REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF HOMA BAY

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Speaking Notes for H.E Gladys Wanga, EGH
During a Courtesy Call with UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health Issues
Date: 11/04/2025

Welcome & Introduction

- Distinguished Members of Parliament from the UK, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to Homa Bay County.
- We are honoured that your mission to Kenya includes a visit here and even more so that the focus is on **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)**—a matter very close to our hearts and central to our county's health priorities.

Context: Why Homa Bay?

- Homa Bay is the **epicenter of the triple threat**: high rates of **new HIV infections**, **gender-based violence (GBV)**, and **teenage pregnancies**—especially among adolescents and young people.
- Our population is predominantly young—**68% are under the age of 24** (2019 KNBS Census).
- We believe that **empowering this population** with access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, education, and protection is the surest path to unlocking their full potential.

Current SRHR Situation in Homa Bay

1. HIV and AIDS

- In 2024, we had an estimated **109,786 people living with HIV** in the county.

- Of these, **7,204 are adolescents (10–19 years)**, and **13,635 are young adults (15–24 years)**.
- Alarmingly, **43% of new adult HIV infections in 2024 occurred among adolescents and youth**.
- **Mother-to-child transmission rate stands at 7%**, indicating room for urgent intervention.

2. Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- Cases of GBV have increased dramatically—**by 80% over the last 7 years**, from 2,466 in 2013 to over **20,281 in 2023**.
- Over **31% of all SGBV cases involve adolescents aged 10–17**.
- We are responding through our **Homa Bay GBV Policy**, which we are actively implementing, including **GBV desks in police stations** and **community-based awareness programs**.

3. Teenage Pregnancies

- In 2024, **over 9,000 teenage pregnancies** were recorded, the highest in the lake region.
- Teenage pregnancy is a major barrier to education and economic participation for girls.
- We are implementing the **re-entry to school policy** for adolescent mothers and increasing **access to youth-friendly health services**.

Strategic County Response

- I am a proud member of the **G7 Women Governors Caucus**, where we are aligning county priorities to deliver on the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, especially SDG 3 (Good Health), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).
- I also chair the **Sigand Nyinam Initiative**, a Lake Region-based collaborative platform bringing together Homa Bay, Migori, Kisumu, and Siaya counties to combat the triple threat.
- At our 2024 Annual Review held in Migori, we reaffirmed our **commitment to prevention, protection, and empowerment**.

Partnerships & Progress

- Through the support of partners like **UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, UNAIDS**, and **Marie Stopes Kenya**, we have:
  - Expanded **school health programs** with age-appropriate sexuality education.
  - Strengthened our **Governor's Mentorship Program** to now include boys.
  - Improved **access to SRHR services** across all sub-counties.
- We welcome your visit to the **Marie Stopes-supported projects** to see the impact firsthand.

Opportunities for Collaboration

- We are keen to explore avenues of collaboration with your parliamentary group and UK-based development partners to:
  - Enhance **capacity building** in SRHR and GBV prevention.
  - Support **community-driven interventions** on HIV, GBV, and adolescent health.
  - Expand investments in **youth-led innovations** and digital health solutions.
  - Promote **cross-cultural learning** and **policy exchanges** between Kenya and the UK.

Closing

- Thank you once again for choosing to visit Homa Bay.
- We are hopeful that today marks the beginning of a fruitful partnership to **end the triple threat**, secure dignity for our young people, and unlock the power of preventative, rights-based health care.