

THE COUNCIL MONTHLY



H.E. Gladys Wanga (Center); Hon. Catherine Muma (4th left) Hon. Beatrice Ogolla (3rd left) and CoG CEO Mary Mwiti (5th left); the Homa Bay team and CoG secretariat during the Devolution Sensitization Week (DSW) in Mbita, Homa Bay County

DEVOLUTION SENSITIZATION WEEK 2025 – A STEP TOWARDS CITIZEN-CENTRIC GOVERNANCE FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE.



H.E Gladys Wanga speaking during the Devolution Sensitization Week (DSW) in Mbita, Homa Bay County

The week - long initiative provided an opportunity for direct, meaningful and candid engagements with the residents of Homa Bay on devolved governance and service delivery. Additionally, it included interventions such as a lands and legal aid clinic as well as a free medical camp which saw the community receive essential healthcare services.

Making the official opening remarks, H.E Gladys Wanga noted that the DSW reflected a collective resolve to make Devolution real and accessible to every person in Homa Bay, acknowledging the challenges, aspirations and contributions of our communities to governance.

“Good governance is not just about policies but about presence, proximity and responding to the real needs of the people,” noted Governor Gladys Wanga.

CoG CEO Mary Mwiti on her part noted that the DSW underscores a powerful truth - citizen engagement is not just a mere formality or constitutional requirement, but a critical process that is the cornerstone of accountable governance.

Devolution is more than a structure of governance, it is about bringing government closer to the people, listening to the real issues they face and addressing their needs through citizen centric service delivery and development.

To this end, the Council of Governors (CoG) in collaboration with partners and the Homa Bay County Government, held the Devolution Sensitization Week (DSW) in Mbita, Homa Bay County from 30th June – 3rd July 2025. The DSW brought together County leaders including the Executive, Senators, MCAs, Women and Youth representatives, Senate, the Judiciary and members of the public.

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KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH

“We are carrying your voices with us as we prepare for the Devolution Conference 2025 to be held from 12th -15th August right here in Homa Bay. The Conference is not about reciting reports but an opportunity to center national discourse on the lived experiences of the people so that our development agenda can truly be people - driven,” she affirmed.

The DSW medical camp had a reach of approximately 24,800 people. These are not just statistics, each number represents a person whose burden was lightened, health restored and whose hope was renewed.

In the general outpatient department 4,960 patients were seen and attended to. 21 individuals accessed family planning services, securing their right to make informed choices about reproductive health, 149 women underwent breast cancer screening while another 30 were screened for cervical cancer. The eye clinic saw 490 people screened with 261 of them being treated immediately. 190 were issued with reading glasses and 25 with corrective glasses. Importantly, 24 patients were referred for further treatment including 17 who were diagnosed with cataracts. As part of the efforts to ensure inclusivity, the medical camp attended to people living with disabilities with 20 of them receiving essential services. Additionally, the medical camp conducted nutritional assessments and reproductive health education for the youth while the Blood donation drive collected 35 pints of blood.

“**Citizen engagement is not just a mere formality or constitutional requirement but a critical process that is fundamental to accountable governance.**”

Mary Mwiti
CEO Council of Governors



Senators Hon. Catherine Muma (Left) and Hon. Beatrice Ogolla during the Devolution Sensitization Week (DSW) in Mbita, Homa Bay County

From land inheritance, subdivision and boundary disputes to cases of land fraud and conflicting title deeds, the land clinic offered valuable insights to the residents of Homa Bay. Justice, just like healthcare, must be accessible and meet people where they are and this was evident throughout the DSW.

Making remarks on behalf of the Speaker of the Senate Rt. Hon. Amason Kingi, Senator Catherine Muma emphasized the need to create an equitable, just and inclusive society where all voices are heard, individual rights are upheld and protected and fundamental freedoms are observed through transparent governance.

“Young people are the heartbeat of our nation yet, they continue to face challenges such as unemployment, early pregnancies, and drug abuse. As leaders, we must create spaces where the youth are heard—not sidelined. We must also raise greater awareness of youth empowerment programs and affirmative action to ensure equitable access for young people across all regions of Kenya,” she added while addressing the youth during an engagement on the second day of the DSW.

Her Counterpart Senator Beatrice Ogolla further noted that the DSW is an example of what Devolution truly means - bringing essential services, information, and opportunities directly to the people at the grassroots.

“This initiative has shown us that when we come together in the spirit of partnership and devolution, the benefits to our communities are tangible and transformative,” added Senator Ogolla.

The CEO Council of Governors extended heartfelt appreciation to all partners, Homa Bay County Government, the Senate and the planning secretariat for their steadfast support, and unwavering commitment to ensuring the success of the DSW 2025.

Further, she thanked all the Healthcare workers who supported the delivery of services and more importantly, the people of Homa Bay for their active participation and engagement.



CEO CoG Mary Mwiti making remarks during the Devolution Sensitization Week (DSW) in Mbita, Homa Bay County

The land and legal aid clinic provided critical advisory and referral services particularly in relation to family succession, criminal procedures, marriage and matrimonial property, social protection and devolution laws.

IBEC CHARTS THE WAY FORWARD ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL FISCAL REFORMS

The 27th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Budget and Economic Council (IBEC) was held on Monday, 23rd June 2025, at the Deputy President’s official residence in Karen, Nairobi. The session was chaired by the Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Prof. Kithure Kindiki. The Chairperson of the Council of Governors (CoG), H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, Governor of Wajir County led the delegation of excellency governors

The meeting brought together Governors, Cabinet Secretaries, heads of constitutional commissions, representatives from independent offices, and senior public finance officials to deliberate on key fiscal matters affecting both levels of government. It came at a critical time, as County

Governments close the 2024/2025 Financial Year and transition into the next, amid ongoing fiscal constraints, delayed disbursements, and pending structural reforms.

Speaking during the meeting, the Deputy President emphasized the importance of cooperation between the two levels of government to accelerate service delivery. “This is a meeting of both levels of Government, created by the Public Finance Management Act, to facilitate a seamless process between the two levels of Government—working as one for the benefit of all Kenyans,” said the Deputy President. He further called for a renewed spirit of consultation and collaboration in line with the principles of intergovernmental relations.



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H.E. Prof. Kithure Kindiki speaking during the 27th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Budget and Economic Council (IBEC)

In his remarks, CoG Chairperson H.E. Ahmed Abdullahi reaffirmed the Council's commitment to strengthening intergovernmental

coordination as a foundation for effective devolution. He underscored the urgency of resolving long-standing challenges including delays in disbursement, legislative gaps, and administrative bottlenecks. He also raised concern

“The resolutions we make in IBEC sessions are not merely policy recommendations; they are the cornerstone of effective service delivery and governance.”

H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, EGH

over the timing of disbursements toward fiscal year, calling on the National Treasury to Governments a two-week extension beyond the closure to enable full absorption of funds.

the close of the grant County financial year

“Our collective focus must now shift from planning to action, from decisions to delivery,” said Governor Abdullahi. “The resolutions we make in IBEC sessions are not merely policy recommendations; they are the cornerstone of effective service delivery and governance.”

A key outcome of the session was the National Treasury's commitment to release the remaining KES 30.83 billion in equitable share by Friday, 27th June 2025, to complete the 2024/2025 disbursement cycle. This was prioritized as a matter of urgency to ensure County Governments meet

end-year financial obligations. The Council welcomed this commitment, while also urging Treasury to take into account the limited absorption window and support Counties by extending financial operations by two weeks.

On health financing, the Council applauded the registration of 23.9 million Kenyans under the Taifa Care program. The Ministry of Health, CoG, and Social Health Authority (SHA) were directed to develop a clear mechanism for timely remittances to the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) to sustain public trust and ensure uninterrupted health services.

The Council also adopted the County Governments Pending Bills Action Plan and instructed the Office of the Auditor General to issue guidelines for the verification of eligible bills, aligned with a recent High Court ruling. In response to a court decision affecting bursary programs beyond FY 2024/25, the Council resolved to establish a technical committee to develop a harmonized framework for future implementation.

Looking ahead, the Council directed the National Treasury to fast-track disbursement of additional allocations under the County Government Additional Allocations Act (CGAAA) and finalize amendments to the Public Finance Management Act to enhance fiscal flexibility and streamline funds flow.

The 27th IBEC session concluded with a call for implementation, accountability, and results. Governor Abdullahi reiterated that the success of Kenya's devolution journey depends on coordinated action and timely execution of resolutions. “It is only through shared responsibility and deliberate follow-through that we can deliver meaningful change to the people we serve,” he said.



H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi speaking during the 27th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Budget and Economic Council (IBEC)

A NEW DAWN FOR MERU: LEADERS EQUIPPED TO DELIVER TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

The Council of Governors conducted an induction workshop for the newly appointed County Executive Committee Members (CECMs) and Members of County Assembly (MCAs) from Meru County under the theme; A new dawn: Re-invigorating Meru County for effective service delivery. The workshop sought to: equip the members of the executive with the requisite leadership skills to support the Governor's vision and enhance service delivery; clarify roles and responsibilities of the members of the Executive and the Members of the County Assembly of Meru and; facilitate seamless integration between the executive and the Assembly.

The workshop was officially opened by the Deputy Governor, H.E. Linda Kiome, who expressed her gratitude to the Council of Governors for organizing the induction. She reiterated her commitment to supporting the Governor's vision and emphasized the importance of unity and dedication in achieving meaningful progress for the people of Meru.



Deputy Governor Meru County H.E. Linda Kiome speaking during induction workshop for the CECMs and MCAs from Meru County



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CEO CoG Mary Mwiti speaking during induction workshop for the CECMs and MCAs from Meru County

“As we progress in this workshop, I urge you to absorb as much as possible to help us build a better county and serve the people of Meru diligently over the remaining two and a half years of our term. If we commit ourselves fully, we can achieve significant milestones and uplift the lives of many who count on us,” she remarked.

Giving her remarks the CEO Council of Governors Mary Mwiti called upon the Meru team to foster a culture that values results, performance, and accountability. She also emphasized on the need to align their energies with the vision of the Governor and County Assembly to help build a foundation for delivering impactful and sustainable development.

“I urge you to ensure effective service delivery in the County and establish appropriate balance between compliance with policies, regulations, norms, and standards in provision of service delivery. Understanding your roles as well as the legal requirements will ensure accountability to stakeholders and optimal use of available resources,”

She further appealed to both the MCAs and CECMs to serve with integrity, humility, and purpose. Emphasizing the principles of public service, she highlighted the need for leaders to demystify their roles and consistently uphold the ethos of servant leadership.

The workshop was also graced by former Makueni Governor, H.E. Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, who shared experiences during his tenure as governor. He underscored the value of shared vision and the need for leaders to effectively manage public expectations through transparent and consistent communication. Drawing from Makueni’s experience, he underlined the need for a well-coordinated approach between various levels of leadership, including the Governor, Deputy Governor, County Executives, and the County Assembly.

“I pray that all of us to continue to embrace evidence-based planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation for accountable service delivery while prioritizing the Meru agenda.”
H.E Linda Kiome

Additionally, the Secretary to the Cabinet, Ms. Mercy Wanjau, engaged the participants on the critical aspects of managing county cabinet affairs and conducting effective cabinet meetings. Her presentation covered key distinctions between the structure of the national Cabinet and the County Executive Committee, as well as the operational functions of the cabinet. She elaborated on the essential elements of cabinet memoranda—highlighting the need for them to be concise, appropriately classified, and signed by the originating CECM. Furthermore, she emphasized the importance of implementing cabinet decisions efficiently and embracing technology to modernize governance processes.

In her closing remarks, Deputy Governor Kiome called on the team to apply the knowledge gained during the induction in their day-to-day operations.

“We are confident that with the insights gained from this induction and lessons learnt through the experiences of our fellow colleagues, we will be able to ensure the smooth running of all operations in the various departments and the County at large, I pray that all of us to continue to embrace evidence-based planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation for accountable service delivery while prioritizing the Meru agenda. Together, we can build more resilient and inclusive Meru that deliver quality services to all residents” added the deputy governor

The induction workshop provided a valuable opportunity for County Executive Committee Members and Members of the County Assembly to strengthen their collaboration, share ideas, and collectively shape policies that will enhance public service management in Meru. A consensus was reached on the need to develop a comprehensive work plan that identifies actionable priorities and delivers quick wins to accelerate the county’s development agenda.



H.E. Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, speaking during induction workshop for the CECMs and MCAs from Meru County

COUNTY LEADERS PUSH FOR FISCAL REFORMS AND INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

County Governments are stepping up efforts to strengthen financial governance and ensure the success of key development programs, with leaders reaffirming their commitment to reforms under the Kenya Devolution Support Programme Phase II (KDSP II) and emphasizing the need for comprehensive infrastructure to support the Affordable Housing Programme.

Speaking during a sensitization workshop for County Executive Committee Members (CECMs) for Finance held at Lake Naivasha Resort on 10th June 2025, the Chairperson of the Council of Governors’ Finance, Planning and Economic Affairs Committee, H.E. FCPA Fernandes Barasa, underscored the strategic importance of KDSP II in reinforcing sustainable financing, expenditure management and accountable governance across Counties.

“This is one of the most transformative initiatives under KDSP II,” Governor Barasa noted. “If implemented effectively, it will enhance public financial management, human resource systems, intergovernmental coordination and citizen participation—pillars that are vital to service delivery.”

The workshop focused on updating CECMs on the progress of KDSP II and sensitizing them on new fiscal tools and frameworks developed by national agencies. These include revenue forecasting models, project screening guidelines, pending bills validation templates, and investment tracking systems—all designed to strengthen planning, budgeting, and reporting at the County level.

Governor Barasa urged finance executives to adopt these reforms as part of their planning for this financial year, noting that they are tied to



disbursement-linked indicators and will influence future resource allocations. He confirmed that the Council’s Finance Committee had reviewed and adopted the tools in advance, demonstrating leadership commitment.



H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi speaking during a sensitization workshop for County Executive Committee Members on KDSP II

On the sidelines of the workshop, the discussion extended beyond finance into how counties can support the success of flagship national programmes. One area that attracted significant interest was the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP), a central component of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

County leaders, led by CoG Chairperson H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, EGH, emphasized that housing cannot be addressed in isolation from the physical and social infrastructure needed to make communities livable and sustainable.

“Providing houses alone is not enough,” Governor Abdullahi noted. “We must ensure every housing development is supported by roads, water systems, electricity, schools, hospitals, markets, and security infrastructure. Otherwise, we risk creating new urban challenges rather than solving existing ones.”

He reminded participants that counties are constitutionally mandated to oversee spatial planning and land use management and are directly responsible for the services that give life to housing projects. The leaders agreed that coordination between the National and County Governments is essential to avoid fragmented development and to ensure the Affordable Housing Programme delivers long-term impact.

Governor Barasa also cautioned against unstructured engagements between national agencies and county officers, calling for adherence to intergovernmental frameworks to ensure clarity, ownership, and continuity in program implementation.

As the workshop concluded, there was a shared sense of priority among county leaders to institutionalize reforms, embrace fiscal discipline, and work collaboratively to support Kenya’s development goals.



H.E. FCPA Fernandes Barasa speaking during a sensitization workshop for County Executive Committee Members on KDSP II

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS CONVENES LEGAL COMMITTEE AND COUNTY ATTORNEYS ON KDSP II

On 24th June 2025, the Council of Governors convened a strategic meeting bringing together the Legal Committee of CoG and County Attorneys from all 47 County Governments to deliberate on the Kenya Devolution Support Programme Phase II (KDSP II) and the enabling frameworks developed to enhance intergovernmental relations. The workshop, held in Kilifi County, was graced by the Chairperson of the Legal Committee, H.E. Achilo Ayako; the Governor of Makueni County, H.E. Mutula Kilonzo; Host Deputy Governor, H.E. Flora Mbetsa; and the Deputy Governor of Meru County, H.E. Linda Kiome.

The primary objective of the workshop was to equip the legal professionals within County Governments with the requisite knowledge and tools to support the effective implementation of KDSP II—a conditional grant program designed to strengthen governance structures and align them with the priorities outlined in the Devolution Sector Plan.

In his opening remarks, H.E. Achilo Ayako, urged County Attorneys to lead their jurisdictions toward a more just, accountable, and citizen-centered future, underscoring the importance of principled service and leadership.

“As we set our sights on the future through KDSP II, it is vital that we reflect on the successes of KDSP I,” he noted. “The first phase was instrumental in laying the groundwork for County Governments—facilitating the delivery of key infrastructure and services that have positively impacted the lives of millions.”

Makueni Governor, H.E. Mutula Kilonzo, echoed these sentiments, noting that KDSP II places a heightened focus on reform, performance, and inclusivity. He emphasized that the program’s design reflects the practical needs and priorities of County Governments, directly addressing challenges on the ground while reinforcing institutional systems for effective,

accountable, and sustainable service delivery.

“The success of KDSP II rests on a solid legal foundation,” he stated. “This places the Legal Committee and County Attorneys at the core of its implementation. I encourage all of us to embrace this initiative with commitment and diligence—championing transparency, robust legal frameworks, and inclusive development.”



Chairperson of the Legal Committee at CoG H.E. Achilo Ayako speaking during the sensitization of County Attorneys on KDSP II

In her remarks, Kilifi Deputy Governor, H.E. Flora Mbetsa, highlighted the critical role of sound legal systems in driving KDSP II’s success. She emphasized the need for sustainable revenue generation, prudent expenditure



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management, transparent procurement processes, and professional human resource systems.

“Let us approach this workshop not only as a learning platform but also as an opportunity to exchange ideas, ask critical questions, and build our collective capacity as legal practitioners and policy influencers,” she added.

Deputy Governor of Meru County, H.E. Linda Kiome, called on County Attorneys to work collaboratively to promote greater accountability, inclusivity, and responsiveness in the devolved governance system. She encouraged active engagement, experience sharing, and joint problem-solving to foster stronger institutions and deliver better outcomes for citizens.

“This is our moment to shape a more equitable and effective devolution landscape for the benefit of the people of Kenya,” she concluded.



H.E. Mutula Kilonzo speaking during the sensitization of County Attorneys on KDSP II

UGATUZI CORNER



Vice Chair of the CoG Urban Development Committee H.E Susan Kihika speaking during the second session of the Kenya Urban forum

The second Kenya Urban forum, convened by the Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development in collaboration with the Council of Governors, the World Bank, UN-Habitat, Kenya Institute of Planners and other partners, held from 17th to 19th June, 2025 emerged as a landmark event in Kenya’s commitment to shape a sustainable, inclusive, and transformative urban future.

The session was officially opened by H.E the President in Naivasha Municipality under the theme the “Future is Urban” - Driving Kenya’s Vision for Urban Transformation through inclusive, resilient and sustainable development.

During the forum, the Vice Chair of the CoG Urban Development Committee H.E Susan Kihika underscored that urban growth must be intentional, calling for visionary planning that is environmentally responsible, digitally enabled, and inclusive. She urged a shift from fragmented governance to citizen-centered systems, with coordinated action across sectors.

ZERO HOME DELIVERIES IN BUSIA, KAMURIAI’S BOLD SHIFT TO SAFER MOTHERHOOD

Busia County, a critical gateway to the East African Community, is making remarkable strides in improving its healthcare system despite facing significant challenges common to border regions. Difficult terrain, poor road network, lack of identification documents and cross-border health financing obstacles have historically limited access to medical services. Additionally, frequent public health threats like mpox, ebola and COVID-19 have tested the County’s health system, which continues to grapple with workforce shortages, infrastructure gaps and language barriers.

Amid these challenges, Busia achieved a major milestone, the complete elimination of unskilled home deliveries in Kamuriai Location, Malaba North Ward. Traditionally, mothers preferred Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) due to poverty, cultural beliefs and long distances to health facilities. TBAs were affordable, accessible and deeply trusted within the community. The County Government, recognizing the health risks involved, launched a comprehensive, community-led initiative that included chiefs, Nyumba Kumi members, CHPs, religious leaders, TBAs and village elders.

Rather than excluding TBAs, the program integrated them as birth companions, allowing them to support women emotionally and encourage skilled facility deliveries. TBAs shared powerful testimonies about the dangers of unskilled deliveries, which helped shift community perceptions. Chiefs and CHPs led door-to-door sensitizations and community forums, engaging men to support maternal health decisions. Structured collaboration among community health committees, religious leaders and local administrators ensured accountability and collective ownership.

The County also invested in outreach, emergency referrals and health worker incentives, with support from partners like DANIDA. CHPs actively-mapped pregnancies and provided timely follow-ups. This sustained, inclusive strategy significantly built community trust in the formal health system.

The Council commends the model and seeks for scaling to other regions, continuing TBA integration, providing transport support and maintaining regular community dialogues to secure long-term maternal health improvements.



Sensitization and training sessions between the chiefs, Nyumba kumi members, village elders, Community Health Promoters (CHPs), and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)



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KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH



48 Governments 1 Nation