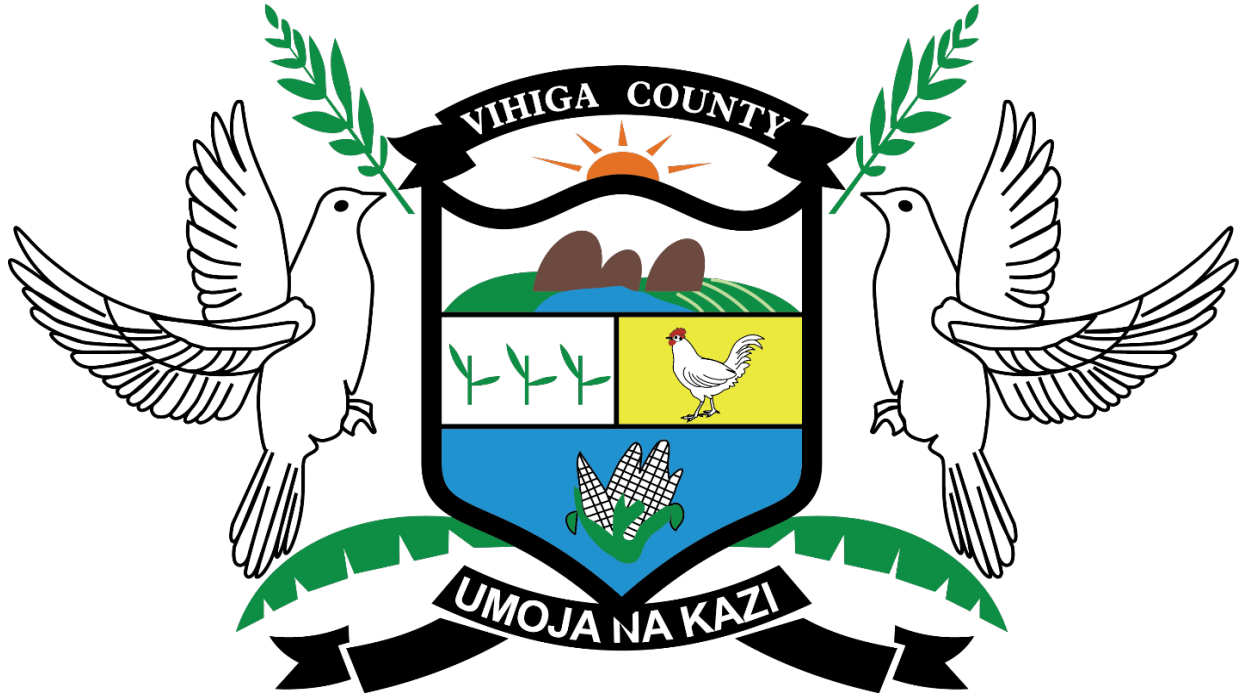


COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA



STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

BY

**H.E. DR WILBER K. OTTICHILO
GOVERNOR VIHIGA COUNTY**

18TH DECEMBER 2020

VISION

Vihiga to Become a Prosperous and Model County in Kenya

MISSION

To transform Vihiga into a Prosperous County by Formulation and Implementation of Good Governance and Development Systems

OUR MOTTO

All Inclusive Development Without Corruption and Tribalism, supported by County Values and Hard work

CORE VALUES

- Integrity and Honesty
 - Equity
- Accountability and Transparency
 - Inclusivity
 - Teamwork
- Courtesy/ Respect
 - Quality service
- Creativity and Innovation

**H.E. DR. WILBER OTTICHILO'S STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS TO
THE PEOPLE OF VIHIGA COUNTY DELIVERED ON 18TH DECEMBER
2020 AT KIDUNDU STADIUM**

Hon. Ken Lusaka – Speaker of the Senate of Kenya
Excellency Governors and Deputy Governors
Hon. Eugene Wamalwa – CS Devolution and ASALs
Hon. Musalia Mudavadi – ANC Party Leader
Hon. Chris Omulele – MP Luanda Constituency
Hon. Omboko Milemba – MP Emuhaya Constituency
Hon. Ernest Kagesi – MP Vihiga Constituency
Hon. Alfred Agoi – MP Sabatia Constituency
Hon. Charles Gimose – MP Hamisi Constituency
Hon. Dr. Patrick Lumumba Saisi – Deputy Governor Vihiga County
H.E. Ambassador Kyle McKarter – US Ambassador to Kenya
H.E. Jane Marriott – British High Commissioner to Kenya
Hon. Hasna Mudeizi Mbone - Speaker of this County Assembly,
Hon. County Assembly Speakers Present,
Honourable Members of the County Assembly,
The County Commissioner and National Government Officials present,
County Executive Committee Members present,
Chief Officers and Other Officers of the Country Public Service Present,
The Principal Magistrate and Members of the Judiciary Present,
Members of the County Public Service Board
Our Development Partners,
Invited Guests and Members of the Public present,
Members of the Fourth Estate present,
All the residents of Vihiga County present and those watching and
listening to this Address through digital media and Radio,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

A. INTRODUCTION

Madam Speaker,

I am indeed delighted to deliver my **third state of the county address** to the great people and leaders of Vihiga County during this special County Assembly sitting outside the official chambers. It is my statutory obligation to deliver this address as provided for in the County Government Act 2012 Section 30 (k). This annual State of the County Address outlines the development achievements and challenges in the County during the 2019/20 financial year and the proposed development projects and programs for the 2020/2021 financial year.

In my first and second State of the County Address which I delivered to the people of Vihiga County on 18th October 2018 and 31st October 2019, I outlined the challenges my administration was facing and how I was going to deal with the same; as well as the development achievement we have made despite of the challenges we faced during the reporting period. I further gave an outline of the projects and programmes that my administration had planned to undertake during the 2019/20 financial year.

In this third State of the County Address, I will present an overview of the development achievements and challenges of my administration for the 2019/20 financial year. I will also briefly outline the planned and budgeted for development projects for the 2020/21 financial year and the envisioned challenges.

Madam speaker,

This State of the County Address is organized as follows:

The first section is the introduction, while the second section highlights the major development milestones that my administration was able to achieve during the first two years of my administration. These socio-economic milestones have had significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of the people of Vihiga County.

The third section presents the details of the development achievements and challenges during the 2019/20 financial year period.

The fourth section presents highlights of the planned development projects, programs and activities earmarked for the 2020/21 financial year.

The fifth and last section presents emerging issues, way forward and the concluding remarks.

B. MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PREVIOUS ADDRESSES

Madam Speaker,

During my first and second state of the county addresses, I identified a number of challenges that we were facing, which slowed down the rate of progress towards delivering on our development agenda. My administration continues to face some of the previously stated challenges which include;

- Delay in the release of development funds by the National Treasury
- The historical pending bills burden
- Bloated human work force and poor work ethics/attitude
- Inadequate qualified and experienced human resource
- Limited revenue streams for own source revenue
- High expectation from the people.

Although some of these challenges still remain unresolved, I am happy to note that we have significantly addressed challenges regarding putting in place an effective governance system, reduction in corruption practices and overall improvement in own source revenue collection.

Madam Speaker,

During the first address (2017/18 FY), I outlined the achievements my administration had made. The main achievements were:

1. Development and launching of the 2018-2022 County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP)
2. Ensuring uninterrupted supply of drugs and non-pharmaceuticals materials to all our health facilities
3. Commenced the construction of the hospital plaza at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Governor's and Deputy Governor's Residences
4. Commenced the construction of Mwitoko fish farm and training center
5. In collaboration with the National Government, we commenced the implementation of the Belgium water project, upgrading Maseno, Mbale and Kaimosi water supplies.
6. The construction of 75 ECDE classrooms, renovation of 26 TVET facilities and the registration of the same with the National Ministry of Education and Technical Training, improvement of TVET enrollment in the county from 2,900 students to 4,572 students.
7. Revamped the Vihiga County Education Fund (Bursary) by increasing its budgetary allocation for each ward from KES 1 million to KES 4 million per year.
8. 27,000 farmers received subsidized fertilizers and certified seed.
9. 37,428 animals were vaccinated against ECF
10. 79 KM of county roads were rehabilitated in all the wards
11. 75 dairy cattle and 80 dairy goats were given to dairy farmer groups across the county.
12. Initiated the implementation of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP).
13. Increased own source revenue collection from KES 93 million in 2016/17 FY to KES 143 million during 17/18 FY.

During the 2018/19 financial year, my administration achieved the following:

1. The installation of 32 and 64 slice CT-Scans at VCRH,
2. Establishment of Dental Units across all Sub-county hospitals,
3. Renovation of Mbale VCRH
4. Implementation of the Mother and Child Maternal Care Program, popularly known as the OttichiloCare program.
5. Completed and opened various healthcare facilities in the County.
6. Operationalization of Mwitoko Fish farm, specializing in fingerlings production and training
7. Distributed planting fertilizer, top-dressing fertilizer and 2 Kg packet of certified maize seed to 34,000 Farmers identified from all the 25 wards of Vihiga County.
8. Distributed 20,000 Coffee seedlings to Coffee farmers within the County, 20,000 Avocado seedlings and 30,000 Tea seedlings to farmers in Vihiga County.
9. Distribution of 3 heifers (dairy cow) per ward totalling to 75 animals to dairy farmer groups across the County.
10. Distribution of a total of 80 dairy goats to Farmers within Vihiga County.
11. Installation of high mast flood lights and ordinary street lighting in strategic locations and markets across the county, for enhanced security and business operations.
12. Procurement and delivery of the first County Fire Engine, Rapid Response Vehicle and hiring of trained fire marshals for fire emergency response in the County.
13. Construction of 108 new ECDE classrooms across the county
14. Inauguration of the Governor's Scholarship program benefitting 110 students from needy backgrounds in the county and continued implementation for the County Bursary Fund program.
15. The operationalization of the Geospatial Technology Services (GTS) laboratory in the county for rational planning using GIS technology.
16. Acquired 10-tonne exhauster, 10 tonne garbage compacting truck and 10-tone skip loader for garbage collection and environmental management.
17. Established the County Trade and Enterprise Fund with KES 34 million disbursed to the youth and women traders in Vihiga County.
18. Commenced construction of market stalls in various markets
19. Commenced the rehabilitation and re-forestation of Maragoli Hills
20. Formulated and enacted various policies and laws
21. Completion and operationalization of various water projects as well as rehabilitation of various water springs
22. Opened 91 KM of new roads and maintained 205 KM of roads in the entire county.
23. Increased own source revenue collection from KES 143 million in 2017/18 FY to KES 178 million during the 2018/19 FY.
24. Completed development of County Land valuation roll

Madam Speaker,

The implementation of the above stated development projects and programs, had the following socio-economic impacts;

1. With improved and development of new road networks, we opened access within the county and eased communication for various economic activities in the county.
2. Installation of high mast flood lights and market/streetlights in strategic points across the county has improved the security of the areas and facilitated extended time of doing business.
3. In education, development, improvement and equipping of TVET institutions led to increase in enrollment of students by 68% compared to the previous years. Construction and equipping of new ECDE classrooms, coupled with improved remuneration of ECDE teachers saw to the growth in the sector by 42% in terms of enrollment and graduation of ECDE pupils.
4. In agriculture, distribution of farm inputs, dairy animals, development of Mwitoko Fish Farm and production of African leafy vegetables saw to the progression of Vihiga County economy from predominantly subsistence economy to agribusiness and commercialization of agricultural value chains.
5. The county witnessed improvement in healthcare systems and better service delivery with the provision of modern diagnostic facilities, devolving further specialized services like dental and surgical theaters to sub-county hospitals, implementation of OttichiloCare program and strengthening of preventive healthcare systems through the CHV program.
6. Restoration and rehabilitation of our environmental jewels like the Maragoli hills, Ebusiekwe hills, traditional forests and restoration of our water catchment areas saw to the improvement of water catchment areas in our County.
7. Under the KUSP, beautification and infrastructural development of the Vihiga Municipality has built up and established Mbale, Majengo, Mudete and Chavakali as key economic hubs of Vihiga County.
8. In trade, construction of new market shades, bodaboda stage shades and establishment of the Trade and enterprise fund has promoted the development and improvement of business working environment and ease of access to business financing.

C. 2019/20 DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Madam Speaker,

My earlier address has so far focussed on the achievements of my administration during my first two years in office. Let me now turn my address to the achievement and challenges during my third year, which is the main focus of today's address.

During the FY 2019/20, the County received:

- KES 4.25 billion as equitable share of revenue raised nationally,
- KES 830.98 million as total conditional grants and
- had a cash balance of KES 429.29 million from FY 2018/19.

- The County also raised KES 148.2 million from own source revenue.

Madam Speaker,

Overall, Own source revenues for 2019/20 FY decreased by 16.8% compared to the previous year (2018/19 FY) when own source revenue increased by 24%. Our own source revenue decreased from KES 178 million in 2018/19 FY to KES 148 million in 2019/20 FY. The revenue shortfalls for the FY 2019/2020 were largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures undertaken by the government to prevent its spread by closing markets and business premises which are the main sources of revenue for the county. We also suspended the collection of revenue during the months of April, May and June 2020.

Total expenditure during 2019/20 FY amounted to KES 5.11 billion comprising of KES 3.79 billion and KES 1.32 billion for recurrent and development expenditure respectively. The previous year 2018/19 had a total of KES 5.75 billion comprising of KES 4.11 billion and KES 1.64 billion for recurrent and development expenditure respectively. It is clear from these statistics that during the year under review, fewer financial resources were spent on development compared to the previous year.

Madam Speaker,

Implementation of the 2019/20 financial year projects and programs faced a number of challenges that led to the overall average development performance and delivery of services during the year. Among the key challenges were:

1. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic
2. Delayed release of development funds by the National Treasury
3. Historical Pending bills burden – we have paid KES 450 million
4. Serious lack of technical capacity in most of the departments
5. Lack of capacity and capability by some of the contractors awarded projects
6. Poor work ethics and attitude
7. Over employment of health workers

Madam Speaker,

The single most important challenge that seriously affected our development activities and programs was the COVID-19 pandemic. To contain the Coronavirus pandemic, we were forced to channel a substantive amount of our resources to combating the deadly disease. Efforts had to be made to rapidly establish proper and specialized health facilities in readiness for the anticipated explosion of COVID-19 patient cases in the County. These efforts included the establishment of 200-bed capacity isolation centers, procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), water tanks, hand sanitizers, provision of water and deployment of vehicles for contact tracing and communication.

As I give this address today, Vihiga County has reported a total of 138 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases. Out of this, a total of 95 have recovered,

5 have succumbed to the disease and 37 are currently isolated (home-based care). 21 healthcare workers have so far tested positive for COVID-19 out of which 1 has died.

As a county government, we continue to play our part in creating awareness of this pandemic in our communities and the danger it poses. As we continue following the National Ministry of Health and the WHO guidelines to guard and protect ourselves and each other from COVID-19, I urge all of us to strictly adhere to the implementation of the issued COVID-19 protection guidelines by keeping social distance, wearing face masks in public places, regularly washing our hands or applying alcohol-based hand sanitizers as well as avoiding crowded areas.

Madam Speaker,

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it some hard learned lessons and opportunities. Some of these are:

1. Lessons Learned

- The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated to us the importance of unity, preparedness, collaboration and coordination during any pandemic is key and critical.
- Regardless of your social status, a pandemic like COVID-19 can adversely affect anyone indiscriminately
- Currently, our health facilities and capacities are in dire need for major transformation to handle any future health pandemics. Therefore, there is need for urgent restructuring of our health systems, particularly the health human resource management system.
- Community led approaches and participation in combating any pandemic is critical including implementation of a well-coordinated management and monitoring system.

2. Opportunities

- Radical change from traditional to new lifestyles
- Shift from traditional/conventional way of transacting business to digital ways of transacting the same
- Created enormous opportunities in research and innovation
- COVID-19 has led to general improvement in our healthcare systems and at the same time exposed the inherent weaknesses in the same. For example, we have built 5-bed ICU/HDU and oxygen plant at VCRH as well as acquisition of numerous new medical and healthcare equipment, courtesy of COVID-19.

Madam Speaker,

Despite of the above challenges, and particularly COVID-19 pandemic, the following were the main projects implemented during the 2019/20 financial year.

1. Completion of Serem and Mukhalakhala Slaughterhouses
2. Implementation of the KES 21 million Agriculture Sector Development Support Program (ASDSP) and the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) – 540 groups received KES

- 198million for improvement of different agricultural value chains including poultry, diary, banana and traditional vegetables.
3. Purchase of 2 additional ambulances
 4. Partial Completion of the County blood transfusion center
 5. The establishment of ICU facility at our County Referral Hospital
 6. Commenced on the construction of oxygen plant at the County Referral Hospital
 7. Commenced on the construction of 35-bed mother and childcare maternity ward at Ebusiratsi Health Center
 8. Opened new dispensaries, among them Esirulo, Ebukhaya, Essaba
 9. Completion of the construction of the County Medical Commodities stores at VCRH
 10. Equipping of most of the health facilities in Vihiga County
 11. Constructed 27 new ECDE classrooms across the county.
 12. Completion of Luanda Omena Market and general improvement of Luanda Market
 13. Construction of a County Fire Station
 14. Development of spatial plan for Kaimosi-Cheptulu complex
 15. Beautification and lighting of Mbale Town and lighting of Majengo, Mbale, Chavakali and Mudete Markets
 16. Completion of the Gaga, Kegoye, Matsigulu and Nang'oli water projects.
 17. The Belgium water cluster project is almost complete, ready for commissioning in January/February 2021.
 18. Commenced the construction and tarmacking of Mbale – Tsiambalo – Munoywa road.
 19. Opened 111.9KM of community roads and maintained 276.2KM of classified roads in the County.

2019/20 FY DEPARTMENT DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Madam Speaker,

I will now present an overview of the planned, budgeted and approved projects and programs for implementation during the financial year 2019/20. At departmental level, KES 2.82 billion representing 40.4% of the total approved budget was allocated for development in the county. The allocation per department and respective achievements was as follows:

I. TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Madam Speaker,

The department of Transport and Infrastructure provides services to all departments of the County Government on the implementation of their own infrastructure activities.

In the department of Transport and Infrastructure, the County Government planned for a total of 83 development projects with a budget of KES 459.3 million. Of these 83 projects; 34 were ward-based, 16 KRB roads, 2 bridges, 4 box culverts and 7 river crossings, 13 high mast flood lights, 1 fire engine shed and 1 consultancy. During the financial year under review, 77 projects

worth KES 260.5 million were completed and this represents 56.72% absorption rate of allocated development funds.

Madam Speaker,

During the reporting period, the department achieved the following:

- Opening/rehabilitation of community roads (111.9 KMs) which were ward-based and funded by the County Revenue funds.
- The successful completion of rehabilitation and maintenance of Class D and E roads in the County – 276.2 KM.
- Provided services to other departments in terms of technical designs, bill of quantities, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Madam Speaker,

The department also commenced on the preparation of the following legal documents to facilitate proper and procedural delivery of its services:

- a) The Vihiga County Roads maintenance Bill 2020
- b) The Vihiga County Roads Policy 2020

II. EDUCATION, SCIENCE, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Madam Speaker,

The department of Education planned for a total of 36 projects with a budget of KES 205.01 million. During the financial year under review, 31 projects valued at a total of KES 135.3 million were initiated and completed by the department (66% absorption of allocated development budget).

Madam Speaker,

During the reporting period, the following was achieved.

1. Development of County Vocational Education and training policy 2019.
2. Construction, renovation and expansion of 5 VTCs and 27 ECDE infrastructure (Classrooms, workshops and sanitary facilities).
3. Increased enrolment of students on the Governor's scholarship programme from 110 to 221 students; and issued bursaries to 27,079 Students (KES 4 million per ward, total KES 120 million disbursed).
4. Supply and delivery of instructional materials, tools and equipment for ECDE and VTCs

Madam Speaker,

It is worth noting, that in the year under review, the department of education managed to develop the following legislation, policies and plans; to facilitate the proper legal frameworks for delivery of its mandate. These are:

1. The Vihiga County ECDE bill 2019
2. The Vihiga County Scholarship Policy 2019
3. The Vihiga County Scholarship Guidelines 2019
4. Vihiga County Vocational Education and Training Policy

III. HEALTH SERVICES

Madam Speaker,

The department of Health Services deals with matters pertinent to the quality of life of the people of Vihiga County. The department offers the most critical services, has the highest number of staff in the County Government (over 50%) and has attracted a lot of attention and criticism.

In this department, the government identified a total of 28 projects with a budget of KES 384.88 million.

The following are the key sector achievements during the year under review.

1. Uninterrupted drugs and non-pharmaceuticals supply from KEMSA to all our health facilities.
2. Rehabilitation and expansion of health infrastructure:
 - Renovation of the male, maternity and amenity wards,
 - Construction of County blood bank Phase 1 complete.
 - Refurbishment of the casualty Wing to create space for ICU and face-lifting of the County Referral Hospital.
 - Construction of County Drug Commodity store
 - Rehabilitation of rural health facilities to enable provision of integrated and comprehensive healthcare.
3. Capacity building of 576 healthcare workers on COVID -19 response and UHC.
4. Implemented OttichiloCare–
 - Registered 4,868 mothers
 - 4,868 mothers received KES 1,000 stipend per visit
 - Increased antenatal visits and skilled deliveries to 69.1% and 56.6% respectively.
5. Created additional 40 Community Health Units to strengthen community health strategy.
6. Stepped up response to COVID -19 pandemic through establishment of 3 isolation centres (VCRH, Mbale Rural Hospital and Hamisi Sub-county Hospital).
7. Developed:
 - Health Policy Framework,
 - Vihiga County Referral Hospital Strategic Plan (2017-2022),
 - Facility Improvement Fund (FIF) Act 2019,
 - Reproductive Maternal Neo-Natal and Child Health (RMNCH) Act 2019 - OttichiloCare,
 - Health Care Services Fund Act 2019,
 - Referral Strategy,
 - Draft Health Care Services Fund Regulations,
 - County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP 2019).

The development programs and projects initiated during the year under review were distributed as follows.

A. Vihiga Sub-county

1. Purchased 2 new ambulances

2. Construction and equipping of Lyanaginga Model Health Centre

B. Hamisi Sub-county

1. Equipped Chepsaga and Jebrongo Dispensaries
2. Fenced Givigoi Dispensary
3. Completed Jemojeji, Jirwani, Kaptis Dispensaries and maternity ward at Cheptulu Dispensary. Commenced on the construction of Shamakhokho dispensary

C. Luanda Sub-county

1. Commenced Construction of Epang'a and Emanaka Dispensaries, and maternity ward at Luanda Dispensary
2. Commenced Renovation of Ebusyubi Health Centre

D. Sabatia Sub-county

1. Commenced construction of Kisatiru Dispensary and Maternity wing at Bugina Model Health Centre.
2. Completed construction of Mulele Dispensary, equipped Chavogere Maternity wing and renovated Kilagiru Health Centre.

COMMUNITY NUTRITION

Madam Speaker,

They say an apple a day, keeps the doctor away. While we may not be able to guarantee an apple for every citizen of Vihiga County, the department has made efforts to promote the importance of nutrition for the good health of our people with special reference to vulnerable groups (children under 5), pregnant mothers and the elderly.

The department achieved the following during the year under review:

1. Conducted Malezi Bora Weeks by supplementing Vitamin A at community level
2. Formed 25 father-to-father groups and 40 mother-to-mother groups in Emuhaya and Luanda Sub-counties to create awareness on the importance of nutrition
3. Conducted 10 food demonstration workshops in 10 sub-locations in 4 sub-counties to raise awareness on healthy diets, and held 40 nutrition health talks on local radio stations – Vihiga FM, Anyole Radio, Samaritan FM
4. Established a seed bank in Emuhaya sub-county which serves as a storage for indigenous seeds in the County
5. Trained 100 local community leaders on Maternal Neonatal Child and Nutrition package to act as advocates in the community; to help improve mother and child indicators

Madam Speaker,

I take this opportunity to recognize and appreciate the support and partnerships from our partners towards combatting the COVID-19 pandemic in Vihiga County.

- MSH
- PATH
- Evidence Action
- IPAS
- TINADA
- KEMRI/CDC
- AMATSI Water Services Company
- The Republic of South Korea
- Nutrition International

- Equity Bank
- STIPA
- One-Acre Fund
- ABSA Kenya
- AMPATH
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Many if not most of the programs and activities carried out by the department of health services are implemented with support of health partners. I also take this opportunity to particularly acknowledge and thank the following for their continued partnership.

- UNICEF
- Ampath Plus
- USAID Afya Ugavi
- Nascop
- Impact Malaria
- Nutrition International
- KEMSA
- NMCP
- Bioersivity International
- MEDS
- SOFDI
- The National Ministry of Health (MoH)

IV. AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FISHERIES AND COOPERATIVES

Madam Speaker,

Agriculture is a critical sector whose productivity and diversity guarantees our county's and the nation's food security. Approximately 85% of the Vihiga County population source their livelihood mainly from agricultural activities; with 65% of the population estimated to be living below the absolute poverty line, subsistence farming account for 90%. My determination is to transform Vihiga into an Agribusiness Economy.

The department of agriculture was allocated development budget was KES 581.95. This included the development funding under NARIGP and ASDSP II. The total development expenditure for the department during the reporting period was KES 259.4 million.

Madam Speaker,

Based on our 2018-2022 CIDP, we have planned to promote growth in the agricultural sector with a focus on increasing food security, income generation and creating employment for the people of Vihiga County. Through the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) and the Agricultural Sector Development Support Program (ASDSP) II, the County is well on its way to achieve this vision. We have focused on promoting dairy, poultry, banana and traditional vegetables value chains among others.

To realize the commercialization of the agricultural sector in the county, the department's cooperative development directorate has put in place and continues to strengthen agricultural cooperative societies to engage in value addition production. To this end, we have established a cooperative fund to enable cooperative societies to access credit.

Madam Speaker,

To address food security in the county and promote commercialization of agriculture in the county, the department offers subsidized fertilizer and certified seeds to poor farmers and distributes industrial seedlings free of charge to famers. The impact of this endeavor has been:

1. Increased crop Productivity; maize from 8 bags per acre to 15 bags
2. Improved production of industrial crops; 30,000 tea and 20,000 coffee seedlings distributed to farmers.

The following was achieved during the period under review:

1. The department distributed:
 - Assorted indigenous African leafy vegetable seeds to 3,000 farmers.
 - Pasture (Desmodium, Rhodes, Bracharia) seed grass to farmersto 60 dairy farmer groups and commercial fodder producers
 - 15,000 avocado seedlings to farmers.
 - 38 breeding stock Ayrshire cows.
2. Enhanced control of crop pests and diseases (fall army worms).
3. 453,000 tilapia and African Catfish fingerlings were hatched at Mwitoko Fish Farm, with 499,050 being sold to farmers at subsidized rates.
4. A total of 33,393 stock were vaccinated against foot and mouth disease.
5. Under NARIGP, a total of 540 community projects were funded along priority value chains and investment enterprises to a tune of KES 198,320,206.
6. Supply of Fish Production hatchery and Aquaculture feeds
7. Procured 20 motorcycles for agricultural extension officers
8. Completed renovation works at Mukhalakhala slaughterhouse
9. Serem Slaughterhouse is at 95% stage of completion
10. Installation of 20 solar security lights, 4 CCTV cameras at Mwitoko fish farm.

Madam Speaker,

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the following development partners who have supported us in the funding and capacity building for different projects.

1. Welt Hunger Hilfe (WWH)
2. Bioversity International
3. Project Brief: Agri-Jobs 4 Youth Initiative
4. Kenya Crops and Dairy Market Systems (KCDMS)
5. Sustainable Organic Farming and Development Initiatives (SOFDI)

V. GENDER, SPORTS, YOUTH, CULTURE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Madam Speaker,

The department of gender, sports, youth, culture and social services; promotes, nurtures and develops sports talents in the county, promotes and conserves our cultural heritage and diversity, empowers the vulnerable in the community for improved livelihood, provides care and support to

members of the society in need of special protection and mainstreams gender, youth and people with disabilities issues in all programs.

In the fiscal year 2019/20, the department was allocated KES 61.98 million development budget. KES 21.4 million was expended for development by the department during the year under review. This was 34.53% absorption of budget allocated development funds.

Madam Speaker,

The key sectoral achievement by the department during the year under review are as follows:

1. The sector nurtured talent by promotion of sporting activities; **Vihiga United FC, Vihiga Queens FC**, Vihiga volleyball team and Vihiga Netball team participated in national leagues.
2. Coordinated participation in the regional athletics competition and KICOSCA games.
3. Rehabilitation of the following sports grounds was done: Kidundu, Mumboha and Solongo.
4. Embarked on the construction of Hamisi Stadium.
5. Organized football tournaments across the county starting from the ward level.
6. Promoted culture through cultural festivals for the Maragoli, Bunyore, Tiriki and Terik native subtribes and facilitated 4 teams to participate in the Kenya Music and Cultural festival in Meru.
7. Completed Construction of Maragoli and Tiriki cultural centers

Madam Speaker,

During the 2019/20 financial year, the department managed to prepare the following pieces of legislation, policies and strategic plans.

1. Vihiga County Sports Bill 2019 – enacted into County Law
2. Persons Living with Disability 2019 – enacted into County Law
3. Vihiga County Sports Policy
4. Persons living with Disability Policy

VI. PHYSICAL PLANNING, LANDS AND HOUSING

Madam Speaker,

In the 2019/20 financial year, the department of Physical Planning, Lands and Housing had an approved budgetary allocation of KES 489.91 for development. During the year under review, the department expended KES 56.7 million, 11.57% absorption rate of all budgetary allocated development funds.

Madam Speaker,

The following are the sector achievement by the department during the year under review.

1. Purchase of one garbage compacting truck 10 tones.
2. Construction of waste-water wetland and bio digester under KUSP
3. Installed a total of 15 (20-metre) monopole high mast lights within Vihiga Municipality.

4. Prepared spatial Development Plan for Kaimosi /Cheptulu.
5. Carried out land surveys, adjudications and boundary disputes resolutions.
6. Established the Vihiga Municipal Board.
7. Purchased land:
 - for the construction of Gamande Youth Polytechnic and Senende Cultural land
 - for the expansion of Vihindi ECDE Centre and Jepkose training Centre
 - for the relocation of Chanzeywe Youth Polytechnic
8. Purchased survey and ICT equipment

Madam Speaker,

Vihiga County's is a beneficiary of the Kenya Urban Support Programme (KUSP), for the development of the former Vihiga Municipality (Vihiga, Majengo, Mbale, Chavakali, Mudete areas). During the 2019/20 fiscal year, the following was accomplished under the programme.

1. Beautification of Mbale Town
 - Construction of drainage systems and water ways
 - Construction of walkway and pavements – laying them with cobble stone
 - Installation of high mast flood lights
2. Commenced upgrading of Mbale – Tsimbalo – Munoywa road to bitumen standard

VII. ENVIRONMENT, WATER, ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Madam Speaker,

The department of Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Resources had an approved budgetary allocation for development of KES 101.1 million.

Madam Speaker,

The department's sectoral achievements are as follows:

1. Completed feasibility study for sewerage cluster for Jeptulu-Shamakhokho -Kaimosi, Mbale-Chavakali and Luanda-Maseno
2. Protected of 46 water springs under the ward development program
3. Constructed 4 new water supplies at Banja – Givogi, Mugogo, Digula Community & Eng'elelwe water projects
4. Constructed Banja borehole and water Kiosk, rehabilitated Mugogo (N. Maragoli) and Gaga (Gisambai) water projects.
5. Constructed a new Decentralized Treatment System (DTF) under the Water Trust Fund
6. Constructed a new Bio-digester & constructed sub-surface wetland at Mbale prisons under KUSP
7. Commenced construction of office block at Gilwatsi – Maragoli Hills
8. Fencing of proposed community forest at Tiriki/Munzatsi, Tiriki/Chepkoyai, Cheptulu, Serem, Senende
9. Purchased 7-acre piece of land for waste management

10. Completed demarcation of Jebrok water plot in Tambua
11. Completed extension of Vigna borehole pipeline in Mungoma
12. Completed installation of water Pump at Muhanda in Lugaga/Wamuluma
13. Completed Supply and erection of elevated pressed steel tank at Eregi borehole
14. Completed Supply and installation of pipes and fittings and electrical items in Busali
15. Completed Supply and laying of Wanadanya Pipeline in Lyaduywa/Izava
16. Completed construction of Eburnangwe water project Phase 1 in N.E. Bunyore
17. Completed rehabilitation of Bumbo water project Phase 1
18. Completed construction of Gisambai/Majengo water project in Gisambai
19. Completed rehabilitation of South west Bungore (Nang'oli) water project in Luanda South

Madam Speaker,

The following are the pieces of legislation and policies prepared by the directorate of environment, energy and natural resources.

1. The Vihiga County Climate Change Fund Act 2019 – completed and published
2. The Vihiga County Sand Harvesting Bill – Draft, awaiting public participation
3. The Vihiga County Climate Change Policy 2018-2022 – completed awaiting publication
4. Vihiga County Forestry Management Policy – Draft, awaiting public participation
5. Vihiga County Agroforestry Policy – Draft, awaiting public participation
6. Vihiga County Solid Waste Management Policy – Draft, awaiting Public participation
7. Vihiga County Water and Sanitation Policy – 1st Draft
8. Vihiga County Water and Sanitation Bill 2020 – Draft, awaiting public participation

VIII. TRADE, INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND ENTREPREURSHIP

Madam Speaker,

In the fiscal year 2019/20, the department was allocated KES 48.94 million development budget. KES 28.4 million was expended for development by the department during the year under review. This was 58.03% absorption of approved budget allocated for development.

Madam Speaker,

For the financial year 2019/20, the department of trade had the following sector achievements.

1. Maintenance of street lighting.

2. Construction of sanitary facilities in market centres; Emabungo, Bukuga, Esibuye stock Market, Kilingili, Lotego, Kinuu, and Ekwanda.
3. Renovated 2 Market Shades at Luanda and Stalls at Serem Market.
4. Disbursed KES 25 million Trade and Enterprise Fund
5. Completed construction of 26 bodaboda shades across the county
6. Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of 10-meter flood lights in Chavakali – ongoing
7. Completed Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of solar PV lighting in Busali
8. Completed Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of 10-meter flood lights in Emabungo
9. Pavementing of Luanda mama mboga
10. Completed training and licensing of bodaboda operators in the county

IX. PUBLIC SERVICE, ADMINISTRATION, COORDINATION OF COUNTY AFFAIRS AND ICT

Madam Speaker,

The department of public service is generally a service department. During the 2019/20 financial year, most of the funds allocated for development (KES 3.4 Million) in the department was supplemented to pay pending bills following the directive from the National Treasury; with the exception of funds allocated for the refurbishment of the County Headquarters.

Madam Speaker,

For the financial year 2019/20, the department of Public Service, Administration, coordination of County Affairs and ICT had the following achievements.

1. All the County Departments and agencies put on performance contracting. H.E Excellency the Governor signed performance contracts with County Executive Committee Members (CECMs), whilst the CECM with the COs, and later performance appraisal cascaded to Senior staff of the County Government.
2. Developed the County Government organization structure and service charters in all the departments and directorates.
3. Undertook staff audit and developed a human resource information management system
4. Supported the development of digital asset register, Boresha Afya ya Mama na Mtoto – OttichiloCare
5. Production and distribution of and documentaries and newsletters highlighting county’s achievements.
6. Establishment of civic education and public participation unit
7. Establishment of complaint redress and feedback committees
8. Undertook civic education and public participation on various bills and county plans
9. Renovation of office spaces in the County Headquarters building and development of modern reception area.

Madam Speaker,

The following were the legislations, policies and plans that were developed during the reporting period:

1. The Vihiga County Public Participation and Civic Engagement Act 2019
2. The Vihiga County Disaster Management Act 2019
3. The Vihiga County Alcoholic Drinks Regulations
4. The Vihiga County Research Policy 2019

X. FINANCE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING

Madam Speaker,

In the fiscal year 2019/20, the department of Finance and Economic Planning was allocated KES 451 million development budget. KES 446.8 million was expended for development by the department during the year under review. This was 99.07% absorption of approved budget allocated for development.

The department coordinated the timely preparation and dissemination of the FY 2019/20 Planning and Financial management documents that included:

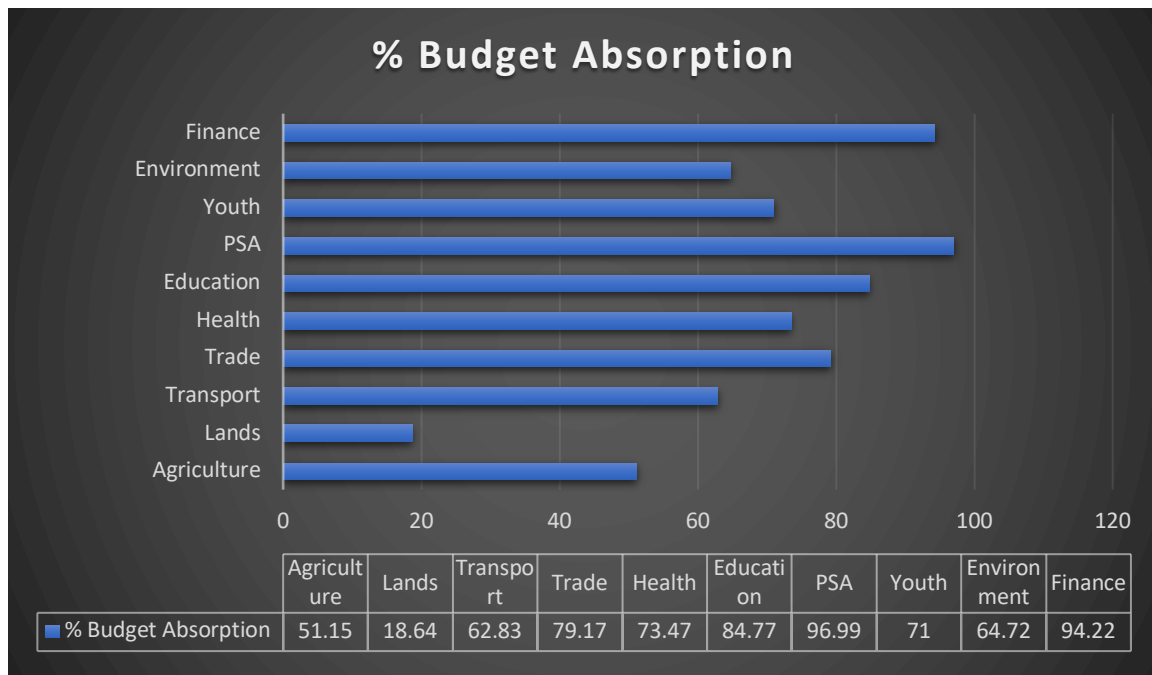
1. The Finance Bill 2019.
2. The 2020/21 County Annual Development Plan (CADP).
3. 2019/20 County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP).
4. County Budget Review Outlook Paper (CBROP) 2019.
5. 2019/20 Budget estimates.
6. Debt Management Strategy Paper; and
7. Periodic Expenditure and financial reports.

Budget Performance by Departments in the 2019/20 Financial Year

Madam Speaker,

The total county expenditure for the 2019/20 financial year amounted to KES 5.75 billion against a target of KES 6.96 billion. Further the County expenditure performance revealed a steady decrease in budget absorption rate from approximately 82% in FY 2018/2019 to about 73.28% in the 2019/2020 FY.

Figure 1 shows the budget absorption for each department during the under review.



E. KEY PROJECTS EARMARKED FOR THE 2020-2021 FINANCIAL YEAR

Madam Speaker,

The 2020/21 fiscal year budget is under implementation. Development projects being implemented this financial year have been highlighted in this financial year's Annual Development Plan (ADP); prepared from the development vision highlighted in our 2018-2022 County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP)

Vihiga County is projected to receive:

- KES 5.335 billion as equitable share of revenue for the 2020/21 financial year.
- Own Source Revenue at 12.5% growth on the 2019/20 fiscal year projection of KES 192.09 million to KES 216.09 million, should the COVID-19 pandemic get under control.

Madam Speaker,

The following are the priorities for the 2020/21 fiscal year:

- 1. Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives**
 - Rehabilitation of Lunyerere and completion of Serem Slaughterhouses, and Esibuye and Mahanga Slaughter slabs
 - Mass livestock vaccination
 - Fingerling production and aquaculture training programme
 - Enhance capacity of cooperative movements
 - Promotion of banana and indigenous chicken value chains
 - Promotion of dairy farming
 - Construction of modern market at Esibuye
- 2. Education, Science, Technical and Vocational Training**
 - Equipping of ECDE centers

- ECDE classroom construction and completion of stalled projects
 - Recruitment of qualified and competent managers and instructors and ECDE teachers
 - Procurement of modern tools and equipment for VTCs
 - Construction/rehabilitation of VTC infrastructure
 - Bursary provision and Governor’s Scholarship Program
3. **Physical Planning, Lands and Housing**
- Integrated Spatial Planning - Physical development plans for towns and market centers including Luanda Town
 - Implementation of KUSP programs and projects
 - Geodetic survey of the County
4. **Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Resources**
- Completion and commissioning of Vihiga Cluster Water Project
 - Completion of ongoing water and sanitation projects
 - Commence on the implementation of Climate Change Program
 - Continue with conservation of water catchment areas
5. **Health Services**
- Refurbishment of Maternity wing at VCRH
 - Procure Backup generators for Hamisi, Sabatia and Emusire Sub-county hospitals
 - Completion of 5-bed ICU/HDU at VCRH
 - Phase 2 construction and equipping of County Blood Transfusion center
 - Construction and equipping of theatre at Hamisi and Sabatia Sub-county Hospitals
 - Completion of the construction of the Oxygen Plant at VCRH
 - Operationalization of the drug commodities and non-pharmaceutical store
 - Resume the construction of Hospital Plaza and County Mortuary
6. **Transport and Infrastructure**
- Routine road maintenance under KRB program
 - Street lighting development in new markets
 - Transport infrastructure development
 - Completion and equipping of County Mechanical Workshop
7. **Public Service, administration and Coordination of County Affairs and ICT**
- Human Resource Audit and Job evaluation
 - Rollout of performance appraisal system, Human resource management system
 - Finalize payroll system
8. **Trade, Industry, Tourism and Entrepreneurship**
- Construction of Modern Luanda Market
9. **Youth, Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services**
- Gender and disability mainstreaming
 - Establishing and protecting cultural sites
 - Promotion of sports and sporting activities – KICOSCA, KYISA
10. **Finance and Economic Planning**

- Revenue – automation and digitization

F. EMERGING ISSUES

Madam Speaker,

Despite of our desire to implement the above planned projects and programs for the current financial year, it is unlikely we shall fully implement the same due to the following reasons:

1. Determination of the County Revenue Allocation Formula

- i. The delay of three months (July-October 2020) in the approval of the Revenue Sharing Formula and the County Allocation Revenue Act (CARA) 2020.
- ii. Despite of the above, we still experience serious delay in disbursement from the National Treasury.
- iii. Because of the delay in approval of Revenue Sharing formula and CARA 2020, we had to prepare 2020/21 supplementary budget to conform to the approved CARA. The supplementary budget was approved by the County Assembly during the second week of the month of December. Therefore, the earliest time it is expected to be approved by the Controller of Budget is mid-January 2021. The time that will be left before end of the financial year will be too short to undertake procurement and implementation of most of the planned projects and programs.

2. COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) Disease

Madam Speaker,

The COVID-19 pandemic, aside from its effects on the economy (businesses and revenue), has put a strain on the County's health systems. A lot of resources that would have been otherwise channeled to development programs, are redirected to combat the effects of the disease.

The disease has also drastically affected economic activities in the county due to the implementation of the National Ministry of Health COVID-19 safety guidelines. This in turn means, a lot of households' wellbeing and sustenance has been greatly affected. How long the COVID-19 safety guidelines will remain in force is not known and therefore we cannot predict the long-term impact of the disease on our development agenda.

With the support of the Council of Governors and KIPPRA, we have developed COVID-19 County Socio-Economic Re-engineering and Recovery Strategy. We shall plan to implement the strategy in order to mitigate long-term impacts of COVID-19 to our Counties. In particular, both the National and County Governments must come up with a comprehensive plan on how to fast track the improvement of our healthcare systems and find lasting solution for our health workers.

3. Bridging Bridges Initiative (BBI)

Madam Speaker,

Although the proposed BBI constitutional amendments greatly favours the strengthening of devolution, the referendum campaigns for the same are expected to directly affect the implementation of our planned 2020/21 financial year development projects and programs. The campaigns may cause some disruptions in implementation of development activities. However, I wish to take this opportunity to urge Kenyans to support BBI in order to strengthen devolution and improve on our national governance system.

Madam Speaker,

The issue of youth and unemployment in this nation and in our county remains a major challenge. The BBI proposals on this matter proposes mechanism to focus on technical training for our youth and programs to encourage and support them to create jobs for themselves.

Madam Speaker,

As a county, we shall establish a database of all youth across the county, documenting their skills and qualifications for business development support and access to credit facilities. My administration will also encourage the youth to enroll in our VTCs for technical training and on completion, we will financially support them through a loaning scheme to come up with business startups. Further, we plan to hold a youth investment forum early next year.

4. Performance Management Contracting

Madam Speaker,

We have instituted performance management contracting in Vihiga County. However, compliance to the same has been a challenge. To that end, we have put in place a Performance Compliance Directorate, with a director, to ensure monitoring and compliance of performance management.

We have also carried out job evaluation and human resource audit to ensure suitable placement of all staff across all departments. When fully implemented, we expect enhanced service delivery in the County Governance System.

5. Climate Change

Madam Speaker,

Climate Change is the defining issue of our time, a reality that is here to stay unless mankind rises to the occasion. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costly.

World economies are moving from overreliance on fossil energy sources to green energy sources towards a global green economy. As a county, we have made great strides to ensure we align our development and economic activities with the national and global policies on climate change.

We have successfully developed and enacted the Vihiga County Climate Change Fund Act 2019, formulated the Vihiga County Climate Change policy together with its regulations and guidelines as well as put in place a Climate Change Directorate to ensure compliance and guide implementation and restructuring of our economy to be climate resilient as stipulated in our 2018-2022 CIDP.

In an effort to promote green energy, we are championing the use of solar energy as well as use of energy saving stoves in Vihiga County.

G. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Madam Speaker,

With the COVID-19 pandemic currently sweeping the world, the functioning of world economy has completely transformed itself from traditional to digital economy. As a county, we must prepare to adjust to this new reality affecting and shaping our economic environment. To achieve this, we plan to do the following:

- Establishment of ICT facilities across the county
- Promotion of digital governance and leadership
- Development of ICT infrastructure in the County working in conjunction with the National Ministry of ICT in order to fast track the implementation of digital (open) governance system.

Madam Speaker,

2022 politics will soon be with us after concluding with the peoples' approval of the proposed BBI constitutional amendments. From July 2021, political formation and transformations will take place. A lot of time and resources by the political class will be focused on formulation and presentation of political agendas and alignments.

However, as a County Government - though our coming into office is also through a political process, we cannot afford to be destructed by the political disruptions, redirecting us way from the development agenda of the county. We shall therefore strive to remain on course to delivering our development agenda for the people of Vihiga County as spelled out in our 2018-2022 CIDP.

In Conclusion Madam Speaker,

As we get into the political season yet again, I take this opportunity to urge all who will be seeking election to political office, including Office of the Governor, to remain civil and focus on issues-based politics rather than personal politics. This will go a long way in fostering cohesion and integration of our people as promoted by the BBI.

Last and not least, I wish first to thank the Almighty God for the good health, strength, determination, courage and wisdom he has given me to strive and transform our County to an economically empowered society. Secondly, I wish to thank the people of Vihiga County and their leaders who have faith in me and have tirelessly continued to support me even in times when my leadership is under severe attack and criticism. Further, I wish to thank the religious leaders in the County, who have faith in me and continue to pray for me to have courage and wisdom to lead and transform the livelihoods of our people.

Finally, I am committed to my vision to transform Vihiga into model and prosperous County in Kenya. With your support, this vision is achievable.

God Bless you all, God Bless Vihiga County.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year 2021.

Thank You!