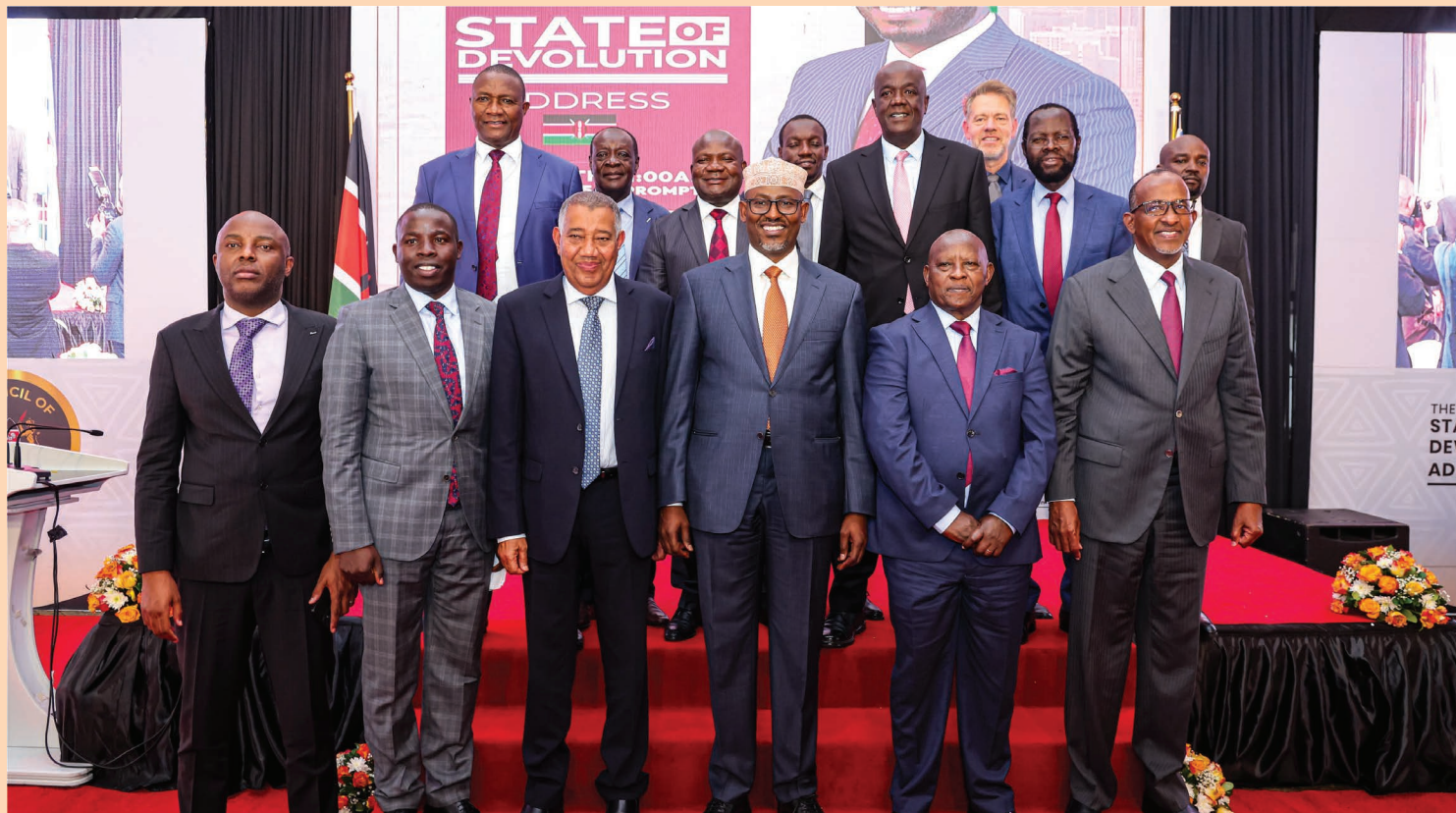


THE COUNCIL MONTHLY



Governors led by CoG Chair H.E FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi during the State of Devolution Address in Delta Corner Westlands

COUNTY GOVERNMENTS RECORD STRIDES AMID FISCAL CHALLENGES: 11TH STATE OF DEVOLUTION ADDRESS



CoG Chair H.E FCPA. Ahmed Abdullahi speaking during the State of Devolution Address

total revenue of Kshs.600.69 billion for FY 2024/25, with Kshs.222 billion allocated to development exceeding the 30% threshold required under the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act," he announced adding that the revenue was drawn from equitable share, additional allocations, own source revenue and unspent funds. However, he noted with concern that pending bills had reached Kshs.172.5 billion by March 2025, largely due to delays in fund disbursement. "Nairobi alone accounts for 70% of this burden. It is unsustainable and we are actively engaging the National Treasury to release what is due," he stated.

Turning to healthcare, the Chairperson affirmed that the Universal Health Coverage agenda is firmly on course. "With 24.4 million Kenyans now registered under the Social Health Insurance Authority, access to primary care has significantly improved," he said. "Out of the Ksh 35.66 billion disbursed through SHA, Ksh 12.7 billion has already reached public facilities." He also revealed that 107,831 Community Health Promoters are now supporting households across the country, calling it "the backbone of community-level health interventions."

The Council of Governors (CoG) Chairperson, H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, delivered the 11th State of Devolution Address (SODA) on 10th July 2025, taking stock of milestones and ongoing challenges as the country celebrates 12 years of Devolution. Making his address, Governor Abdullahi emphasized the urgent need to reflect and recommit to the spirit of the Constitution and protect the gains made through devolved governance.

"County Governments have projected

NEWS INSIDE

1

COUNTY GOVERNMENTS RECORD STRIDES AMID FISCAL CHALLENGES: 11TH STATE OF DEVOLUTION ADDRESS

2

HOMA BAY GEARS UP TO HOST DEVOLUTION CONFERENCE 2025

3

SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY A GAME CHANGER FOR ECDE LEARNERS IN COUNTIES

4

STRENGTHENING HEALTH SPENDING UNITS AS VEHICLES FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

5

UGATUZI CORNER

6

KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH



CoG Vice-Chair H.E. Dr. Mutahi Kahiga speaking during the State of Devolution Address

Additionally, he praised Counties for digitizing health systems, stating that over 8,000 tablets had been distributed to boost patient registration and claims processing. “The FIF framework has allowed 44 Counties to strengthen financial autonomy in public facilities, generating over Ksh 16.9 billion in internal revenue,” he added. Despite the progress, he urged the Ministry of Health to fast-track equipment delivery and release pending payments to facilities that have submitted claims. “Let’s not stall this momentum we are closer than ever to achieving UHC,” he emphasized.

In agriculture, the Chair noted that marketed agricultural earnings rose to Ksh. 690 billion, with livestock earnings increasing by 17.2%. He highlighted success stories in avocado and milk production, attributing the growth to farmer training and expanded mechanization. “Our Counties trained over 100,000 farmers and extended advisory services to over 6.5 million, this is devolution at work,” he stated.

He also celebrated progress in urban development, with 19 counties having approved spatial plans and 118 municipalities receiving charters. Counties, he said, are complementing the national Affordable Housing agenda by contributing land and implementing County-specific housing programs. “Our role is crucial in localizing this vision,” he affirmed.

Efforts in road and transport infrastructure also stood out, with over 18,000 km of roads improved through cabro



CoG Whip H.E. Stephen Sang speaking during the State of Devolution Address

I invite all stakeholders to the upcoming Devolution Conference 2025 in Homa Bay County from August 12th to 15th. All Kenyans should engage and actively contribute to shaping the future of devolution

H.E FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, EGH

paving, gravelling and tarmacking. “We are investing in people-friendly infrastructure, including 1,949 km of walkways and 17 new bus parks,” he said, citing this as proof of devolved units responding to real community needs.

On education, Governor Abdullahi remarked, “In 2024, pre-primary enrolment rose to nearly 3 million learners. County Governments have constructed over 5,950 new classrooms and employed 78,101 teachers, this is an unprecedented investment in our youngest citizens.” He added that the average pupil-teacher ratio had improved to 37:1, and that Ksh 6.8 billion had been allocated specifically for pre-primary education. “This is not just an education statistic, it’s a promise to every child that they matter.” On vocational training, he noted that the number of trainees rose to 172,527 across 1,222 centers. “We are not just educating, we are equipping our youth with skills that speak to the future,” he remarked.

Furthermore, Counties invested significantly in trade, supporting 60,020 MSMEs through training and formalization. Governor Abdullahi also cited the establishment of 34 County Aggregation and Industrial Parks, which are set to enhance value addition and reduce post-harvest losses.

He highlighted environmental efforts, including the planting of over 21 million trees and increased investments in waste management and recycling infrastructure. “We are turning waste into opportunity,” he said, referencing projects like Mandera’s greening program and Nandi’s organic waste recycling using black soldier flies.

On blue economy, counties made strides in fisheries management, fish market construction, and aquaculture innovations, while also prioritizing the protection of marine ecosystems and water resources.

The Chair also praised progress in social protection, noting a 40% increase in gender-responsive funding and stronger programs for PWDs, elderly persons, and street children. “Counties are driving inclusive development with dignity at the center,” he said.



Health Cabinet Secretary Hon. Aden Duale speaking during the State of Devolution Address

He emphasized the importance of the judiciary and intergovernmental collaboration in defending devolution, particularly on resource allocation rulings and policy coordination platforms like IBEC. “Our collective voice must remain vigilant, not just reactive,” he said.

In conclusion, Governor Abdullahi invited stakeholders to the upcoming Devolution Conference 2025 in Homa Bay County from August 12th to 15th, encouraging all Kenyans to engage and actively contribute to shaping the future of devolution. “We are not just celebrating what has been done we are laying the foundation for what must still be achieved. Let us keep building.”



www.cog.go.ke



@KenyaGovernors



Council of Governors-Kenya

HOMA BAY GEARS UP TO HOST DEVOLUTION CONFERENCE 2025

Over 12,000 local and international delegates are expected to gather in Homa Bay County for the highly anticipated Devolution Conference 2025, set to take place from 12th – 15th August at the Homa Bay High school.

The Devolution Conference Steering Committee, chaired by H.E. Dr. Mutahi Kahiga, visited Homa Bay County on 29th August 2025 to assess the level of preparedness and readiness to host the conference even as final preparations continue. Addressing media during the visit, the committee urged all stakeholders to participate and engage in the national dialogue guided by the Conference theme: “For the People, for Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice.”

“This conference is about inclusivity, it’s about the government listening to the people. We invite all stakeholders to come to Homa Bay and attend the conference and various side events. On the youth agenda, we will be hosting a dedicated youth event and we urge all counties to register not less than five youths each, to give them a platform to be heard and actively participate,” noted the Committee Chair Mutahi Kahiga further commending Homa Bay County Government for their commitment and dedication in planning for the conference.

“As hosts, we extend a warm invitation to all delegates attending the conference. We are fully committed and expect to provide maximum security and optimum hospitality to all our guests. We also extend our sincere gratitude to all stakeholders and partners involved in making this conference a success,” added the Homa Bay Deputy Governor H.E Joseph Magwanga.

“
This conference is about inclusivity—it’s about the government listening to the people. We invite all stakeholders to come to Homa Bay and attend the various side events of interest.”

H.E. Dr. Mutahi Kahiga, EGH

The Principal Secretary State Department for Mr. Lenasalon, reaffirmed the national government’s commitment to ensuring the success of the Devolution Conference, emphasizing that the discussions would be centered on the voices of the Kenyan people.

The Senate also reiterated its continued support for the Devolution Conference, highlighting its crucial role in showcasing the progress of devolution in Kenya through knowledge-sharing, policy dialogue, and strengthening of service delivery systems.



CoG CEO Mary Mwiti speaking during the recce visit in Homa Bay County



CoG Vice Chair H.E. Dr. Mutahi Kahiga (right) Homa Bay Deputy Governor H.E. Joseph Magwanga (Centre) and Hon. Moses Kajwang in a discussion during the recce visit in Homa Bay

Homa Bay County Senator Moses Kajwang’ emphasized the need for strengthened collaboration between citizens and governments in order to deliver the best outcomes for the country. He encouraged Homa Bay residents and local entrepreneurs to seize the opportunity to showcase their culture through food, arts, and music. He also noted that the conference would bring significant economic benefits to the local community.

Pre-conference activities will include a variety rich cultural events such as boat racing, wrestling, Ajua, pot balancing, football, and the Rech Festival, designed to celebrate local traditions and foster community engagement.

“Today, we are assessing our level of preparedness for the Devolution Conference, and I’m happy to report that Homa Bay is very well prepared to welcome the nation once again,” Senator Kajwang’ added. “On Madaraka Day, we hosted the nation for a day; this time, the country will be with us for nearly five days. The impact will be much greater economically, socially and politically than the Madaraka Day celebrations we previously hosted.”

The conference will officially be opened by the President H.E William Ruto on the first day. Delegates will engage in a candid conversation on Good Governance, focusing on mainstreaming the principles of good governance and inclusive development in the daily operations of subnational governments. The aim is to position County Governments as centers of excellence in public service delivery.

On the second day, the theme will be Human Rights and Social Justice, with discussions centered on integrating socio-economic, political, civil, and cultural rights as well as principles of inclusion, equality, and diversity into subnational governance. This session will be graced by the Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga.

The third day will focus on Finance and Resource Allocation, aiming to ignite in-depth dialogue on how to address systemic inequalities and promote fairness in financial access for all. This session will culminate in the official closing of the Devolution Conference 2025 which will be graced by the Deputy President H.E Kithure Kindiki.

The Steering Committee later conducted a field assessment of key venues to evaluate progress and identify pending activities needed for the successful delivery of the conference. Sites visited included Homa Bay High School (the main conference venue), Raila Odinga Stadium, The Arboretum, and Homa Bay Primary School, which will serve as the main registration point.



SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY A GAME CHANGER FOR ECDE LEARNERS IN COUNTIES



CoG Chair H.E FCPA. Ahmed Abdullahi speaking during stakeholders meeting on the development of a model policy on pre-primary school feeding for county governments.

School feeding programs have long been recognized as powerful tools for advancing child development, education, public health and economic resilience. Over time, these programs have evolved towards more community-driven and resilient approaches with the Constitution of Kenya further assigning key education functions including pre-primary education to County Governments, empowering them to design and implement nutrition initiatives tailored to local needs.

Despite the bold efforts by Counties, school feeding programs have remained fragmented, inconsistently funded and lacking a harmonized policy framework, underscoring the urgent need for a unified and a sustainable approach. In response to these challenges and recognizing school feeding as a vital social protection imperative, the Council of Governors (CoG) in collaboration with County Governments, the Senate, National Government, Development Partners, Food for Education (F4E) and other stakeholders embarked on the development of a model policy on pre-primary school feeding for county governments.

The school feeding policy addresses the pervasive problem of malnutrition and short-term hunger among pre-primary learners across Kenya - conditions that have a profound and long-term impact on children's physical health, cognitive development, school participation and academic performance.

Speaking during a consultative meeting with stakeholders to review the model policy on 21st July 2025, CoG Chairperson and Wajir Governor noted that the policy offers a harmonized and scalable framework to help Counties deliver sustainable, context-responsive school meal programs across ECDE centers.



Senator Betty Montet speaking during stakeholders meeting on the development of a model policy on pre-primary school feeding for County Governments.

“This framework is a step forward in improving child nutrition, boosting school attendance and promoting equity in ECDE services,” said the CoG Chair adding that the policy is expected to be officially launched during the upcoming Devolution Conference in Homa Bay County.

“It is important to note that there are some Counties that have implemented school feeding initiatives. This policy will complement these efforts and has adopted a multi-sectoral approach that will ultimately improve the child’s development, educational outcomes and contribute to community empowerment,” added his counterpart H.E Dr. Eric Mutai who also chairs the CoG Education Committee.

The consultative meeting also highlighted critical issues affecting the education sector including the proposed performance audit by the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG), which targets bursaries, scholarships and ECDE services in six Counties. The Council termed the process legally flawed, citing its inconsistency with Article 229 of the Constitution and Section 36 of the Public Audit Act. “The audit intends to go back to 2021, yet some governors weren’t in office then. Why only six Counties? Why bursaries and ECDE alone, when Counties have excelled in health, agriculture and water?” posed Governor Abdullahi. He further noted that the audit was conceptualized without engaging the Council or the affected Counties weakening its relevance and objectivity.

“Some Counties have implemented the school feeding initiatives. This policy will complement these efforts and ultimately improve the child’s development and educational outcomes”
H.E Dr. Eric Mutai

Nyeri Governor and CoG Vice Chairperson H.E Dr. Mutahi Kahiga echoed this concern, reminding stakeholders that while Counties support lawful scrutiny and audits, it must be conducted within defined timelines. “Unfortunately, these Counties are being targeted for a re-audit despite already undergoing previous reviews,” he said further highlighting County efforts in employing ECDE teachers, investing in infrastructure and implementing school feeding programs as clear indicators of devolution’s success.



CoG Education Committee Chairperson H.E Dr. Eric Mutai speaking during stakeholders meeting on the development of a model policy on pre-primary school feeding for county governments.

On the proposal to put together ECDE centres, primary and junior schools to constitute comprehensive schools, Governors argued that ECDE is a constitutional mandate of counties and the recommendation mooted by the Presidential Working Party on Education Reforms was an affront to Devolution as it attempted to centralize key education functions. Further, it was noted that there is need to develop framework for management of comprehensive schools.

The Council affirmed its commitment to accountable governance, transparency and mutual respect between institutions and the rule of law. “We welcome constructive audits that are lawful and collaborative,” Governor Abdullahi reiterated. “Our goal remains to safeguard devolution and deliver quality services to all Kenyans.”



STRENGTHENING HEALTH SPENDING UNITS AS VEHICLES FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE



Dr. Tole, chief officer Lamu giving a certificate of participation to a facility manager after successfully finishing the training

The Council of Governors (CoG) and Ministry of Health in collaboration stakeholders including Amref, USAID and Centre for Disease Control have trained health facility managers across 36 counties, as part of a nationwide programme aimed at strengthening public health facilities by enhancing effective management of resources, accountability and overall efficiency.

This capacity building programme- the first of its kind in the country, has been undertaken through the collaborative efforts of different partners, bringing on board the Social Health Authority, Digital Health Authority and National AIDS and STI Control Program (NASCOP) to increase SHA registration, optimization of claims and integration of vertical services.

The Constitution of Kenya bestows County Governments with the mandate to oversee the management and provision of quality health services at the primary and secondary level. County Governments have operationalized the Facilities Improvement Financing Act which provides for financial autonomy of health spending units while the Social Health Insurance Act provides financing mechanisms for those spending units.

Further, the Financial Management and Procedures Manual was recently launched and an audit report by the Office of the Auditor General on Level 4 and Level 5 Hospitals in Kenya identified gaps in the performance of health spending units, citing weaknesses in lawfulness, use of public resources, internal controls, risk management and governance.

It is against this backdrop that the capacity building programme for health facility-in-charge was designed to comprehensively respond to the needs of the health spending units. The 3 – 4 day training happening in each

County covers key aspects including facility planning and budgeting; revenue management and procedures; procurement processes; cash and bank management; accounting for expenditure; inventory management; managing fixed assets; periodic financial reporting and statutory audits at a health facility.

“Previously our facilities especially dispensaries and health centers relied on donor monies....now they are raising and retaining monies hence the need for such capacity building” said one of the CECMs in charge of Finance during the training in Mombasa County.

“Increasing hospital collections is not enough. The increase in monies from SHA must be reflected in service availability, quality and patient experience. This calls for stricter oversight and accountability to ensure true, lasting progress towards UHC,” said H.E Dr. Mutahi kahiga during a recent training forum in Nyeri County

There have been notable results as a result of these engagements, with the top 10 counties in SHA registration and claims being the initial counties that were trained. Notably, one of the counties doubled its registration and claims within 3 weeks after the training. This buttresses the fact that training of health facility in-charges ~ who have overall responsibility over the spending units has a direct impact on operational efficiency and management of budgets.

Strengthening the leadership and governance in the health sector has potential to enhance the management of resources, and is a necessary step to improving the delivery of health services. The reforms introduced through the health facility autonomy calls for stronger accountability norms, including clear procedures for management of health records and frequent supervision by county leadership to ensure compliance.



Facility managers during a training session in Mombasa County

UGATUZI CORNER



CoG Roads and Transport Committee during a consultative meeting with County Executive Committee Members (CECMs), Chief Officers, and County Directors in charge of Roads and Transport

The Council of Governors Roads and Transport Committee, convened a consultative meeting with County Executive Committee Members (CECMs), Chief Officers, and County Directors in charge of Roads and Transport, together with the Kenya Roads Board (KRB). The meeting discussed key issues affecting the sector including the disbursement of the Road Maintenance Levy Fund (RMLF). It was resolved among others that the RMLF funds be ring-fenced strictly for roads purposes, with the Chief Officer for Roads designated as the accounting officer and a mandatory signatory to the RMLF Special Purpose Account.



www.cog.go.ke



@KenyaGovernors



Council of Governors-Kenya

COMMUNITY KITCHEN GARDENS DRIVING NUTRITION GAINS IN NAKURU COUNTY.

Malnutrition remains a pressing issue in Kenya, driven by poverty, food insecurity and lack of nutrition awareness. It disproportionately affects women, children and adolescents, especially during the first 1,000 days of life, a critical window for cognitive and physical development. According to WHO’s 2024 fact sheet, in 2022, 149 million children under five were stunted globally, 45 million wasted and 37 million overweight or obese. In Nakuru County’s Ogilgei community, child malnutrition has been worsened by poor feeding practices, parental alcoholism and inconsistent exclusive breastfeeding. In 2023, two malnutrition cases and one related death were reported, mostly among transient families.

To combat this, the Community Health Committee (CHC), with support from the DANIDA PHC Support Program, introduced kitchen gardening. Through leadership training and regular engagement, CHCs and Community Health Promoters (CHPs) taught families in 5 villages how to grow vegetables using sack gardens an innovative space-saving method suitable for small households. A community demonstration garden was also established on a 0.25-acre plot at the local health facility, with members contributing resources and managing plots collaboratively.



A proud beneficiary showcases her thriving sweet potatoes



Community Health Committee members together with Community Health Promoters who train and educate the community on kitchen gardening and nutrition

The initiative led to tangible improvements with over 40 households adopting kitchen gardening, improving access to fresh chemical-free produce. Some families also sold surplus vegetables thus boosting income. Health outcomes improved significantly causing antenatal visits to rise from 357 to 464 while immunizations increasing from 1,113 to 1,669 and facility-based deliveries growing from 39 to 45 by early 2025.

The project enhanced food security, strengthened social ties and increased health service utilization. Lessons include the effectiveness of using vegetables as ANC attendance incentives and the success of simple, locally adapted solutions like sack gardens. Continued support, IEC materials, transport resources for CHPs and provision of water tanks for year-round gardening are recommended to sustain the impact.

KEY EVENTS



48 Governments 1 Nation



48 Governments 1 Nation