

IMPACT OF EMBRACING DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVED GOVERNANCE THROUGH THE MYMAKUENI COUNTY APP

On June 30, 2023, Hon. William Ruto, the President of Kenya, inaugurated the enhanced national eCitizen platform, offering more than 5000 online services. While this has streamlined national-level services, many Counties are still struggling to provide digital solutions for the devolved functions. As a result, residents continue to shuttle between physical offices, relying on paperwork for necessary approvals.

Makueni County has partnered with Safaricom to introduce the MyMakueni County App, an online platform aimed at improving digital governance. This App launched in March 2023, has made Makueni County the inaugural recipient of Safaricom's program, which is designed to facilitate the seamless transition of Counties toward digital service delivery. This significant achievement not only underscores Makueni County's pioneering role but also represents a substantial leap forward in the quest for greater transparency, accountability, and responsiveness within the sphere of local governance.

The MyMakueni County App, developed in close collaboration with the County Department of ICT, provides a comprehensive solution by consolidating all County services into a unified, user-friendly platform. This innovation enables residents, including business owners, car owners, plot owners, and citizens, to conveniently access and make payments for a wide range of County services. These services encompass various aspects such as land and building payments, revenue collection, parking fees, business permits, market access, utility bills, and more. Further, the app establishes a direct channel for engagement, allowing citizens to communicate directly with the governor through the "Sema na Mutula Jnr" feature.

One of the most remarkable outcomes of this digital transformation is the substantial increase in revenue, achieved through the integration of electronic cashless self-service platforms like Hada za Soko, land/business permits, and "Sema na Governor." This shift has led to a significant upswing in Own-Source Revenue between March



to June from 272,021,820 to 305,711,352 an increase of 33,689,532. The adoption of this digital revenue collection system has effectively eradicated issues related to theft and vulnerabilities inherent in manual revenue collection methods. Consequently, cases of harassment by individuals falsely claiming to be County officers and illicitly collecting taxes from market traders have been eliminated.

Accessing the app has been made convenient through multiple avenues, including a USSD short code (*838#), a mini-app accessible on the M-Pesa super app, download options from the Google Play Store or App Store, and a web portal accessible at www.mycounty.co.ke.

