Patients receiving services from the newly bought CT Scan at Vihiga County Referral Hospital. For the first time Vihiga residents no longer go to Eldoret nor Kisumu to seek CT Scan services.

Bonface Esau, a beneficiary of Governor’s Scholarship studies in their home in Emuhaya. 100 bright needy students received full high school scholarship this year.
The center will go a long way in reducing needed services close to Vihiga residents. Dr. Ottichilo expressed his satisfaction saying the center will provide the much needed blood transfusion services for specialised treatment from the Vihiga County Referral hospital has reduced by 80 per cent. This is after the County Government installed a 32-slice Computed Tomography machine (CT-Scan) at the County referral hospital. It was procured at a cost of sh.42million.

In most cases, patients admitted at the facility who needed emergency care were normally referred to the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH) Eldoret for treatment.

This is part of Governor Wilber Ottichilo’s manifesto of providing specialized health services to the people of Vihiga County.

Dr Juma said majority of the patients were from Vihiga, while others were from Busia, Siaya, Kisumu and Kakamega counties.

“We are now able to offer prompt diagnosis to stroke patients, those with serious head injuries, accidents victims, cancer, cardiovascular and kidney diseases, abdominal and pelvic scans at a subsidised price,” said Dr Juma.

He added: “Refrerrals outside the hospital has significantly reduced. We only refer patients with blood haemorrhage (blood bleeding in the brain) to Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital since they require surgery and stabilization in an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) which we don’t have.”

According to Allan Sabwe, a radiographer, chest and abdominal scans costs Shs7,000, head scans Shs5,500, vertebral spinal cord Shs6,000 and angiography Shs20,000 saying all prices are subsidised.

Most hospitals in the region charge between Shs10,000 – Shs40,000 depending on the type of scan being taken.

Isaiah Ndula aged 62 years, was among the first patients to be treated at the Vihiga County Referral hospital after the CT scan was installed.

According to his wife, Micah Amukoa aged 54, after visiting five hospitals in vain, they were referred to the referral hospital where after she only paid Ksh.8,000 and her husband (Nduka) underwent several scans.

“The CT scan showed that his spinal cord had fractured and the head had serious injuries. His foot that had swollen was also scanned and it was discovered that the veins were also fractured. A catheter was also inserted in his body to enable the heart to continue pumping,” said M. Amukoa.

Vihiga County Medical Services Chief Officer, Arnold Mamadi, said the CT scan has improved diagnostic services at the facility saying it has the capacity of being upgraded to 64-slice CT Scan machine.

Dr Mamadi said a 64-slice CT scan machine combines a series of X-ray views taken from many different angles, and then uses a computer to reconstruct the “slices” to produce actual pictures.

“Before the installation of the CT scan machine at the referral hospital, mortality rate was very high. Worse of it, some of the patients we used to refer to other hospitals out of the county succumbed on the way before reaching to the doctor who was supposed to attend to them,” he said.

During the launch of the CT-Scan early this year,Vihiga Governor Dr.Wilber Ottichilo said that when he came into office,he prioritized acquisition of a CT-Scan,a vital equipment at any referral hospital. “Our people can not be going all the way up to Eldoret to seek CT Scan services.I now want to encourage Vihiga residents to register for NHIF so that they can get these services at an affordable rates.” Said Dr.Ottichilo.

According to Vihiga County Referral Hospital (VCR) Medical Superintendent, Dr.Vitalis Juma, by April 2019 170 patients who needed CT-Scan services at the facility had successfully undergone treatment since the machine’s installation in February 2019.

MWOKI RESIDENTS TO HAVE A DISPENSARY

Mwoki residents in Masana, South Maragoli ward will not be visiting neighboring health centres to seek medical attention. This is after the county government’s initiative to construct a dispensary in the area.

While addressing the area residents during the groundbreaking ceremony, Otchilo said his government will fully equip the dispensary and employ health workers to serve the people of Masana area to cut down on the cost and distance they travel while seeking treatment. The dispensary will cost 30 million shillings.

“Our people in Masana area have been suffering for a long time travelling to other areas which is expensive but from now on they will receive treatment at Mwoki which will make services affordable, available and accessible to them.” Said Dr Otchilo.

Alfred Ukimu, an area resident expressed their gratitude saying their dream of having a health facility closer to them is now a reality.

The facility is expected to serve more than 50,000 people in and out of Mwoki and it will be set up on a three acre piece of land donated by Mwoki PAG.

Health is Vihiga governor’s priority, hence consuming close to half of the county’s annual budget.

Sharan Imali a medic attending to a patient donating blood at Vihiga Referral Hospital.

COUNTY NEWSLETTER | 2

RESIDENTS

Shuah Makungu a radiographer examining a patient during a CT scan at the Vihiga County Referral Hospital.

170

Number of patients who have received CT Scan Services between February - April

Shuah Makungu a radiographer examining a patient during a CT scan at the Vihiga County Referral Hospital.

Patients will no longer go to Eldoret and Kisumu for CT Scan Services

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Minayo enrolled in the scheme in November 2018, enabling her visit Gsuidimbuli Health Centre four times before birth for antenatal care to accord her the benefits that come with the scheme.

Through the scheme, she got free services that included delivery in addition to the Sh1,000 received every visit to a health facility.

‘We shall continue supporting these women. We shall ensure that no woman delivers from home and that the life of the mother and child is safeguarded’ Governor Ottichilo said.

She calls on the governor to expand the care into offering more supplements and clothing. A few metres away from Minayo’s home, it is all joy just in the neighbourhood where Vella Imali, 30, is reaping another bundle of joy after giving birth baby girl through the Ottichilo Care scheme on April 1.

And on delivery, the scheme of offers her mothers baby effects that include towels, basins and pampers.

The single mother says the help will enable her raise her twins and pleads enable her raise her twins and pleads that no woman delivers from home and that the life of the mother and child is safeguarded. Governor Ottichilo visited the house she is living in, found she has converted the sitting room into her makeshift bedroom.

She had an old mattress, but when Vihiga governor Dr Wilber Ottichilo visited her, among the things he brought her was a new mattress. She enrolled in the scheme in November last year and is home with goodies from the plan that was launched during the same time last year.

Like Minayo, Imali hails the scheme and calls on enhancement to attract more mothers to register.

The two believe by registering all the mothers, cases of deaths during births will come to an end.

This is the narrative shared by all the beneficiaries we spoke to. Community health workers also hail the scheme that has made them more effective at the grassroots.

Everlyn Malesi is one of the many community health workers tasked with enrollment of expectant women in Ottichilo Care program that was launched on 11th December, 2018 at Bugina health centre.

She says many women have registered and all that have given birth through the scheme have had safe deliveries. She says expectant women are subjected to several tests at no fee to ensure their safety and that of unborn infants.

“We make follow-ups to take care of the mothers. Upon registration, we issue them with ‘Boresha number’ for monitoring. We aim at ensuring that they don’t deliver at home,” says Ms Malesi.

H.E Dr Wilber Ottichilo hands a towel and other gifts to vellah imari a beneficiary of the ottichilocare programme.

Maureen Minayo, Ottichilo Care beneficiary receives a mattress and other goodies from Vihiga governor Dr Wilber Ottichilo during Easter holiday.

On February 11, Governor Ottichilo personally visited another woman Rehema Ouma - a member of the scheme who had just delivered twins at the county referral hospital in Mbale. Through the scheme, expectant women are entised with effects for their infants and a monthly stipent of Sh1,000 from delivery until the child attains 18 months in addition to free delivery. At this point, the county government also issues the child with a birth certificate, which gives many mothers a nightmare. Apart from maternal care, the program also promotes family planning. Couples are advised to have healthy spacing of children.

Dr Ottichilo said the scheme had already registered more than 2,500 expectant women by April 2019. Moreover, 21 health centres are implementing the program. The scheme that has been allocated Sh30 million is a partnership program with UNICEF, Swedish embassy and Liverpool university.

The ottichilo Care Program Offers:

- Free antenatal clinic for expectant women KES 1,000 for every 1st & 4th Antenatal Clinic, delivery day, 6th week and 18th month after delivery during immunization.
- Free Delivery
- Post-natal care up to 18 month after birth
- Birth Certificate
- Family planning.

H.E Dr Wilber Ottichilo with the ottichilocare team visiting maureen minayo who delivered twins at gaigedi village under ottichilocare programme.
More than 32,000 Kenyans die every year from cancer. Cancer is number three killer disease in the country after pneumonia and malaria.

To help Vihiga fight cancer, the county governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo through the health department led the county in joining the world to mark World Cancer Day on 4th February 2019 at Hamisi Sub-County Hospital.

The big score of the day was launching of an oncology unit the hospital. Now area residents can be screened for cancer at the facility before they can be given referrals for treatment, for those who are found to be having cancer symptoms.

In addition, the day was a blessing to many as they were screened and sensitized on cancer disease. This was largely achieved through partnership between the county and AMPATH.

The county government will set up oncology units in all sub-counties to provide services to all residents.

Due to the many deaths caused by cancer that most times is discovered at an advanced level where one cannot get treatment especially in women, the county government of Vihiga has introduced the Human papilloma vaccine at the Vihiga County Referral Hospital to prevent cervical cancer.

**Cancer Fact Sheet**
- It kills more than 30,000 Kenyans per year
- It is killer disease number 3 in the country
- About 39,000 people get cancer yearly

**Causes of Cancer**
- Lifestyle-related factors.
- Biological or internal factors, such as age, gender, inherited genetic defects and skin type.
- Environmental exposure, for instance to radon and UV radiation, and fine particulate matter.
- Occupational risk factors, including carcinogens such as many chemicals, radioactive materials and asbestos.
Meet the only Female Ambulance Driver in Vihiga County

Born 32 years ago, bred in Izava Lyaduywa ward, Anne Adisa—mother of two—is not just a normal driver. She is tasked with driving patients in critical condition as fast as she can to health facilities for medical attention. As she narrates to Communication department’s Lindah Mudaki, driving on ambulances requires more than the normal driving skills.

1. We tried to have this interview with you sometime back to no avail. Does it mean you are that busy?
Am always very engaged, my job is a little bit tricky because we are always on call, even if you are seated somewhere you can’t be relaxed because you can receive a call anytime to go and save a life somewhere.

2. Tell me, how your day is usually like...
My day can start anytime. Normally when I don’t receive that 3 or 4am call, I wake up, do some house chores then report to work. Upon arriving at the Vihiga County Referral Hospital, I pick ambulance keys and get to know where I am supposed to hit the road to.

3. How did you find yourself an ambulance driver?
Growing up I used to admire drivers a lot, and to be specific, those driving ambulances. To be precise, I am living my dream. I really wanted to save lives especially that of mother and child during deliveries.

4. Are you married, if yes, does your spouse understand nature of your job?
Yes, I am married. I must admit I have a very supportive spouse who understands my job. He knows that my duty is usually to rush those in need of medical attention to hospital, and even if I come back home at 1am, he fully understands.

5. How many ambulances does the county have, are they well equipped?
Vihiga county has 3 ambulances of which 2 are fully equipped but the department is in the process of acquiring more ambulances for efficient services so that many people with emergencies can be served.

6. Tell us the day you will never forget as an ambulance driver...
There is this day I was rushing a 13-year-old girl who had kidney failure from Chandumba to Kenyatta National Hospital. When we reached Kinoo, so close to the hospital she breathed her last. I was so heartbroken that I had been driving so fast to save her life only to lose her.

7. As I finish, what do people say when they see you drive an ambulance?
Many people get surprised. They ask me where I get the confidence but I tell them I love what I do. Many think it should be a man driving it.

8. How do you rate Vihiga County Referral Hospital?
Services at Vihiga County Referral hospital have greatly improved which has even made patients from other counties come to the hospital for treatment. Drugs are sufficient and the rate at which its being equipped, Vihiga residents should have no doubt about the services offered.

9. Do you think the County Government of Vihiga is committed in improving health care of its people?
YES, the county government has done a lot to improve healthcare for Vihiga residents, talk of the CT scan, new X-ray machines, medical equipment, satellite blood transfusion center that is under construction just to mention but a few. If given time to perform, our governor will be a pace setter on matters devolution.

10. Finally, what do you tell that lady who is either selective with careers or one that wants to be like you?
I want to tell young ladies out there not to be selective when choosing careers. You can always use any career to reach your goal in life. Those who want to drive an ambulance always know that unlike normal driving, here you are after saving lives and serving humanity. Goodluck!

Anne Adisa alighting from the ambulance she drives at the County Referral Hospital before this interview.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Dr. Wilber Ottichilo
Governor

“In my administration my major focus is on Health-care, for one obvious reason, you must have a healthy population if you want to have any development. So for us in vihiga, we are focusing on healthcare as our priority. We want to have a healthy population, once you have a healthy population people can get involved in various initiatives with probably just minimal support.”

Dr. Patrick Sasi
Deputy Governor

“We encourage our culture to continue. We therefore encourage our people of Vihiga County to embrace their culture and pass it to the generations to come. We inherited our vegetables such as emiroo, omuree, sucha, chisaka, seveve from our forefathers and we are therefore tasked to preserve such indigenous vegetables and teach our children skills on how to grow and use them.”

Hasna Mudeizi
Speaker

“Vihiga is the Homeland of Bamboo courtesy of the focus leadership of Governor Wilber Ottichilo,” Environment CS Kerako Tobiko during National Bamboo Policy at Sosa Cottages.”

Josephtha Mukhobe
PS, Culture & Heritage


We as an assembly are working well with the Executive wing of government. That doesn’t mean our roles as Legislative arm are compromised. We perform our oversight roles for the benefit of the people of Vihiga. What we need is your support to enable us achieve development goals for people of Vihiga.”
BRIGHT NEEDY STUDENTS
Benefit from Governor’s Scholarship

The old adage: “Lightning never strike the same place twice” resonates so well with the story of 15-year-old Bornface Esau from Ebusyubi village in Emuhaya, Vihiga County.

Having missed an opportunity to benefit from Equity Foundation’s ‘wings to fly’ scholarship, the newly unveiled scholarship by Governor Wilbur Ottichilo came at the nick of time. “We had given up when we did not receive any communication from Equity Foundation two days to the date when Form Ones were expected to report to schools,” said Esau’s mother Jackline Apondi.

This was a devastating moment for a mother who relies on menial jobs to fend for her family. “I was sure what to tell my son as I had no other plans since the father abandoned national school in Kajiado County. "I didn’t think of alternative slot at the nearby school making it possible for my son to secure education was to be fully catered for at his home in Essong’olo Village,” she said.

The sad reality dawned on master Esau who scored a total of 390 marks in last year’s Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams at Ebusyubi Primary School in Luanda Sub County as Education (KCPE) exams at Ebusyubi.

The caller informed her that master Esau was among the 100 successful beneficiaries to be fully sponsored through the Governor’s scholarship fund, which targets bright but needy students from Vihiga County.

Most of the recipients were picked from among those who were interviewed and subjected to home visits by Equity Foundation team to ascertain whether they merited but were not successful. “Since I had no money for transport, I approached Esau’s teacher who owns a boda boda to carry us to the county headquarters at Mbale where we were to be given some funds for shopping, transport and pocket money,” said Mr. Apondi.

With the help of the county, they managed to secure a place for him at Emusire High School in Emuhaya Sub County to save the family the agony of covering the long distance to Kajiado County. “I am forever grateful to Governor Ottichilo for making it possible for my son to secure an alternative slot at the nearby school which has made it easy for us to pay him a visit whenever it is needed,” said the mother who relies on menial jobs to fend for her family.

But master Esau has promised to work hard and turn the fortunes of the family, as he hopes to pursue his dream of becoming a neurosurgeon and be a pillar to his community. “While I am the only one who has benefited from the Governor’s initiative in my village, many households have to make do with one meal a day as well as contend with the struggles of using kerosene lamps to study at night,” said Mr. Esau.

The family of Esther Andisi from Essong’olo village in Emuhaya Sub County is also yet to overcome the joy of joining the school of her choice after emerging top at the neighbouring Essong’olo Primary School with 397 marks. Due to the failing health of her parents, Esther’s father (Daniel Ong’ayi) confesses that they were not able to raise the school fees for their daughter who was admitted at Kaplong Girls in Bomet County.

But what luck would have it, Ms Apondi received a call from Governor Ottichilo’s office a day to the reporting date, asking her to present her child at the county offices in Mbale the following day.

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100 Bright Needy Students who received full high school Governor’s scholarship in 2019

Miss Esther says she was motivated to work hard when their area Member of County Assembly promised to buy those who achieved over 350 and above a pair of shoes and metal boxes as his support to appreciate their effort.

“My mother saw no need of me going to collect my gifts when they had no plans of taking me to a boarding school due to lack of money but I insisted,” she narrated. But the cries of the 13-year old to the area MCA prompted him to push for her to be considered among the beneficiaries.

“We were overcome with joy and disbelief of the news that Esther was among those whose secondary education was to be fully catered for at a time when we barely had no option,” said her mother Martha Ong’ayi.

The couple who have eight children are often bedridden due to their varied ailments as Mr Ong’ayi has suffered from arthritis for the last 20 years while his wife faces frequent attacks of acute bronchitis. “It gets ugly at times when the two of us get grounded and have to make ends meet as we are the only bread winners in our family,” said Mrs Ong’ayi.

But Esther who is optimistic that she will use the opportunity to uplift her family from the ruins of desperation and giving up in life says she wants to become a lawyer when she grows up.
More than 20,000 students across the county benefited from the Vihiga county bursary fund early this year. A total of 125m was disbanded to students pursuing studies int secondary and tertiary institutions from vulnerable families.

The beneficiaries received between 5,000 to 10,000 shillings while those pursuing technical studies in technical vocational centres (TVET) get full scholarship.

ECDE Classes Construction Boosts Education Sector

However, she cautioned primary headteachers against converting ECDE classroom’s to class eight and seven classrooms.

While commissioning ECDE centres at Jeblabuk and Jebrengo primary schools in Gisambai ward, Vihiga governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo said his government has shifted focus towards initiating solid education foundation to the minors.

Dr. Ottichilo said through education sector his government has already procured learning materials inline with the new curriculum alongside training ECDE teachers by Kenya literature bueraue (KBL).

Governor and his deputy dancing during the launch of Jeblabuk ECDE centre in Gisambai ward.

A total of 125 centres were constructed at a tune of 85 million shillings in this financial year budget.

Mary Anyienda, Chief Officer Education Science and Vocational training said construction of three ECDE centers in every ward across the county will be done before the end of this financial year.

“Already 87 ECDE centers have been completed while the rest are at their final stages, I want to assure Vihiga people that by April this year all 105 centres will be done”, said Mary Anyienda.

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The milestone achieved has already started bearing fruits as the institutions have realized a meaningful increase in the number of students’ enrollment in different fields of study.

“I am encouraging the county to sustain this momentum and initiate private/public participation in the construction of ECDE centres,” said Mary Anyienda, Chief Officer Education Science and Vocational training said.

As local institutions of higher learning, the county has not spared any expense to invest in building the capacities of all the 31 registered TVET institutions as it aims at establishing itself as a technical skills rich county.

The milestone achieved has already started bearing fruits as the institutions have realized a meaningful increase in the number of students’ enrollment in different fields of study.

“The exercise helped the department a great deal in conducting a suitability test for all the tutors as we were able to implement a smooth restructuring and upgrade the quality of technical skills offered,” noted Ms Agufana.

By the end of this financial year, Vihiga County Government is targeting to install equipment and tools in identified centres of excellence.

Some of the institutions earmarked for technological advancement and rehabilitation services include Keveye, Kaimosi, Maseno, Solongo and Emukunzi vocational training centres.

Among others, the machinery to be supplied comprises of automotive and electrical gadgets, agris business tools, hair dressing and beauty therapy tools as well as tailoring and masonry devices.

The initiative is intended to attain equity as the county is aiming to benefit all the

125 Million to Empower the Needy Academically

Vihiga county boss commended county assembly for being prompt in passing the Vihiga county bursary fund bill that enable education science and vocational training department allocate 125 million shillings that translates to 4.8 million shilling across the 25 wards respectively.

Mary Anyienda, Chief Officer in charge of education said that her department submitted a total of 4.8 million to each ward accounts on time just to ensure timely distribution across the county.

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I received bursary from the county government to enable me join Keveye Vocational Training Centre,” she said.

Her father Mr. Isaiah Magumba expressed confidence that the well-equipped institution will enable her daughter acquire skills that would empower her to access opportunities and respond to market demands.

“The platform has given my daughter a second chance in life and now has an opportunity to be a role model to the rest of her siblings as she begins the journey to self-reliance,” she said during an interview at their home.

While acknowledging that Rome was not built in a day, the county Education Boss hopes to seize the moment and take the lead in making institutions in the county places of choice, both nationally and in the region.

Interestingly, the TVET institutions have also attracted a number of students with grade C+ and above as they opt to undertake technical trainings as opposed to joining universities.

“Going forward, we want to turn around the institutions which have for a long time been associated with people who have failed and provide a good alternative to people who want to access post-secondary education,” said Ms Agufana.

However, those still interested to pursue university education can still take advantage of the good foundation provided through various short courses, certificate and diploma programmes the TVETs have on offer.

As a way of motivating and empowering instructors, the county under Governor Wilber Ottichilo used Sh19 million to pay salary arrears, which had been pending for years, in addition to purchasing of branded (Vihiga County) TVET textbooks.

This is besides the instructors undergoing a two-week training on managerial skills in Nakuru as a way of exposing them and sharpening the skills.

“The exercise helped the department a great deal in conducting a suitability test for all the tutors as we were able to implement a smooth restructuring and upgrade the quality of technical skills offered,” noted Ms Agufana.
Vihiga County TVETs First to Implement Bamboo Curriculum

The introduction of bamboo curriculum in Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions in Vihiga County has elicited high expectations as learners are looking forward to reap from the new enterprise. Being the first county to bring on board a bamboo curriculum in Kenya, Vihiga County Government is positioning itself to tap from the opportunity presented by the availability of ready market for bamboo products.

Implementing institutions will include Hambale, Gaudia, Solongo, Mudete, Munugi, Maseno, Nalawa, Mwamba, Ebisiralo, Emukuuki, Kaimosi, Boyani and Karandini.

Some of the products of the fastest growing plant include toothpicks, furniture, musical instruments, door and window frames, medicine, animal fodder, baskets, flooring and use in pulp and paper industry.

Farmers and institutions have already been encouraged to plant bamboo which also acts as a forest cover while students of Hambale Vocational Training Centre have constructed a modern gazebo from bamboo which acts as a demo site for learners.

As a way of encouraging TVET graduates, Governor Ottichillo became the first county chief in the country to preside over a graduation ceremony at Mbane Municipal Grounds. "I call on the youth to change their mindset towards the deaf in Luanda Sub County which has advanced in the undertaking while the neighbouring country learnt from Kenya 37 years ago."

"The advantage of bamboo is that it has over 1,400 species which can grow in almost any part of the country and thrive in the poorest of soils," he said while marking World Water Day in Vihiga on March 22.

Vihiga County Education Chief Officer Mary Anyiendah on the other hand indicated that enough funds have been allocated to purchase tools that will enable students achieve value addition products from the plant through the new curriculum. The county official also pointed out that the department will develop a policy towards bamboo curriculum after successful conclusion of the pilot programme.

Governor Ottichillo on his side noted that the role of bamboo in mitigating environmental problems is going to be even more than the products being anticipated to be derived from bamboo.

He pointed out that the county is well strategized to become the champion of bamboo growing in Kenya as they seek to commercialise bamboo farming and benefit from the lucrative green economy. "Tapping on the aptitude of one of the world’s fastest growing plants, the county hopes to rapidly increase the forest cover as well as exploit the versatility of the giant grass to build a sustainable future," said Mr Ottichillo.

The move comes at a time when Kenya has devoted itself to meet a global commitment to achieve 30 percent forest cover in the next three years. President Uhuru Kenyatta while opening the third annual One Planet Summit at the United Nations Office Complex in Nairobi in March this year underlined the need for the country to move from the current level seven percent.

To ascertain the viability of the venture and encourage its ownership, Environment Cabinet Secretary Keriko Tobiko called on the county government to roll out an intensive civic education as a way of highlighting to the public the benefits of bamboo. "I appeal to the county government to closely work with all the stakeholders including entrepreneurs, financial institutions, members of the civil societies and non-state actors in order for them to wholly embrace the move," said the CS.

He noted as unfortunate that Kenyans could be forced to do their benchmarking activity in Ethiopia which has advanced in the undertaking while the neighbouring country learnt from Kenya 37 years ago.

The training of trainers was conducted by International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), an intergovernmental organization registered with the United Nations that promotes the growing of bamboo for economic and environmental gains.

Vihiga County TVETs First to Implement Bamboo Curriculum
**Dairy Farmers to Benefit from Trainings**

Women and Youth in Vihiga have a reason to smile as they were recently privileged to be considered by Welt Hunger Hilfe, in their 5-year project of transforming Dairy Cattle farming into being more entrepreneurial. The same project is also expected to elaborate more to the residents of the county on how to adopt the culture of agribusiness.

Speaking during the official launch of the project in Vihiga, Governor Wilber Ottichilo assured the stakeholders that his government is dedicated into seeing that the program succeeds effectively. "The project is going to promote dairy farming with a major impact that will change the agricultural landscape in the county," Said the County Boss. He also urged the youth to embrace agribusiness.

As a result, the cooperative movement will be supported by the county government as the engine of development by recruiting a chief officer in the cooperative directorate and more senior staff in the department. It is also expected that there will be recruitment of more field extension officers, veterinary services will be improved to manage disease control and artificial insemination will be practiced to upgrade the animals for high production of milk.

The County Director for WHH Mr. Elvis Lumbasona said they are happy to partner with Vihiga County to improve on milk production by improving on animal husbandry. That is by improving on the animal breed, improving on food intake, improving on veterinary services, capacity building/providing training for farmers, marketing, Milk Value chain and providing storage coolers.

"Our department under the leadership of our able Governor has procured 75 storage coolers. They will be distributed to different dairy farmers groups in the county, Said Chief Officer for agriculture department, Pamela Busungu.

**Farmers to benefit from Sh.193 Million for Agribusiness**

Farmers are set to benefit from 193 million grants from the National Agriculture and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP).

NARIGP is a World Bank funded program aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and profitability in rural communities through trainings and micro-project investments.

The target projects 4 value chains including dairy cow, local chicken, indigenous vegetables and tissue culture bananas.

Community has already been sensitized and community institutions which are CDCs have been trained and signed MOU with the County Government.

The groups have started developing proposals for funding currently a total of 65 proposals has been developed and being evaluated by CDCs and sub-county technical teams. Proposal development will be a continuous process and it’s targeting 573 groups in the whole county at a cost of sh. 193 million.

The project under component 2 on supporting producer organization is in the process of forming an umbrella body for all actors along each value chain. This component aims at aggregating all the groups along each value chain to form a producer organization which will assist farmers in marketing and value addition of their products.

The project has component 3 which is supporting county community led development; this entail land scope wide investment which cut across 2 or 3 wards. Currently 1 area of investment has been identified in Luanda cutting across Embungo, Wemilabi and Central Bunyore. It’s targeting irrigation, micro-project investments.

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**Commercialization of Indigenous Vegetables, a Great Boost to Vihiga Farmers**

Beatrice Jerono, an African Indigenous Vegetables farmer from Gamalenga displaying slender leaf vegetables in her farm.

Lack of market, proper training and storage facilities have always been a major problem faced by indigenous vegetable farmers across the county.

The farmers, whose produce has always gone stale for lack of market and proper storage will now have value for their goods following the establishment of both local and international markets for their produce under the commercial project to cultivate African Indigenous vegetables.

The project which was launched by Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo has seen over 2,500 farmers across the county enrolled under it. The farmers, who were trained on the best farming practices by the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology also received seeds from the National Products Industry (NPI).

Having costed the County Government Sh. 30 million, the project will see farmers produce sold within and outside the county.

Speaking during the launch of the project in Shamakhokho ward on 29/03/2019, Dr. Ottichilo assured farmers that there is an already established market for the farmers produce among them Tusks and Carrefour. The farmers will also have a cottage industry established for them and their produce dried and packaged for sale.

"My government will ensure that a cottage industry is established to ensure your products are well packaged before sales. This will enhance better sales," The Governor said.

Vihiga County is among counties selected by the National Government to pilot the project. The farmers will be planting black nightshade (lisuutsa), cowpeas (likuyi), spider plant (itosaga) and jute mallow (muture) vegetables.

Permanent Secretary for Culture and Heritage Josephtha Mukobe who graced the launch in Shamakhokho said that indigenous vegetables can help curb most of the diet related diseases affecting a greater population in the modern society among them anaemia and cardiovascular diseases.
COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN DAIRY FARMING

The National and the County government is set to buy and distribute five milk coolers worth 8 million each to 5 dairy cooperatives. The facilities will comprise milk coolers worth 3,000 litres capacity, solar panel for water heating and a standby generator.

Bunyore Livestock Co-operative Society is one of the cooperative societies in the county. Located in Luanda Sub County, the society held a sensitization meeting to the farmers.

Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo outlined the ongoing plans to revive dairy societies within the County one of them being distribution of 150 dairy cattle for a period of 21 days before they are transferred from the breeding ponds to an indoor hatchery for incubation. The project is located at Mwitoko Farm, a 14-acre parcel of land, also in Luanda Sub County and has 31 large fish ponds.

Vihiga County’s annual milk requirement is about 60 million litres but produces only half of this. The County is also in the process of purchasing motorbikes to enable extension officers move around with ease to help farmers.

The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives has also prepared a Co-operative Enterprise Fund bill that is awaiting County Assembly approval so as to aid in strengthening Cooperative societies within the County in terms of funding.

Vihiaga Targets Sh240 Million in fish farming

A cute shortage of fish in Vihiga County has seen fish mongers rake in millions by selling the product at exorbitant prices.

This is despite the county being located barely 20km from Lake Victoria. The high prices are attributed to the fact that the demand for fish is very high as compared to its supply. The price is even double in eateries.

Majority of the fish being consumed in Vihiga now comes from Lake Victoria, Lake Turkana, local fish ponds and to the extreme, the ones imported from China. As a way of solving the acute shortage of fish in the county, Governor Wilber Ottichilo, has embarked on a multi-million project that will see the county stock and hatch fingerlings in large scale and supply to the farmers at a subsidised price.

The project is located at Mwitoko Farm, a 14-acre parcel of land, also in Luanda Sub County and has 31 large fish ponds.

According to Governor Ottichilo, the few farmers in the county after harvesting fish, they always experience the problem of getting fingerlings and in case they manage to get them, they are of poor quality and expensive.

“We are revamping the fisheries sector and we are mainly concerned with aquaculture which is slowly picking. Currently, we have at least 1,634 farmers who have engaged themselves in fish farming activities which are mainly carried out in ponds that were started under the Economic Stimulus Program (ESP) in 2010-2013,” said Ottichilo.

Dr Ottichilo said the 1,200 fish ponds in the county cover a total area of 45 hectares with the main fish cultured being Nile Tilapia and Catfish, saying that Nile Tilapia is preferred by the farmers as it grows faster and is tolerant to diseases. Wilson Munala, the County Director of Fisheries, in an interview, said the 10 out of the 31 fish ponds at Mwitoko Fish Farm will be stocked with parent stock like Nile Tilapia (Oreochromis niloticus) and catfish for brooding fingerlings, once the farm is fully operational.

Mr Munala said the remaining 21 ponds will be used for keeping fingerlings (nursing ponds) before they are distributed to fish farmers.

The County Fisheries boss noted that eggs and newly hatched fingerlings will be transferred from the breeding ponds to an indoor hatchery for incubation for a period of 21 days before they are transferred to the nursery ponds for growing to marketable fingerlings.

“At the hatchery, we will be changing growing to marketable fingerlings. For a period of 21 days before they are to an indoor hatchery for incubation. The County Fisheries boss noted that eggs and newly hatched fingerlings will be transferred from the breeding ponds to an indoor hatchery for incubation for a period of 21 days before they are transferred to the nursery ponds for growing to marketable fingerlings.

According to Munala, they intend to produce 1.2 million fingerlings (Nile tilapia) and 500,000 fingerlings (catfish) from the fish farm annually, adding that farmers in the County usually stock catfish to control overbreeding since its demand is lower than that of Tilapia.

Munala said in the 2017/18 financial year, a total of sh17 million was allocated to the project and in the 2018/19 fiscal year, another Sh10 million has been pumped into the project so that the county can raise enough fingerlings and boost fish farming in the county.

According to Stephen Njau, the Deputy County Director in charge of fisheries, if all the current ponds within the County were to be stocked, fish farmers will be able to harvest between 800-1,000 mature fish per pond, saying out of the 1,200 ponds, they will at least get 960,000 fish.

“A tilapia fish at the local market goes at Shs 250. The farmers will get at least Shs 240 million and this will go a long way towards improving their economic status,” said Mr Njau. According to the Directorate of Fisheries, there is a ready market for fish at leading local markets in Luanda town, Mibale, Chavakali, Shamakhokho, Maseno and even Kakamega and Bungoma.

Fresh harvested tilapia fish at Solongo vocational training centre.

Governor Ottichilo gives Samuel Ndere subsidized fertilizer at Emuhaya. 37,900 farmers benefited from the fertilizer bought at a cost of 70M.
**Behind the Scenes**

"Guraanduka nooooo" I guess these were the words coming from the mouth of our Ag. County Secretary Philip Gavuna.

Away from the crowd, away from the security but they were not away from our camera. Our governor and his deputy having a chat.

Now if you don’t find our Chief of Staff Noah Okaya in the office, you know where to find him. Interacting with common mwananchi.

**Love for Children** - As other officers from the communication department were busy taking photos here, videos there; these two were having a father-child moment during their fieldwork in Hamisi.

Talk of class friendship. His Excellency could not worry about safety of his fingers.

Onyl heaven knows the joke that almost broke mheshimiwa Bagada’s ribs.

Vihiga Governor trying to balance fibre made commodity as his deputy seems to enjoy each and every bit.

Wait, I can imagine the speed at which our chief of staff fled to save ESRI desktops from crushing. Otherwise we could be counting losses.

**Much Awaited Fire Engine Arrives**

The anticipated fire fighting engine is finally in Vihiga County to help in fighting fire disasters in the county.

The 10,000 litre capacity fire machine make (MAN33.360 T6*4BB-WW) which costed the County sh.57.6 million was purchased from Australia and will cut down numerous loses of property incurred in the past due to fires.

The county had earlier purchased a Rapid Response Vehicle (TOYOTA D-MAX) at a cost of sh. 15 million which will help access remote areas.

Vihiga governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo termed it as a step towards the realization of his flagship projects in the county.

"Vihiga residents now have a fully equipped and functional fire engine to help in mitigating fires together with the rapid response vehicle." Said governor Wilber.

Residents in the county did not hide their joy upon getting the good news citing it as a relief since the county has been hiring fire fighting services from Kisumu or Kakamega which because of distance sometimes arrived late as the fires cause more mayhem.

“We will now not suffer by waiting for fire engine services from Kakamega and Kisumu, fire will be extinguished faster and easier,” said Eunice Amuko, a market vendor in Mbale Municipality.

Vihiga becomes one of the counties in the Lake Region Economic Block to have such a modern fire engine.

**Transport & Infrastructure in Pictures**

Completed Ondeyo PAG - Water Supply - Siloya road

Construction of high mast light ongoing at Serem market

Construction of Endeli-Tsimbalo road

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Vihiga becomes one of the counties in the Lake Region Economic Block to have such a modern fire engine.
Speaking during the public participation, Vihiga Governor said that the county has 9.7% coverage of trees including bamboo according to the ministry of Environment and Forestry.

“We as a county are even planning to pass the 10% mark and get to 15% in terms of tree coverage so as to enhance our environment”

CS Tobiko also gave out seedlings to students of Esibila Secondary School in Emuhaya during the World Metrological day that came after that public participation for planting at homes.

Chief Officer in charge of Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Resources Dominic Luvavo said that the environment committee that was sworn in has been trained on how to approach the process of reclaiming the riparian lands in the county.

In Vihiga we already boast of a son of the land who discovered and is reaping from the myriad benefits of bamboo. Victor Mwanga, Shamakhokho resident who is the leading bamboo farmer in Vihiga produces more than 1,500 products from the bamboo tree such as chairs, desks, baskets, toothpicks, charcoal bricks among others.

**County’s Plan to Reclaim Riparian Land through Bamboo Plantation**

Vihiga County is distributing bamboo seedlings to farmers to help reclaim riparian land and river beds in the county. In tandem with that, the county through the department of Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Recourses will set up a 20 acres bamboo seedling nursery in Kibiri forest.

Out of 20,000 seedlings expected to be planted, 1,000 have been given to Lake Victoria North Water Board Service to plant along the river beds that give water for distribution in the county by the organization since bamboo purifies the water. 1000 more seedlings were given out during the world Forest day to be planted in the rehabilitated Maragoli hills to revive the scenic place. More seedlings will be given to the Technical and Vocational Institutions offering the bamboo curriculum for purposes of educating the students during this rainy season. 1000 bamboo seedlings will be planted at Ebusekwe hill.

Public participation forum on draft National Bamboo Policy 2019 was held in the county on March 22nd 2019 and graced by Cabinet Secretary in charge of Ministry of Environment & Forestry, Keriako Tobiko to educate the community on importance of bamboo.

It's in this spirit that the county will partner with the National government to improve bamboo farming for both home and commercial use. It's through the policy that the government will partake in; allocation of at least 10 percent of overall annual budget to promote bamboo plantation, promotion of bamboo planting in riparian lands and in watershed management in line with prevailing wetlands policy and regulations, mandate block farming of bamboo on Forest land above 30-degree slope along with deep-rooted trees and planting of bamboo as farm boundaries and in terraces in farm land...

**Water Projects**

1. Nang’oli water project – Luanda South ward (on-going)
2. Esirulo – Emalindi water project – Central Bunyore (on-going)
3. Eburnangwe water supply – North East Bunyore ward (on-going)
4. Chango water supply – Central Maragoli ward (stalled)
5. Mbihi water supply – Lugalagwa/sumulumu ward (on-going)
6. Gaga water supply – Gisimbi ward (on-going)
7. Chapsaga water project – Banja ward (on-going)
8. Chekombero water project – Busali ward (completed and to be commissioned)
9. Mang’ong’o water project – South maragoli ward funded by the World bank was completed and commissioned.
10. Eburnangwe water project – on-going.

Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo and Environment CS having a look at items made from bamboo

A Student of Chekombera primary school enjoying clean water from chekombera water project.

Construction works at Kaimosi water project.Its among the 1.7B Belgium water projects that will serve 195,000 households in Vihiga.

Construction works ongoing at Maseno water project. Maseno,Kaimosi and Lunyere are Belgium water projects.

A Student of Chekombera primary school enjoying clean water from chekombera water project.

Environment CS Keriako Tobiko and Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo together with other national and county officers

Developer Ottichilo having a chat with renowned metrological news anchor Ngwata Francis

County’s Minister for Water and Environment Prof. Enanda Mwanje addressing people

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1. Governor, The Wasundi-Kigama road is in a horrible state, when will it be rehabilitated? 

Hello Herbert, the Wasundi-Kigama road has been eroded and is in a bad state yet the department of transport and infrastructure has factored it in the financial year’s budget for it to be rehabilitated. I kindly request for your patience.

Kindly lia with your area Member of County Assembly and give him other roads that need to be rehabilitated to done through the ward based projects.

2. Mheshiwiwa Governor, when will the county Government give us ‘Trade Enterprise Funds to start businesses?”

Hello Gladys, the Trade and Enterprise board is already in office (sworn in on 24th January 2019). The board will be in charge of disbursing the funds for empowerment of micro and medium enterprises from 13th May 2019.

The fund has KES 33 million. The criteria for application are already in public domain.

3. Governor, we are having a problem paying school fees for our secondary students. What is your plan to help parents like me have a difficulty in paying high school fees?

It is not the prerogative of the County Government to pay school fees for students. However, the County Government is well aware of the plight of needy and bright students who are inhibited to continue their education due to poor economic backgrounds. For these students, the county government of Vihiga has availed the Vihiga County Education Fund (Bursary) to support in a small way the parents/guardians of these students. We also recently launched the Governor’s Scholarship program that fully sponsors the education of needy students from our communities, from form one to four.

4. Can we have piped water in Mwikobana to address frequent water shortages? 

Amukoko James – Mwikobana

Hello Amukoko, The Maseno water project is near completion. With it operational, the entire Mwikobana ward will benefit greatly from piped water. We are also building Ng’oloi water project with the capacity of supplying the entire Luanda South, Mwikobana and Luanda Township wards. With this project, we are looking forward to ensuring every homestead has access to piped water.

To ensure all this achievable and sustainable in the long run, we have revitalised Amati water services that will be managing water schemes and water supplies in Vihiga County.

5. We get difficulties when patients are in critical condition and require quick attention. Can the department of health get an ambulance in this area? 

Kevin Oyole – Luanda South

Currently the county government has three ambulances domiciled at Emuhaya, Hamisi and Sabatta Sub-county hospitals. We also have one at the County Referral Hospital.

In the 2019/2020 financial year budget, we have budgeted funds to acquire 2 more ambulances one of which will be domiciled in Luanda Sub-county. We believe this will go a long way to strengthening health emergency services in Vihiga County.

6. Is it possible to have a dairy plant in our county? 

Philip Angiicho – Luanda South

Currently, we have Vihiga dairy cooperative. As much as we urge farmers to take their milk there, we are distributing milk coolers in each sub county to strengthen milk production.

One of the agendas in my manifesto was revitalizing cooperative movements in Vihiga County. We have presented a cooperative bill to the assembly that once approved and enacted into county law will make the realization of this agenda possible. We have several development partners who are willing to support this in this endeavour but it has to start with creating capacity to supply the milk to warrant establishment of a milk plant.

7. When will the Emusire-Luanda road be completed?

Lawrence Kutetto – Central Bunyore

Thank you Lawrence for this question. The Emusire-Luanda road is a project under Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KERRA) of the National Government. However, the County Government is a key stakeholder interested in the expedient completion of the project without compromising the expected quality of the work. My office has been in constant communication with KERRA and the contractor to ensure the completion of the road in good time.

8. Governor, you said that we keep worshippers in church daily from Monday to Monday. Does this mean that you are neglecting pastors?

Rev. Geoffrey Muhando – Central Maragoli

Rev. Geoffrey Muhando, I know you understand 2 Thessalonians 3:10 which says, “For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: if a man will not work, he shall not eat.” I never meant to offend church goers. I was encouraging Vihiga residents to be objective in their respective religions. Even God rested for one day after creating the universe for six days. So Geoffrey lets have time for everything in order to help Vihiga grow.

There is a famous Nigerian quote that says something like, “if you do not know where you are coming from, you don’t know where you are heading to, you can’t get lost.” This saying would appear to be an apt reference to many counties in the country.

The state of confusion under which most counties operate makes it difficult for one to undertake an honest assessment and this explains why the few that have clear plans and strategies stand out even when that for which they are being applauded does not amount to much.

Vihiga County is currently attempting to have a clear trajectory that is set to see the county dine at table with the few success stories such as Kakamega and Makueni counties. Looking at the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018-2022 read together with the County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSIP) 2019/2020, one sees a ray of hope for the county. Not only do the plans look exciting but the evidence of what is already taking place on the ground is encouraging.

However, the county is lucky because its people driven development makes it easier for people to accept change even when such a change seems painful at first.

The county is succeeding in actualizing development and in so doing even the most skeptical are beginning to change their mind. This encouraging state of the county, more development can be seen through infrastructural works where the county government, working with MCAs has embarked on major road construction throughout the county, including opening up hitherto inaccessible villages. And one could go on and on. Of course, more needs to be done but given that the county government is operating with and within clear plans, I have no doubt our better days are ahead.

This encouraging state of the county, must be attributed to the great people of Vihiga county and to the steward. Governor Ottichilo has, within the short period that he has been at the helm, shown that Vihiga can make it and with the support of Vihiga people, he will deliver Vihiga. It is for this reason, that I see the people of Vihiga supporting their governor all the way beyond 2022.

VIHIGA RISING

Prof. Herman Manyora
Political and Communication Specialist.

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ix months after being sworn in, the Municipal Board of Vihiga County has started implementing its planned projects as outlined in the Urban Areas and Cities Act and under Kenya Urban Support Program (KUSP). Just recently, Governor Wilber Ottichilo together with the Board Members conducted a ground breaking ceremony for construction of high mast flood lights at Majengo market. Under KUSP, 15 high mast floodlights are set to be commissioned and installed within the Municipality in areas like Chavakali, Mudete, Majengo, Mbale, Kiritu, Gisambai, Lotego and Kidundu.

I will ensure that Majengo Market becomes a secure and 24hr town as it has always been the wish of Vihiga people,” said Governor Ottichilo in his speech. KUSP is a Sh.250 million programme funded by the world bank, with the aim of beautifying and rehabilitating all the urban centres in the county.

The Governor was very particular in his remarks on matters of effective development by his government citing that he had taken time since he came into office to master the proper ways of implementing projects for the people of Vihiga and that the year 2019 is time for action. The Governor tasked the Board Members to fast track the exercise as money for Municipal projects is readily available.

“As the Board members, we will ensure that these projects are well implemented since we are working with a government that has well structured plans for the people of Vihiga,” said the deputy chair of the board Dorcas Wodera. She even outlined plans that the board has once the installation of flood lights is completed.

**Some projects under KUSP are:**

- Beautification of the main towns within the Municipality - Landscaping and Planting Flowers & Trees which will add aesthetic value to our towns i.e Majengo, Mbale, Chavakali and Mudete.
- Upgrading of roads to bitumen standards as well as developing pedestrian walkways - this will increase safety of residents on the roads and improvement of accessibility in all seasons.
- Provision of Garbage Compacting truck, Excavator and Skip Loader to manage both solid and liquid waste - this will promote cleanliness in our streets as residents will be encouraged to dump solid waste in bins which will then be emptied on a regular basis.
- Construction of a wetland - this will assist in improving liquid waste management in Mbale town. The wetland will clean liquid waste from the main septic tank at the prison area & ensure the water entering into the river is safe for human consumption.
- Provision of fire hydrants at strategic points in Mbale and Majengo.
- Beautification of the major towns within the Municipality - Landscaping and Planting Flowers & Trees which will add aesthetic value to our towns i.e Majengo, Mbale, Chavakali and Mudete.
- Upgrading of roads to bitumen standards as well as developing pedestrian walkways - this will increase safety of residents on the roads and improvement of accessibility in all seasons.
- Provision of Garbage Compacting truck, Excavator and Skip Loader to manage both solid and liquid waste - this will promote cleanliness in our streets as residents will be encouraged to dump solid waste in bins which will then be emptied on a regular basis.
- Construction of a wetland - this will assist in improving liquid waste management in Mbale town. The wetland will clean liquid waste from the main septic tank at the prison area & ensure the water entering into the river is safe for human consumption.
- Provision of fire hydrants at strategic points in Mbale and Majengo.
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Chief of Staff Noah Okaya admires Vihiga map made from dried banana fibre in the county booth in Kirinyaga during devolution conference.

Devolution CS Eugene Wamalwa takes a look at the aquaponic system displayed by agricultural department during devolution conference at Kirinyaga University.

Paul Mbuni CECM in-charge of Administration Coordination of County Affairs at the county’s booth during the devolution conference.

Vihiga County Assembly’s Speaker Hasna Mudeizi giving her submission in a forum during the devolution conference.

Vihiga Deputy Governor Dr. Patrick Saisi shakes hand with Kirinyaga governor Ann Waiguru before a football match in Kirinyaga during devolution conference.

Magaret Ahona in her cow shed. She is among the beneficiary of dairy cow from the county government of Vihiga.

Deputy Governor washing a boy’s leg afflicted by jiggers in Shiru.

A worker refurbishing county Staff houses in Sabatia. The program is being carried out by the Department of Lands.

Vihiga Deputy Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo with KMPDU leadership in his office led by Dr Oroko Obegi (Chair) and Dr. Oluga Ouma (Sec Gen).

Songo Agribusiness students fish harvesting class at the institution’s fish pond. The institution benefited from the county government of Vihiga fingerlings and fish starter feed.
33 Million Loan to Empower Business People

Business people in the county have always cited lack of capital as the main hindrance to the growth and establishment of small and medium enterprises. It is now expected that business in the county will develop and grow rapidly after the empowerment of traders through disbursement of the trade and enterprise funds. The funds will be given to small and medium enterprises before June 2019.

It will be a revolving fund whereby successful loan applicants will have to repay their loans for others to benefit. “I want to tell traders that this fund belongs to them and it will be a revolving fund that will attract interest and return, others can get access to a lower rate, so that as they grow, it will become a revolving fund that will attract interest but at a lower rate, so that as they return, others can get access to the funds” said Pamela Amunga, a board member during the training of traders at Vihiga Friends Church.

Individual Qualifications

Applicants, both group and individuals, will be required to download the forms from the county government web page, which they will fill, attach a business proposal and a current single business permit or a registration certificate for people in groups. The forms will then be submitted to desk officers who will be stationed in every sub county office and later be vetted and presented to the trade and enterprise fund board for approval. The forms will be made accessible to all interested individuals who meet the loan requirements on an ongoing basis since the fund is a revolving one.

Successful loan applicants will be given loans by the trade and enterprise funds board in partnership with equity bank. The county government has allocated Ksh 33 million for the traders of Vihiga County.

“Previously, we left the market by 7pm. We were afraid of running our businesses till late because robbers thrived under darkness, but when the streetlights became operational, we can now work up to 10 pm”, said Luke Chabuga, a businessman in Cheptulu market.

“My business has improved since these lights were installed because I can work till late. Some time back, I had to leave the market earlier, this is not the case anymore”, said Mary Abukuse, a trader from Mwicho market.

Insecurity

Insecurity which has been a menace to the traders and other residents has greatly reduced since the installation of the street lights.

Facts

- Installation of streetlights is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County Government, the national government and Kenya Power.
- The County government is mandated to ensure proper maintenance of the streetlights and payment of electricity bills.
- Installation of streetlights is an ongoing project and markets that still lack lighting will have lights installed.

Streetlights Boosting Businesses

Availability of street lighting has enabled traders who could not run their businesses late into the night do so and this is improving the economy as more income is generated. Business people who previously used to leave their work premises earlier are now running their businesses late into the night.

Markets in the county are expected to develop and grow rapidly as the county embarks on promoting trade and local economic development under the trade and market management bill.

Speaking after signing the bill into law, Governor Wilber Ottichilo said the bill will uplift trade through available markets. “We have never had a law governing how trade is undertaken in our markets, our markets have been free for all but with this bill now our markets are going to be organised, people using the markets will have a clear way of carrying out their operations and this bill gives them an enabling environment” said Dr Ottichilo.

There will be established the market management committee under the bill which will develop income generating programs to maintain the markets, aid in running social amenities in the markets, provide orderly manner of movement of persons and traffic transporting goods to the market and provide liaison between the traders and the directorate of trade and markets.

The directorate on the other hand will promote and develop small businesses by providing business support and advisory services to traders. It will promote inter trading with other counties and represent matters of trade affecting the county at various discussion forums. It will also sensitize the public on laws relating to fair trading and consumer protection and ensure traders get access to suitable funding by the government or donors.

According to Geoffrey Vukaya, County Executive Committee Member (CECM) in charge of Trade tourism and industrialization, the bill will seek to ensure market days are gazetted for the different markets and tenancy agreement for all stalls are established to ensure proof of ownership for each stall exists.

“We’ve not been having legal market days in our 314 markets but now this will be clearly defined in our law, the regulations will guide on when and how to increase rent basing on economy variations” said Vukaya.

Market development under the bill will be enhanced through; building modern markets, renovating and maintaining existing markets, providing lighting and modern sanitary facilities, assisting in proper coordination of market elections and mobilizing the private sector to participate in county development programs.

Street lights in Mbale. They were installed to boost county’s security and economy.

A Conducive Environment established for traders as the Market Management Bill is signed into law

Traders at Mbale market

A weighing scale in a butchery. Weight and measures bill was passed to help consumers against con traders.

A bodaboda shade at Cheptulu, Hamisi Subcounty. The county Government is constructing the shades for bodaboda riders.

Trade Pictorials
**SPORTS, YOUTH, GENDER AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Hope for Vihiga Teams as County Launches Stadium Construction**

The construction works at Hamisi stadium has kicked off. The stadium, located in Gisambai Ward-Hamisi Sub County will consist of a main stand, changing rooms, perimeter fence, the main playing ground and is expected to accommodate close to 15,000 people, costing the County Government 35 million in the first phase.

Apart from football, the arena will also play host to other sporting activities such as Rugby, Volleyball, Netball, Boxing among others with adequate lighting systems and standard facilities.

In his remarks while launching the works in April 2019, Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo said that sporting teams within the county will experience a new chapter after completion of the stadium. He also issued a stern warning to greedy and incompetent contractors who disappear with money and abandon their projects to keep off from development projects in the county.

‘Those contractors who are not capable of executing their works accordingly should surrender to those in a position to perform. We shall also blacklist them,’ said Ottichilo. Once complete, the stadium will become a home playing ground for Vihiga United and Vihiga Queens football clubs who are playing their premier league matches in Bukhungu and Munias grounds respectively.

Vihiga Queens Captain Ainez Mango appreciated the County Government for the noble initiative, stating that it will go a long way in setting rules and standards in the county’s football which attracts lots of supporters.

Gov. Ottichilo also said that once effective, there will be no more matches, unlike the current routine where we visit them. The coach, Alex Alumira on his part notes that since the county government started sponsoring the girls, a lot has been realized with most ladies having cleared their university fees through the salaries they earn as Queens Players of the team.

The lads are also proud of having several players who have earned national call up to Kenya’s Harambee Stars, the most recent being the appearance of Centre Back Benard Ochieng during the AFCON qualifier match between Kenya and Black Stars of Ghana, a match that was played in Ghana.

United is currently at position 16 having played 30 matches.

Apart from sports, the County Government through the Department of Gender, Culture and Sports has also been sponsoring other cultural groups which have excelled in various competitions across the country. For instance, Chavakali Friends Choir emerged the best group choir during the 92nd Kenya Music Festival with Juthaidi Farmers Women group being crowned as the best cultural group during the same competitions.

Deputy Governor Dr. Patrick Saisi speaking during the presentation of trophies by various champions from different competitions to the county government, said that the bill once signed into law will bring to an end the hitches normally experienced whenever it comes to financially supporting these groups.

As government, we shall continue supporting all these talents because they also make us proud as a county and fly our flag out there.’ Dr. Saisi said.

**A New Dawn for People with Special Needs in Vihiga County**

People With Disability in Vihiga will now be fully recognized and have easy access to services. This is after Vihiga Governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo assented to the Disability Bill.

As the Governor, I will ensure that this bill is implemented effectively and that the disabled get equal opportunities in my government,’ Dr. Ottichilo said.

Naomi Mandela, nominated to represent the disabled in Vihiga County Assembly stated that Vihiga County now becomes second after Kisumu to have passed Disability Bill.

Mandela also outlined that once effective, there will be formation of a Vihiga County Board for Persons With Disability to advocate amongst other issues 5% representation of the disability especially in matters to do with employment.

The board will also ensure that the welfare and issues to do with the disability are handled accordingly.

This, she said will ensure equitable distribution of opportunities to people with disabilities.

Inattendence was the Vihiga County Assembly leadership led by The Speaker Husana Mudeizi and members of the County Executive Committee.

**Vihiga Queens, the Reigning Women Premier League Champions**

The coach, Alex Alumira on his part notes that since the county government started sponsoring the girls, a lot has been realized with most ladies having cleared their college fees and university school fees through the salaries they earn as Queens Players of the team.

Their male counterparts, Vihiga United were able to survive from relegation having finished position 12 with 41 points despite first time appearance in the 2017/18 KPL season.

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**COUNTY NEWSLETTER | 32**
Residents of Luanda Sub County
listening to 2019 - 2020 budget public
participation at Mumboha A.C.K in April.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

“Public participation is a constitutional requirement
whose main aim is to encourage the public to have
a meaningful input into decision making process in
budgeting. Vihiga residents in all the five subcounties
were given a chance to give their views on 2019/2020
budget. The exercise helped in boosting democracy by
letting people say the kind of services they need. The
county government of Vihiga carries out this exercise to
also improve transparency and accountability in decision
making process of budget making process and also
increase public confidence in the government.”

Members of the County Budget and Economic Forum inspecting Doctor’s Plaza
at Vihiga Referral Hospital when they had their first meeting.

County budget &
economic forum
kicks off work

B eing a requirement outlined in Section 137 of the Public Finance
Management (PFM) Act, each
county is required to establish a County
Budget and Economic Forum (CBEF) that
comprises of The Governor, His Deputy,
the 10-member County Executive
Committee and representatives from
various groups and institutions.

In Vihiga, the forum which was unveiled
on 8th November 2018 held its first
meeting on 25th of February 2019
with an aim of overseeing the county
leadership within the executive.

As a way of kick starting their duties, the
team visited the County Referral Hospital
to assess completed and ongoing works
done by the governor. Speaking on behalf
of the forum, renown political analyst
Prof. Herman Manyora, said that the
team will assist the county on budgetary
matters for it to serve vihiga residents
fullthro.

“If what we have seen today at the
hospital in terms of development and
facilities, not forgetting cleanliness is
anything to go by then I believe we are
on the right track.” Said Manyora.

The mandate of the forum is to provide
means of consultation by the county
government on the preparation of county
plans, matters relating to budgeting, economy
and financial management at the county level and accountability.


HEALTH SERVICES

COMPLETED
1. Emuhaya Sub county hospital
2. Hamisi Sub county hospital
3. Kisirui dispensary
4. Mulundu dispensary
5. Luanda dispensary
6. Jebroo dispensary
7. Renovation of sabatia hospital
9. Kaptech dispensary
Ongoing projects
1.  Construction of Hospital plaza
2.  Construction of county blood
    transfusion center
3.  Completion of Bugamangi dispensary
4.  Renovation of;
    a. Emuhaya Sub county hospital
    b. Hamisi Sub county hospital
    c. Kisirui dispensary
    d. Mulundu dispensary
    e. Kumbu dispensary
    f. Kimwenge dispensary
    g. Esgo dispensary
    h. Shiru health center
    i. Esirulo dispensary
    j. Kegoye dispensary
    k. Luanda dispensary
    l. Luanda dispensary

EDUCATION

COMPLETED
1. Renovation of classes and dormitory at
    Keveye VTC
2. Purchasing of Motor Vehicle at
    Gimomoi VTC
3. Supply of Furniture To All VTC
4. Supply of KRAT tools to all Public
    ECDE
5. Supply of Stationery To All Public ECDE
6. Supply of Electric Circuit At Keveye VTC
7. Construction of temporal structure at
    Shiru VTC
8. Supply of Projectors and White boards
to all VTC
9. Construction of Workshops at
    Keveye VTC
10. Supply of KLB Books to all Public
    ECDE centres
11. Supply of Car Spare parts to VTC
12. Supply of Stationery to all VTC

ONGOING ECDE CLASSROOMS
1. Mbihi - Lugaga Wamuluma
2. Chanda - Central Maragoli
3. Gimomoi - Banja
4. Kapkoi - Banja
5. Kibara - Izava/Lyaduywa
6. Onyekwu - Izava/Lyaduywa
7. Kegondi - Sabatia West
8. Kisatiru - Sabatia West
9. Iteko - C/ Maragoli
10. Ebusamba - Luanda South
11. Esivembe - Luanda South
12. Mwakale - Emabungo
13. Waluka - Emabungo
14. Ebuwando - Emabungo
15. Givigoi - Gisambai
16. Vokoli - Wodanga
17. Eliba - Wodanga
18. Esibeye - Mwibona
19. Kigunda - Chavakali
20. Kitulo - Mungoma

SUMMARY OF PROJECTS IN DEPARTMENTS

HEALTH SERVICES

SUMMARY

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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21. Musunguti - Mungoma
22. Ebusiekwe - Central Bunyore
23. Sitruru - Sabatia West
24. Vihiga - C/Maragoli
25. Wanondi - Chavakali
26. Gaigedi – Wodanga

NOTE: We have more than 75 ECDE classes under construction which are ward based.

ON-GOING WORKS IN TVETS
I. Rennovation of Emmukunzi VTC
II. Rennovation of Solongo VTC
III. Construction of a domitory at Ebukhuya school for the deaf
IV. Renovation of classes at Kaimosi VTC
V. Renovation of domitories and administration block at Maseno VTC

AGRICULTURE, FIESHERIES, LIVESTOCK & COOPERATIVES

1. Distribution of Dairy cows
2. Supply of incubators and brooders
3. Mukhalakhala Slaughter
4. Ovacado seedlings
5. Coffee pulper
6. Supply of green houses

ONGOING
1. Supply and delivery of dairy goats
2. Mwitoliko fish farm
3. Vaccination of animals

4. Tea, coffee, ovocado planting
5. Supply of tea seedlings and coffee

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Provision of fire engine and rapid response vehicle
2. Installation of lightning arresters
3. Completed Simbi- Sawmill road
4. Completed Mugaza – Chamasilili – Lunyrere road

AGRICULTURE, FIESHERIES, LIVESTOCK & COOPERATIVES

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2. Supply of incubators and brooders
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UN Habitat team led by Head of the Youth Douglas Ragan(in half-coat), Project Management Assistant Linus Siyenyi (in blue trouser) and Technical support officer Kelvin Keya when they paid the Governor a courtesy call in February.

COURTESY CALLS

It was all smiles when former Rarieda member of parliament Nicholas Gumbo met his former counterpart, now Vihiga Governor Dr.Wilber Ottichilo.

UN Habitat team led by Head of the Youth Douglas Ragan(in half-coat), Project Management Assistant Linus Siyenyi (in blue trouser) and Technical support officer Kelvin Keya when they paid the Governor a courtesy call in February.

ENVIRONMENT, WATER, MINING & NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Mang’ong’o water project
2. Chokombero water project
3. Gisambai Majengo water project
4. Ilungu toilet
5. Piping of muhanda water project
6. Rehabilitation of water springs

ON-GOING
1. Lunyerere water project
2. Maseno water project
3. Kaimosi water project
4. Rehabilitation of maragoli hills
5. Nang’oli water project
6. Esirulo – Emalindi water project
7. Ebunagwe water supply
8. Mbhi water supply
9. Gana water supply
10. Chepsaga water supply
11. Distribution of piping for Mang’ong’o water project
12. Equipping vigina primary school borehole
13. Equipping of Eregi junction borehole
14. Pipping of Standiska – Viyalo – Kilingili market
15. Rehabilitation of Five springs Central Maragoli
16. Drilling and equipping borehole at Banja
17. Drilling of borehole South West Bunyore
• Piping at Kaptech
• Matsigulu water project
• Piping of Ebusakami water project
• Bumbo - Shamakhokho water project
• Construction of a raised tank at Kima market

LANDS, PHYSICAL PLANNING AND HOUSING

COMPLETED PROJECTS

1. Geospatial Technologies System Laboratory at the County Headquarters and Sub County Offices.

2. Successful transfer of Title Deed to Kenya School of Government (KSG) for Land at Emanda where KSG campus is to be constructed.

ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Projects Directly funded by the County Government
   • Refurbishment of the roofing of County staff houses
   • Preparation of valuation rolls for Vihiga municipality and Luanda Town council
   • Fencing of select markets within the County
   • Establishment of GTS Lab and purchase of software.
   • Purchase of land for land banking in Gilwazi and Luanda.

TRADE

COMPLETED

• 4 market shades in Luanda South
• 1 market shade in North Bunyore
• Bodaboda shades in Busali
• 2 bodaboda shades - Luanda South
• 2 bodaboda shades - South Maragoli
• 2 bodaboda shades - Shiru
• 2 bodaboda shades - Banja

ONGOING PROJECTS

1. Construction of markets
2. Construction of bodaboda shades
3. Completion of works at Wemilabi market
4. Slabbing of Luanda mama mboga market
5. Murraming of Cheptulu, Kilingili, Mudete market
6. Construction of toilets in Mudete, Ekwando and Cheptulu
7. Constructing a high mast flood light at Kima market

SPORTS, CULTURE, YOUTH, GENDER, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL SERVICES

COMPLETED PROJECTS

• Leveling and grassing of Emukunzi grounds.

ONGOING PROJECTS

- Lwenya ground levelling in Sabatia.
- Hamisi Stadium construction in Hamisi.
- Development works at Kidundu grounds.
- Development works at Mumboha stadium.
- Leveling and fencing of Mahanga grounds.
- Levelling and construction of a shed at Ebusakami grounds

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To all our readers,

We can’t thank you enough for your unending support and loyalty to this publication. You are the reason we passionately ink our pages just to make sure you are updated on all the developmental happenings in our beautiful county, 0038. Asante sana!

Talk to us through: infovihiga@gmail.com, communications@vihiga.go.ke  
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA, P.O BOX 344 – 50300, MARAGOLI

The one and only new fire engine bought by the County Government to fight fire disasters.

Vihiga governor Dr. Wilber Ottichilo carries baby Goldsyndicate Mudeizi born under the OttichiloCare program in Sabatia. Looking on are her parents. The program launched in December 2018 to encourage women deliver from hospitals had registered 2,500 women by April 2019.