



Unlocking the Tourism Potential of Makueni County through Strategic Branding and Marketing

In 2021, the County Government of Makueni adopted the Makueni County Tourism Policy, which sets a clear vision: to unlock the County's tourism potential through structured product development, investment attraction, and community engagement. A key

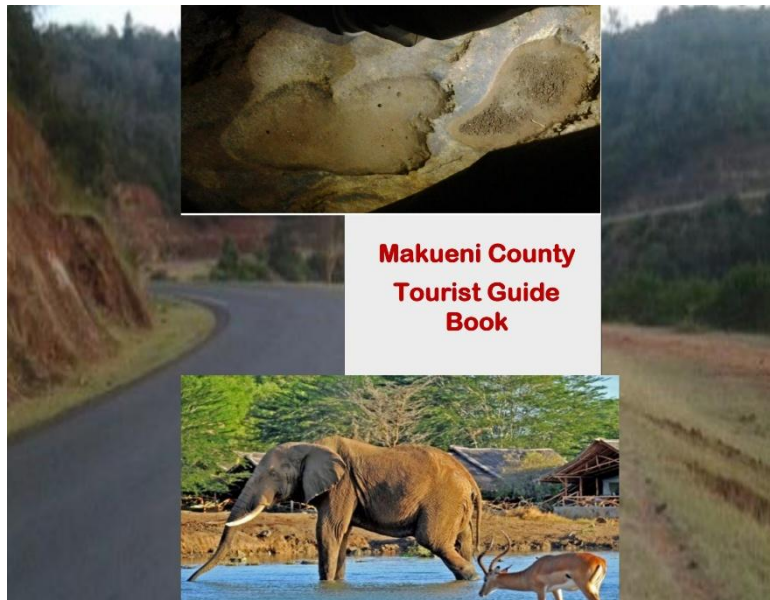


Figure 1 The Makueni Tourism Guidebook, showcasing the County's diverse attractions and tourism offerings

outcome of the policy's implementation was the development of **the Makueni Tourism Guidebook**, a strategic tool designed to document, brand, and promote the County's diverse tourism assets.

The guidebook was developed through a participatory process involving County tourism officials, community members, tour operators and hoteliers. It maps out over 30 attractions across the County, categorized

into nature based, cultural, religious, and culinary tourism.

Among the standout experiences are hiking trails like Nzaui Hill and Chyulu Hills, which offer breath taking views and rich biodiversity. Tsavo West National Park, part of Kenya's oldest and most expansive protected area, also extends into Makueni, offering iconic wildlife experiences. The guidebook also highlights spiritual tourism through sites like Kalamba, the birthplace of the African Inland Church in Kenya, now a national religious monument. Cultural experiences are equally emphasized, with opportunities for visitors to engage with traditional Kamba dancers, local artisans, and storytellers. Tourists can also enjoy authentic local cuisines.

To support visitor planning and tourism product packaging, the guidebook also includes a comprehensive mapping of accommodation and hospitality facilities across the County. This includes hotels, lodges, and restaurants in key towns such as Wote, Emali, and Makindu, positioning Makueni as a viable inland destination for both leisure travel and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE).



The guidebook serves not only as a promotional asset but also as a planning and investment tool. It provides practical information on accessibility, safety, accommodations, site descriptions, and curated travel circuits. By packaging Makueni's tourism assets into a coherent, easy-to-use product, the guidebook has empowered local businesses and positioned the County for increased visibility in Kenya's competitive tourism sector.

The impact of this initiative has been evident. Local sites have experienced a gradual increase in visitor interest, with the guidebook used at exhibitions, County forums, and regional fairs. It has also sparked increased community involvement in tourism enterprise development, including guided tours, homestays, and cultural performances.

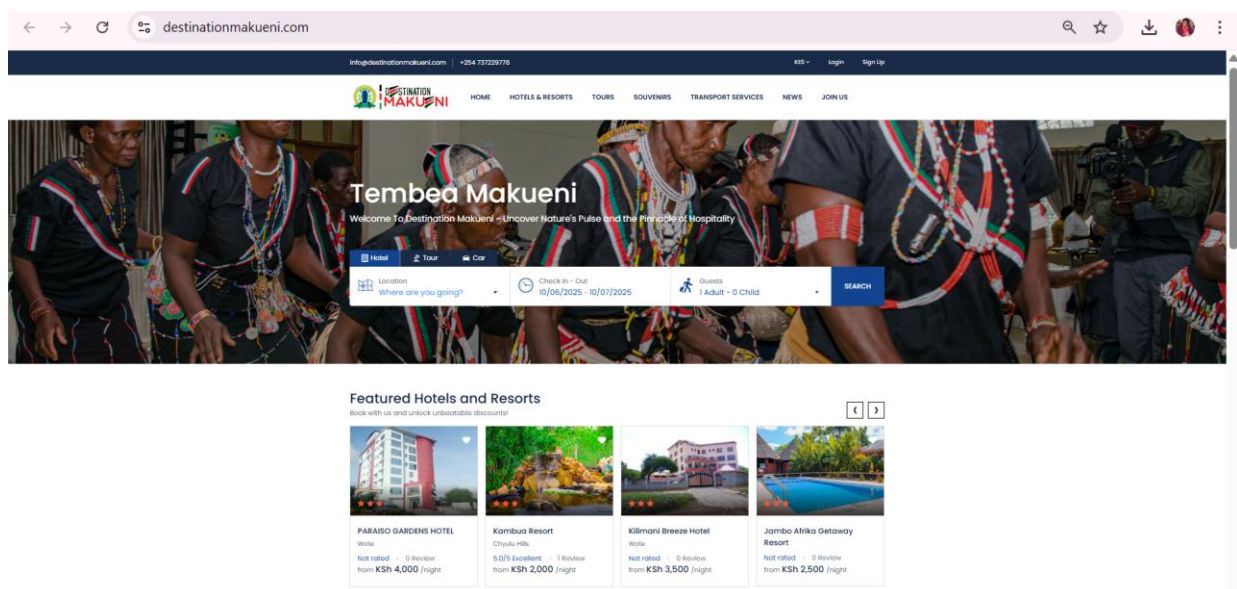


Figure 2 Destination Makueni digital platform, showcasing the County's attractions, accommodations, and tourism experiences

To amplify the reach of its tourism strategy, the County launched **Destination Makueni** (<https://destinationmakueni.com/>), a digital platform that showcases the County's attractions, events, accommodations, and experiences. This online portal complements the guidebook by offering a dynamic space for trip planning, marketing, and business listings, and strengthens the County's digital tourism footprint.

What initiative has your County taken to promote tourism and local enterprise?

Visit <https://maarifa.cog.go.ke/> to learn more about the successful initiatives on service delivery our Counties are undertaking.

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