



**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF NYANDARUA
OFFICE OF H.E THE GOVERNOR**



GOVERNOR'S PRESS SERVICE

**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR (DR.) MOSES KIARIE BADILISHA
TO THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF NYANDARUA, DURING THE ANNUAL
STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS HELD ON 22ND NOVEMBER, 2023 AT THE
COUNTY ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS, OL'KALOU**

**The Honorable Speaker of the County Assembly of Nyandarua. Hon. Stephen Waiganjo,
The House Leadership,
Honorable Members of the County Assembly,
Distinguished Guests:**

It is a great honor for me to present this Annual State of the County Address to this August House and share with you - the representatives of the people, the status of our great motherland, Nyandarua.

While this address is a legal requirement, I nevertheless come before this August House not largely out of this legal duty, but because, for me, it is an opportunity to share the progress of our joint work with my co-builders and colleagues in the transformation of our county. In this Assembly, therefore, and on this afternoon, we gather to have a conversation on the milestones we have achieved, review our progress, chart new paths, and find common grounds.

Therefore, bound by this mutual desire and duty to those we serve, today, I present this State of the County Address underlined in bold and emphatic letters – **our county is on the right trajectory courtesy the unity of purpose between us.**

Thus, the theme of this year's State of the County Address is ***Unity, Peace and Hard-work as Building Blocks of Development.***

Honorable Speaker,

In crafting a better and prosperous county, my administration has taken several administrative, policy and statutory interventions all aimed at recreating our land. My three-pillar Change Manifesto anchors our development on a strong foundation premised on ten key focal areas, but principally seeking to create both economic and social freedoms for our people.

This manifesto further dovetails into the national BETA PLAN and other national, regional and international economic blueprints. It is also aligned to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, because we can never develop in isolation of the environment we are.

Therefore, the strategies that my administration has deployed in the last one year have been targeted, intentional, and benchmarked against established parameters, hence our evaluation – in this State of the County Report, is founded on sound footing and principles.

Granted, and as my co-builders of the county, the current progress and development we witness would never have been possible without the valuable leadership of the Speaker Hon. Stephen Waiganjo, the House Leadership led by the Majority and Minority Leaders Hon. Mwangi Nyaga and Hon. Mwangi Gichuki respectively,

the Committee chairpersons, and the entire membership of this August House. Indeed, collectively and individually, you have helped sow the seeds of unity and transformation, watered them through your legislative, representational, and oversight support; and now our people keep reaping the freedom benefits and dividends.

I also wish to acknowledge the cooperation and support my administration continues to receive from the elected leadership in our county. I, therefore, extend my appreciation to the Senator Hon. John Methu, County Woman Representative Hon. Faith Gitau, Hon. Kwenya Thuku, Hon. Wanjiku Muhia, Hon. David Kiaraho, Hon. Michael Muchira, and Hon. George Gachagua. Also worth my appreciation are the Hon. Rebecca Miano, CS Trade and Industrialization, and Hon. (Eng.) Joseph Mbugua, PS Roads.

To each one of you, I thank you all.

Honorable Speaker and Honorable Members,

To achieve the set development objectives of my administration and align functions to the three-pillar, ten focal areas' architecture, one of the first tasks was to reorganize government through the Executive Order No. 1 of 2022, where I restructured departments to conform with the development goals of our people.

Subsequently, the process of forming government took place and I must with profound gratitude thank this County Assembly for its support and dutifully discharging its mandate.

I wish to report to this House that this process is now complete and our government is not only fully formed, but the successes of this synergy and collegial relationship between different arms of government has seen Nyandarua County achieve an unprecedented budgetary absorption rate of 88% - a historic first never witnessed before since devolution.

That we are transforming lives and breaking artificial ceilings of development is not an abstract narrative; this is the testimony of the great people of Runanu village in Geta, or their counterparts in Nazareth, Shamata; equally shared in Huruma, Leshau Pondo; or by residents of Kimbo in Rereshua, Githioro ward; and confirmed as true by school-going children who now have a new bridge in Washington in Engineer – young scholars no longer fearing to be swept away by raging rivers as they walk to seek education;

this is the story that will be told in Kidowa, Rurii; and in Rumathi, Kaimbaga, when we shall not only be connecting people through new bridges, but bringing freedom to a people cut away from movement and opportunities, and other social and economic bonds.

Honorable Members, if anyone ever doubted what unity and peace can do to a people; if anyone ever questioned why working together for common public good is important;

and if anyone seeks to sow the seeds of division between our people, or between leaders, I ask you to send them to the homes of over 1500 families – spread across our county, who each evening have a meal on the table from the casual engagement in our County Roads Machineries – men, young women and mothers, and even old men, who we have put money into their pockets.

When 65,000 students have received education support through bursaries and scholarships, disbursed through a very elaborate and transparent process of public participation, and now have their education guaranteed, that is how peace dividends look like.

At the national level, over 100 units of the Affordable housing are progressing on well in O'Kalou, with another 230 set for construction in Engineer. My administration has already signed relevant MoUs with the respective state agencies, and this programme will be escalated to other towns.

Once again, I thank this House and relevant departmental committees for their policy and statutory support towards making some of these inter-governmental projects seamless and successful.

Honorable Speaker,

We are living at a time when globalization is no longer a foreign concept. Issues we thought, only a few years ago, as backwater phenomena now deeply dominate our conversations, and largely influence our public policy conceptualization, formulation and implementation. And no other two critical issues dominate this discourse than climate change, and youth participation.

Yet, even though they are two distinct issues, they are nonetheless symbiotic and each feeds into the other. Therefore, even at the policy level, we must adopt a compounded yet integrated approach to each to achieve holistic results.

Honorable Members, this week, the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with others, is issuing farm inputs in form of seeds to thousands of our farmers in whole of Ndaragwa sub-county. These are households that have witnessed over three seasons of failed crops as a result

of ever deteriorating climatic conditions. These families, deep in rural Nyandarua – a county without a single industry, are victims of climate change largely caused by the developed, industry-driven global North. This is the paradox of our times and the saddest manifestation of the global inequalities of development.

It is for this reason, and in order to help reclaim our environment and re-engineer our farming, together with other national and international stakeholders, especially the World Bank, we are implementing climate-smart agricultural interventions in both areas of crop and livestock production.

Already, some projects have been completed while others are ongoing and are transforming lives, but not in the scale anticipated. And that is why more resources and speed needs to be deployed to reach larger populations, and at even shorter periods.

Some of these projects, like the Kingi dam, Mbuyu dam and water projects, the Munoru dam, Ex-Jacob, Rutara, Ex-Mayor dam, Gwa Kiongo, and tens of other small colonial dams remain critical enablers of climate mitigation and all-season farming. I also wish to report to this House that this climate resilience intervention will now be rolled-out in each and every ward under an expanded programme.

Further, to safeguard our environment from continued degradation, we are called upon, especially as leaders, to cultivate the culture of tree growing and conservation.

Climate mitigation is no longer an exclusive government undertaking, but a community and individual obligation – it is our environment, it is our livelihoods, and it is about us; let us all get involved in big and small ways.

Again, nothing better demonstrates the devastating effects of climate change, so closely brought to us than the near death of our most-valued lake – the Lake Olbolossat, and its attendant ecosystem.

The near extinction of this lake is a chilling reminder of the vulnerability of our land and communities within, to these environmental changes. But it is also a moment of deep reflection on what a combination of climatic disruptions, exacerbated by human activity can do to millions of livelihoods, including the impact on animals, birds and other aquatic life.

Honorable Members, if there was a more urgent intervention, it is saving Lake Olbolossat from extinction; and with it, livelihoods in six counties as far as Wajir. That is why this coming Sunday – 26th November, 2023, we begin an annual half marathon that will be used to raise awareness

and fundraise for the total restoration of this critical ecosystem and water body, an Important Bird Area, our protected wetland, and a treasured jewel of our motherland.

Honorable Speaker, and Honorable Members,

Aware of these emerging climatic threats, and the critical issue of our youth who are faced with multiple challenges of unemployment, shrinking opportunities in the midst of a ballooning population – an important resource which unattended can turn into a security time bomb, my administration has developed several policy interventions.

To adequately anchor these multi-sectoral interventions, we successfully developed the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2023-2027 which, among other sectoral targeting, weighs in very heavily on the twin issues of climate change and youth involvement in development. As a policy, each and every department of government has a youth component to help mainstream and anchor their issues as critical development agenda. Equally, climate mitigation, especially on trees growing and conservation, is now a cross-cutting issue anchored in each of our programmes.

But as a county, we cannot achieve this targeted development without creating financial independence and sustainability, especially by expanding our resources' basket.

Improvement of our Own Source Revenue, through establishing new revenue streams like we are doing with tourism, streamlining our revenue collection through automation, digitization and sealing leakages, improving on efficiency and cutting wastage, and, importantly, catalyzing development at the local level, is one sure way to navigate the development terrain.

In the last one year, for example, and without increasing taxes as compared to other counties or jurisdictions, we managed to increase our OSR from Ksh. 373 million to Ksh. 505 million, representing a 35% revenue growth.

It is this journey to self-reliance that saw my administration manage to reduce pending bills by a whopping Ksh. 700 million.

It is also one of the foundations, including the need to improve on the welfare of our people, upon which as a county we were able to confirm on permanent terms of service over 200 of our staff who had been casual workers, some for periods longer than 25 years.

Honorable Members, unity between us – founded on the mutual respect between our institutions, also saw us introduce capitation for our VTCs and ECDEs to the tune of Ksh. 25.7 million and 10 million respectively. Further, my administration managed to construct 35 new modern ECDE classrooms with 20 ablution blocks, and targets to add 20 more classrooms and 10 ablution blocks in this financial year.

In addition, as part of implementing the ECDE teachers scheme of service, and improve the teacher/pupil ratio, we are seeking to confirm more teachers on permanent and pensionable terms while at the same recruiting additional assistants on contract basis, even as we embark on their full absorption on permanent terms.

And to further make our VTCs centers of excellence, I have instructed all departments of government to start procuring their uniforms from these institutions. In the near future, we also wish to pilot on how these VTCs can start repairing our vehicles, manufacture sanitary towels, tents, and other items easily produced from available resources. This, again, will be integrated into the youth agenda where young students and non-students will be linked up to create a thriving local youth-driven cottage industry.

And to further boost our education standards and ease the burden on our citizens, we have already started the process of issuing over Ksh. 182 million worth of bursary set to benefit over 35,000 students. Thus, upon conclusion of the bursary exercise, over Ksh. 400 million will have been disbursed, and close to 100,000 students benefited in the last one year alone.

Honorable Members,

One of the major objectives under BETA, and perfectly captured in my Change Manifesto is on quality and affordable healthcare. As a government, we have adopted a multi-pronged approach to managing our health by ensuring that we address staffing needs, commodities, and also infrastructure.

As a county, we come from a disadvantaged position bearing our history of marginalization. Yet, we chose not to dwell on a past we cannot change but rather focus on a journey of transformation. A journey to build modern and better hospitals, staff and train our professionals, and constantly equip our facilities with essential commodities.

In the last one year, my administration managed to stock our facilities with commodities worth over Ksh. 170 million, and equally procured strategic equipment worth Ksh. 30 million.

On staffing, 38 healthcare workers from the cadre of nurses, clinical officers and doctors were recruited, others confirmed on permanent and pensionable terms, while 160 UHC staff had their contracts extended.

Only this October, I commissioned 1297 Community Health Promoters – our Health Army, to go to our villages - each serving about 100 households, as our frontline healthcare defense.

On infrastructure, I wish to report that the construction of the Mashujaa Complex at the J.M Kariuki Memorial Hospital is 60% complete, and talks are at an advanced stage to unlock the national government’s funding. Engineer County Hospital’s 116-bed wards have been completed and commissioned, and operationalization of the same is ongoing awaiting finalization of recruitment of critical staff.

Further, Melangine CDC is nearing completion, with major improvements and upgrading taking place across each of our earmarked level four facilities in Manunga, Bamboo, Ngano and Ndaragwa where construction of a modern maternity is ongoing.

The national government, courtesy of the President, is also working on upgrading Njabini Health Center into a level four facility in honor of late freedom fighter Mukami Kimathi.

As a mark of approval for improved healthcare services, over 1.6 million outpatient visits were made to our facilities, with 12,036 successful deliveries conducted across the county. And to further improve on service delivery, we are at an advanced stage of having the J.M Kariuki Memorial Hospital certified as a Medical Internship center. This certification will see the facility upgraded to a teaching facility hence availing additional staff and bettering services. Further, my administration is establishing a cancer center at the facility; already, screening for cervical cancer is taking place across all our 85 facilities.

Honorable Members, a healthy population is the sum total of many variables, one of them being better nutrition. And better nutrition is the product of a good and thriving agriculture sector. As the food basket of this nation, Nyandarua's potential to becoming the regional, and even global driver of crops and livestock production is profound, yet largely unexploited.

Aware of this potential, with capacity to leapfrog our people from basic producers to commercial players taking care of their nutritional and economic needs, my administration has instituted several policy and strategic interventions in the sector.

For example, the dairy sector is one such area where our comparative advantage is immense. To realize this advantage, the Directorate of Livestock has embarked on an elaborate breeds' improvement programme working with our extension officers and animal health assistants.

Already, subsidized A.I services are now available where locally improved semen is costing Ksh. 700, and imported at Ksh. 1000.

So far, over 3275 heifers have been inseminated under the improved breeds' programme, with a target of availing this service to every household, at even cheaper and affordable costs. To realize this, I have held successful deliberations with KARLO, KAGRIC and the Ministry of Agriculture's State Department of Livestock to provide both semen and liquid nitrogen to our farmers, select cooperative societies and service providers.

I also look forward to delivery of value-chain inputs from the national government especially the 20,000-liter liquid nitrogen plant, and the 35 milk coolers for our cooperative societies as promised by the President, upon which I have made several follow-ups and assurances made.

In the crop production sector, I have also embarked on an extensive programme which seeks to provide our farmers with inputs, especially for pyrethrum - which we intend to achieve over

5000 acres in the medium term, avocado, and apical cuttings for new varieties of crops that are climatically-adapted and developed in our modern tissue culture laboratory in Oljoroorok.

Honorable Members, these interventions will best find traction and grounding in a vibrant cooperative society environment that is a catalyst for aggregation and economies of scale. Towards this, in the last one year, we have managed to register 15 new cooperative societies, conducted comprehensive financial and governance audits for 65, and managed to strengthen a further 10 through infrastructural support.

It is my proposal that on completion of this audit, clean-up and strengthening exercise, our cooperatives will take up their rightful role in driving the change agenda, and, with guidance of relevant agencies, establish a union that will take up some macro interventions like large scale aggregation, sorting, grading and value addition.

I am also pleased to inform this House that our journey of value addition, and establishment of the very first agro-processing plant in Nyandarua is on course with the scheduled construction of the County Aggregation and Industrial Park in Njabini.

I thank the County Assembly for its support towards actualizing this project, the largest ever conceptualized and to be established in Nyandarua. That, as a county – both the Assembly and

Executive, we were able to re-align our budget and factor in this mega project into our planning is another testimony of the unity of purpose and dividends of collaboration.

And to create a sustainable value chain for this agro-processing, we have already embarked on massive improvement of our markets in Soko Mpya, Engineer, Ol'Kalou, and further seek to expand other micro-aggregation and collection centers across our county.

Honorable Speaker, and Members of this House,

A wrap-up of my three-pillar development model and attendant interventions focuses on the social welfare of our people, especially on provision of water. As a county, we are a water-deficit region which for long has been a source of the same water to other counties, yet not enough for her people.

Allow me to most profoundly thank and appreciate the role of this Assembly in foregrounding and amplifying our water rights and making it a national issue. The petition to the Senate, and other state agencies, especially regarding Sasumua, sets a precedent on the management of our natural resources, especially where we are the custodians.

But even as we continue to pursue these national interventions, my administration has been fully seized and aggressively implementing a policy of water access for all.

In the last one year, for example, we managed to connect over 2800 households, laid over 90Kms of pipes to homes and institutions, sunk and equipped 16 boreholes, solar-equipped another 24, and successfully managed to desilt two dams.

Sustainable resolution of water problems in Nyandarua remains a priority, and we continue to engage the national government on construction of the promised mega dams, and desilting of over 300 colonial dams, expansion of Kirima intake, Geta intake and Njabini bulk water intake, including implementation of St. Luke Water Project.

Honorable Members, I wish to thank you for making it possible and passing requisite legislation and policy documents for establishment of our two new municipalities – Engineer and Maira Inya, and subsequently vetting and considering the Board nominees as submitted to this House.

Related to this desire to modernize our urban areas, I also wish to inform the House that as part of reforming our physical planning regime, we are at the final stages of completing the County Spatial Plan, county valuation roll, and also the establishment of a county land bank. We have

also completed the Arboretum Masterplan which will transform the park into a tourism, sporting, recreational and ecological attraction site.

Further, Honorable Members, you will agree with me that it is no longer sustainable to ferry solid waste from every end of the county into the county headquarters in Ol'Kalou. Hence, going forward, we are developing a framework of solid waste management where each sub-county will be responsible for refuse handling, management and disposal within its own jurisdiction. I look forward to your support.

In conclusion, Honorable Members, I wish to inform this house that a number of bills, regulations and policies are lined up for consideration after completion of the necessary legal steps, including public participation. Some of these include:

Nyandarua County Inspectorate, Compliance and Enforcement policy, 2023; Nyandarua County Inspectorate, Compliance and Enforcement Service Bill, 2023; Nyandarua County Inspectorate, Compliance and Enforcement Standing Orders; Nyandarua County By-laws; Nyandarua County Parking Place and Omnibus policy, 2023; Nyandarua County Establishment of the Directorate of Special Programmes; Diaspora Affairs policy; Water bill; Water policy; County Environment Action Plan; Environment Bill; Environment

Policy; Climate Change Act amendment; Climate Change Regulations; Natural Resource policy; and, among many others, the Natural Resource Bill.

Honorable Members, as we continue to midwife this transformation, we must remain vigilant and ever alert to the realities that tranquility, development and positive change is not, as would be expected, a welcome development for some. For a county that had been deeply stuck in conflicts and internal fights, the milestones achieved in the last one year have destabilized profiteers of this disharmony and anarchy.

One area that has greatly alarmed those against our unity has been the collaborative framework we developed where both the Executive and Members sit and identify priority projects at the ward level, set minimum funds for them, and eventually ensure their completion. A lot has been said about this development model; but this concept is nothing but the perfect demonstration of a bottom-up, citizens-driven and oriented development.

It is here to stay; we can only make it better.

Yet, on the floor this August House I reiterate: not on my watch will we tear apart the very fabric of our motherland to suit personal and short-term political expeditions. Our people have suffered for long, and now, in under one year, they are witnesses of what unity and collegial

leadership founded on respect between leaders and institutions can do. They have tasted development and seen transformation.

Even in this very Assembly, the legislative seat of our county, once turned into a theater of war and anarchy, every Member I speak to boldly asserts that never again will this county slide back.

That is the change and transformation we swore to uphold. And this is the cooperation, hard-work and harmony we will defend and protect for the sake of our people's development.

As your Governor, it is my assurance that I will continue to be the champion of these values. Towards this end, I wish to thank the Nyandarua professionals, either in Nairobi or in this county, and wherever else they are including in the diaspora, for showing great willingness to partner in transforming our county. To all of you I say: in my administration, you have a dependable ally.

Finally, allow me to ask our citizens to observe great care and follow instructions from experts during this period of El-Nino rains. Let us constantly remind our people to remain vigilant and take all necessary precautions. But above all, let them take advantage of the rains to plant fast-growing crops, and grow trees to conserve our environment.

And to each one you here, Honorable Members and distinguished guests, and to our citizens, friends and nature lovers across the world, once again, please join me in saving our great lake Olbolossat by coming out in large numbers for the inaugural Lake Olbolossat Half Marathon slated for this Sunday, 26th November, 2023. I thank you all.

Thank you, God bless Kenya, God bless Nyandarua.