

# GENOWA ECHO

## ENDLESS POTENTIAL

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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF HOMA BAY



### News Highlights

**President Ruto's Bag of Goodies**

**SOCA 2026 Highlights Key Achievements**

**Air Travel Resumes Between Homa Bay and Nairobi**

**School Children Now Equipped with Learning Materials**

## Presidential Visit: Unpacking President William Ruto's Visit: Projects, Numbers, and Pledges

By Lawrence Magware



**H**E. President William Ruto embarked on yet another visit to Homa Bay County last month, underscoring his continued engagement with the region's development agenda. This two-day tour involved an extensive itinerary through several sub counties, including Rachuonyo South, Rachuonyo North, Ndhiwa, and Suba North. Throughout his visit, the Head of State highlighted the government's commitment to enhancing infrastructure and community projects aimed at improving the quality of life for residents.

During his tour, President Ruto launched several ongoing initiatives designed to stimulate economic growth and bolster public services in these areas. He took the opportunity to inspect various development projects that are currently under construction, assessing their progress and the impact they are expected to have on the local population. The visit was characterized by interactions with community leaders and residents, allowing him to gather feedback on the projects and discuss plans to address the specific needs of each sub county.

**KES 1.3  
BILLION**

The 19 km Rusinga Island Ring Road, constructed at a cost of KES 1.3 billion, was commissioned to enhance the growth of the tourism, blue economy, and hospitality sectors in the county.

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Additionally, the government has committed KES 17 billion to major road projects in the county, which include the Karabok - Adiedo, Mbita - Sindo, Kadel - Pala - Kanyadhiang, Nyalkinyi-Imbo, Lala - Maguti, Gor Mahia Ring Road, Nyabera - Koguta, and Agolo Muok - Kiabuya - Magunga - Sindo roads, totalling a combined 298 km of road network.

An additional KES 5.6 billion will be allocated for another 78 km of road network to address projects such as Sikri-Lida, Mfangano Island Ring Road, Rusinga East Ring Road, and the extension of the Gor Mahia Ring Road.

The government will also expedite the construction of the Great Lake Victoria Ring Road, which stretches from Port Victoria in Busia County to Muhuru Bay in Migori County. In Homa Bay, the Homa Bay-Samunyi-Kipasi and Sindo-Nyandiwa-Mikuyu-Sori roads will also be included in this initiative.



The government is constructing three major fish landing sites in the county: Mainuga in Rachuonyo North, Wakula in Suba West, and Nyandiwa in Suba South. These sites will serve as major fishing hubs and are expected to boost economic growth within the county. Additionally, KES 250 million will be allocated to establish Fishermen Rescue Centres, which will provide safe havens and rehabilitation units for fishermen in cases of accidents and emergencies while on fishing expeditions.

The Kobodo Economic Stimulus Program (ESP) Market has been commissioned. Along with the markets at Misambi, Kendu Bay, Luanda Nyamasare, Sindo, and Kijebi, this market is part of a plan to build a total of 18 ESP markets in various trading centres across Suba, Ndhiwa, Homa Bay, and Rachuonyo.

The government is also set to construct 7,000 affordable housing units in Oyugis, Kendu Bay, Rodi Kopany, Rangwe, Ndhiwa, Magunga, and Mbita at a cost of KES 17 billion.

The Sondu - Homa Bay - Awendo transmission line has been commissioned and is now operational at its Ndhiwa substation.

This KES 1.5 billion project aims to provide reliable power to the region, benefiting over 70,000 households in Homa Bay and Migori counties and boosting local enterprises. The government has committed KES 2.4 billion for last-mile connectivity across the county, part of which was launched by the President in Kologe early last year.

A KES 75 million pledge has been made for the construction of a Level III hospital in Rodi Kopany. Additionally, a KES 30 million dining hall and a school bus will be provided for Agoro Sare High School.



## ***State of the County:*** **Governor Wanga Delivers State of the County Address, Commits to Deliver Further for the People**

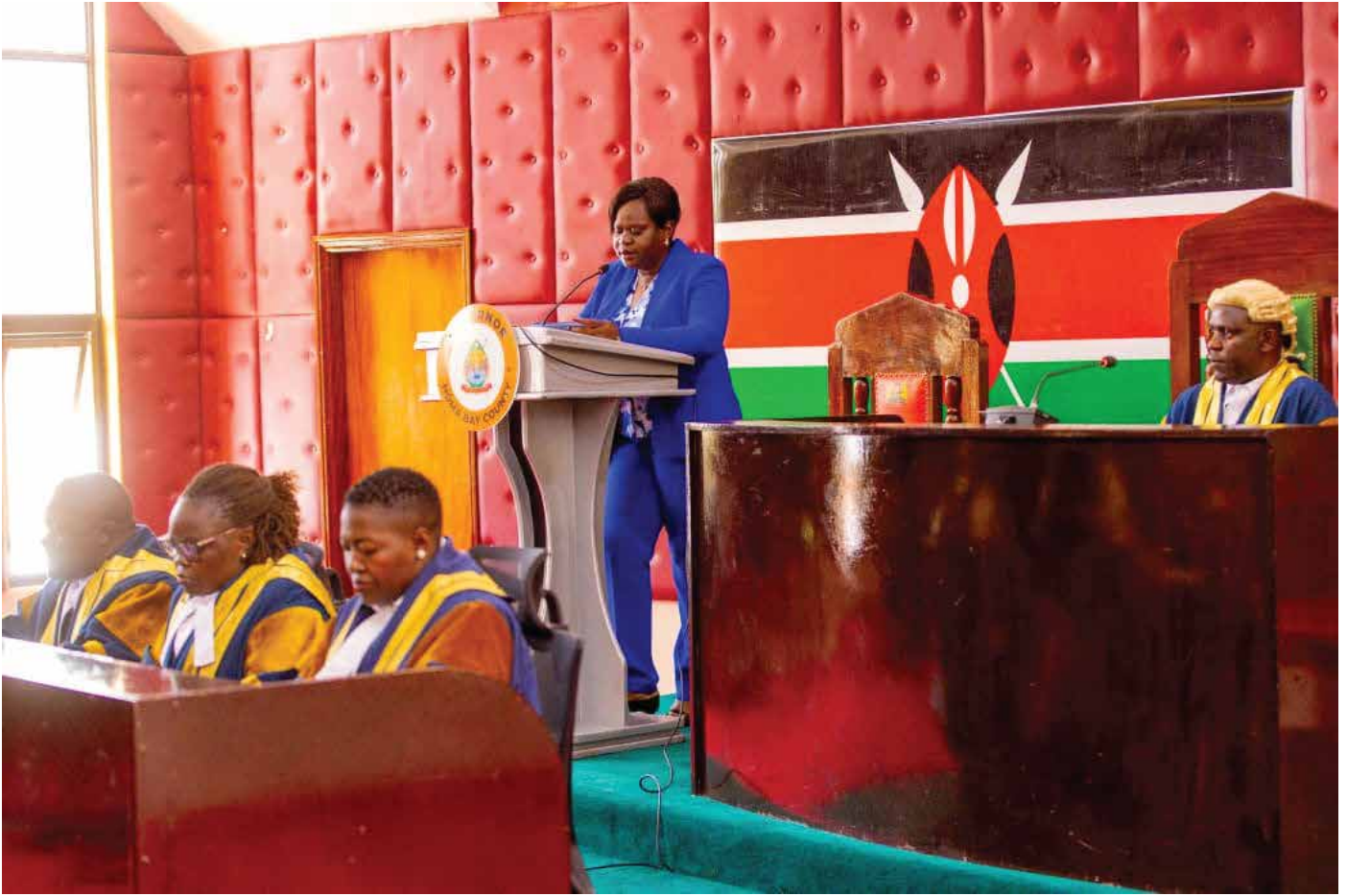
*By Communication Team*

**G**overnor Gladys Wanga delivered her third State of the County Address to the County Assembly of Homa Bay, a crucial gathering aimed at reflecting on her administration's policies and the tangible achievements made since her tenure began in August 2022.

During the address, Governor Wanga took an analytical approach to discuss the various strategies and reforms her administration has implemented, emphasizing the significant progress made in adhering to national values and aligning local initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This comprehensive vision aims not only to elevate the quality of life for Homa Bay residents but also to foster sustainable growth across the region.

Since she assumed office on August 25, 2022, Governor Wanga has emphasized a governance model grounded in discipline, transparency, and inclusivity. Her administration has focused on the County Integrated Development Plan 2023–2027, which serves as a roadmap for guiding the region towards holistic economic transformation and social progress. Under her leadership, substantial improvements have been noted across all 40 Wards, showcasing the effectiveness of her strategic initiatives.



"In the early days of my leadership, Homa Bay faced a myriad of challenges, such as alarmingly high maternal and child mortality rates and a significantly low revenue collection rate. Through persistent and coordinated efforts, we have begun to shift the narrative, uncovering Homa Bay's vast potential," she stated, reflecting on the county's journey.

The administration's introduction of revenue reforms has been particularly noteworthy, having generated over Kshs. 1 billion. This achievement was facilitated by a streamlined and automated revenue collection process designed to improve efficiency and accountability. Additionally, there have been considerable enhancements in health facilities, which are pivotal to improving healthcare outcomes. Infrastructure projects have also gained traction, including the ambitious Raila Odinga Homa Bay Stadium project, which aims to serve as a cultural and recreational hub for residents. The successful hosting of major events further underscores Homa Bay's growing significance as a regional centre.

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Looking ahead, the outlook for Homa Bay County is brimming with possibilities: the youth are becoming actively involved in various sectors, agricultural productivity is on the rise, local markets are expanding, and efforts to provide clean water access to every household are gaining momentum.

The administration is unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding the vulnerable populations, ensuring that children benefit from dignified learning environments, and maintaining well-connected road networks. Together, we are laying down robust systems and foundations, united in our vision and determined to propel Homa Bay towards a thriving and prosperous future.



**Aviation:**

# Renegade Air Makes a Dramatic Comeback, Launches Direct Flights to the Capital

*By Communication Team*



**R**enegade Air made a significant and memorable comeback at Kabunde Airstrip, which has recently reopened after an extensive eight-month closure for crucial renovations and upgrades.

On Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, at approximately 1400 hours, the airline's 37-seater flight touched down at the airstrip. Among the passengers were numerous tourists eager to explore the natural wonders of Ruma National Park, a major attraction in the region. The arrival was marked by an impressive water salute, carried out by the Fire Department of the County Government of Homa Bay, symbolizing a warm welcome and celebration of the flight's resumption.

As the passengers disembarked, they were greeted by a delegation of senior county government officials, led by the Deputy Governor-designate, Hon. Danish Onyango. The presence of local leaders underscored the significance of this event and their commitment to promoting tourism and connectivity in the area.

In remarks made shortly after the arrival, Patrick Oketch, the Sales and Marketing Manager of Renegade Air, announced that the airline plans to operate three flights each week between Homa Bay and Nairobi. The scheduled flights are set for Fridays, Sundays, and Mondays, providing convenient travel options for both tourists and residents.



Oketch further indicated that after an initial two-week period, the flight schedule would likely be expanded to accommodate an increase in demand, potentially adding more flights to enhance accessibility to this beautiful region.



## Education:

# Government, Partners, Focus on Improving Learning Outcomes for Young Learners

## Governor Wanga Launches Distribution of Teaching and Learning Materials to Empower Early Learners

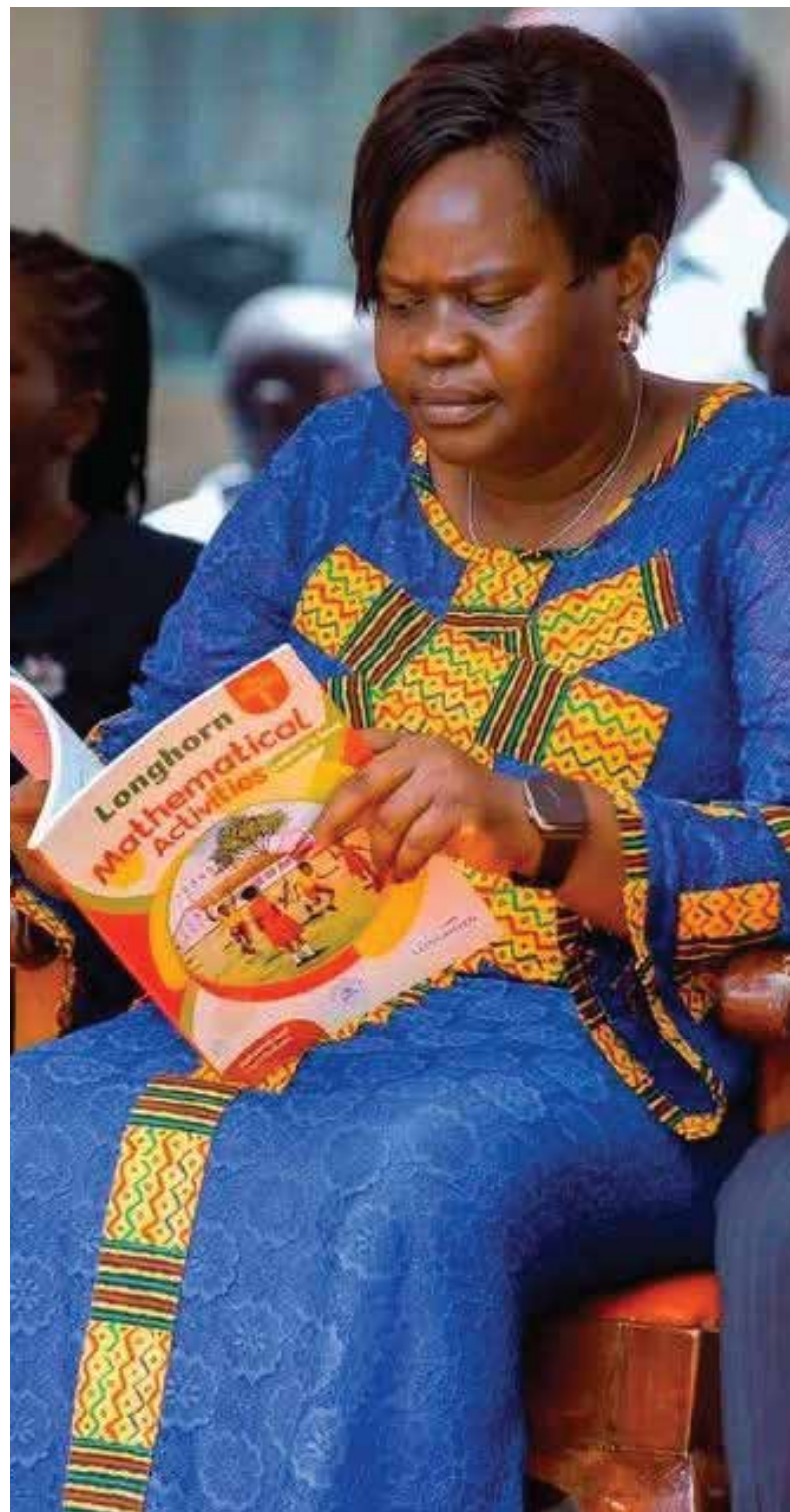
By Collins Ogutu

**H**.E Governor Gladys Wanga presided over the official launch of the distribution of essential Teaching and Learning Materials at Shauri Yako Primary School. This milestone event marked a significant step forward in strengthening early childhood education across the county.

The initiative is part of a groundbreaking partnership with Longhorn Publishers, valued at KES 7.8 million, aimed at empowering approximately 63,119 Young learners in all 896 Early Years Education (EYE) Centres throughout Homa Bay County. The provision of quality teaching and learning resources is expected to unlock new opportunities for educational excellence and pave the way for a brighter future for children in the region.

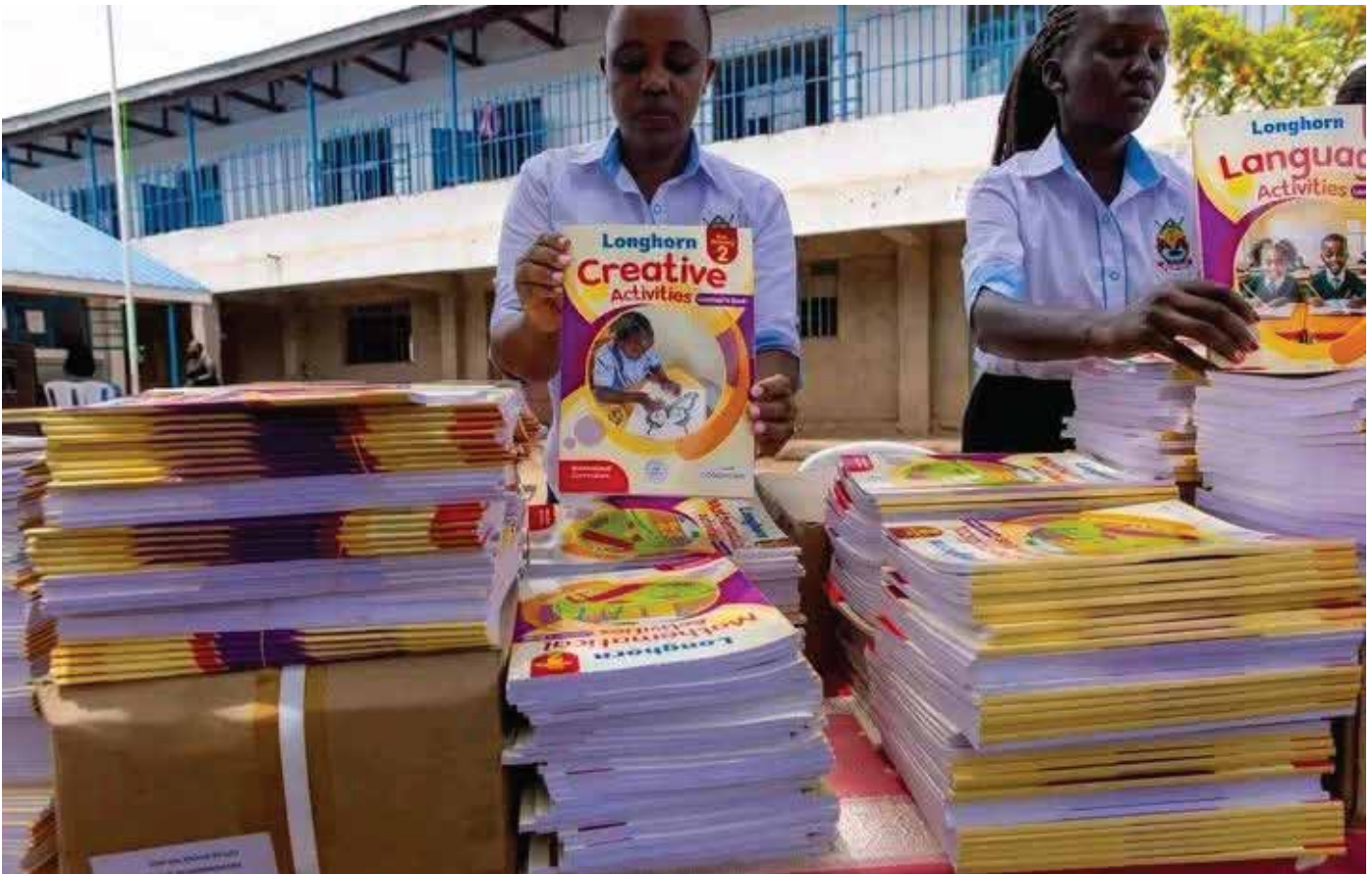
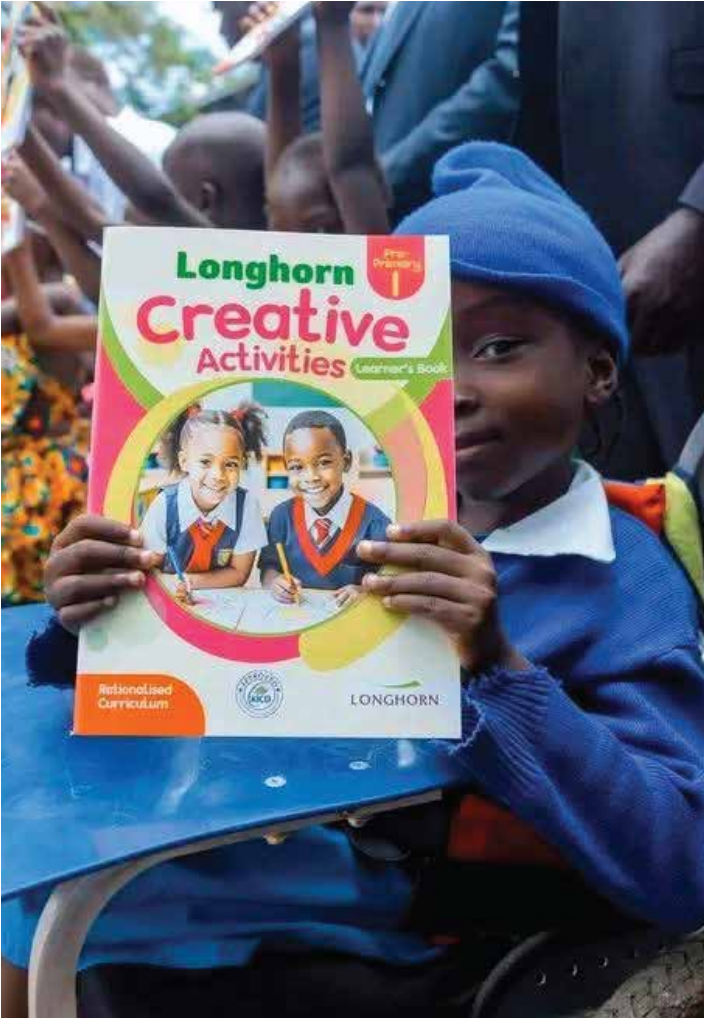
During the launch, Governor Wanga affirmed the administration's commitment to investing in early childhood education as a foundation for lifelong learning and development. "This partnership will ensure that our children have access to the best learning materials, fostering an environment where they can thrive academically and socially," she said.

“*This partnership will ensure that our children have access to the best learning materials, fostering an environment where they can thrive academically and socially.*”



The distribution of these vital resources is set to enhance teaching quality, improve learning outcomes, and promote inclusive education across all EYE Centres. It reflects Homa Bay County's broader vision of nurturing a knowledgeable, skilled, and empowered generation.

As the county continues to prioritize education, this initiative underscores the collective effort to provide every child with the tools they need to succeed and realize their full potential.



# Homa Bay, Sight Savers Hold Education Directors Inclusive Play-Based Learning Project Workshop

By Collins Ogutu



The Department of Education, Human Capital Development and Vocational Training, in partnership with Sight Savers under the innovative ECDE Inclusive Play-Based Learning Project, organized a vibrant one-day workshop for Sub-County Early Years Education (EYE) Directors.

The workshop aimed to strengthen coordination among early childhood education stakeholders, improve the quality and sustainability of inclusive education, and enhance learning outcomes for the county's youngest learners. It brought together EYE Directors from across the sub-counties to share best practices, strategies, and build capacity for more effective early childhood education.

Participants engaged in interactive discussions and practical sessions covering critical topics such as the effective implementation of the school termly classroom observation tool, preparations for the upcoming April Teachers Refresher Training, and strategic planning for establishing School-Based Inclusion Training of Trainers (TOTs).

This initiative underscores the County's commitment to creating an inclusive, supportive, and empowering early childhood education system that nurtures the potential of every child, regardless of their background or abilities.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Joseph Goga, the County EYE Director, emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in achieving quality early childhood education: "By working together and sharing expertise, we can build an education system that is inclusive, innovative, and responsive to the needs of our children."

The department and its partners remain dedicated to fostering an environment where all children have access to quality early learning experiences that lay a strong foundation for their future development.



# Public Participation Exercise on Model Learning Centres Concludes, Additional 200 Classrooms Planned

*By Collins Ogutu*

The County Government of Homa Bay officially conducted a four-day county-wide public participation exercise, engaging residents across all 40 wards. This initiative is a critical step in preparing for the phased rollout of Phase II of the Ondoa Kaunda Program, a transformative project dedicated to expanding early childhood education infrastructure and enhancing local service delivery.

The Ondoa Kaunda Program aims to significantly improve access to quality education for young children in Homa Bay County. Under Phase II, the county government plans to construct an additional 200 Early Years Education (EYE) classrooms, supplementing existing facilities and increasing the number of classrooms per ward from the current figures to a total of nine classrooms per ward.

Key components of Phase II include the construction of 200 new EYE classrooms: Each ward will see the addition of five classrooms, bringing the total to nine classrooms per ward. This will contribute to a statewide total of 360 EYE classrooms in the fiscal year 2025/26



**Development of Model EYE Centres of Excellence:** Four state-of-the-art centres will be established across the county to serve as hubs for best practices in early childhood education, staff training, and community engagement.

**Enhancement of local governance infrastructure:** The county plans to construct eight ward administrators' offices and one sub-county administrator's office, aiming to streamline administrative functions and improve service delivery at the grassroots level

The four-day public participation forum provided residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions, share insights, and highlight community-specific needs related to the construction projects.





This participatory approach aligns with the county's commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and community-led development, ensuring that project implementation reflects the priorities and aspirations of residents.

County officials who conducted the exercise underscored that community engagement is vital for the success of these initiatives. Their input will guide resource allocation, project design, and implementation strategies to maximize impact and sustainability. The county also emphasizes that the feedback collected will be documented and incorporated into the project planning and execution phases.

## Healthcare:

# Homa Bay Launches Groundbreaking Long-Acting PrEP to Curb New HIV Infections

By Abnery Pajero

The County Government of Homa Bay has marked a significant milestone in the fight against HIV/AIDS with the official launch of long-acting injectable Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) medicines, Lenacapavir and Cabotegravir, unveiled by H.E. Gladys Wanga at the Kendu Bay Sub-County Hospital.

Speaking during the launch, Governor Wanga underscored both the urgency and promise of the intervention. "We are here to launch this PrEP. It is important to us in Homa Bay, as our County is among the counties with the highest prevalence of HIV and among those with the highest incidences of new HIV infections."

She further emphasized the transformative potential of the innovation, noting, "This PrEP is groundbreaking for us because we see light at the end of the tunnel as far as reduction of new HIV infections is concerned."

The move reflects the continued effort of the County Government of Homa Bay to strengthen preventive services by expanding the options available to our people in the fight against HIV.



This landmark initiative positions Homa Bay among 15 counties selected for the pilot phase of a national rollout led by the Ministry of Health through NASCOP, with support from the Global Fund. It signals a bold step forward in expanding access to innovative, effective HIV prevention options in a county that continues to experience a high burden of new infections.

Unlike daily oral PrEP, these new long-acting injectable options offer a more convenient and discreet alternative, addressing adherence challenges while significantly improving prevention outcomes, particularly among high-risk populations.



The rollout is expected to accelerate progress toward reducing new infections and safeguarding vulnerable groups, including young people and women.

The injectable PrEP is now actively being administered across ten designated health facilities: Kendu Bay Sub-County Hospital, Makongeni Level 4 Hospital, Rangwe Sub-County Hospital, Ndhwa Sub-County Hospital, Sena Level 4 Hospital, Rachuonyo East Hospital, Rachuonyo South Hospital, Nyandiwa Level 4 Hospital, Sindo Level 4 Hospital, and Mbita Sub-County Hospital.

This initiative, besides being a medical advancement, represents a strategic investment in the health and future of Homa Bay. By expanding prevention choices and strengthening service delivery, the County Government is reinforcing its commitment to ending new HIV infections and building a healthier, more resilient community.



## Governance:

# Government Holds Five-Day Capacity Building Workshop for Public Service Officers to Enhance Better Service Delivery

By Collins Ogutu



The County Government of Homa Bay, in collaboration with the County Pension Fund (CPF), concluded a successful five-day capacity building and team bonding workshop aimed at enhancing the skills and cohesion of the county's public service workforce. The training brought together County Chief Officers, Directors, and members of the County Public Service Board.

The intensive workshop focused on key areas essential for strengthening public service delivery, including understanding the legal framework and code of conduct governing public servants, promoting professionalism through public service etiquette, and equipping participants with strategic planning and retirement savings knowledge. Additionally, the program emphasized effective communication skills and the importance of mental health and overall welfare for public servants.



Participants engaged in interactive sessions and team-building activities designed to foster camaraderie and improve collaboration across departments. The workshop also aimed to reinforce ethical standards and ensure that public servants uphold the highest levels of integrity while serving residents.

As the county continues to implement development projects, this capacity-building initiative serves as a strategic move to empower its workforce to meet the evolving needs of its residents with professionalism and resilience.



## ***Social Services:*** **The Disability Sensitization and Assessment Tool Development Formalized**

*By Antonine Abiero*

The County Government of Homa Bay, through the Department of Social Services in collaboration with Kisumu Medical and Education Trust (KMET), successfully concluded a two-day disability sensitization workshop and the development of a comprehensive assessment and mapping tool for persons with disabilities within the county.

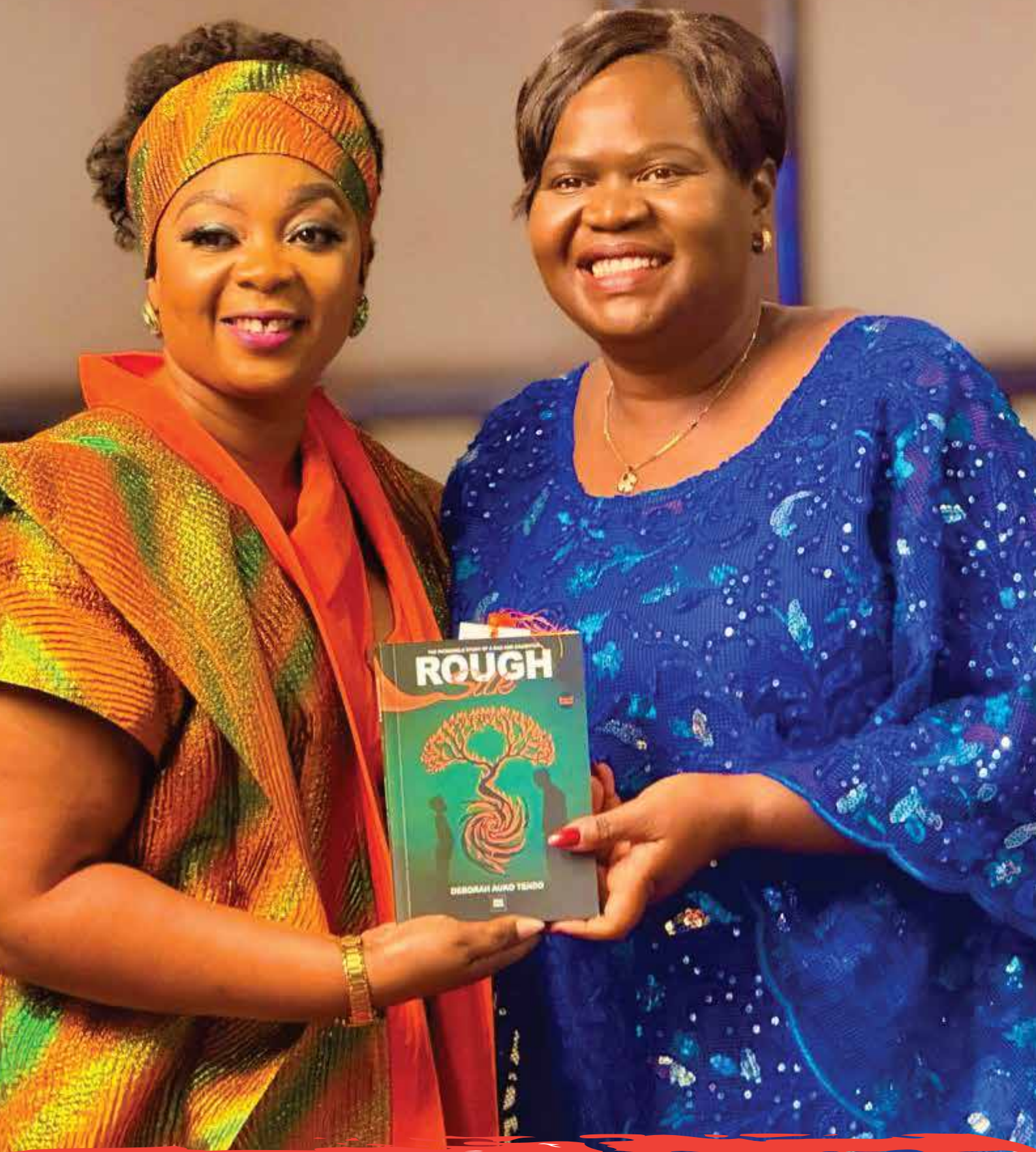
This important initiative aims to enhance understanding of the number and needs of persons with disabilities in Homa Bay, enabling the county and its partners to make informed planning and budgeting decisions. By accurately mapping and assessing the disability landscape, the program will ensure that resources are effectively allocated and that persons with disabilities are integrated into all development programs.



The assessment tool will facilitate the inclusion of persons with disabilities in accessing government services, promote disability mainstreaming, and ensure that no one is left behind. It also aligns with the county's broader efforts to promote inclusivity, equality, and social development.

Speaking during the closing session, Mr. Elly Nyiero, the Chief Officer of Sports, Culture, Heritage, Talent Development and Social Services, emphasized the importance of this partnership, noting, "This program is a significant step towards building an inclusive society where persons with disabilities can access opportunities, participate fully in community life, and receive the support they need."

The county's commitment to disability inclusion reflects its determination to create a supportive environment where everyone's rights are respected and upheld. This initiative will go a long way in fostering social equity and ensuring that disability mainstreaming becomes a standard practice across all county programs.



*“This captivating memoir tells the extraordinary story of a single father raising his daughter in Kenya. Through the daughter’s perspective, it highlights the challenges and triumphs they face together, showcasing the resilience, wisdom, and love that define their journey. It serves as a heartfelt tribute to men who defy the odds and make a lasting impact on their families and communities”*