

GENOWA ECHO

ENDLESS POTENTIAL

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News Highlights

★ *President Ruto Launches Key Projects in the County*

★ *Cabinet Draws plan for 2026/27*

Presidential Tour: Roads, Markets Headline President William Ruto's Latest Homa Bay Tour

By Communication Team



President William Ruto concluded his tour of the Nyanza region with a renewed emphasis on markets, roads, affordable housing, and other development projects.

In Homa Bay, the President began his tour by inspecting the ongoing construction of the Misambi modern market in Kabondo-Kasipul Constituency. He then officially handed over the Kendu Bay modern market in Karachuonyo and opened Kijebi and Sindo modern markets in Suba South.

Accompanied by Governor Gladys Wanga and senior national leaders from Homa Bay, the President stated that the government is investing Sh3.5 billion in 21 modern markets within Homa Bay County. He highlighted the unprecedented construction of 600 modern markets across the country, noting that no other administration has developed this level of infrastructure since Kenya's independence in 1963.

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“The ongoing construction of 600 modern markets is unprecedented in our country,” he said. “We are fulfilling our promise to provide traders with decent and dignified spaces to conduct their business.”

The Misambi market is expected to accommodate 200 traders and is scheduled for completion in November. In contrast, the Kijebi, Sindo, and Kendu Bay markets are already ready for occupancy and will each accommodate at least 300 traders.



“The ongoing construction of 600 modern markets is unprecedented in our country”



Ruto also linked the markets to the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP), explaining that the program is transforming cities, towns, and trading centers through the development of housing and supporting infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewerage systems. He mentioned that the government is investing Sh27 billion in affordable housing, modern markets, and hostels for students in universities, technical colleges, and the Kenya Medical

Training Colleges as he presided over the laying of the foundation stone for the Sindo KMTCC campus.

Regarding road infrastructure, the President called for the expedited completion of several roads already under construction. These include the Ojijo Teko Ring Road in Karachuonyo, the Sori-Magunga-Sindo-Mbita Road in the Suba region, the Gor Mahia Ring Road in Ndhiwa, and the Karabok-Adiedo Road.



Delivering the Plan:

Executive Holds Fourth Retreat, Draws Development Roadmap for Year 5

By Steve Muga



Under the leadership of Governor Gladys Wanga, the County Government of Homa Bay held its 4th Cabinet and Senior Leadership Retreat that brought together members of the County Executive, Chief Officers, leadership from semi-autonomous county entities, and the County Assembly.

It marked an important milestone in evaluating the administration's performance from August 2022 to date. Anchored in the Genowa Manifesto, the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP 2022–2027), and Annual Development Plans, the meeting followed the strategic statement, "The Governor Finishing Strong: The Last Mile," which set clear priorities for Financial Year 2026/27.

In a candid review of its four-year performance, the retreat highlighted significant transformation of the county in health, infrastructure, education, fiscal management and economic empowerment, among other sectors.

Over the past four years, the County Government of Homa Bay has delivered substantial progress across key development pillars. Fiscal governance saw significant growth, with Own-Source Revenue reaching Kshs. 1.729 billion in FY 2024/25, driven by automated collection systems and the establishment of the Revenue Board.



The Governor Finishing Strong: The Last Mile





Healthcare transformation expanded specialized services through flagship facilities like the Hon. Phoebe Asiyo Oncology Centre and brought the average distance to a health facility down to 5 kilometers, successfully removing Homa Bay from the national list of counties with high maternal and child mortality.

Educational and economic investments yielded 604 Early Years Education classrooms, expanded road networks by 736 kilometers, and fostered agricultural production in cotton, sunflower, and certified seed distribution.

To ensure the administration fulfils all public promises in its final year, the Cabinet resolved



to deploy a Human Resource Information System to curb workplace absenteeism, and transition Early Childhood Development Education teachers to permanent and pensionable terms.

Flagship projects, including the Accident and Emergency Block at the County Referral Hospital, the Riwa Special Economic Zone, and various ward-based water and infrastructure developments, will be fast-tracked to completion. Guided by the Deputy Governor, monthly inter-departmental reviews will track the implementation of these resolutions to guarantee a strong, lasting impact for the citizens of Homa Bay.

Governance: **Human Resource System Goes Digital**

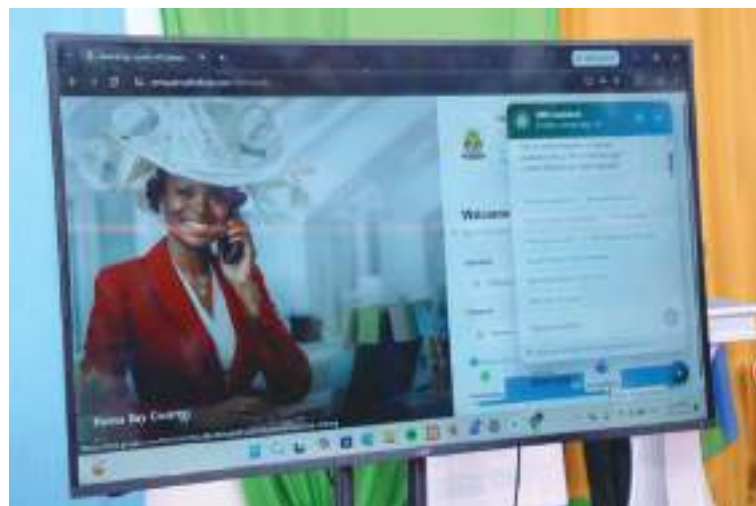
By Lawrence Magware



The County Government of Homa Bay has officially introduced the Homa Bay County Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS), representing a significant advancement in the modernization of human resource management and service delivery.

While launching the system, developed by Craft Silicon, Governor Gladys Wanga elaborated that the new system aims to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and self-service capabilities while offering reliable data and strategic insights to assist in human resource planning and decision-making.

The HRMIS consolidates employee information and automates essential human resource functions such as management of employee records, payroll processing, benefits administration, time and attendance tracking, and performance evaluation.



The implementation of this system is anticipated to strengthen human resource processes, facilitate better access to employee information, foster accountability, and support evidence-based decision-making throughout the county.

This launch underscores the County Government's dedication to utilizing digital technology to modernize its operations and improve service delivery for both employees and residents.

Healthcare:

County Heightens Preventive Healthcare with Key Policies and Interventions

County Marks World Contraceptive Day, Launches Strategic Health Documents

By Abnery Pajero



The County Government of Homa Bay strengthened its commitment to reproductive health, sanitation and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) with the launch of three strategic policy documents during the commemoration of World Contraceptive Day 2026 at Kolunga Beach in Rusinga, Mbita.

County officials, together with stakeholders and development partners, joined the rest of the world in marking World Contraceptive Day under the theme, “My Contraception, My Choice, My Future.” The commemoration provided an opportunity to champion expanded access to quality contraception and family planning services as a pathway to informed choices, healthier families and improved health outcomes.



The event also brought an integrated package of healthcare services closer to the community, with residents accessing antenatal care, cancer screening, eye care, immunization, family planning and health education, among other essential services. The integrated approach underscores the County's focus on taking comprehensive and responsive healthcare services to communities.

A key highlight of the occasion was the launch of the Homa Bay County Reproductive Health Policy, 2026; Homa Bay County Strategic Sanitation and Hygiene Investment Plan, 2026–2031; and Homa Bay County Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) Engagement Strategic Plan, 2025–2030.

The Homa Bay County Reproductive Health Policy, 2026 provides a strategic and rights-based framework for improving reproductive health outcomes and strengthening the County's capacity to deliver equitable, high-quality and sustainable reproductive health services. The policy adopts a life-course and people-centered approach, with strategic priorities including expanding access to family planning, improving maternal health, strengthening adolescent and youth-friendly services, addressing sexual and gender-based violence, and safeguarding the reproductive health rights of vulnerable and marginalized populations.





The Homa Bay County Strategic Sanitation and Hygiene Investment Plan, 2026–2031 provides a comprehensive framework for addressing sanitation and hygiene challenges across the County. It seeks to strengthen investments in sanitation infrastructure, improve hygiene practices and enhance environmental health across learning institutions, health facilities, urban centers, rural areas, markets and public spaces.

The Homa Bay County TBA Engagement Strategic Plan, 2025–2030 provides a structured framework for engaging Traditional Birth Attendants in efforts to strengthen maternal and reproductive health outcomes and improve linkages between

communities and the formal health system.

Together, the three documents provide deliberate frameworks for guiding the implementation and roll-out of interventions, strengthening coordination among stakeholders and development programmes, and aligning investments with the County's health priorities.

By translating policy commitments into coordinated interventions and strengthening partnerships at community level, the County continues to build a health system anchored on prevention, equity, access, quality and sustainability, while advancing its journey towards Universal Health Coverage.



County Committed to Preventing Postpartum Haemorrhage through the 'Run for Her' Initiative

By Abnery Pajero



The County Government of Homa Bay has renewed its commitment to preventing avoidable maternal deaths and improving the quality of maternal and newborn health services through strengthened prevention and management of Postpartum Haemorrhage (PPH), through a PPH Run dubbed "Run for Her and Save Her Life."

The County is strengthening the entire continuum of maternal care, from the community and Community Health Promoters to primary healthcare facilities, referral hospitals and emergency referral systems. This includes ensuring that pregnant women are identified early, encouraged to attend antenatal care, supported to deliver under the care of skilled health personnel and receive appropriate postpartum care.

The PPH Run also served as a call to action for health teams and partners to examine existing systems and identify areas requiring improvement. Key priorities highlighted include early identification and management of women at risk of PPH, availability of essential medicines, blood and emergency supplies, strengthening health worker competencies, improving referral and communication systems, and continuous mentorship, monitoring and quality improvement at facility level.

Complementing the Run for Her initiative was a blood donation drive held as part of the day's activities, highlighting the critical role of adequate blood supplies in saving the lives of women experiencing severe bleeding during childbirth.

The drive provided an opportunity for participants, health workers, partners and members of the community to contribute to strengthening the County's blood reserves, while also raising awareness of the importance of voluntary blood donation and the need for a reliable supply of blood for emergency maternal care.

The County further emphasized the importance of using data to drive improvements in maternal health outcomes. Every maternal death or severe maternal outcome should provide an opportunity for health teams to identify gaps, learn from experience and implement corrective measures to prevent similar outcomes.



People and Mobility:

Mfangano to Receive Ferry and Ambulance in the Near Future

By Communication Team

The County Government of Homa Bay, in partnership with the national government, is poised to significantly enhance transportation and emergency services for the residents of the Mfangano archipelago. This initiative is part of broader efforts to improve accessibility and healthcare delivery in the region.

The Kenya Shipyard Limited (KSL) at the Kisumu Station is in the process of assembling what is set to be the first public ferry specifically designed for service on the waters of Lake Victoria in Kenya.





This state-of-the-art ferry is designed to accommodate up to 200 passengers and carry a minimum of ten vehicles simultaneously. Additionally, the ferry will facilitate the transportation of various cargo items between Mfangano Island and the mainland to significantly ease the movement of goods and people across the Rusinga Channel and the expansive Winam Gulf.

In another development for the region, Governor Gladys Wanga announced that the long-anticipated water ambulance is nearing completion. This essential vessel is expected to greatly improve emergency response and referral services, benefiting not only the residents of Mfangano but also those living on the nearby islands of Takawiri, Remba, and Ringiti in Suba West, as well as Kiwa and Kibuogi in Suba South and Central. The introduction of the water ambulance is expected to be a game-changer in terms of accessing timely medical care, particularly in emergencies, where every minute can make a difference.



During an inspection of the construction progress on both the ferry and the ambulance, Governor Wanga expressed her confidence in the capabilities of Brigadier Peter Muthungu, the Production Manager at KSL, and his team to deliver high-quality and durable vessels that will not only meet the immediate needs of the community but will also stand the test of time in service.

This development marks a promising step forward for the residents of Mfangano and its surrounding areas, paving the way for improved connectivity and enhanced healthcare access.



Social Protection: **Children among Key Beneficiaries in Disability Registration and Assessment Exercise in Ndhiwa**

By Antonine Abiero and Tom Dede

Homa Bay County has conducted a mass registration exercise for persons with disabilities at Ndhiwa Primary School, aimed at improving access to government services and strengthening planning for inclusive programmes.

The exercise was organized by the County Departments of Social Services and Public Health & Medical Services in partnership with Nyabondo Centre for Persons with Disability, CBM, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, and the Ministry of Education's Educational Assessment Resources Centre.



Participants were registered to support their access to disability certificates, which can help them benefit from various government services. Those identified as needing assistive devices also received them during the exercise.

Children were included through the Ministry of Education, which carried out educational assessments to help determine their learning needs and guide placement in appropriate schools.

The registration and assessment exercise is also intended to help the county establish a clearer picture of the number and needs of persons with disabilities across Homa Bay. This information can inform planning, budgeting and the design of programmes, to ensure services reach people who might otherwise be overlooked.



By bringing registration, assistive-device support and educational assessment together at one location, the initiative sought to connect residents with support while helping county and national agencies better understand the services required.

Further, the County Government of Homa Bay, in collaboration with IDF, Listeners Without Borders, and Sida, today convened a multi-stakeholder dialogue forum aimed

at strengthening gender equality, social inclusion and accountability within fishing communities across the county.

The forum brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), local authorities, fisheries institutions, community representatives and other relevant actors working to promote gender equality and the rights and wellbeing of people living and working within fishing communities.

Food Security:

Homa Bay Launches Ksh.58.36 Million Farmer Support Package, Food Loss and Waste Action Plan

By Bernard Oketch

Homa Bay County Government, through the National Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (NAVCDP), has launched a comprehensive package of farmer and community support interventions valued at Ksh. 58.36 million alongside the Homa Bay County Action Plan for Food Loss and Waste Reduction (2026–2031), in a twin exercise aimed at accelerating agricultural transformation, strengthening food systems and improving livelihoods across the county.

The NAVCDP support package comprises Ksh. 28,395,000 in Inclusion Grants, Ksh. 16,439,624 in Matching Grants, Ksh.8 million for resources to establish and equip demonstration sites, and Ksh. 5,522,040 worth of Digital Agricultural Resource (DAR) Kits, bringing the total value of the interventions to Ksh. 58,356,664.

The Inclusion Grants account for Ksh. 28,395,000, with Ksh. 2,745,000 allocated to seven Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Ksh. 25,650,000 allocated to 21 SACCOs.

The grants are intended to strengthen the capacity of beneficiary organizations to participate more effectively in agricultural value chains, establish and expand enterprises, and improve the livelihoods of farmers and other community members.

A further Ksh. 16,439,624 in Matching Grants has been allocated to 15 SACCOs to support productive investments and expansion of viable agricultural enterprises. The matching-grant approach is designed to promote ownership, accountability and sustainability while enabling beneficiary organizations to leverage their own contributions alongside project resources.

The County also launched Ksh.8 million worth of resources for demonstration sites, which will provide practical learning platforms for farmers and community institutions. The demonstration sites will facilitate farmer-to-farmer learning, knowledge transfer and adoption of improved agricultural technologies and practices while complementing interventions in value-chain development, farmer-led irrigation and sustainable land management.

The interventions form part of the wider NAVCDP implementation framework in Homa Bay, which places emphasis on farmer mobilization, cooperative development, value-chain strengthening and increased participation of farmers in commercially viable agricultural activities.

The Action Plan was spearheaded by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) in collaboration with the County Government of Homa Bay and other stakeholders. It seeks to address key causes of food loss and waste along agricultural value chains while promoting more efficient, sustainable and resilient food systems.





The Action Plan places emphasis on practical interventions to minimize losses after production and improve the utilization of food resources. Key areas include strengthening awareness among farmers and value-chain actors, improving post-harvest handling and storage, enhancing access to appropriate technologies and strengthening coordination among stakeholders across the food system.

Education:

County Intensifies Inclusive Education Initiatives

New Action Plan Seeks To Tackle Gender Gaps in Education

By Collins Ogutu

The County Government of Homa Bay, in partnership with Population Council Kenya, launched a Gender in Education Action Plan intended to address gender-related barriers to learning and improve education outcomes across the county.

The plan was developed through the Evidence for Gender and Resource (EGER) initiative, which supports the use of evidence to shape practical, locally responsive interventions. It provides a framework for bringing education stakeholders together to coordinate action, strengthen local ownership and improve accountability.

The launch drew attention to persistent challenges across the education system. Girls have higher primary school completion rates than boys in Homa Bay, but completion rates fall at secondary level for both genders.





The trend points to the need for interventions that support learners not only to enrol in school, but also to remain in education and complete their studies.

At the launch, stakeholders committed to supporting initiatives that keep girls in school. Homabay County Executive Committee Member for Education Martin Opere said the plan has given the county government justification to spend money on secondary and vocational education. While some school levels fall outside devolved functions, he explained, the county can still support, since success at primary level means little if learners disappear afterwards.

The Action Plan is aligned with the Education Sector Gender Policy 2026. It is intended to guide stakeholders in identifying priorities, coordinating responses and directing efforts towards the county's education needs.

Through the EGER initiative, evidence is expected to inform decisions and translate into practical steps at the local level. The plan also emphasises shared responsibility among stakeholders, with coordination and accountability positioned as key to delivering more equitable and inclusive education.

Lillian Agesa, an EGER Research Officer at Population Council Kenya, described the plan as a comprehensive framework developed to tackle gender issues in education in the county. The EGER project has also worked in three other counties: Kilifi, Narok and Laikipia.

The county government and Population Council Kenya say the framework will help focus interventions on the challenges affecting learners in Homa Bay. Its success will depend on stakeholders working together to put the plan into practice and track progress towards improved outcomes for all learners.



County, Sightsavers Review Eye-Health Screening in 71 Schools

By Collins Ogutu



The County Government of Homa Bay and Sightsavers reviewed the implementation of school-based eye-health screenings under the School Health Integrated Programme (SHIP), bringing together teachers trained in eye health from 71 programme-supported schools.

The process focused on checking and validating data gathered during learner screenings, assessing progress across participating schools, and identifying weaknesses in reporting and referral. The review is intended to give programme partners a clearer picture of how screening activities are being carried out and where additional support may be needed.

Teachers shared challenges they face during school-based screenings, including practical barriers that can affect the quality and consistency of services. Their feedback will help partners identify ways to support teachers and improve how screening activities are organised and documented.

Participants also examined gaps in referral processes. Timely referral is important for learners who show signs of possible eye-health concerns and may require further assessment or care.

Strengthening links between school screenings and follow-up services is therefore among the issues the programme partners aim to address.

This development is expected to inform improvements to screening procedures, data management and teacher support across the participating schools. By validating screening information and hearing directly from teachers, the county government and Sightsavers can better identify implementation challenges and plan appropriate responses.

SHIP works with schools to support the identification of potential eye-health concerns among learners. The review meeting marks a step in assessing the programme's progress and strengthening the processes needed to ensure that screening results are recorded accurately and learners who may need further attention are referred in a timely manner.





"The lake represents one of our county's most valuable assets. We are committed to not only enhancing fish production from our waters but also maximizing the potential of the blue economy to foster sustainable economic growth within our community." ~ Governor Gladys Wanga