



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

HOMA BAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**SPEECH BY H.E GLADYS NYASUNA WANGA, EGH
DURING THE LAUNCH OF NEWBORN UNIT
AT RACHUONYO COUNTY HOSPITAL
ON 26.05.2026**

Country Director, JHPIEGO

Chief of Party, Momentum Country Global Leadership

County Executive Committee Members

Our dedicated healthcare workers

Development partners

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

Today marks a defining moment for the people of Homa Bay County, particularly the mothers and newborns in Rachuonyo South, as well as our neighbouring sub-counties of Rachuonyo North, Rachuonyo East, and Rangwe.

I am deeply honoured to preside over the launch of this **Newborn Unit at Rachuonyo County Hospital**. This is a statement of our county's commitment to protect life, uphold dignity, and secure the future of our children.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This milestone has been made possible through our strong partnership with **JHPIEGO**, one of our key collaborators in advancing maternal, newborn, and child health in Homa Bay

County. On behalf of the County Government and the people of Homa Bay, I extend our sincere appreciation for your continued support. The impact of this partnership is measurable. Through your support, **medical equipment worth approximately Ksh. 30 million has been distributed across all sub-counties in Homa Bay.** You have also strengthened the capacity of our healthcare workers through critical trainings in comprehensive newborn care, emergency response, immunization, and nutrition.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Newborn health remains one of the most urgent priorities in our healthcare system. In Kenya today, **neonatal deaths account for nearly 47 percent of all under-five mortality,** and a significant number of these deaths occur within **the first week of life.** In counties

like ours, where access to specialized care has historically been limited, the risk is even higher.

But we also know that up to **80 percent of newborn deaths are preventable** through simple, timely, and high-quality interventions.

This is why this Newborn Unit is so important.

It will enable us to better **manage premature babies, low birth weight infants, neonatal infections, and birth-related complications.** It will bring life-saving services closer to our people, **reduce referrals to distant facilities**, and ease the burden on Homa Bay County Teaching and Referral Hospital. Most importantly, it will improve the **survival chances of our newborns.**

As a County Government, we have taken deliberate steps to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality. By aligning our investments with the national Universal Health Coverage agenda, whose core promise is simple: that no mother or child should be denied quality healthcare because of distance, cost, or lack of specialized services.

That is why we continue to expand and equip our health facilities across the county. This is why we recently **recruited 90 additional healthcare workers** to strengthen service delivery. And it's also why we have continued to ensure the consistent availability of essential medicines, commodities, and equipment in our facilities.

By strengthening facilities at the sub-county level, we are reducing pressure on referral hospitals while ensuring that our people can access quality healthcare closer to where they live.

Allow me at this point to commend the healthcare workers at Rachuonyo County Hospital. Your dedication and sacrifice continue to save lives every single day, often under very difficult circumstances. You are the backbone of our healthcare system.

I also wish to recognize our Community Health Promoters. Across Homa Bay County, these frontline workers are ensuring that healthcare begins at the household level, that mothers attend clinics, that children are immunized, and that no one is left behind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our journey towards better health outcomes cannot be walked alone. To our partners, we reaffirm our commitment to continued collaboration in maternal health, nutrition, immunization, adolescent health, and strengthening primary healthcare systems.

As we launch this Newborn Unit today, let us remember our collective responsibility, as enshrined in our Genowa Manifesto, of ensuring that every child born in Homa Bay gets the best possible start in life. That responsibility rests with all of us as the county government, partners, healthcare workers, and the community.

A big congratulations to all the stakeholders for this important milestone. May this facility stand as a beacon of hope for mothers and children across this region.

May God bless you all, and may God bless Homa Bay County.

Thank you.