



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

HOMA BAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**Speech By H.E Gladys Nyasuna Nyasuna Wanga, Egh,
During the 3rd Governor's Girls Mentorship Camp
At Ogenya Girls High School
On 15th May 2026**

Our Chief Guest, Amb. Susan Nakumicha

**The Principal and Board of Management of Ogenya Girls,
Teachers and mentors present,
Development partners and county officials,
Parents and guardians,
Distinguished guests,
And our girls gathered here today.**

Good morning.

It is my pleasure to join you today for this year's **Governor's Girls Mentorship Camp here at Ogenya Girls**. This is now the **third mentorship camp** following successful engagements at **Asumbi Girls and Ratang'a Girls respectively**, and I am encouraged that this initiative continues to grow both in reach and impact.

I want to begin by appreciating our teachers, mentors, partners, parents, and county staff who continue to invest their time, expertise, and resources towards supporting girls in Homa Bay County. Mentorship requires a collective commitment from families, schools, government, and society.

When we speak about mentorship, we are essentially speaking about **guidance, exposure, and opportunity**. Many of us seated here today can point to individuals who influenced our path at critical moments in life. In my own case, I grew up **observing leadership** closely through my father, whose public service shaped my understanding of **responsibility and mentorship**. Watching him engage people and navigate leadership challenges planted an early interest in governance and service. Those experiences mattered because they made leadership feel possible.

That is why forums such as this are important, particularly for girls. Sometimes what a young person needs is not necessarily grand intervention, but consistent encouragement, honest guidance, and an environment that allows them to see possibilities beyond their immediate circumstances.

As a county, we have deliberately prioritised programmes that expand opportunities for girls and young women. Through the **Fins to Swim Scholarship Programme, 628 bright but vulnerable students** have received full scholarships from secondary school through university. At the same time, our **bursary programme continues to support 29,966 learners** across the county, while the **Fundi Mang'ula initiative has enabled 1,200 youths**, especially **young women**, to acquire **technical and vocational skills** in areas such as ICT, hospitality, tailoring, construction, and entrepreneurship.

We have also continued to invest in **ECDE infrastructure under the Ondoa Kaunda Initiative, under which we have constructed 604 EYE classrooms in just 2 years; health services; menstrual hygiene support**, and programmes aimed at protecting adolescents from vulnerabilities that interfere with their education and well-being.

These interventions are informed by the realities our young people face today.

We continue to confront challenges associated with the **Triple Threat**: HIV infections among adolescents and young people, teenage pregnancies, and sexual and gender-based violence. These issues continue to affect educational outcomes, mental health, economic opportunities, and the overall well-being of many young girls.

Addressing these challenges require open conversations, access to information, mentorship, supportive families, responsive institutions, and informed decision-making by young people themselves. **That is partly why this camp exists.**

We want our girls to receive accurate information, engage with role models and mentors, build confidence, and have honest discussions about education, health, leadership, career choices, and personal responsibility.

To the girls gathered here today, I encourage you to take these conversations seriously. Your future will largely be shaped by the choices you make consistently over time, how you approach your education, the company you keep, your discipline, and your willingness to remain focused even when distractions arise.

From experience, I can confidently tell you that leadership begins with character, discipline, empathy, and accountability. It is reflected in how you treat others, how you handle responsibility, and whether people can trust your word and actions.

I therefore encourage you girls not to limit yourselves. Whether your interests are in science, technology, business, politics, creative arts, sports, or technical fields, pursue them seriously and confidently.

I also want to challenge our teachers, parents, and mentors to continue listening to young people and guiding them patiently. The environment young people are growing up in today is very different from that of previous generations. Social media pressures, mental health concerns, online influence, and economic uncertainty have created new realities that require present and intentional mentorship.

To our partners and stakeholders, I thank you for walking this journey with us. Sustainable change requires collaboration, and we value the role each of you continues to play in supporting education, health, mentorship, and youth empowerment in Homa Bay County.

Now, to our girls, allow me to leave you with this charge: take yourselves seriously. Value your education, guard your future, and do not allow temporary distractions to derail long-term opportunities. The decisions you make now will shape the kind of women and leaders you become. Stay disciplined, stay curious, and remain confident enough to pursue opportunities even when the path seems difficult. Most importantly, remember that success is measured not only by how far you go in life but also by how many others you uplift along the way.

I thank you all for your attention and for your continued commitment to empowering the next generation of young women in our county.

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

Thank you.