Policy.
- iii. Laws on control of Air pollution, noise pollution and outdoor advertising- Bungoma County Outdoor Advertising and Signage Control and Regulations Act, 2023.
- iv. Laws on County transport- Migori Municipality By-Laws, 2024; Homa Bay Transport Policy 2023; Homa Bay Transport Act (awaiting public participation before committal to the County Assembly).
- v. Laws on Animal control and welfare- Bungoma County Animal Welfare Policy, 2024; Bungoma County Livestock Saleyard Bill, 2024. (currently before the County Executive).
- vi. Laws on trade Development And Regulation- Migori County Trade Development and Credit Scheme Draft Regulations 2024; Bungoma County Trade Development Loans Fund Regulations, 2023; Bungoma County Weights and Measures Act, 2023; Bungoma County Co-operative Societies Act, 2023; Bungoma County Public Markets (Amendment) Act, 2023; Homa Bay County Enterprise Development Special Fund Bill, 2024 (awaiting Cabinet Approval Before Committal to the County Assembly); Homa Bay County Cooperative Development Bill, 2024 (awaiting Cabinet Approval Before Committal to the County Assembly); Bungoma County Youth & Women Empowerment Fund; Regulations on Bungoma County Persons with Disability Empowerment Fund; Regulations on Nyamira Development Revolving Fund Bill and Nyamira Investment and Corporation Bill.

- vii. Laws on County Planning and development- Bungoma County Revenue Administration and Management (Amendment) Act, 2023; The Bungoma County Inspectorate, Compliance and Enforcement Act, 2023; Homabay County Infrastructure Financing Fund Act, 2023; Homa Bay County Lakefront Development Corporation Act, 2023.
- viii. Laws On Pre-Primary Education and Childcare Facilities- Turkana County ECDE Bill and policy, 2024; Migori County Agriculture Technical, Vocational, Education and Training Policy; Kajiado County Early Childhood Education Act 2023; Kajiado County Vocational Training Centres Act 2023; Kajiado County Child Care Policy; Kajiado County Child Care Facilities Act 2024; Homa Bay Education Bursary and Scholarship Fund Act, 2023; Homa Bay County school feeding programme policy 2024.
- ix. Laws On Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation- The Homa Bay Sand Harvesting and Quarrying Management Bill, 2024(awaiting Cabinet approval before committal to the County Assembly; Homa Bay Sand Harvesting and Quarry Management Policy, 2024; Homa Bay County Water Policy, 2023; Homa Bay Water Bill, 2024(awaiting Cabinet approval before committal to the County Assembly); Nyeri County Forest Management and Conservation (Harvesting and Movement of Forest Produce) Regulations, 2023.
- x. Laws On Disaster Management- Mandera County Disaster Risk Management Act 2023; Bungoma County Disaster Management Policy; Bungoma County Disaster & Emergency Management Bill.
- xi. Laws On Control of Drugs and Pornograph-y Nyeri County Alcoholic Drinks Control and Management Act, 2024.
- xii. Laws on Coordination and Participation of Communities at the Local Level- Kajiado County Public Participation Act 2024; Homa Bay Public Participation Bill, 2024 awaiting Cabinet approval before committal to the County Assembly; Homa Bay Bay County Access to Information Bill,2024(awaiting Public Participation before committal to the County Assembly); Turkana County Public Participation Bill, 2024; Bungoma County Disability Mainstreaming Policy Before the executive; Bungoma County Civic Education & Public Participation Policy; Bungoma County Communication Policy.

### **13. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

In six (6) years, the sun will set for the implementation of Agenda 2030 (the SDGs). Kenya is amongst the community of nations that has adopted a set of indicators derived from the overall seventeen (17) goals. With devolution, delivery of public goods such as water, healthcare, roads, early childhood development and education and extension services, is in the hands of County Governments. A majority of the County functions listed in the Fourth Schedule are directly linked to the SDGs, and consequently, devolved units stand at the center of the SDGs implementation.

In a collaborative effort with the State Department for Economic Planning and backed by UN agencies such as UNRCO, UNDP, UNPFA, IOM, and UNICEF, the CoG has successfully conducted four (4) County engagements. These engagements were designed to deepen the understanding of Kenya's prioritized SDG indicators, acquaint stakeholders with the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) and Voluntary National Review (VNR) processes, and capture best practices. As such, 17 County Governments namely Bungoma, Busia, Elgeyo Marakwet, Wajir, Homa-bay, Kajiado, Kakamega, Makueni, Mombasa, Narok, Nyeri, Taita Taveta, Vihiga, West Pokot, Baringo, Kilifi, and Embu have conducted VLRs this fiscal year and subsequently generated reports. The key messages from the County VLRs center around five issues: integrating SDGs into planning frameworks, financing for SDGs, climate change, data and digitization, and ensuring that no one is left behind. These VLRs were incorporated into the Voluntary National Review (VNR) that was presented at the High-Level Political Forum in July this year.

County governments are working to strengthen their statistical capacity to support tracking and reporting on the implementation of SDGs. For example, Makueni County has collaborated with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) to develop and publish the County Statistical Abstracts for 2023. Similarly, Mombasa County is also collaborating with the KNBS to develop the County Statistical Abstract.

Kakamega County has established a County Statistics Unit which collaborates with community councils in collecting data and information from villages which is submitted to the Unit through the ward administrators.

#### 14. MAARIFA CENTRE

During the 2023-2024 financial year, the Maarifa Centre published the Fifth and Sixth Edition of the Compendiums of County Innovation and Best Practices on Service Delivery, showcasing success stories from five sectors. Additionally, with support from FLLoCA, Maarifa documented 13 climate change stories, which are now featured in the Seventh Edition of the Compendium which focuses on County level climate action. In total, the Centre developed 46 success stories in the financial year under review.

To enhance knowledge management (KM) in the Counties, the Maarifa Centre works with County knowledge management champions who are the focal persons to offer coordination and communication support during documentation. Currently, the Centre has a database of 31 champions. To empower them and promote KM in the Counties, Maarifa Centre facilitated two training and sensitization workshops for all nominated County KM champions, focusing on profiling their Counties and developing success stories.

At the 2023 Devolution Conference held in Uasin Gishu County, (CoG), through the Maarifa Centre, launched the Devolution Book. This publication which can be downloaded at the Maarifa Centre portal, commemorates a decade of devolution in Kenya, offering valuable insights and reflections on the journey and impact of devolved governance in the country.

Further, with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), there has been a revamp of the physical Maarifa workspace and addition of a state-of-the-art GIS lab that will be activated in this current FY. The lab is equipped with advanced technology for spatial data analysis, mapping and visualization, providing invaluable tools for environmental monitoring, resource management and strategic planning. This step will provide CoG staff with cutting-edge resources to conduct in-depth analyses and develop data-driven solutions.

The Maarifa Centre has fostered a culture of knowledge sharing by organizing peer-to-peer learning forums. Supported by the World Bank's Locally Led Climate Action (FLLoCA) project, one of the most impactful learning forums in the financial year under review targeted all County Directors in charge of Climate Change, Forestry, Water and Environment. The three-day workshop, themed *"Embracing Peer-to-Peer Forums as a Tool to Provide Solutions to Climate Change Challenges,"* enabled attendees to share local indigenous approaches to various problems.

Additionally, in the year under review, the Centre partnered with the Agriculture Committee to conduct a learning forum aimed at County Executive Committee Members in charge of Agriculture, Livestock and Cooperatives. This forum was themed *"Investing in Inter-County Peer-to-Peer Initiatives to Promote Institutional Reforms."* Success stories generated from these forums and any other knowledge assets including the Devolution Book, the Fifth and Sixth edition of the compendium can be downloaded at <https://maarifa.cog.go.ke/> while physical copies can be collected from the secretariat.

## **CONCLUSION**

Devolution remains the cornerstone of our governance, aiming to be a catalyst for transformative service delivery and equitable development across the country. As demonstrated in this address, Counties have made remarkable progress in critical sectors like healthcare, education, roads, environment and water and sanitation services.

Despite these achievements, challenges such as claw backs on County functions and delayed disbursements to Counties threaten the full realization of devolution. My plea, as we implement the devolved system of governance in this third cycle, is that we all work together towards ensuring that the people of Kenya enjoy the full benefits of devolution enshrined in Article 174 of the Constitution. To borrow from the words of Abraham Lincoln the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America, County Governments are of the people, by the people and for the people. Consequently, as Governors, we are committed to investing in the success of devolution for this and future generations.

Let us continue to champion and protect devolution, building a more inclusive, responsive, and accountable governance system for all.

**H.E. Anne Waiguru, EGH**  
**Chairperson, Council of Governors**