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Brings Homa Bay Alive

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Homa Bay Basks in Glory After a Successful Devolution Conference Hosting

A Landmark Event Ends Leaving Homa Bay and the Nation Reinvigorated
By Lawrence Magware



President William Ruto, Governor Gladys Wanga and other dignitaries admire the 3-D designs of the proposed Homa Bay City at the County Pavilion. All Photo Credit: Eunice Atieno

As Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki thundered, "I now declare the Devolution Conference 2025 closed," an overwhelming wave of joy and relief washed over the attendees in the grand conference hall. The atmosphere was electric, especially for the host Governor Gladys Wanga, Governor Dr. Kahiga Mutahi - who had been the chairperson of the Conference's steering committee - and the CEO of the Council of Governors, Ms. Mary Mwititi. For them, this was not merely a closing statement from the day's keynote speaker; it represented a resounding endorsement of the collective efforts and dedication they had poured into the event.

The preceding three days in Homa Bay County had been nothing short of transformative, creating a historic moment that redefined the scope and impact of large-scale national conferences.

“

*I now declare the
Devolution Conference
2025 closed*

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The event etched its legacy deeply into the fabric of the nation, characterised by open discussions, strategic partnerships, and meaningful connections, all punctuated by the vibrant

hospitality of the local communities, who showcased their rich culture and warmth.

The Devolution Conference 2025, notable for being the second to be held in the Nyanza region and the inaugural one in Southern Nyanza, not only celebrated the significant strides made by the county in the realm of devolution but also highlighted the remarkable achievements under the leadership of the region's first female county boss, Governor Gladys Wanga. This gathering served as a powerful catalyst, reigniting the county's collective determination to expand possibilities, dismantle barriers, and forge a future that uplifts every citizen, no matter their background.



Leaders display the newly launched Devolution Training Handbook.

It was a bold declaration that devolution is not just alive but robust, actively driving the engines of equity, inclusion, and social justice throughout Kenya. Throughout the conference, delegates engaged in spirited debates on pressing issues and shared innovative solutions, illuminating the potential of devolved governance.

In her poignant closing remarks, Governor Wanga stated,

“The solidarity shown by the nation in these past days reaffirms that when we come together, no challenge is too great and no aspiration too distant. The presence of esteemed national leaders here has reinforced our shared commitment to strengthening devolution as the cornerstone of Kenya's prosperity. Together, we will ensure that every voice is heard and every community thrives.”

Her words resonated in the hearts of all present, emphasising a unified vision for a more equitable future for all Kenyans.



President William Ruto admiring a gift from Governor Gladys Wanga



Rt. Hon Raila Odinga, flanked by the CoG pose for a photo at the Arboretum Amphitheater



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki receives a gift from host Governor Wanga

President Ruto Opens Devolution Conference, Asks for Collective Duty in Realizing the Nation's Vision

By Communication Team



President William Ruto giving his keynote address on the opening day of Devolution Conference 2025 at Homa Bay High School

President William Ruto officially opened the 9th Devolution Conference at Homa Bay High School, setting an ambitious tone for the gathering by urging delegates to contribute actively to the nation's progress. This conference emerged as a vital platform for national dialogue, reflecting the importance of participatory governance in Kenya.

The theme for this year's Devolution Conference, "For the People, For Prosperity: Devolution as a Catalyst for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice," underscores the forum's objective of ensuring inclusive governance. This theme resonates with the nation's goals of fostering partnerships and collaboration among various stakeholders, thereby addressing pressing socio-economic challenges faced by different communities.

The sub-theme, "Re-engineering County Governments to Accelerate Development and Close the Socio-Economic Divide,"

The sub-theme, "Re-engineering County Governments to Accelerate Development and Close the Socio-Economic Divide," highlighted the critical role that county governments play in promoting equitable development across the regions. This initiative aims to bridge disparities by ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their geographic or socio-economic background, have access to opportunities and resources essential for their prosperity.

In his speech, President Ruto emphasized the pivotal role of devolution in advancing the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). He articulated its potential to enhance equity, promote inclusion, and facilitate social justice while accelerating development at the county level.

"This biennial devolution conference is therefore a moment to take stock, celebrate gains, and re-imagine how we can accelerate progress for every county and all Kenyans," President Ruto stated, highlighting the occasion's significance.

The President remarked on the relevance of this year's theme, given the current socio-economic context and the urgent need for developmental reforms within counties. "This year's theme speaks directly to our National Vision—a Kenya where every citizen, regardless of their region, gender, background, or status, has a fair and equal opportunity to thrive," he asserted, embodying the ideals of a united and equitable nation.

In his closing remarks, President Ruto reaffirmed that county governments are central to delivering essential services and executing development projects. He outlined how these governments not only stimulate economic growth but also enhance living standards and overall citizen well-being by strategically addressing community needs.

The event drew significant participation, including key figures such as the European Union Ambassador to Kenya, Henriette Geiger, and the German Ambassador to Kenya, Sebastian Groth, who joined numerous national leaders, corporate representatives, and members of the diplomatic corps. Their presence marked a collaborative effort towards realizing equitable development and social justice in Kenya.



Governor Wanga leading the President and other delegates into the main conference hall



Delegates at the conference



Raila Odinga: For Dr. Mbai's Legacy, We Must Ensure Devolution Works

By Communication Team

The Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga led the nation in commemorating the 22nd anniversary of the late Dr. Crispin Odhiambo Mbai, a renowned devolution champion and esteemed academic, during the second day of this year's Devolution Conference. This poignant moment took place at the Arboretum Amphitheatre, where the President had initially unveiled a commemorative plaque honouring Dr. Mbai, who served as chairperson of the devolution subcommittee of the Kenya Constitutional Review Commission before he was assassinated in his house in 2003.

Despite the previous day's activity by the President, it was Raila Odinga, a close friend and ally of Dr. Mbai, who took the lead in reflecting on the immense contributions the late scholar made towards the establishment of devolved governments in Kenya.

Raila articulated passionately at the Amphitheatre. He was joined by several governors, including the Chairperson of the Council of Governors (CoG) and Wajir Governor FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, who expressed their admiration for Dr. Mbai's legacy.

“

Dr. Crispin Odhiambo Mbai was a vital force in championing the constitutional changes that established devolution. We owe it to his visionary ideas and unwavering commitment that today our people have a meaningful voice in their governance,”

”



Later, the former Prime Minister proceeded to deliver a keynote speech at the conference, where he revisited the arduous struggle to implement devolution in Kenya. He highlighted key milestones in the journey toward achieving this significant constitutional reform, offering insights on

how to further strengthen devolution to ensure that it delivers justice and equitable development for all Kenyans. His address resonated with attendees, as he urged them to remain vigilant and proactive in safeguarding and advancing the democratic ideals that Dr. Mbai fervently advocated for throughout his life.



President Ruto Launches Ultra-Modern Homa Bay County Headquarters

By Steve Muga



President William Ruto presided over the grand opening of the newly built Homa Bay County Headquarters on August 13th. This modern complex now stands as a beacon of devolution and progress in the region.

The landmark facility, developed through an innovative financing model in partnership with CPF Financial Services, was made possible under Article 209 of the Constitution, which allows counties to explore new sources of own-revenue financing. This pioneering approach ensured the project was completed on time and is now fully operational, ready to serve the people of Homa Bay.

The headquarters will host over 500 county staff, consolidating operations that were previously scattered across different locations. It also includes a repurposed Huduma Centre, upgraded into a modern Ushuru Centre, Business Licensing Unit, and Citizen Service Hub, creating a one-stop shop for essential services.

Speaking during the launch, President Ruto commended Homa Bay for investing in transformative infrastructure that strengthens devolution. He noted that the building reflects the county's commitment to bringing services closer to the people, enhancing transparency, and fostering investor confidence.

“This building is a symbol of efficiency, dignity, and opportunity. It represents a new chapter in how services are delivered to the great people of Homa Bay,” the President remarked.”



Governor Gladys Wanga hailed the headquarters as a historic milestone, affirming that it will not only improve efficiency but also inspire public confidence in devolved governance.

Designed with modern aesthetics and cultural inspiration from Homa Bay's lakeside heritage, the headquarters doubles as a landmark of pride for residents. With this launch, Homa Bay joins other progressive counties investing in modern infrastructure, underscoring its steady journey toward growth, modernization, and people-centered service delivery.



Side Events in Health, Youth, Women and Disability Inclusion Foster More Collaborations in Enhancing the Gains of Devolution

Stakeholders Unite to Tackle the Triple Threat at the Devolution Conference 2025 in Homa Bay

By Abnery Pajero

The National Syndemic Diseases Control Council (NSDCC) convened a critical side event under the theme “Accelerating County-Led Solutions for Ending the Triple Threat of New HIV Infections, Mistimed Pregnancies, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Among Adolescents bringing together county leaders, policymakers, youth representatives, development partners, and community voices to reflect on the growing risks faced by adolescents and to chart new pathways for action.

The dialogue underscored the urgent need to treat adolescent health not as a marginal programme but as a central pillar of development with participants stressing that counties must consistently invest in adolescent health and empowerment so that young people view education, rather than early motherhood or infection, as their future.

A collective call was made to reject harmful cultural practices that fuel GBV and child marriage, and to ensure that survivors of violence are accorded justice through formal systems rather than informal “kangaroo court” settlements.

Speakers emphasised that responsibility for addressing the triple threat cannot rest with health authorities alone. Parents, policy makers, educators, community leaders, and society at large were urged to recognise that adolescent health is everyone's business. The intentional implementation of supportive policies, such as return-to-school measures for young mothers and school-based protections, was identified as vital for protecting the dignity and rights of adolescents.

Looking beyond the conference, the side event outlined several opportunities for collaboration.



These included establishing inter-county peer learning platforms to exchange best practices, and developing joint resource mobilisation frame and securing legislative support and budget oversight. Further, development of county-level data systems to track indicators of the triple threat and guide targeted interventions was also suggested besides localising solutions and sustaining progress.

Emerging commitments focused on expanding youth-friendly and youth-responsive services, such as gender desks in police stations and waivers for GBV-related health services. Communities were called upon to mobilise men, boys, elders, faith leaders, and role models to challenge harmful norms and promote positive behaviours.

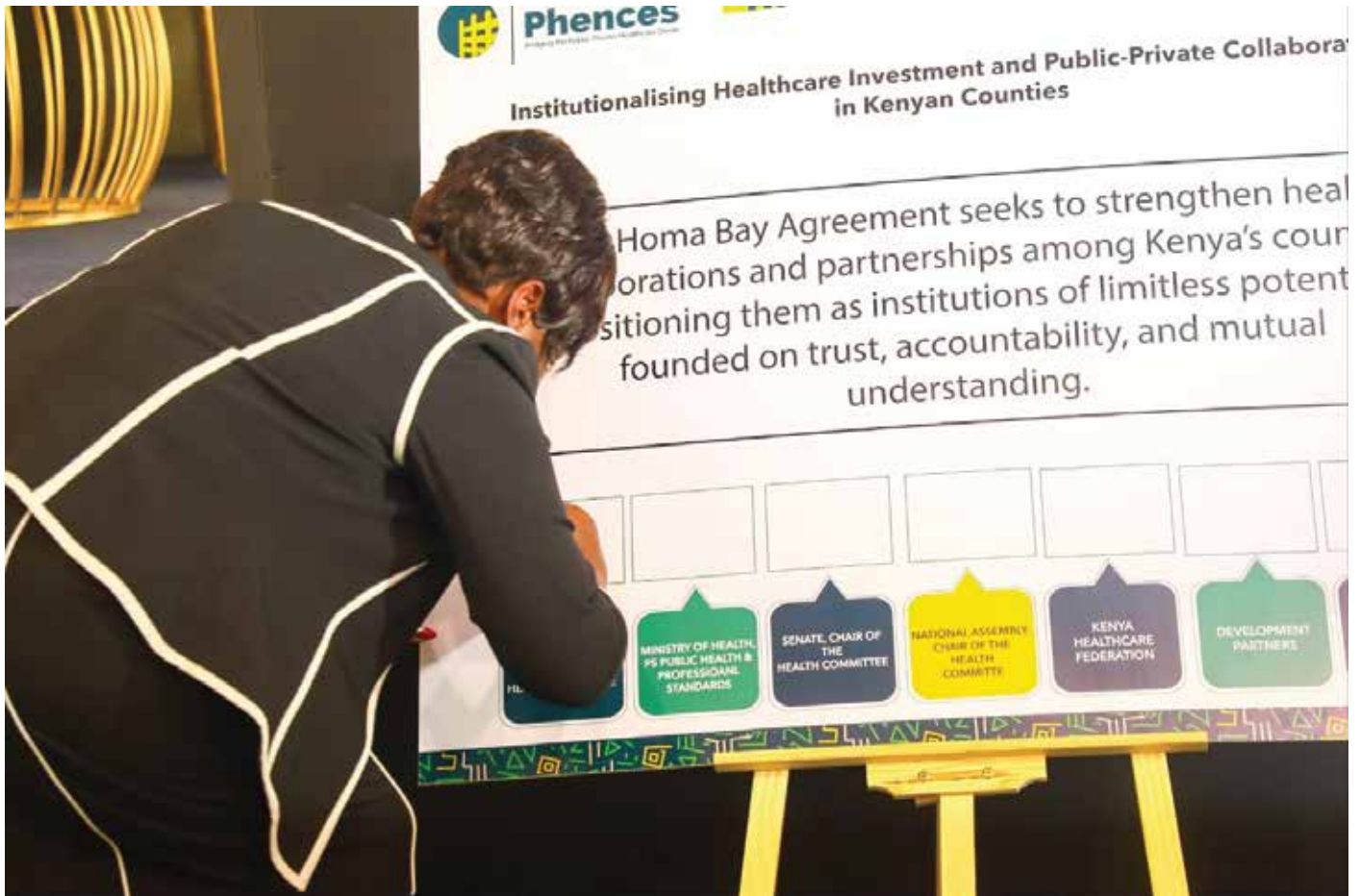
Parental engagement was highlighted as equally important, with a call for age-appropriate education at the household level to prevent risky behaviours and support healthy adolescent development.

The conversations sparked in Homa Bay demonstrated that with consistent investment, multi-sectoral collaboration, and meaningful youth inclusion, Kenya can overcome the triple threat and secure a healthier future for its young people.



Governor Wanga Leads Calls for Joint Healthcare Financing, Louds County Partners in the Health Sector

By Veroncia Nyasoro and Abnery Pajero



Governor Gladys Wanga over the Devolution Conference at Homa Bay High School took the opportunity to rally for more joint financing to healthcare, saying the counties alone cannot manage the disease burden in the rural, especially on diseases like malaria and communicable diseases.

While addressing a high-level side event on “Strengthening Ecosystem Collaboration and Public-Private Partnership,” convened by that brought together government leaders, legislators, private sector players, development partners, and civil society representatives to explore how Kenya can mobilise sustainable resources to strengthen health systems at the county level, Governor Wanga said, “When I took office, malaria prevalence stood at 17%.

Today, thanks to community action, strong partnerships, and innovation, we have reduced it to 3.6%. Thousands of lives have been saved,” adding “A healthy population is the foundation of a thriving economy. I stand as a Zero Malaria Champion. Together, with leaders, partners, and communities, we can end malaria in our lifetime — not by chance, but by choice.”

The keynote address was delivered by Mary Muthoni, Principal Secretary for Public Health, who underscored that financing remains one of the biggest bottlenecks in delivering quality and equitable healthcare in devolved units.

She emphasised that counties cannot depend solely on exchequer disbursements to meet the growing health demands of their populations, and instead must actively embrace partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms to close existing gaps.

Participants acknowledged that while Kenya has made progress in expanding healthcare services under devolution, funding remains inconsistent and often inadequate. County leaders observed that competing priorities strain budgets, leaving health facilities underfunded, under-equipped, and at times unable to deliver essential services. Legislators pledged to work with counties and the Ministry of Health to strengthen oversight, align policies, and ensure that financing frameworks are responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens.

Discussions at the side event highlighted the critical role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in unlocking additional resources, improving efficiency, and accelerating innovations in healthcare delivery. Representatives from the private sector noted that counties can benefit from

structured collaborations that bring in not only funding, but also technology, expertise, and infrastructure support.

Civil society leaders stressed the importance of ensuring that such partnerships are inclusive and community-centred, so that investments directly improve access to healthcare for vulnerable groups.

The journey has been made possible by a coalition of committed partners — The Global Fund, USAID's President's Malaria Initiative, WHO, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the local civil society organizations. They brought not only funding but also technical expertise, innovation, and an unwavering demand for accountability.

The side event closed with a shared commitment to build trust between counties and private sector actors, improve transparency in resource mobilisation, and design financing strategies that go beyond donor dependency. Counties were urged to integrate PPP models into their health sector strategies and to establish clear policy and regulatory frameworks to guide collaboration.



Devolution Conference 2025 Puts Spotlight on Maternal and Newborn Health

By Abnery Pajero



At a side event by Lwala Community Alliance themed “Lessons from the Grave: A Call to Action for Ending Preventable Maternal and Newborn Deaths through Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR),” participants reflected on the persistent challenge of maternal and newborn mortality in Kenya and shared solutions aimed at saving lives.

Dr. Patrick Amoth, Director General in the Ministry of Health, set the tone with a sobering reminder that while progress has been made in expanding maternal health services, too many women and children are still dying from preventable causes. He stressed that every maternal or newborn death represents not just a personal tragedy for families but also a systemic failure that demands accountability and urgent action.

Panelists spoke candidly about the gaps that continue to cost lives, including delays in care, poorly equipped facilities, inadequate staffing, and weak referral systems. Midwives and clinicians shared moving experiences from their work, underscoring the reality that many of these deaths could be prevented with timely interventions and stronger health systems.

Legislators and governors emphasized that counties, as the custodians of devolved health functions, must take ownership of maternal and newborn health outcomes by institutionalizing MPDSR and ensuring its findings inform policy and budgetary decisions.

The discussions also framed maternal and newborn deaths as an issue of social justice. Participants observed that these deaths not only deny women and children their right to health but also undermine community wellbeing and development. Calls were made for more investment in quality maternal care, reliable medical supplies, adequate infrastructure, and continuous training of front-line health workers. There was also a strong emphasis on community engagement, particularly in challenging cultural barriers that discourage facility-based deliveries and in empowering families to seek timely care.

The side event concluded with a collective commitment to shift focus from simply counting maternal and newborn deaths to actively preventing them. Counties were urged to embed accountability in their health systems, allocate sufficient resources, and foster multi-sectoral collaboration with civil society, professional associations, and development partners. The message was clear: Kenya has the knowledge and tools to end preventable maternal and newborn deaths, but success will require political will, consistent investment, and a shared determination to protect mothers and babies.



Persons With Disability Included in All Spheres of Devolution Conference

By Sarah Orucho

This year's theme for the devolution conference was "For the People, For Prosperity," emphasized the crucial role of devolution in fostering equity, inclusion, and social justice. In a significant effort to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities (PWD), the Council of Governors, in collaboration with the National Council for Persons with Disability and various development partners, engaged over ten skilled Sign Language Interpreters from across the country. This initiative aimed to reinforce the notion that devolution not only facilitates equitable access to services but also actively breaks down societal barriers and empowers marginalized communities.

Tom Okiki, a deaf resident of Homabay County, articulated the importance of inclusion in decision-making processes, stating, "We have a voice and must be included in decision making." His sentiments highlight the need for representation and acknowledgment of the deaf community in governance and policy formulation.

Okiki expressed his gratitude for being part of this year's devolved conference delegation, which marked a pivotal moment for PWD.

Gloria Awino, a member of the deaf community from Migori, praised devolution as a transformative power for accessibility and service delivery. She specifically noted the significant improvements in obtaining essential services, such as disability certification, access to assistive devices, and sign language interpretation. These services, previously centralized in Nairobi, are now more easily accessible at the local level, resulting in considerable savings in both time and money for individuals with disabilities.

As this year's devolution conference draws to a close, it is timely to reflect on the words of Haben Girma: "Disability rights are Human rights. Inclusion is a pathway to equity." This statement encapsulates the essence of the discussions held and the path forward in ensuring that every individual, regardless of their abilities, is afforded equal opportunities and representation in society.





Homa Bay Launches First-ever Youth Policy, Seeks to Strengthen Young People's Agenda

By Communication Team

After 12 years of persistent efforts and perseverance, the youth of Homa Bay finally have a reason to celebrate. A significant milestone has been reached with the establishment of the Homa Bay County Youth Policy, officially launched during the Devolution Conference 2025.

The launch event, characterized by a spirit of unity and hope, took place at the Tom Mboya University Amphitheater and was attended by notable figures, including the county senator, Hon. Moses Kajwang, and Homa Bay Town MP, Hon. Opondo Kaluma. The occasion also welcomed Dr. Kennedy Odede, the CEO of SHOFKO and the 2025 Nelson Mandela Award winner. More than 600 enthusiastic youths from various regions gathered to witness the unveiling of the county's first-ever youth policy, which was officially presented by Deputy Governor Oyugi Magwanga on behalf of Governor Gladys Wanga.



Since taking office three years ago, Governor Gladys Wanga has been committed to creating a robust legal framework to support her ambitious youth agenda. The newly unveiled policy is a critical component of this vision, designed to serve as a comprehensive roadmap for addressing the unique needs of the youth in Homa Bay County.



In collaboration with SHOFCO and the Department of Youth Affairs and Cooperative Development, the county engaged a wide range of stakeholders in drafting the policy. This inclusive approach ensured that the voices of all young people were heard, with special attention given to the inclusion of youths living with disabilities.



The Homa Bay County Youth Policy delineates specific interventions and mechanisms that the county government will implement. These include strategies for effective resource mobilization for youth programs and initiatives aimed at mainstreaming youth issues and empowering young people across the county. By prioritizing these efforts, the policy sets the stage for transformative change and opportunities for the youth of Homa Bay.

County, Partners Launch Disability Inclusion Baseline Report, Commit to More Efforts on Disability Mainstreaming

By Antonine Abiero

The County Government of Homa Bay Department of Gender, Inclusivity and Women empowerment, in collaboration with Council of Governors, National Council for Persons with Disabilities, and partners, held a side event and launched a Baseline Assessment Report on Disability Inclusion in County Governments in Kenya 2025 at the Devolution Conference in Homa Bay County.

The report, prepared by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) with the support of partners and the Council of Governors, highlights key findings on how county governments are implementing policies and programs for persons with disabilities.





While the report's findings indicate that there's still a long way to go to achieve full inclusion, they also identify promising practices. It provides evidence-based recommendations to guide future planning and action.

A key finding of the report is that disability inclusion remains behind in many county governments. For example, only 16 county governments have enacted specific disability legislation, and only 12 have a stand-alone disability policy. In addition, only about 3.1% of county government staff are persons with disabilities, which is far below the 5% legal requirement.

However, there's also positive news: 39 county governments have employed

persons with disabilities, including Homa Bay, and 35 have economic empowerment programs for persons with disabilities. The report also highlights that most county governments are implementing affirmative action policies such as the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) program and the extension of the retirement age to 65 years for persons with disabilities.

H.E. Governor Simon Kachapin of Elgeyo Marakwet, during his speech, appreciated the partners: CBM Kenya, Light for the World, United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK), Social Protection Department, and the Council of Governors (CoG), for their invaluable collaboration and support in holding this important discussion.



Delegates' Experience A First in Devolution Conference History: Homa Bay's Innovation Sets DevCon2025 A Class Above Others

Innovate254 Hackathon: Fusing Devolution and Digital Innovation in Homa Bay

By Steve Muga



This year's Devolution Conference was not just about speeches, breakaway sessions, and plenaries, it was about action, creativity, and the bold spirit of innovation. On August 9, 2025, at 11:00 AM EAT, the Innovate254 Hackathon officially kicked off at the Tom Mboya University, bringing together some of Kenya's brightest young tech minds for 48 hours of problem-solving, coding, networking, and collaboration.

A big thank you goes to H.E. Governor Gladys Nyasuna Wanga for steering and championing this groundbreaking event. The hackathon was a flagship event under the DevCon2025 Delegates Experience Program, a special segment designed to give delegates a hands-on feel of how technology is reshaping public service. For two full days, teams of innovators competed to develop practical, scalable digital solutions to some of the toughest challenges facing county service delivery today.



Governor Gladys Wanga, speaking during the launch, emphasized that the event is more than a contest. "This is a fusion of devolution and digital innovation. It is a platform where ideas meet governance, where technology meets people, and where youth-driven creativity can transform service delivery across Kenya."

The Innovate254 Hackathon was structured around three categories, ensuring inclusivity for participants at every stage of their innovation journey:

1. Ideation:

This category targeted budding innovators with groundbreaking concepts but without a finished product. Participants here were challenged to clearly articulate their ideas, demonstrate their potential impact, and outline a roadmap for turning them into solutions that counties can adopt.

2. Prototype:

For participants who already had a minimum viable product, this category focused on refining and stress-testing those solutions. Teams showcased functional demos, integrated user feedback, and illustrated how their prototypes can address real issues in areas such as health, agriculture, governance, and climate resilience.

3. Ready to Scale:

This was the advanced stage for innovators with market-ready products or services.

These solutions were evaluated on their scalability, sustainability, and ability to integrate seamlessly into county systems. The emphasis here was on impact at scale, turning innovation into inclusive development.

But Innovate254 was more than just laptops and late-night coding marathons. Participants were immersed in an unforgettable experience that included mentorship sessions with industry leaders, networking with county and national government officials, and inspirational talks from tech entrepreneurs. They were also equipped with master-class sessions on various topics.

Ultimately, we had winners from the three categories who bagged a collective basket of Kshs. 2.5 million, which will go a long way to support panel beat their solutions and scale them to the market. We sincerely thank our partners, Strathmore University and Tom Mboya University, for the invaluable support. We equally extend our appreciation to Safaricom, Huawei, Amazon, Konza Technopolis, Craft Silicon, and the State Department for ICT and Digital Economy.

At its core, the hackathon aligns with Kenya's ambition to be Africa's Silicon Savannah. It embodies the belief that the future of governance is digital, data-driven, and citizen-centred. From artificial intelligence to blockchain solutions, the prototypes born have the potential to transform how counties deliver health services, improve agriculture value chains, enhance transparency, and drive inclusive growth.

The Innovate254 Hackathon is a call to Kenya's youth: come forward, showcase your creativity, and be part of shaping a new governance model for the digital age. It is also a reminder to policymakers and leaders that innovation must be nurtured, supported, and integrated into everyday governance. As we move to the next phase, one thing is certain, the spirit of innovation in Homa Bay is alive, and it is building a future where technology and devolution walk hand in hand.



Skating, Cycling, Cruising and Wildlife Give Delegates a Feel of County's Tourism and Hospitality Potential

By Lawrence Magware

As delegates flocked to Homa Bay County for the ninth Devolution Conference, they were blissfully unaware of the extraordinary experience that awaited them. For many, the conference seemed poised to follow the familiar routine of plenary sessions, endless speeches, and academic side events. However, this year was different—thanks to the innovative Delegate Experience, a first of its kind.

Under the steady leadership of host Governor Gladys Wanga, delegates were treated to an exhilarating showcase of talent as budding skaters from across the nation transformed the main highways of Homa Bay Town into a dazzling arena for street skating. With remarkable agility and skill, these young athletes captivated the audience with their breathtaking routines on the smooth tarmac.

The excitement continued with an electrifying display of youth sports, featuring spirited cyclists who raced along the streets and alleys of Mbita Town, their wheels whirring in harmony with the air around them.

Meanwhile, a unique island-hopping adventure unfolded, wherein delegates - including governors, cabinet secretaries, and principal secretaries - embarked on an unforgettable journey across four of the sixteen picturesque islands dotting Homa Bay County's sparkling waters.



This extraordinary excursion was made possible by a lively Waterbus, where a talented disc jockey played an infectious mix of catchy hits that kept spirits high as the delegates soaked in the beauty of their surroundings.

Culminating this spectacular experience, delegates were treated to an evening game drive and camping adventure at Ruma National Park, the exclusive sanctuary for the rare Roan Antelope. As night fell, delegates marveled at the sight of three of Kenya's iconic "big five" animals under the starlit sky with the sun fading into the imposing Gwasi Hills. The evening was further elevated by captivating performances from Ohangla maestro Prince Indah and a medley of local secular and gospel artists, creating a magical atmosphere that left an indelible mark on all who attended.

Alfred Cheruiyot Defends His Wild Run Tittle as the Roan Antelope Half Marathon Makes a Huge Comeback

By Communication Team



The second edition of 'Run with Roan' showcased an exhilarating display of endurance and spirit as Alfred Cheruiyot valiantly defended his title at this year's Roan Antelope Half Marathon, held in the challenging landscape of Ruma National Park. This event was a key highlight of the Delegates Experience for the Devolution Conference 2025.

Cheruiyot, who hails from Elgeyo Marakwet County, triumphed over an impressive field of more than 100 elite athletes who competed in the race. Having clinched victory in the inaugural race in 2023, he demonstrated remarkable consistency and skill.

After crossing the finish line, Cheruiyot shared his secret to success with journalists, attributing his triumphant performance to his unwavering commitment to training. "I have been doing a lot of practice ahead of this race. I thank God for the strength that allowed me to retain my title in the marathon," he declared, radiating gratitude and humility.

Following Cheruiyot was Alex Ngeiywo from Bungoma County, who showcased his own remarkable talent by securing second place.

Fredrick Domongole from West Pokot claimed third, sharing insights about his first experience in this competitive marathon. "This is my first time participating in this marathon. It is a well-organized race, and I have learned valuable lessons here," Domongole commented, clearly impressed by the event.

In the women's category, Nancy Cherop emerged victorious, adding to her impressive portfolio of racing experiences. "I have participated in many races, but there are unique lessons I've learned here. The race was well-coordinated and exhilarating," Cherop reflected.

The winners were generously rewarded, having earned cash prizes of Sh250,000 for Cheruiyot, Sh100,000 for Ngeiywo, and Sh75,000 for Domongole, celebrating their remarkable achievements.

The marathon was orchestrated through a collaborative effort between the Homa Bay County Government, the Kenya Wildlife Service and other partners, emphasizing both athletic prowess and ecological awareness.

Governor Wanga highlighted the event's dual purpose of enhancing tourism in Homa Bay County while contributing to the conservation of the roan antelope, an iconic species in the park. "This marathon has been organized to promote tourism in Homa Bay County. It will also play a vital role in conserving the roan antelopes in their natural habitat," she stated.

CS for Tourism Rebecca Miano, the chief guest at the event, praised the initiative as one of the most intentional and impactful ways to elevate the county's tourism potential while safeguarding one of the nation's natural and cultural treasures—the roan antelope.



The Roan Antelope Half Marathon Leader Board

| Category | Position | Winners | County |
|--------------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 21Km Men Half Marathon | 1 | Alfred Cheruiyot | Elgeyo Marakwet |
| | 2 | Alex Ngeiywo | Bungoma |
| | 3 | Fredrick Domongole | Uasin Gishu |
| 21Km Women Half Marathon | 1 | Nancy Cherop | Usain Gishu |
| | 2 | Dorothy Kipkilach | Elgeyo Marakwet |
| | 3 | Vivian Jerotich | Elgeyo Marakwet |
| 10Km Men Run | 1 | Brian Owino | Kisumu |
| | 2 | Geoffrey Odhiambo | Homa Bay |
| | 3 | Hannington Odari | Homa Bay |
| 10Km Women Run | 1 | Leornida Owiyo | Migori |
| | 2 | Dalzman Gloria | Homa Bay |
| | 3 | Varine Achieng | Homa Bay |





Traditional DevCon Curtain-raisers Thrill Delegates

By Oketch Bernard

In the spirit of unity and cultural celebration, the County Government of Homa Bay, through the Department of Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mining, and Digital Economy, in partnership with the Council of Governors (CoG), hosted a vibrant entertainment on the eve of the Devolution Conference.

The day's activities were a lively blend of tradition, sport, and friendly competition, featuring boat racing, wrestling, and the popular local game Ajua. The shores of Lake Victoria came alive as both men and women competed fiercely in the boat races, where the legendary Amilo boat dominated the waters, securing first place in both categories.

On land, wrestling enthusiasts were treated to an electrifying showdown, with John Otulo emerging as the undisputed champion, showcasing strength, skill, and determination.

To celebrate excellence, each winner walked away with Ksh. 25,000, while the runners-up pocketed Ksh. 20,000, a gesture that underscored the County's commitment to promoting sports, culture, and community engagement.

The event not only provided thrilling entertainment but also highlighted Homa Bay's rich sporting culture and the County's readiness to welcome visitors for the Devolution Conference.





"We are intentional in rebuilding Homa Bay County, to make it the leading and the most preferred county to visit, live, work and invest in. In doing so, we are making sure that every sector thrives, and development is achieved equitably." ~ Governor Gladys Wanga