

State of the County Address to the County
Assembly By
H.E, Rt. Hon. Kenneth Makelo Lusaka, EGH
Governor, Bungoma County



COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF BUNGOMA

STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS BY RT. HON. KENNETH MAKELO LUSAKA, EGH THE GOVERNOR OF BUNGOMA COUNTY

TO THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY

27th March, 2025

Excellency, Governors present,

Our Honourable Senator,

Honourable Emmanuel Situmah, Speaker, County Assembly,

Honourable Members of the County Assembly;

Distinguished guests,

It gives me great pleasure to deliver my State of the County Address for this year in fulfillment of the requirements of Section 30(2)(k) of the County Governments Act.

The County Assembly is the most critical stakeholder in our county government and is key not only to service delivery but also to sustaining Devolution. The demands on your time and support are high, and as a sub-national Legislature, you lay the foundation for the execution of development in the County.

As I stand to enumerate our achievements, it is worth commending the central role of this Assembly in aligning legislation to the performance of the Executive. Allow me Mr Speaker to emphasize the central role of this house and the members in shaping

and changing the lives of our people; I want to urge all of us elected Leaders from our County to desist from imputing bad motive on this house and give our Honourable members of the County Assembly the Respect and Honour they deserve; you are the people's closest representatives and the people's choice reigns Supreme.

Max DePree says:

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”

When I took my oath of office, I defined the reality for the people of Bungoma for five years. We are right in the middle of the term, and I want to thank you for helping me achieve the elusive cohesive Leadership and a vibrant mechanism for constant collaboration and consultation as elected Leaders. This was powerfully demonstrated by the large turnout of County leaders, led by the Speaker of the National Assembly and yourselves, at the County Leaders & Stakeholders Consultative Engagement

forum, which I recently convened at Kibabii University. I will seek to institutionalize this forum as a periodic engagement.

Mr Speaker

We have spent the last two years championing the cause of Devolution; we have progressed from humble beginnings to greater heights, making this a year of action. We must continue to focus on the things that unite the people of this County, regardless of region, party, age, or socioeconomic status; we must possess the profound belief that tomorrow can be achieved through hard work. Today, our challenges are even more significant; expectations are higher, and the road ahead remains uncertain. As a County Government, we have set out to provide our citizens with a better service delivery experience.

In my second term in office, I remain committed to people-centered solutions. There are many successful local entrepreneurs engaged in various business activities that produce goods and services for both our County and the Country at large.

I am committed to harnessing this to reinvest in capitalization, enhancing the competitiveness of our economy while simultaneously creating opportunities for employment in the informal sector. To this end, my government is constructing modern markets that will enhance the trading environment and ensure longer trading hours for our people.

Since my last address at this Assembly on 18th October 2022, we have continued to deploy our resources to ensure our development scorecard remains on track and upholds the aspirations that our people have for devolution. We were honoured to host The National Celebrations of our 60th Madaraka Day 2024, an event that not only put us on the map but also brought Diplomats, Dignitaries, both local and foreign. Subsequently, we hosted the County Assemblies Sports Association (CASA) games in October and closed the year with the National Celebrations of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in December. These events have strengthened our deep drive for National values.



Mr Speaker,

Our fiscal space continues to shrink even as prices continue to soar. We must, therefore, continue to up our Source revenue mobilization to support the implementation of various ongoing programs. The County Treasury has initiated a redesign of its taxation policies to make them more supportive of economic activity. This will boost revenue collection from the current Kshs 1.02 billion in FY 2023/24 to the target of Kshs. 2.26 billion in FY 2024/25 and will be achieved through the implementation of the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy for the period FY 2024/25 – 2026/27, which provides a combination of tax administration and policy measures to enhance revenue mobilization

Regarding human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination, and the protection of the marginalized, we have prioritized human health and well-being by ensuring access to quality healthcare, education, and other essential services. The County has scaled up service Delivery and ensured the availability and readiness of the same at our health facilities.

We have constructed more early learning classrooms to bring Early Childhood and Development closer to our people. We have also ensured that all wards receive an equal allocation of funds for community empowerment, thereby boosting development. Internally, we have met the threshold for the requisite numbers of women, youth, People with Disabilities, and minorities, as seen in the composition of the County Executive Committee, starting with my very own Deputy, who is both female and from a minority group. We observe strict Compliance with “Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO)” laws. The County allocates 30% of the County procurement opportunities to youth, women, and persons with disabilities.,

Abraham Lincoln said:

The greatest fine art of the future will be the making of a comfortable living from a small piece of land.

Recognizing the importance of our agriculture-rich county, my government has initiated infrastructure development of the road networks to open up the major production areas of the county, thereby promoting the growth of the agricultural industry, which contributes 16.6% of the Gross County Product (GCP), second only to transport and storage services. We have prioritized the development of the sector to spur inclusive growth and development, aligning with Vision 2033, Medium Term Plan (MTP) IV, and the Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS).

To enhance livestock productivity and increase income among the farmer groups, the Department, through Ward-Based Projects, supplied and delivered 108 dairy Cows and 40 goats to registered farmer groups in various Wards within the County. Additionally, the Department plans to reduce poverty and contribute to economic growth by establishing community-based animal health workers, providing veterinary drugs and vaccines, constructing livestock markets, and developing value chains for livestock products such as milk, meat, honey, eggs, and hides through the Kenya Livestock Commercialization Project.

To enhance crop productivity in the County, we purchased certified fertilizer and Maize seed for 21,900 farmers in the forty-five Wards through the Farm Input Support Programme. We procured and distributed avocado and coffee seedlings. Our County continues to stand out for exemplary program implementation, and in December 2024, we were awarded special recognition for the best-managed NAVCDP in the country. Our approach to people-centered service delivery was recognized as the panel examined the sensitization of stakeholders, the presence of community-driven development committees, the identification of Farmer Producer Organizations, the training of community institutions, and the support of SACCOs.

To realize the dream of Universal Health Coverage and bring health services closer to the people, the county has embarked on various interventions aimed at: i) Promoting Primary Health Care; ii) Halting and reversing communicable and non-communicable diseases; iii) improving Health Infrastructure; iv) Promoting Universal Health Care financing, v) ensuring the digitization of health information vi) creating a health workforce.

Health remains a key concern for my government, and our commitment to strengthening the healthcare system remains unwavering as we work towards ensuring equitable and accessible healthcare services to all. We have made significant strides across the six building blocks of health:

Effective service delivery in healthcare encompasses quality, accessibility, safety, and coverage. A performing workforce comprises effective human resources management, relevant skills, and well-defined policies. My administration has varied terms for 196 healthcare workers, both medical and non-medical. We recruited 235 healthcare workers on permanent and pensionable terms, promoted 190 healthcare workers across all cadres, and recruited an additional 548 healthcare workers. To entrench health practices at the household level, we have a total of 3,580 community health promoters who receive a stipend and serve as our first line of response.

In terms of health infrastructure, we have sought partnerships to expand our specialty hospitals. Together with the M-PESA foundation, we are constructing a mother-and-child hospital in Naitiri Sub County Hospital. In conjunction with the Kenya Pipeline Company, we have built a modern theatre at Cheptais Sub-County Hospital. We have also completed a 60-bed facility in Bumula and a 100-bed facility in Sirisia, both of which are awaiting equipping. For the balance of FY 2024/2025 and FY 2025/2026, we will make deliberate budget allocations and source external partnerships to ensure adequate resources are available to equip these hospitals.

A well-performing system ensures the production, analysis, dissemination, and use of timely and reliable information. We have initiated the process of automating our healthcare services through the installation of a Health Management Information System, which will enhance efficiency and facilitate the timely generation of data across all service areas.

Effective leadership and governance in health ensure the existence of strategic policy frameworks, effective oversight, coalition building, provision of appropriate incentives, attention to system design, and accountability. To this end, we appointed and inducted Hospital Management Boards for Levels 4 and 5 and established Health Facilities Management Committees for Levels 1 and 2. The Department is reviewing the Bungoma County Health Services Act 2019 to align it with the Facility Improvement Act 2023. We will soon present this, along with the regulations, to this house for approval. I request your support to pass these policies to enhance service delivery to our people.

Under Trade and Industrialization, we are focused on enhancing the livelihoods of our people by fostering a robust, market-driven, and 24-hour economy. We have pursued this agenda through key initiatives in the Department of Trade, Energy, and Industrialization. The County Aggregation and Industrial Park (CAIP), currently under construction at Sang'alo, will be a special zone that provides value-added centers for agricultural products, as well as storage facilities.

Under the Urban Centers Street Lighting Program, we continue to install solar lights despite significant challenges at the outset, primarily due to vandalism of solar lights and their accessories. However, our dedicated staff remained resilient, conducting repairs and replacements as needed. This program is crucial in enhancing security and promoting a 24-hour economy. The first batch of Kshs 12 million trade loans benefited 1,000 small-scale traders, primarily Mama Mboga businesses, fostering economic growth and financial independence. Our County Aggregation and Industrial Park (CAIP) has realized significant progress despite inordinate delays in receiving the National Government's co-funding. While we have spent over Kshs 90 million, the National Treasury has only disbursed Kshs 61.5 million of the allocated Kshs 250 million. With the proposed County Government Additional Allocation Bill, Bungoma will receive an additional Kshs 105.3 million to accelerate the development of the industrial park in Sang'alo.

Our market infrastructure development program has undergone a facelift at Chwele Market, which is currently 90% complete, while the construction of the Kipsigon and Kamukuywa markets is on schedule. Additionally, we have constructed 30 metal stalls and an auction ring at Dorofu Market in East Sang'alo Ward, as well as another 30 metal stalls in Maraka Ward.

Through the Energy Partnership, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC) for a matching fund project, with both the County and REREC contributing Kshs 45 million each. Under Phase 1, 21 transformers have been installed in 21 wards, benefiting 660 households. Phase 2 will target the remaining 24 wards. The Bumula Energy Centre, launched in September 2024, is set to be a game-changer for Bungoma County. I hereby direct the Department of Lands to resolve the ownership issues so that the project can proceed without any further delays.

With a budget of over Kshs 600 million, it will connect over 5,400 households to electricity and serve as a hub for renewable energy initiatives, clean cooking solutions, and environmental conservation.

Our County is both vast and rugged in terrain in many places. To enhance our road network and improve mobility, we have prioritized the development, expansion, modernization, and maintenance of sustainable transportation infrastructure, facilitating the efficient movement of people and goods. Under our Road Maintenance and Upgrades initiative, we opened and graveled 953 km out of the targeted 1,100 km of roads, constructed six bridges and 40 box culverts across all 45 wards, and upgraded 11.5 km of urban roads to bitumen standards in Bungoma Town.

Lisa Haisha says:

Great leaders don't set out to be leaders; they set out to make a difference. It's never about the role, it's always about the goal."

One of my legacy programs is the 20.85 km Misikhu-Brigadier Road upgrade, and I am proud to say that the project is currently at 50% completion. The National government has since taken over the site, and I can confirm that it will be completed entirely within this financial year. To enhance public safety and transport, we have overhauled the Kanduyi Fire Office and commissioned the Webuye Fire Station. We installed 130 light masts on the 6.5 km Musikoma-Kanduyi dual carriageway and fast-tracked the upgrading of Matulo Airstrip to facilitate passenger services. Over the medium term, the county government will prioritize the development, expansion, modernization, and maintenance of sustainable transport infrastructure to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people and ensure compliance with the globally accepted building standards through continuous monitoring and inspection of all public and private works; Promote public and transport safety; Strengthen the institutional framework for infrastructure development; accelerating the completion of sector priority projects; Partner with the National Government and other stakeholders to develop and sustain access to opportunities in the transport industry.

This will open up rural areas, enabling the movement of goods and services to accelerate economic growth.

My government is committed to empowering women and providing them with viable and affordable credit. I have always said that women hold half the sky; let us support them to keep it better. By building the capacity of our women, we open doors to unparalleled growth, promoting the depth and strength of the family unit. We uphold social empowerment and cultural preservation.

In Sports, we are on the path to becoming a sports powerhouse, having successfully hosted the County Assembly Sports Association (CASA) Games, where our County Assembly emerged victorious. In my first term, I had a vision for building the capacity of our athletes as well as those of our neighbors. I invested in the Chemoge High Altitude Training Center. Phase One is now complete and is scheduled to open in April 2025, accompanied by a marathon to mark its launch. This facility will provide world-class training facilities for athletes both in our County and outside.

We have embarked on the modernization of Masinde Muliro Stadium, with Phase One now complete and Phase Two currently underway. The National Government supplied 10,000 seats for the terraces.

In recognition of our rich culture and exchange, as well as our role in policy development, we organized key cultural events, including hosting the Bamasaba King (Omukuka) and participating in the Embalu ceremony in Mbale, Uganda. The County Assembly has also passed critical policies, including the Youth Policy, Sports Policy, Gender Mainstreaming Policy, Disability Mainstreaming Policy, and the Children's Policy, and these will go a long way in preserving our culture.

On land tenure regularization, we are issuing leases to current occupants of Nang'eni settlement lots under the land tenure regularization program. Urban development remains a cornerstone of my administration's agenda, and we have embarked on Municipality Expansion with Bungoma and Kimilili Municipalities fully functional, while Webuye and Chwele Municipalities are at an advanced stage of

operationalization. Under the Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project (KISIP2), the County is implementing a Kshs 378 million facelift project for Mjini Settlement (Bungoma Town) and Landi Matope (Chwele), focusing on road upgrades, drainage systems, water supply, and street lighting.

We are poised to modernize our markets by constructing new facilities and upgrading existing ones. We handed over the construction sites for the Soko Kubwa Market in Bungoma Town and Chwele Market, which are set to revolutionize trade and commerce. The Soko Kubwa Market is a Kshs. Three hundred seventy-three million state-of-the-art facilities will feature modern trading stalls, ICT hubs, revenue offices, toilets, a lactation room for mothers, and parking spaces, among other essential amenities. The four-storey market is expected to be completed within 18 months, providing traders with a conducive business environment. The Chwele Market, at a cost of Kshs.

Three hundred forty-three million will feature cold storage rooms for perishable goods, a conference facility, ICT hubs, and dedicated loading zones. This market will serve over 1,000 traders, strengthening our position as a regional trade hub.

Further, the de-gazettement of Kiwanja Ndege Airstrip paves the way for the expansion of Matulo Airport, where my administration is in the process of acquiring 50 acres of land for runway extension and terminal construction, facilitating commercial flights. To ease congestion in Bungoma town, we are constructing the Kanduyi Bus Park, where modern market stalls will be developed to accommodate traders. As an Insignia to our Government, we have commenced construction of the Executive offices of the County Government, reinforcing our commitment to efficient governance and service delivery by establishing a central point for all our Departments to serve the people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

As I continue to present to you the progress, challenges, and the path ahead, I want to assure you that our commitment remains steadfast to build a resilient, prosperous, and inclusive Bungoma County.

As John Maxwell says:

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way."

Education is a key pillar in our development agenda. In recognition of the need for diverse skill sets, we have invested in our Vocational Training Centres, which have seen exponential growth in terms of institutions and enrollment rates. This is because they provide opportunities for youths to acquire skills in employment and entrepreneurship. The rapid change in technology and the dynamics of the labour market require that VTCs link with industries to update skills and training. To address this, the county, in partnership with Zizi Afrique, has sensitized communities to the importance of VTC through radio talks and roadshow campaigns.

The county also confirmed 303 VTC instructors to permanently facilitate the value of technical and vocational training in providing skills, knowledge, and competencies. The county department in charge of Vocational education shared the report with this house. The gaps identified in the assessment will guide decision-making in future planning, and to bridge these gaps, we have partnered with various partners, specifically GIZ, to offer conservation agriculture.

In recognition of the place of Public Service Management and Administration, my administration has prioritized a responsive and efficient public service to enhance service delivery across Bungoma County. We have improved Our Infrastructure by constructing new ward offices to reduce rental costs, and plans are underway to equip and fully utilize them.

We have developed a County Integrated Performance Management Framework whose implementation will ensure that the entire County is pulling in the same cohesive strategic direction and can effectively measure achievements towards the

Governor's Manifesto and global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as integrated in our third-generation CIDP. All County employees signed performance contracts and appraisals for FY 2024/25, aligning their work with the County's development goals.

Furthermore, in line with Global Trends and in the spirit of Strengthening Human Resource Capacity, we have trained 600 staff members, re-designated 88 staff, and absorbed 194 casual workers into permanent roles to leverage their existing knowledge and experience in service delivery.

In a historic move, my administration has implemented a Scheme of Service for County Enforcement Officers, a long-overdue step that will facilitate promotions and career progression for over 200 officers. Additionally, we have initiated in-house training for specialized services, including the County Band, VIP drivers, VVIP protection, and prosecution units, paving the way for the establishment of County Courts. We introduced a structured promotion plan to address stagnation in

administrative ranks, which, when fully implemented, will see clear succession planning in our Public Service.

To enhance accessibility and efficiency, we are establishing Ward Service Centres in all 45 wards, where citizens can access County services. We are also establishing ICT Centres in every ward, ensuring stable internet connectivity to facilitate e-governance and service delivery. Additionally, we are implementing a robust Hospital Management Information System across major hospitals, supported by stable internet infrastructure. These reforms and initiatives reflect my administration's unwavering commitment to an efficient, transparent, and responsive public service that truly serves the people of Bungoma County.

Regarding water, Environment, and Climate change, the county's forest cover stands at 15.55%, which is above the recommended 10%. As of 2019, the tree cover is 21%. However, the forests and trees are not evenly distributed; hence, there is a need to plant more trees, especially in areas with limited tree and forest cover.

To further enhance this, the county will continue to implement its Tree Growing Programme as part of the national government's plan to plant 15 billion trees nationwide by 2030. In the past year, 600,000 Tree seedlings were planted and nurtured across the county. To enhance access to safe, clean water for domestic use, the County has made significant progress through interventions such as sinking boreholes across the county under the Community Empowerment Fund and the FloCA program, extending water pipelines for last-mile connectivity, and protecting high-yielding water springs.

Through the National Government FLLoCA program, the department has enhanced community resilience and livelihoods and developed adaptive capacities to enable the community to respond to climate stresses and shocks. The FLoCA program has funded 30 water schemes by upgrading high-yielding water points with solar installations, distributing Hass avocado and fruit tree seedlings for livelihood projects, developing apiaries and fodder banks, and rehabilitating river lines with

Indigenous trees to protect riparian areas, as well as institutional greening and tree nursery development.

This program is expected to contribute to climate change mitigation, adaptation, and employment creation for vulnerable groups, including youth. In addition, the County Government, in collaboration with the National Government and Development Partners, will continue to commit funds towards the National Tree Growing Programme. This will contribute to the protection and conservation of the environment through the restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands and ecosystems.

Mr. Speaker Sir

The journey toward a prosperous Bungoma is a shared responsibility. I extend my deepest gratitude to this honorable House and all stakeholders who have contributed to the success of our development agenda. Your commitment and collaboration have been instrumental in driving transformative change across the County.

As we forge ahead, I urge all of us to remain united, steadfast, and focused on delivering impactful development. Let us continue to work together, innovate, and push forward initiatives that uplift the lives of our people, ensuring that every resident of Bungoma benefits from our collective efforts.

I sincerely appreciate this Assembly for aligning budgetary appropriations with my priority projects as outlined in **CIDP III**. My administration is committed to creating a lasting legacy by investing in world-class sports facilities and modern market infrastructure, which will enhance Bungoma's economy for generations to come. I was given a second chance, and I want to finish STRONG!

To achieve this vision, my government has prioritized funding for our **four high-impact legacy projects**—the **Chemoge High Altitude Training Centre, Misiku - Brigadier Road, Kanduyi Bus Park, and Kamukuywa Modern Market**. These projects are pivotal in unlocking economic potential, enhancing livelihoods, and positioning Bungoma as a regional hub for sports, trade, and as a transport corridor.

To fully realize these transformative initiatives, we require increased **financial support**. I therefore appeal to this honourable house to consider **additional budgetary allocations** to accelerate the completion and commissioning of these projects. Increased funding will ensure that our citizens reap the benefits of these strategic investments **sooner rather than later**.

Together, through unwavering dedication and our shared commitment, we can build a stronger, more prosperous Bungoma. **Let us rise to the occasion, unlock new opportunities, and secure a brighter future for all.**

**As I conclude, I will leave you with the words of Harvey Firestone:
“The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.”**

Let your most significant duty be the development of our County.

God Bless Kenya.
Thank You all!