Unleashing the potential of Meru County
The Meru Rising Conference
Proceedings of the conference held at
Kenya Methodist University - Meru
27th and 28th June 2013

THEME:
Unleashing the potential of Meru County
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How high the County of Meru rises is dependent on how high we set our goals and the measures we put in place to achieve our targets on time. We can only unlock the potential of this great county through concerted efforts that harness key competences; our investors, professionals, youth scholars, administrators, politicians and the general public.

We believe that aligning our vision and county government investments with Vision 2030, the long-term national development blueprint, will put us on a steady growth trajectory that will ultimately deliver middle-income living standards for the People of Meru County. This forum therefore marked the beginning of the social-economic transformation that will improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the County of Meru, through creating business opportunities for the common benefit of all. Through this conference, we aimed to bring to the attention of Kenya and indeed the world, the existing opportunities in agro-processing, education, tourism and ICT among other sectors in Meru.

The County of Meru is on the verge of a takeoff. How high we rise is dependent on how high we set our vision, the audacity of our goals and our commitment to attaining them.

Welcome aboard.

The Senator, Meru County, Hon. Kiraitu Murungi
The Governor, Meru County, Hon. Peter Munya

Conference organizing committee

- Senator Hon. Kiraitu Murungi, Chair
- Governor Hon. Peter Munya, Convenor
- Mr. Martin Bikuri, Secretary and Conference Coordinator
- Bishop Dr. John Ataya, Member
- Dr. Moses Ikiara, Member
- Mr. Koome Mwambia, Member
- Ms. Sheila Mugambi- Ngatia, Member
- Mr. Kithinji Chokerah, Member
- Ms. Esther Nkatha, Member
- Mr. Joel Imitira, CCK, Member
- Mr. Kenneth Kyaka, Member

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EQUITY BANK

DTB
Fusion Capital
Co-operative Bank

Unleashing the potential of Meru County
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

Hon. Peter Munya
Governor of Meru County

M
eru County located on the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya, extends from the ice-capped tip of this most attractive second highest mountain in Africa, cutting across the equator to be about one third in the northern hemisphere while the rest is in the southern hemisphere. Meru County has diverse ecological settings ranging from the moorlands and montane ecosystems of Mt. Kenya with temperate like climates to the African type savannas of Meru National Park with tropical climates, covering variable representations of African humid, sub-humid, and arid ecosystems. Climatically, a journey across Meru County is like a journey from Europe to equatorial Africa.

The indigenous people of Meru are Bantus in origin but the county is inhabited by all tribes of Kenya and beyond depicting the well known traditional good hospitality of the Meru people. The main economic activity of Meru is agriculture. Meru is known nationally and internationally for its endemism in crop varieties and biodiversity. Meru County has one of the highest forest cover in the Kenya and the vision of Meru County Government is to increase this tree cover through participatory programmes involving planting high value multi-purpose agro forestry tree species in the agricultural lands. The county has a population of about 1.5 million people with a projected rise to 1.6 million by 2017.

This conference explores the potential for development in the county in several sectors of the economy namely: agriculture, infrastructure, education, health, tourism, security, land and natural resources, ICT, culture, cooperatives, industry and others. The aim of the conference was to put together all stakeholders in the sectors to think together and chart the way forward on the broad subject of sustainable development in Meru so that the new county government of Meru can intervene to make the opportunities a reality and to the financial institutions the vital information they would need in making decisions on what areas to direct their financial investments. The conference discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by investors and the ways in which the government of Meru can intervene to make the opportunities a reality and reduce the challenges facing the investors.

The conference resolved that Meru has a great potential for investments in all the sectors of development with the big quick wins in the tourism, and agro-processing among others. The conference attracted over 500 participants of all walks of life not only from the county but from all over the republic and beyond.

Peter Munya

The initial idea for holding the Meru rising conference came from His Excellency, Honourable Peter Munya – the Governor of Meru County and Honourable Kiraitu Murungi, the Senator for Meru County. The organizing committee would like to thank both the Governor and the Senator not only for initiating this very noble idea but also for convening the conference at a most appropriate time. The conference was organized by Red House consultants who made several meetings with the governor and the senator to conceptualize the conference and working out all the logistics of the conference. The committee also thanks the Red House group together with the technical experts; Dr. Moses, Ikiara, Mr. Julius Chokera, Sheila, Mr. Martin Bikuri, and others who would have provided inputs into the preparations for this conference at various stages of groundwork both in Nairobi and in Meru.

The conference was sponsored by a number of organizations who offered financial and material assistance to support the conference. The organizing committee acknowledges all the institutions and individuals who offered support for this conference.

The conference benefited from a number of discussants who were very informed and played a significant role in informing the sector discussions. Many thanks go to Dr. Moses Ikiara the master of ceremony and Dr. Rev. Bishop Kobia Ataya, who continued to guide sessions throughout the conference.

Finally the organizing committee, the conveners, the Meru County Executive Committee members, Meru County Staff and all who were involved in the preparation of this great event wish to thank all the participants for sparing two days of their lives to help us think through the areas covered in this conference. As we have heard in the concluding remarks by His Excellency the governor of Meru, they should consider their contributions well received and they should feel proud for having contributed to the development of Meru.

Finally all persons who offered secretarial assistance either through machine operations, recording, provision of food, security, driving duties and all other forms of assistance are hereby acknowledged.

Acknowledgements

The conference attracted over 500 participants of all walks of life who contributed to the development of Meru. The Key facts and trends of developments in various sectors and those of made keynote presentations that set the pace for the conference and all the discussants who provided the facts and trends of developments in various sectors and positioned Meru in the world development arena. The Key note presenters include: His Excellency the Governor Mr. Peter Munya; The Honourable Senator Mr. Kiraitu Murungi; Amb. Francis Muthaura; Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi the Cabinet Secretary for Education; Dr. James Mwangi the CEO Equity Bank; Dr Julius Kipng’etich the Chief Operating Officer Equity Bank; Dr. Wahome Gakuru Director: Bonfide Group of Companies; Professor Msdamba – the vice Chancellor of KCA University; Dr. Gerison Ikiara, Mr. Julius Chokera of UNDP and many that contributed in the preparation of their very informative presentations. As shown in this proceeding the list of discussants is long considering all the sessions and breakout groups. To all the discussants we salute you for a job well done.

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Unleashing the Potential of Meru County

The Context

Join the promulgation of the New Constitution in August, 2010, Kenya embraced the most ambitious and potentially the most transformative governance structure since her founding 48-years earlier. With the signing of the Constitution by H.E. Mwai Kibaki, the former president and appending of the Government Seal by the Attorney General, Kenya conferred on herself a devolution architecture comprising of Forty Seven County Governments, One National Government and a significantly restructured Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. The Meru County Government which is a creation of this process has therefore seized and embraced this occasion and is raring to chart a development discourse that will materially improve the quality of life for the citizens of this great County.

Over the last 50-years since the founding of Kenya as an independent Country, the Citizens of Kenya have been plagued with socio-economic challenges associated with a dysfunctional centralized leadership and Governance structure that dis-empowered its citizenry in a truly traumatizing and de-humanizing way. Those over 45-years old in Kenya nostalgically remember that at their young age, they had access to a reasonably functional healthcare system that was well resourced with healthcare supplies and motivated healthcare personnel that was the envy of all. They too attended public primary schools where text books, exercise books, pencils and other school consumables were supplied to pupils and teachers. This generation was admitted to National Schools in various corners of the Country on merit and admission letters delivered to their homesteads through an informal synergy between the public postal system and a community information delivery mechanism that worked. And parents shepherded their sons and daughters into matatus, buses and trains to far away high schools like Maseno, Shimo la Tewa, Machakos Boys, Alliance High School, Meru School amongst others without any worries about security and upkeep of their children.

Moreover, this generation too had their fees paid through affordable agricultural loans advanced to their parents by the cooperative societies against coffee, tea or other cash crop harvests. Agricultural extension services worked, cattle dips were operational and livestock extension officers visited dairy farmers in trendy, off-road vehicles and motor bikes to check on their herd and advise on modern animal husbandry.

But...that was then. The public services delivery system has significantly deteriorated with adverse consequences to the citizen. Over these past years, we have witnessed a systematic cannibalization of quality public service delivery systems and in their place we have an inefficient, poorly resourced and corrupt health care system that is ill-prepared to deal with the health care needs of today. The County and indeed the Country has an education system that is incapable of responding to scientific, business and commercial needs of the emerging economy while the Agricultural systems is one that literally “bleeds a leech to fatten an heifer” as farmers are made to carry burdens associated with commercial greed of “brokers” and the corruption appetite of the Government officials. In addition, there are new challenges associated with a ballooning youth unemployment, grinding poverty, inadequate and dwindling water supplies, environmental degradation, growing urbanization and pressure on inadequate infrastructure services, dwindling agricultural productivity and health related challenges. Meru County, just like other Counties in the Country, is plagued by these challenges and the Meru County Government desires to design innovative mechanisms to redress them. The architecture of this new development template for the Meru County is set to begin on 28th June 2013 during the inaugural Meru Rising Conference.

The Meru Rising Conference...

The Conference was therefore planned to be a gathering of Ameru leaders, Ameru professionals, Ameru people, Citizens of Meru County and friends of the Meru County from the public service, academia, research organizations, political sphere, business community, development organizations, farmers, cooperative movement, youth, women and people living with disabilities to discuss and contextualize the Meru County development question and chart a pragmatic, internally coherent and focussed long term development agenda for the County. This conference has been convened by the Offices of the Meru County Governor and that of the Senator, supported by a professional team of actors from Meru County.

The main thrust of the conference was to take stock of the status of Meru County with respect to important socio-economic matrices such as poverty, quality of education, agriculture, infrastructure development, healthcare provisioning, water and irrigation, trade and development, youth (un)employment and cohesion. This conference was designed to mine the wealth of knowledge and expertise from well researched presentations and panel discussions to gather views, comments and discussions on the socio-economic (i)Health of Meru County and what needs to be done in the short, medium and the long term horizon in order to make Meru County Rich, Prosperous and Truly Great. Some of the questions and thematic issues the Meru Rising Conference is expected to delve into but not limited to the following:

1. Increasing and deepening access to affordable, quality and international competitive education facilities and content: Meru County has an elaborate network of education institutions from primary to University and one of the key themes to be addressed by the conference is how to deepen the rich of the education facilities, improve transition from primary to secondary, modernize education facilities and leverage modern technologies such as e-learning with appropriate local content in order to place education in the county competitive and among the best in Country and beyond.

In addition, Meru County can use her location, cosmopolitan nature, proximity to Nairobi, peace and security to profile herself as a quality education hub to meet the growing demand for primary and secondary schools by middle class families for their children. Opportunities exist for high-end primary and secondary private education institutions covering both local and international curriculum in Meru akin to those that exist in Nairobi, Nyeri, Nakuru and Muranga’s Counties. Opportunities also exist in post secondary technical training to impart skills to those, who for a reason do not proceed to university.

2. Modernization Agriculture through technological innovations for wealth and employment creation: Meru is a rich agricultural community mainly comprised of small holder peasant farmers. The entry point for truly creating wealth in Meru County must, of necessity be in Agriculture considering that over 90% of the County Citizens are (directly and indirectly) dependent of agriculture for daily livelihoods. The conference aimed at discussing the strategies for handling post harvest losses through erection of modern cold storage and agro-processing facilities (potatoes, bananas, honey, dairy, fruits amongst others) in the County, modernization of agricultural farming methods through irrigation and agricultural extension services, revamping of the farmers’ cooperative movement in the County to support farmers and sourcing of markets for agricultural commodities with a view to improving farm-gate prices and cash-flows to the farmer.

3. Identifying the “locational economies” of Meru County: Meru is centrally located in the Country with close proximity to Nairobi notwithstanding, the Lamu Port Southern Sudan Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor which is scheduled to pass through County. In addition, two key infrastructure Vision 2030 flagship projects, namely the Isiolo Resort City and Isiolo International Airport are being erected in Meru and Isiolo Counties. The Conference aimed at discerning the significant locational economies of these projects to Meru County and discuss strategies that will position Meru County as a front line beneficiary from these projects in terms of agricultural exports through these facilities to Southern Sudan, Ethiopia and globally; service industry and logistics centre, capturing
the transit business through hotels, housing (dormitory for the Resort City) and recreation.

4. **Creating an Intelligent County by Harnessing Information and Communication Technologies as an enabler for Meru County Development:** The “New Economy” must leverage information and communication technologies in order to improve productivity, efficiencies, transparency and lower the costs of doing business. The Conference was intended to consider how to leverage technology in governance, processes (e-government) through automation of registries, provision of broadband connectivity to all schools (e-learning), police and health facilities (e-health), and provision of free Wi-Fi connections (Wi-Fi hotspots) in the towns and market centres. Wi-Fi hotspots would greatly empower county citizens, especially the youth who are in college and encourage citizens to participate in governance.

5. **Meru as the “Factory for Fabrication of Non Conventional Renewable Energy Technologies”**. Renewable Energy Technology (solar panels, wind turbines, small hydro-power turbines, biogas digesters amongst others) is a multi-billion dollar business global. In European Union alone, the solar technology business is estimated to be worth roughly about US$27billion. Just recently, EU imposed a 11.5% tariff on all solar equipment imports from China and it is expected that this Tariff is likely to cost China about US$27billion. A key plank of President Obama’s job creation strategy was to create ‘home grown energy jobs’ which meant providing incentives to American Renewable Energy Equipment manufacturers located in India and China to re-locate their production plants back to America. Renewable Energy Technology is considered a premium industry globally as a revenue earner through exports, job creation and an important knowledge, science and incubation industry. Africa in general and Kenya in particular has abundant solar energy resource relative to most of the European Countries. Wind Energy potential in the country is also proving to be great. The Turkana Wind Project recorded average wind speeds of 12 metres per second (the average wind speed for a good prospect ranges from 4-7m/s). In Meru we are fortunate to have a belt identified to have an excellent potential for wind energy that stretches from the border with Isiolo and passes close to Meru town and beyond to Nanyuki. It is in deed the biggest identified wind energy source area closest to Nairobi. Africa is the un conquered frontier in this business and Kenya and indeed the EAC Region has started to embrace this technology. Moreover, demand projection for renewable energy technologies moving forward is facing up north. To harvest the value of this highly prospective industry, Meru County could pronounce itself and create visibility as the Renewable Technology Factory for Kenya. This industry will give the County a start in industrial development, create significant value in terms of exports to other counties and the region, create jobs and also generate and incubate science and technology knowledge within the County. This pronouncement could be made in the context of the National Government’s “One Community One Product” (which could also mean One County One Product).

6. **Role of towns, market centres and urban areas as epicentres for economic growth and development**. Well planned towns and market centres hold a lot of latent potential to create jobs and economic growth for Meru County. The existing towns and market centres in Meru County are poorly planned and dirty with no leisurely, recreational or aesthetic appeal to the urban and spending middle class families. The Conference aimed at discussing how to re-plan, zone and re-organize the towns and market centres to become neat and attractive metropolises with well planned infrastructures, green parks, walk-ways, shopping malls and other facilities that appeal to the rich and wealthy. Well planned towns would also start attracting educated rural population and this could potentially release agricultural land for large scale, mechanised farming in the long term.

7. **Land Use Resource Mapping and Planning holds a lot of prospects in optimization of land resources in the County.** The County needs to identify, map, zone and plan the land resources in the County for various economic activities. An important objective in this process was to unleash the potential of private sector investments by strengthening property rights in Meru County by providing title deeds where they do not exist within the County. Do we require to develop a land use master plan for the County?

8. **A healthy County is a productive county.** The conference discussed mechanisms for increasing the footprint for the health care delivery system focussing a lot on preventive care with education, clean water, food, clean environment, proper waste management and disposal and adequate health supplies and human resources as critical ingredients. Opportunities for embedding information and communication technologies in healthcare provisioning in the county (e-health) for healthcare database management, early warning and response, healthcare supplies and stocks management amongst others will important discussion points during the conference.

9. **Re-discovering the Cooperative Movement in Meru County:** Meru County was a pioneer in farmers’ cooperative movement but has over time lost that amiable position due to mediocre and visionless management of the cooperative societies. The conference discussed how to reinvigorate the cooperative movement in Meru as a critical way of pooling affordable financial resources for development.

10. **What are the niche Tourism Resources in Meru County?** The Conference discussed how to make Meru County an attractive and high value tourist destination for both domestic and international tourists, how to brand Meru National Park as the Mara in the East without the (wild) beasts and how to profile and market the Mount Kenya East Tourism Resources locally and internationally through inter-county cooperation.

11. **Preparation of a 20 Year Rolling Meru County Master Plan.** As they say, “falling to plan is planning to fail.”. In this regard, the most important step in the transformation of Meru County is to design an intelligent, broadly acceptable and SMART development Master Plan that will guide the development and financing of annual work plans by the County Government. The Conference therefore discussed how to collate all this information and organize it into a widely acceptable and locally owned Meru County Master Plan. The point was to make the process transparent and professional so that the resulting master plan can be accepted as the guiding development blue print for the County that can transcend future electoral cycles, akin to the National Government Economic Blue Print, the Vision 2030.

12. **Who will pick up the bill?** A key plank of the Meru County Government’s development agenda is the design of a realistic and sustainable County Development Financing Model. The Meru Rising Conference aimed at discussing how to raise and ring-fence a sustainable revenue generation base, explore the opportunities provided by the Public Private Partnership Model for financing projects and the prospects from debt, equity and grant financing in County development. A critical part of this agenda was how to grow the economy.

13. **County Legislation:** In order to give legal momentum to strategic interventions in the County, the Conference discussed and made recommendations on the County laws that require to be developed on a priority basis. These laws could be in the realms of urban planning and management, land use management, county planning, resource mobilization among others.
Executive Summary

The purpose of the Meru Rising conference was to call on stakeholders in various sectors of development so as to share ideas on how Meru County can formulate its development agenda. This was a very noble idea, to start with an all rounded open ended public consultation on development matters. The new constitution of Kenya promulgated in 2010 placed profound emphasis on public involvement in all matters of development. This conference having been held before one that would focus on bringing in the investors, was a well thought and planned idea because the development will be a people lead and planned approach, rather than the other way round where investors lead the agenda. This means the development needs identified in the conference will help target investors whose interest is aligned to the identified needs.

The conference was organized to have a few Keynote presentations that played a role of setting the stage for the participants in order to lead to the conference objectives. The keynote presentation described in detail the current situation of economic development in Meru in all the sectors, some of them narrating the historical trends, past achievements and failures. The conference was also planned to have thematic speakers who made their presentations based on specific sector development needs for Meru County. The thematic presentations were followed by panel discussions with selected discussants that are knowledgeable to the thematic or sector areas under discussion. This gave opportunities for wider participation in setting the stage for discussions.

All the presenters and discussants contributed to three key questions: (1) what are the development needs for Meru County; (2) what should be done in each identified need in order to bring about development in Meru County; and (3) how should it be done in order ensure it is done well.

It was recommended to align development projects to the Vision 2030 in order to contribute to the national development agenda and benefit. In this regard the strategic location of Meru in relation to LAPSET, a vision 2030 project was hailed and investors urged to take advantage of the upcoming developments. The presentations and discussions were organized to be sector by sector and the following are some of the major proposals and resolutions sector by sector.

Agriculture
Agriculture was recognized as the main economic backbone for Meru County. As such efforts must be made to improve on agriculture in the county by addressing the problems faced by farmers of different crops in different production zones. Some of these problems include declining productivity, declining soil fertility, reducing land production units due to subdivisions and the need for improvement in market access. It was noted that the county lacks agro-processing facilities and thus farmers sell their produce raw, largely to brokers at farm gate prices. The current situation is such that farming has become unprofitable and unable to support livelihoods especially small scale producers.

The county government was urged to look into ways of improving agricultural production, not only cash crops but also the indigenous food crops that are disappearing due to over reliance on commercial farming. Some of the indigenous food crops are important for food security and are more adapted to the climate. Associated with the changing climates there is also an increase in crop pests. County government was requested to promote agri-business by increasing farmers participation in marketing of their crops rather than waiting for brokers to come with their farm gate prices that are sometimes controlled by cartels to keep the prices low. Agro-processing was identified as an area where the county can partner with the private sector to add value to crop commodities.

On livestock it was noted that Meru has great potential for dairy farming and that dairy products have markets not only in the country but also abroad. Reasons for the low uptake on dairy farming needs to be investigated and the problems addressed, so that participation can be improved. There is one milk processing plant that needs to be improved to produce more milk and market it more widely.

On fish it was also agreed that aquaculture has a great potential for Meru County due to its environmental conditions. Fish farming has a good economic potential and farmers should be encouraged to invest in production. It was reported that already a fish processing plant had been put up in Kanyekine and can process over 20 tonnes of fish per day. This means that Meru County can sell processed fish even to foreign markets.

Irrigation was seen as the way to go to solve some of the problems facing farmers. Recommendations were made for each constituency to have a dam for irrigation and that in total the county should have about 100,000 acres under irrigation.

Education sector
Education performance in Meru is currently poor based on the national exam results of last year despite having many schools that are well equipped and staffed just like other counties. Reasons for the poor performance need to be investigated with a view of improving the standards. Ways suggested to improve education include: establishing an education board to spearhead the management of schools in the county; establishment of an education endowment plan for each constituency to have inpatient facilities and a level 5 hospital in every sub county. Other hospitals should now be multi storeys to use the available spaces more economically.

The need to improve the road network especially in the rural areas to increase market access was identified. Housing within the towns was identified and the county government was urged to create an enabling environment for investors in the tourism industry to come and invest in all categories of investment in the tourism industry. This investment will support the national flagship project of LAPSET and the initiative to decongest Maasai Mara by making Meru National Park the next Maasai Mara.

Health
The meeting recommended the county to increase the number of health facilities and also upgrade the existing ones, such that we have one major referral hospital in Meru County and a level 5 hospital in every sub county. Other hospitals should be upgraded to have to have inpatient facilities and low especially for technicians and artisans. These skills are needed to provide labour in industrialization of the county and the county should develop programmes to increase training in all areas necessary to Meru economy.

Tourism
Tourism was identified as one of the areas Meru County has a big comparative advantage compared to many other counties due to its geographical location on the slopes of Mt. Kenya, proximity to the upcoming Isiolo resort city, being in the frontiers of diverse land use types; landscapes, land cover and livelihoods that range from pastoralists to commercial and small scale farmers. Currently Meru has very little investments in all forms of tourism. The participants were very enthusiastic that through investments in tourism, Meru can make big quick wins especially in the area of tourist hotels. There are opportunities in cultural tourism, educational tourism, sport tourism, and health tourism. It was noted that the county has no golf hotels despite having many local residents who are potential golfers. The county government was urged to create an enabling environment for investors in the tourism industry to come and invest in all categories of investment in the tourism industry. This investment will support the national flagship project of LAPSET and the initiative to decongest Maasai Mara by making Meru National Park the next Maasai Mara.

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be equipped with sufficient drugs. The suggestion by the governor to build a renal unit in Meru Hospital was welcomed by all the participants who supported the idea so as to reduce suffering of people who go to Nairobi for dialysis. The move was also praised as it would attract patients from neighbouring counties and thus contribute to making Meru hospital a regional referral hospital.

Planning
The meeting recognized the importance of planning in today’s development matters and recommended that proper planning especially of towns must be made in order to utilize available land economically. The county should implement a policy that discourages building of small structures and encourage development of multi storey houses so that the town can grow vertically rather than horizontally.

Land in many parts of the county has no title deeds and the owners cannot use them as collateral in financing or when they sell the value is much lower due to lack of title deeds. The county should fast track land adjudication so as to facilitate preparations of titles. Some of the things that were identified to be in urgent need included: Identification of the unique land resources in Meru County; Holding of land forums with technical people; making a clear distinction between urban and rural planning where each should have clear objectives and land use plans; and enforcing management of land rights. Urban planning and Evaluation rolls, need to be done first because they catalyse other future development activities. There should be a clear policy on Riparian reserves and Road reserves. In addition, modern urban planning, needs to be done in order to: Let every town tell its story and spell its character in addition to becoming more beautiful. This will enable the county to focus more on delivery of services to the people.

The conference noted that there are many land cases most of which are very old and recommended that these cases should be resolved. Strict adherence to the rule of law should be followed in adjudication exercise. All government assets need to be mapped and asset register drawn. Integrated land development through a consultative land forum that includes technocrats, policy makers, and other stake holders. The county was requested to establish a GIS unit to be used in mapping all physical assets.

The county recommended creating an enabling environment for business to thrive by:
- Creating a one stop shop for doing business.
- Creating a legal framework and ensure adherence.
- Creating an information centre where investors can easily get information to assist make business decisions.

The county was requested to establish a county revenue bond/ Diaspora bond, County bank, and create a Meru County youth development fund.

Cooperatives
The co-operative movement is considered a crucial platform in harnessing and fast tracking economic development, especially when the various activities aimed at income-generation are considered.

The Cooperatives in Meru County are organized into service and producer cooperatives. The producer cooperatives’ objectives are to promote the use of modern technology and contribute to the county development through production. They are involved in economic activities in the following business: Coffee marketing; Dairy marketing; Sacco - Rural and Urban and Transport- Matatu Saccos, Housing projects; Multi-purpose activities; Irrigation-based farming activities.

The following challenges face the cooperative movement within the county:
- Marketing systems especially in Coffee industry, bedevilled by Cartels that dictate on producer prices without considering the farmers’ production costs.
- Farm input acquisition complications due to import restrictions, mobility and tariffs applicable in international trade.
- Under-Capitalisation more particularly in Saccos and other co-operative institutions which access credit for onward lending.
- Poor loan management that at times lead to delinquencies.
- Milk hawkers that lead to high adulteration frequencies and levels.
- Politicking aimed at satisfying individual interests.
- Wranglings due to mismanagement of some co-operatives.
- Limited management capacity in Irrigation-based cooperatives.

Some of the proposed interventions considering the importance of the sector in augmenting Vision 2030 objectives include:
- Alignment to Vision 2030 Flagships which will call for Youth participation in co-operatives.
- Improvement of societies management/leadership through inculcating corporate governance.
- Enhancing societies’ regular inspections and spot-checks.
- Streamlining marketing systems for commodities handled.
- Branding of commodities handled by co-operatives aimed at confirming their originality and identity.
- Efforts to support women participation in co-operative activities and undertakings.
- Farm input procurement systems to be improved.
- Availing affordable credit to boost production.
- Conduct economic viability studies with a view to promotion of Miraa.
- Co-operatives to discourage exploitation of producers by middlemen.
- Promote establishment of Agri-processing facilities for value-addition especially in coffee, dairy and horticulture.
- Encourage banana farmers to form co-operatives.
- Revive dormant cotton co-operatives and where the exercise proves futile; promote formation of new societies to handle the commodity marketing.
- Modern farming practices to be emphasised - Good agricultural practices, good processing practices; and practise farming as a business.
- Mobilization of more people to join or form co-operatives so as to participate in economic activities.
- To invoke the Bills of Rights on property ownership.

The conference discussed several areas where efforts of capacity building should target, in order to improve co-operative movement in the county. It was agreed that capacity building and training in co-operative movement should emphasize professionalism in management and recruiting of staff; explore the emerging innovations in the emerging markets- i.e., the niche markets. It was agreed that the training should include formulation of co-operative business models that take care of the changes in the business world. The training should include courses on enterprise development giving more attention to corporation with other service providers through Private-Public Partnerships. Studies should be conducted to give light on how the youth can form organisations that can be brought together to form co-operatives. Efforts must be made for dairy farming with Meru to liaise with Central Dairy Union for assured markets and quality through value -addition. The training should improve managerial skills in Savings and Credit co-operatives including financial management.

Other recommendations include establishment of an umbrella co-operative at the county level to control/eradicate unnecessary splits due to individual interest and instead rejuvenate and reorganise small co-operative units that are not economical to amalgamate to form stronger economy societies.

Efforts must be made to de-politicise the management of co-operatives and promote governance that will entail societies’ frequent inspections so as to improve their performance. The county should anew to formulise terms of reference for co-operative evaluations. The cooperatives should embrace ICT to improve efficiency. Gender balance in co-operatives’ leadership and management in should be encouraged in line with the current Constitution.

The conference outlined the priority areas that the county should consider for implementation which include:
- Establishment of a School of Co-operatives Management and Accountancy.
- Promoting an umbrella Savings and Credit at the county level to handle the activities similar to those currently handled by Ikenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives-KUSCCO.
- Convene an interactive county forum to further brainstorm and formulate a work plan for inclusion in the Meru County Integrated Development blueprint.

ICT
The role of ICT cuts across all the development sectors in the county. Some of the areas where ICT is critical in the running of Meru County activities include:

1) Governance and Service Delivery: ICT is necessary for the county government to give timely delivery of information for better service delivery. Through ICT, the government is able to empower the people through access to information without bureaucracy, improve productivity and be cost effective in doing business with suppliers and customers.
ii) Agriculture: ICT will be vital in the storage of agri-
business data for future reference. Farmers can improve
herd management by using the data gathered by the
computer. By analyzing various feeds on milk yields, farmers may adjust accordingly to obtain
optimal milk yields. ICT can provide up-to-date market
information on prices, inputs and consumer trends
country wide.

iii) Planning: Communication infrastructure is very vital in
day to day running of the county where information and
knowledge can rapidly be transferred to different levels
of the county through communication networks. Security
is monitored through use of ICT systems where data can
be stored for reference and used later if need be. Land
mapping/ surveying and physical planning will be done
through ICT.

iv) Education sector: Education website programmes
where views are exchanged by different scholars from the
county and beyond is possible through ICT.
Telecollaborative activities in school system empower
students to become active, collaborative, creative,
integrative, and evaluative learners. Higher educational
institutions offering distance education courses can
leverage the internet to improve the programme’s reach
and quality. Software development by our institutions of
higher learning in the county is another area that can be
explored.

v) Utilities: ICT will be very important in the improving
water efficiency in the county. To lower per capita water
usage in the county, the technology must be used to
survey or map, monitor usage, design or redesign, build
and operationalize the water system. Billing to the
consumers will be easy if the system is automated so that
the consumers can read their bills and settle payments
via mobile phones. This will also apply to power billing
the consumers can read their bills and settle payments
via mobile phones. Health practitioners will

What needs to be done in ICT:
The following suggestions were presented on what the
county needs to do in order to make the county an ICT hub of
choice. The county will need to:

i) Come up with priority areas that need to be addressed.

ii) Come up with a County ICT Strategic Plan

iii) Develop an implementation roadmap where prioritization
of ICT programmes is done and clear timelines drawn.

Challenges that might be experienced in the ICT sector
Some of the challenges to be experienced in developing a
sound ICT structure include: lack of structured approach to
ICT programs; Lack of buy-in by the stakeholders; lack of
direct impact on the Mwananchi; inadequate resources in
terms of finances and human resource; dependency on the
national government on some ICT initiatives e.g. IFMIS; and
difficulties in integrating the ICT systems i.e. IFMIS and the
already existing revenue collection system and any other
system developed in future.

Quick wins in the county ICT
The following are areas that the group felt needed to be
addressed with urgency:

• Development of Portal for the county.
• Automation of county processes, and
• Information management in transactions.

In the medium term the following areas were considered to
be in need of implementation:

• Lay of ICT infrastructure in the whole county.
• Establishment of digital kiosks.
• Establishment of hot ICT spots.
• Attract organisations to establish Data Centres in Meru.
• Develop ICT systems to complement the already central
government established systems i.e. IFMIS.
• Partner with institutions of higher learning in the County
to establish ICT innovation centres.

The Meru Rising conference was the first of its kind to
be held in Meru and the purpose was to solicit views of
experts, residents and stakeholders on development
opportunities available for the county, what the county
needs in form of development, and what the people of
Meru would need to be part of their development agenda.
The consultation also aimed at identifying and prioritizing
the most important development issues to be dealt with in
each of the development sectors in order to improve the
livelihoods of the people and bring development in the
county. The meeting was widely and adequately advertised
and was attended by people of all walks of life as it was open
to all who could reach the venue and register.

The conference was designed to be interactive in order to give
opportunities for everyone who had an idea to contribute.
The programme comprised keynotes speakers who started
off every theme based session by giving an analysis of the
current situation, trends of changes, opportunities for
Meru in the specific theme or area of development, and
the way forward for the county. The keynote presentations
were followed by a panel discussions with discussants
comprising of a number of notable key personalities with
known achievements in the field. The panel discussions
gave a room for more ideas from experts in the audience to
augment presentations by the key note speaker and the
discussants. To give more room for everyone to participate
there was a concluding session where the participants joined
one of about (11) eleven breakout groups based on the key
development sectors relevant to development in Meru. This
gave room for everyone who had an idea to contribute to
do so. Discussions in the breakout groups were presented
in a plenary as summaries of the views of the people who
participated in the group.

The Meru Rising conference could not have come at a better
time because the county now has a new government that was
preparing the blue print for development under the devolved
responsibilities. The conference preceded an effort by Meru
County government to invite investors to start or expand
their businesses in the county. The Meru Rising conference
was therefore expected to provide a cache of priority areas
of investment and alternative options that investors can choose
from to start a sustainable business in the county. The expert
assessment provided by this conference will not only give
options but will help the investors to make judgments on the
most profitable businesses that can make best of their capital
inputs. The conference was also attended by a number of
business financiers who are willing to offer financial support
to start business in Meru. It was expected that the financiers
will understand areas for investment in Meru County so that
they can target their financial resources to the right areas of
investment ranging from farming, agro-processing, mining,
industrial development, infrastructure, commerce and trade,
education, environment, tourism, health and other sectors of
economic social and physical development.

In the opening remarks the master of ceremony Dr. Moses
Kiama stressed on the purpose of the conference and that this
purpose would best be met if the participants or speakers
can focus on three main areas of need as follows:

1. Where Meru County as a government should focus on
issues of development
2. What we need to do in these areas in order to get there
3. How to do it in order to get there

There areas we need to focus on include; Agriculture,
Tourism, Mining, Industrial development, trade and Industry,
education, health, infrastructure, human development,
disaster management, environmental conservation and also
finance. Some of the areas where county interventions can
create impacts include: projects on value addition, reducing
the process of business registration that is bogged by
multiple trade licensing, and of course creating an enabling
environment for the investors.

The conference started with an opening session that brought
together visionary leaders and the major stakeholders of
development in Meru County who gave key note exciting
and encouraging speeches that cut the way forward for the
experts.

The following are the key note presentations made during
the opening session provided here as was presented by the
speakers:
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

The Opening Session

A Vision for Meru County
by Hon. Kiraitu Murungi - Senator of Meru County

The Honourable Senator started by thanking the Governor for convening the conference and the participants for coming in large numbers. He said that the conference could not have come at a better time than now when development all over the world is faced with many challenges ranging from bad weather, to increasing population and escalating poverty especially among the developing countries. This is a critical turning point for Meru. We need to preach the gospel of prosperity. Many citizens lack ideas on how to get out of poverty. It is the work of this conference to produce ideas that can inform these citizens on how to get out of poverty. We need to attract investors to come to Meru to invest to change Meru. We need to make proposals for sustainable development. We need to have a clear path to success. This conference has been organized for this purpose. We are all gathered here as professionals, each one in his own field of expertise so as to re invent the wheel that will change Meru. We need to make realistic dreams, make a proposal with roadmaps, timelines and a clear path to success. If we all put our minds together and give this initiative the best of ourselves, there is no doubt that we will make a very good start in this long journey of development and uplifting our people out of poverty.

Some of the random thoughts we need to consider include:

1. Creating a Meru Economic Social Council (MESC)
   This should comprise of people with forward thinking and with full knowledge of what Meru needs, what we can do to turn the economy of the county to prosperity.

2. Creating an irrigation project for 100,000 acres in Meru
   If Kenya through the Jubilee governments is planning to irrigate 1 million acres, then Meru through our county government should plan to irrigate 100,000 acres within the current term of office. This is possible because we have an abundance of rivers that can be the source of water for irrigation. Located on the wetter side of Mt. Kenya, we are also blessed with more rainfall than many parts of this country which can provide water for irrigation if dams can be made.

3. Improve business infrastructure
   Meru has a high business potential which if well planned and fully exploited can turn the economy of this county into prosperity. Starting from our already known strengths in farming, we need to develop industries for processing the agricultural commodities into processed goods. An example is the already completed fish factory in Kanyakine which has a capacity to process over 20 tonnes of fish per day. Let us do the same for other agricultural crops like coffee, tea and cotton.

4. Attract investors by giving free land to remove obstacles to development
   One of the biggest obstacles to development is the availability and cost of land to set up factories and other investment facilities. This obstacle tends to keep investors away. We need as a county to provide free land to investors as a way of attracting them to make investments. Some other counties have done the same but I think if Meru does so we will attract even more than them because other factors like good weather, market access and so on will contribute to our advantage.

5. Make Meru a premier tourist destination
   Meru has a very unique position in the tourism sector of this country and the world in general. We are located at the foot of the second and most attractive mountain in Africa. Meru stands from the snow capped highest point in Kenya to the lowlands and rangelands with wildlife of all types. Meru has sceneries some of which are spectacular and most attractive. We have a history in this country as having had the best form of governance before independence. The list is long and we cannot exhaust it here. All these tourist opportunities are lying idle. Our neighbour Laikipia County which has only a small part of Mt. Kenya was declared the world heritage site because we have very rich wildlife and natural resources.

6. Build a 5 star tourist hotel
   In line with the spirit of tourism we need to focus on all levels of tourism including the high spending tourists.

Promote the idea of model schools
The idea of model schools that has already started should be promoted to be centres of excellence that can attract students not only from the county but from the country over and beyond. We should develop a culture of learning from those who are doing better in order to avoid wasting time in re inventing the wheel.

7. Build another MACU
   Meru became famous when in the 1970s we built MACU building. To date no other significant and spectacular investment has been made. We need to build another MACU in the same spirit to be a world class business centre that can attract investor’s world over to come and do business in Meru. By doing so they will employ our people, spend money in the county and buy our produce and so on.

8. Expand dairy farming and build a Meru milk processing plant
   Meru has a small dairy factory that produces high quality milk. This milk has a better market than any other even in Nairobi, but for some reason the amount of milk produced in Meru is little and the amount processed by the factory is even much less. We need to expand dairy farming and also expand the milk processing plant to have a higher capacity. Today Kenya is an exporter of milk to other countries. Let us tap into this market opportunity in dairy industry.

9. Meru should be the leading county in aquaculture
   The climate of Meru is the best for aquaculture due presence of good weather and plenty of rivers to supply water. We can culture different types of fish from the cold weather trout to the warm weather tilapia and the swamp inhabiting mudfish. We have already a fish processing plant in Kanyakine whose capacity is very large and can be exploited. We are planning at least two cold storage facilities one in Kanyakine and another one in Maua. These are centres for collecting fish as they are transported to the factory for processing. We will build more such centers as production increases.

10. Develop a youth service forum to provide labour for projects in the county
   We have a lot of young people in the county who are not formally employed. There is potential to harness labour from these youths to do some of the development projects we are proposing in this conference. We should develop a youth service for the county. This can also be
an approach for training the youth to have skills they can use in their life once they grow from being youth.

11. Develop annual cultural festivals

Meru is known to have a strong culture. For example Njuri Ncheke is known by people as a strong cultural institution all over the republic and beyond. We need to develop this cultural inheritance into a modern income generating activity like annual festivals.

12. Initiate a research center to put value to our potatoes, Mira, and the crops we grow including developing Meru wine from grapes

We need to put up our county agricultural research centre to put value to our crops like potatoes, miraa and other crops we grow. We should look for ways of processing and marketing our crops into finished products. We should stop selling our potatoes in large extended bags and marketing our crops into finished products. We should look for ways of processing our crops we grow. We should promote this idea and make our own large industry for a world class winery with wine brands.

13. Create a permanent Meru social security fund and a medical cover for people above 75 years of age

We should start our own permanent Meru Social Security with medical cover for the elderly who at the moment are almost neglected. It is said that people after contributing in national building when they have energy, they are neglected when they lose their energy due to old age. We should develop a medical fund to take care of the old age.

14. Upgrade hospitals to have 1 hospital in every constituency and a referral one in Meru Town.

Medical care is very crucial to the development of a community. Healthy people are productive people. We should therefore not lose sight of the fact that in order to empower our people to develop the first thing is to make sure they are healthy enough to contribute to development. The approach is to bring health facilities closer to people by building a hospital in every constituency and a referral hospital in Meru County.

The presentation from His Excellency the Governor was as follows:

The governor thanked the participants for turning up in large numbers to attend the conference. He assured them that the County government of Meru will take their deliberations seriously and use them to inform the development initiatives of the county. He started by pointing out that from the height of the glacier-covered Mt. Kenya, to Adamson falls in Meru National Park, Meru is unequal in terms of natural beauty. If, as it is generally stated, Kenya is the most beautiful country per square kilometer in the world, Meru is the most beautiful country per square kilometer in Kenya.

This conference is supposed to focus on generating ideas on how Meru can exploit its potential in various sectors and position itself as a preferred destination for investments. The assumption being that, significant investments in Meru would generate wealth, and create employment for our people.

Meru being a cultural county, a centre with the biggest potential for growth is agriculture. The key question, therefore, is how do we expand this important sector, and how do we tackle the challenges that are contributing to its stagnation. How do we move a large population of people, still engaged in subsistence farming, relying on rudimentary tools and outdated technology, to commercial and mechanized agriculture. How do we link these farmers to potential markets, and how do we provide them with market intelligence to enable them grow crops that fetch the best prices in the market.

Closely linked with agricultural production is the question of value addition. Should our coffee farmers continue selling coffee beans to agents of companies in Europe and Asia, who process them and reap premium prices? Meru County produces the best tasty tea in the world that is used to blend other teas of inferior quality, yet tea comes out of our factories as already finished products. We must firmly move into producing Meru brands in the world tea market without further delay. The county government is already engaging tea farmers on how these can be realized within the shortest time possible. Our tea, coffee and other premium products must be sold directly from Meru so that the county can reap maximum benefits. Our potential for agro-processing has barely been scratched. Meru is strategically placed to take advantage of the proposed transport corridor to Ethiopia and Southern Sudan. Starting agro-processing industries to take advantage of the market provided by this transport corridor is therefore, strategic.

County government has set aside 200 ha to construct an industrial park in the vicinity of Isiolo Airport to give opportunity to Industrialists to utilize the Airport and the transport corridor and the Isiolo Resource City.

The cooperative movement has been the driver of economic growth in Meru for many years. Most of our farm produce are marketed through cooperatives and some of the value addition ventures to the farming sectors are also owned and run by cooperatives. Cooperatives have also been offering affordable credit to small scale farmers and entrepreneurs and have been assisting farmers in mobilizing savings, an important prerequisite for investment and development.

The centrality of cooperative movement in the transformation of the Meru economy, cannot therefore, be ignored. In the last two decades, however, the cooperative movement has been bedeviled by a myriad of challenges ranging from mismanagement, corruption and outright stripping of assets by unscrupulous leadership and government functionaries that has led to decay and stagnation in this important sector. How therefore, we address these challenges and return this sector to trajectory of laws and development is a major question. Meru county government is determined to nurse a cooperative sector back, and we are determined to address
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

In addition, we are also working with the Kenya Rural Roads Authority and the World Bank, on urban roads improvement program that will see roads in several urban centers such as Mau designed in readiness in upgrading to bitumen standards. I know I cannot go through all the plans that the county government has in this short time. Important thing is that this government was supposed to help us generate ideas on all the key sectors that we intend to focus on in the county and I do not want to take all the time talking to you but I wanted also to mention to you that one of our major challenges is getting enough resources to carry out all the programs that we have. We have ideas, you have ideas, and we will generate very many ideas during this two-day conference. But I want us to really focus on where we will raise the money to back these ideas with, because that is the biggest challenge we have. The National allocation we are going to get from the national budget is a drop in the ocean and already the national government has decided that all the staff that is working in the county is going to be off-loaded to the county government. So all the staff working in the audit sector, all the staff working in the agricultural sector, in the water sector from July, the county government will start paying salaries. In a modest estimate, the health sector alone we are supposed to cough 700 million to pay salaries. In the agricultural sector, I am told we have to cough 300 million to pay salaries.

Our budget revenue from national allocation is 5.5 billion and out of this 5.5 billion, 1 billion is conditional funding, half of it going to level 5 hospital, so our allocation which we can really talk about is 4.5 billion half of that is going to paying salaries. So it is useful to be very robust on what we can do and I also want, I can see Bwana Mworia here and other people who have good ideas on how we can get additional funding and even how we can prepare ourselves to borrow. The National government actually, most of the developments it is undertaking are through borrowing and most of the roads we are driving on like Thika road and others are all done on credit so there is nothing wrong with borrowing money to improve our economy and generate more money. So we would want good ideas on how we can get where we can get affordable credit for the county so that we can no longer be able to test the structure to generate more money.

The other issue on money that I wanted to comment on is the challenges we are facing in raising local revenue. When we took over the county institutions, the former local authorities were generating 300 million so the money we can raise as we speak now from reliable sources is 300 million. Our budget within the next one financial year is to triple that so we have factored in the budget, approximately, 800 million to be raised from the local resources. We can raise that money, the only problem we have is that we have an entrenched culture from the workers of the former county council that they don’t regard this money they collect as public money. They collect the money then they remit what they want to remit. They also have double receipts, one for them and another for the county government. And even when you send inspectors to talk to them, the reaction you get from them will tell you the kind of entrenched thinking that this public money can also be for private use, they tell you this money is not from your family or from your son. That is the reaction you get when you follow them in to the parking lots or markets. So we really have a big challenge, but we are determined to change that culture even if it means getting new people to do that job, we are ready to do that. So if you hear lots of noises coming from around you, just know that is because we are trying to interfere with somebody’s great tree. But, we are determined to do it because there is no other way we can be able to mobilize resources to do development for the people who elected us to in office.

One of the other areas I need to touch is that, apart from those other sectors I have talked about as high potential for investment in Meru like tourism and agriculture, we have a very huge potential for investment in wind power. It has already been identified by one of the companies that generate power that, a small area in Tigania can generate 400 Mwatts of wind power and that is just one small area. So that potential for wind power is huge and we want target investors who have capacity, who have money to put in this sector and be able to generate power, sell it to the national grid, make money and create employment for our people.

Before I conclude, let me reiterate what I said at my inauguration that positive transformation of Meru County can never be a one-man show. It is a collective effort involving all stakeholders and all people of good will to contribute to the efforts. Let us therefore pull together to realize this potential. I am especially, constrained to call up on the elected leaders of this county to minimize the side shows. We were elected for a purpose; let us all make an effort to realize this purpose. Lastly, may I assure you all that the invaluable ideas generated in this forum will not go to waste.

I thank you and wish you well in your stay in Meru County.
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to be given the honour and the pleasure to address this wonderful gathering. I have been requested to speak on the imperatives and the potential of the Meru County. First, I wish to most sincerely, congratulate the Governor, Mr. Peter Munya and the Senator, Mr. Kiraitu Murungi for convening this conference. We are all accorded a rare opportunity to think together, on how best to grow our county.

Meru County is one of the Kenya’s 47 counties. Each of the 47 counties is expected to synergize their efforts in appropriation to foster development in the county and also impact on the development of Kenya. Each county is to serve as an engine of demand for goods and services, and that is why we have many educational and financial institutions providing services to the population. Very few counties have fully fledged local universities as we have in Meru. In addition, all the major universities have their campuses located in Meru. And Meru is also host to at least 18 branches of different banks in the country. The county is also fairly well staffed with hospitals, health centers and dispensaries.

Secondly, the geo-economics of the county are excellent because considering that the county is located at the centre of Kenya with very fertile volcanic soils and has a very high concentration of permanent rivers which are fairly well distributed. Meru County neighbours the arid northern Kenya which is food deficient. It is therefore, strategically placed to serve as the bread basket for Northern Kenya and the neighboring countries of Ethiopia and Somalia. Moreover, with a population of 40 million people expected to grow to 65 million by the year 2050, the demands for food in Kenya will continue to grow. With Isiolo becoming a transport hub for Northern Kenya, and the country at large, as a result of the implementation of the LAPSET project, as well as the proposed oil refinery to be set up in Isiolo, Meru County’s strategic importance will be greatly enhanced. The Isiolo International Airport and the Isiolo-Moyale road are at an advance stage of completion. The LAPSET project will also include a resort city at Isiolo and a railway hub connecting Meru, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Lamu and southwards, the railway will also connect Meru, Isiolo, Embu and Nairobi. Meru will also benefit from the construction of the Isiolo-Mogadisho road which runs through the greater part of northern part of Meru as part of the LAPSET project. The county development strategy will therefore require reorientation so that it takes full advantage of this infrastructural development. The planned road from Isiolo to Mwingi, Kitui and Kilwezi, is also another strategic transport corridor to serve the Meru county, the importance of which cannot be over emphasized. The Kamba population, which is the fifth largest in the country at about 2.5 million people is dependent in the food supplies from outside the Kamba counties. The proposed road would make food transport from Meru to Ukambani most efficient and consequently, open a large market of Meru county’s agricultural output.

Meru people are generally friendly and welcoming to investors outside the county. This is a good attitude, which should be encouraged. But the people should not be on-looking; they should seek partnerships and place great ambitions in enterprise developments, adoption of rural technologies and creative in doing business. The population should be challenged to be more outward-looking and travel to other counties and countries in the region and the world, in search of business opportunities and learning. Meru County neighbors the important tourist areas of Laikipia, Mt. Kenya and Samburu and is home to the Meru National park and Lewa conservancy. Strategically, therefore, Meru should claim its rightful position in the Mt. Kenya and Northern Kenya tourist circuit which, are now going to be strongly enhanced by the Isiolo International Airport and the Isiolo Resort City. These offer opportunities for tour operators, hotel developers, hotel workers, travel agents and tour guides. Meru County should develop cultural centers at all district headquarters and at least one Njuri Njike shrine at every district for incorporation in the tourist circuit. For the county’s strategic advantage to be fully exploited, the county’s development strategy should be aligned to vision 2030 and the Jubilee government’s development agenda. In other words, the county governments’ development agenda should complement the national government’s development agenda and vice versa. Indeed, it is the synergies of the two development agendas that will determine the rhythm and the rate of development in the county and Kenya at large.

A lot of resources from the national governments is spent in the counties. So it is very important that the county’s strategy synergise so that they take maximum advantage of public resources available. Meru County has also major challenges that slow down development. The challenges need to be addressed as a matter of urgency to unleash the development potential of the county. First, the county has no industries to talk about as we stand now. A few projects were started, the posho mill by the Meru cooperative and the milk processing plant and a few industries for tea, but their capacity to create jobs is very limited, so we need to do a lot in terms of focusing on how we can turn around the basically agricultural county into a mixed county which is both agricultural and industrial county. This is associated with lack of skills and knowledge on value addition, innovation and enterprise development.

The high agricultural productivity needs to be matched with value adding agro-processing industries. Virtually all Meru county agricultural produce is marketed without processing. Even the tea and coffee factories produce goods which are marketed in bulk. There is no material packaging being carried out in the county. Mira has always packaged the traditional way; bananas have also followed the traditional wrapping and bulk marketing. We also add no value to our potatoes as we market them in big sacks or unpackaged in the basis of our container measure. There are many jobs we could create in the development of packaging industries for agricultural produce in this county. As the government shifts its agricultural policy from rain-fed to irrigated agriculture, Meru County needs to develop and modernize its irrigation scheme. Currently, there is no major irrigation scheme in the county to talk about. We therefore need to utilize our rivers more optimally, and we have more rivers than anybody else, by constructing at least one irrigation dam per ward. Sometimes people get worried where the land to build dams will come from. Our valleys are deep and they can hold a lot of water. If we are able to hold water in these dams, water can be available for irrigation. You cannot depend on just pumping water from existing rivers; in fact they are dry now because there is no more water to pump, they cannot cope with the pumping which is taking place. We are talking about a situation coming up with ambitious program to develop at least a dam per ward. In Meru here we may think that is not possible if we have over-flown areas like Kiambu. All coffee estates have dams and that is what supports the good coffee in Kiambu. Why can’t we do it here? We have valleys and rivers which are permanent which needs to be tapped. The challenge of small shamba holdings could thus be minimized by irrigated agriculture due to its much higher productivity; farmers are not consistent in the application and adoption of new technologies. We are losing a lot of crops in lower
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

Education is accorded the highest priority in the national index. This has to change if we have to go where we want to go. It is the quality of the product of a schools that will determine the rate of development of the county and its contribution to the nation and the world. The Kenya population is migrating at a very high rate, at the rate of 1 million per annum from the rural areas to the urban areas. This is a positive development which should be encouraged because it will lease the agricultural land for farming so that people can build houses in towns. Jobs are mostly created in urban areas because of concentration of talents and consumer markets. The county government therefore, needs to prioritize urban and town planning now and impose those plans, otherwise what we are going to have in the next 15 years is a lot of urban slums and that is the direction that should be avoided right now. The county government needs to set aside land for industrial development in those towns, schools, hospitals, recreation facilities and administrative centers. Plans should cover long-term projections considering that in only 17 years, 65% of the Kenyan population will be living in towns. There should be at least three urban centers identified for initial planning and development in every district of the county.

Industrialization in the county will require a critical mass of highly trained technicians and engineers as well as professionals trained in enterprise development. Meru county is deficient of these critical areas. To address this critical problem, the Meru universities and the Meru-based university colleges and Meru technical training institutes are providing higher levels of training but there is no adequate training at the lower level. Junior polytechnics should be well equipped and have appropriate boarding facilities for both young women and men. There should be one technical school well equipped and have appropriate boarding facilities for training at the lower level. Junior polytechnics should be created to stimulate investments in agro-processing, import/export business, housing development, marketing, and develop irrigation schemes.

Cooperatives are encouraged to hire competent managers and their management committees should observe the higher level of transparency and integrity. There is no doubt that, a revitalized cooperative movement can transform the economic opportunities in the county, within a very short time. The county government therefore, synergizes with the program for industrialization programs being undertaken by the national government and the industrialization programs and enterprise development have a lot of resources. We need to prepare their entry point at the county level. It is the responsibility of the county governments to prepare the entry points. Central government will have money, but it has no way of spending that money because there is no entry point. It is the county governments to prepare those entry points. Furthermore, the county government should pay attention to programs that create employment for the youth. Many youth are wasting their productive years by turning to drinking and drugs. This trend should be reversed through establishment of empowerment programs that specifically, target the youth such as in the areas of enterprise development, performing arts, ICT centers, cooperatives, irrigation schemes, industrial centers and skills development. Such groups should be funded through leveraging among other things, the youth and women development fund, CDF, and through support of parents, relatives and friends.

In conclusion, I have emphasized the critical role being played by the devolved government at the county level and the high expectation of the people for better services and faster development. Meru County’s synergy with the national development agenda, will determine the rate of its development and the nation at large. It is therefore extremely important that a county implementation strategy is developed on carefully selected programs and projects in order to achieve optimum development. Success will entirely depend on the capacity and vision of the county leadership the ingenuity and hard work of its people. Thank you very much.

Also institutional development in the county. The savings and cooperatives schemes continue to do well and should be encouraged. Time is now ripe for cooperatives to move into agro-processing, import/export business, housing development, marketing, and develop irrigation schemes.

We need to address those things if we have to really develop our fruit growing industry. Both fruit and grain farmers are seriously challenged, the county government needs to prioritize extension services in conjunction with KARI and ICIEP to deal with the pest menace on sustainable basis. Not far away, especially, in the foreign districts, there is extensive technology being applied in agriculture like green houses, we are not adopting those technologies, we are not learning the technologies which can help the small scale farmers. Green house technology which is being practiced extensively by large-scale farmers and other technologies should be introduced to small-scale farmers with the support of the county government so as to facilitate their entry in to the global market for horticultural produce. Flowers and peaches are appropriate for cooler areas of the county, while the fruits; mangoes, bananas are very good for warmer areas. One of the viability consideration for the establishment of the Isiolo International Airport was to support the export of miraa and other vibrant horticultural products in the Meru County. The small scale farmers need to be supported so that they are able to prepare their produce for marketing through the airport. All such products should be packaged for direct placement in the supermarkets of importing countries. In addition, value addition through packaging and processing of these products will create many jobs in our county.

The county government needs to set aside land for industrial development in those towns, schools, hospitals, recreation facilities and administrative centers. Plans should cover long-term projections considering that in only 17 years, 65% of the Kenyan population will be living in towns. There should be at least three urban centers identified for initial planning and development in every district of the county.

Meru County is one of the pioneers of cooperative movement. Sons of Meru played critical roles in the establishment of the Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (Mr. Kinyua), the Cooperative Bank of Kenya was started by Mr. Kimbui and the Cooperative Insurance Company of Kenya which is the youngest, was started by Mr. Cyrus Kobia. These are huge successes in the county. They were done by our people, so let us use this ingenuity to revitalize the cooperative movements in Meru, because the cooperatives can give us momentum for industrialization, build business empires and
Attracting Investments in Meru – The next big ideas and how to make them reality/Trends in the new world of investing
by Dr James Mwangi – CEO Equity Bank

According to the letter I received from the His Excellency, honorable governor and also the senator, I was asked to talk about 2 things:

- Enriching the potential of Meru County
- Bringing investments in Meru

I was also asked to reflect on these ideas globally and how to make them a reality in respect to the trends in the world of investments.

I want to talk briefly about the latter, and then we start global and come back home, and basically friends, in the new world of investments. I have been very privileged to be involved in one way or another in most of the global investment setting forums. I seat on the board of the commonwealth business council and privileged to be on the global advisory board of Visa card who have been involved in many aspects of investments, very privileged also to serve on the advisory board of IFC and on a leadership perspective also very privileged to seat on the leadership council of the GB and in an advisory position at the G20, where real investment decisions are being made.

On these two things, I was asked to talk about, I would like to say, will involve the future trends and investments in the world and the first one is the capital and consequently the issue of the scarcity of investors and that investment capital. Scarcity of investment capital is not real, it’s a fallacy. Investors and investment capital is not the problem, the problem is great ideas that can attract investors and that can attract investors capital. Capital follows ideas and follows investment opportunities, so that makes it so simple that if we truly wanted the global capital to come to Meru all that we simply need to do is to make Meru a great investment environment.

The second one is to ensure Meru has the right investment opportunities. To do this 2 things are important: have investment opportunities and have an attractive investment environment and if you look, this theory has been properly proven by countries like Singapore, the capital that really developed Singapore was not Singapore per se it was global capital. The capital that is developing is what one of the world’s toughest desert of Dubai is global capital and if global capital can go to a desert, why would it pass Meru? Those who have been in Singapore, Meru as a county may be 10 times bigger than Singapore and it’s a bare rock, without a mountain on its backyard, and without a single river and in 30 years its land is a proof, real proof that global capital can go anywhere. The second one is that the world has now been flattened, before it was very difficult for western capital to go to Russia, because it assumed that was socialism psychology, it was very difficult for American capital to flow to the East but you notice now that the world has been flattened by a couple of things, namely:

- Globalization – we are now globally interconnected, some people would like to call it a global village, so capital can be anywhere because of the global systems, they are completely interwoven in respective of where we are.
- The political ideology – This seems to have become irrelevant in the past in the Cold war era when we knew of the 2 political philosophies, where Capital was elective on where it could go and where it could not go, it appears to take the world to almost a homogeneous political philosophies, where the political divides have also disappeared, the last divide has been broken by technology, particularly internet has completely broken the last barrier of distance, the last mile has been capital accessible.

So it doesn’t matter where the investment is, and where the investors are. I went to Kagumo High School and in Form 2, like all of you in Form 2 it was the era and age of forming relationships and remember in those days, letters were received only on Fridays or Mondays, it appears during the senators time it was the same, but remember how long those letters used to take, I don’t know Senator how long the Harvard letter took to reach you in Meru, may be 2-3 weeks, now with a friend in the US or anywhere how long does it take you to connect? Seconds, the world has been flattened; it doesn’t matter where you are up on the mountains, in Meru or in New York. It is instantaneous that matters now. This has happened in investments so that in the mindset of global capital it doesn’t matter where the investment is, it is where it gets the best return, it is where it can feel secure and it is where the environment is enabling in terms of lowest costs and it is for that reason that when we were formulating the Vision 2030, we made it with this in mind. I am very privileged and very humbled when I talk about this when Dr. Galuру is in the house, with whom we worked on the blue print while I was in the technical team formulating Vision 2030. Ambassador Muthaura and Senator Kiraitu also worked with us are also here. We realized that what we needed to do was to create enablers and once we got the enablers right then everything else would naturally get into place. The enablers were set by the environment, which was the very important. The environment that investors look for is:

- Predictability
- Certainty

They want to be certain that their investments are safe and that incase there is dispute there is a judicial system to settle the dispute. I am proud that people like the Senator here, played a significant role in creating one, we have got a new constitution a new government and new legislation, and principally the environment was complete. Has it worked in the last 18 months? We have 28 global companies relocating their headquarters to Nairobi, From South Africa to Nairobi. Headed by none other but by the World Bank, IMF and IFC. We have become more attractive than South Africa. General Electric is in Nairobi, IBM is in Nairobi. Microsoft is in Nairobi. I am sure now the list is more than 28 as it keeps on growing.

So, principally what you need to do is ask yourselves, how do you then make Meru equally attractive? This is a fallacy because counties do not have to look for money, you do not need money, because capital will come. Let’s reduce the cost of doing business and that is when ports, airports, roads, railways, pipelines become important. It is purely making it comparable to any other part of the world in terms of cost, so the most important thing in laying the foundation like in form of energy, it took us 80 years to produce 1,200 MW, the foundation that has been laid by the ministry of energy would be in the next 3-5 yrs reach 5,000 MW, 5 times or 4 times growth to be conservative, and that is all that is required, reduce the cost of Energy from 16cts USD to 8cts USD, which investor would not like to see his cost halve? Why would you be in Rwanda or Uganda if the cost is still 20cts USD, when you can get it at 8cts USD?

That is simply what arithmetic is, is if you want to know how the cost of doing business affects business ask the Matatu owners. The owners of those Matatus plying between Nairobi and Thika will tell you, it used to take them between 2-3 hours to do just one trip, now it is taking them between 30-45
The last one I want to say is in the last many years, the biggest thing in development is production, it is who produces, wealth is measured in production the factors of production are capital, land and labor, things have really changed, what you just need now is labor but of a different kind, labor of a different kind, the biggest and most, the company with the highest capitalization in the world is Apple. How much land do they have? Zero, you don’t need land anymore, land is not an important factor of production, and so if you thought that you create wealth on the massive country of Meru, you are wrong. It is not about Land. Capital we said it is not about your capital, because capital will grow, for those companies we have talked about, it is not capital that students of 24 yrs had, they dropped from school and all big companies run by those who drop in school are successful. But anyway, I completed school. What we really need is a human capital with great ideas and money will flow from anywhere in the world. Face book just the other day did an IPO, and it raised 800 billion USD, so if we multiply 800 billion USD a 85; so as to get in KSH, how much would it be? 6.8 trillion KSH, our budget is only 1.6 trillion.

Young kids aged 28, are able to attract with their minds 6.8 trillion shillings to fund their ideas, capital will flow whenever you want it to flow. Now, earlier on you were very excited that you constituted the government, how rich is Meru? I come from a small development country, when you pass Murang’a you sympathize with us “samosa nyama” that is Muranga’s. We chose not to run government we chose to run business, so Muranga’s county is the home of Equity bank. The wealth of Equity bank alone is higher than the wealth of Meru County. 150 Billion shillings, Equity has a bigger balance sheet that the budget of the country of Meru, put together, those are the facts that you can look for them in the business daily. We have Royal media in Murang’a, we have Thika Nut, and we have Muranga’s macadamia nuts. We chose to go on an entrepreneurial way. Meru is great but Meru people need to accept to take risks, you avoid risks you want to be sure, you want to be certain. There is a correlation between return and risk so because you chose to be very low in taking risk all government salaries may be 50% come to Meru.

Changing the mindset of Meru county people, to accept that government doesn’t create wealth, it creates policies and enabling environment for others to make money, so we have made money and you have made policies. If you have nothing you don’t know it is the incentives of protecting a business, I must say that you are not protecting me because you like me, you will be protecting me because in the process you are protecting yourself, but if I see you people never invest, do you really care about protecting investments? No, I will say that your interests are not aligned to mine. How to do you so that you get interested in aligning yourselves to the investors? You must make compromises. The biggest concern I have shorter this is that the Central Bank has the mandate to sell a portion of my shares of 7.5%, and they passed a law that I must sell to a maximum of 5%, and when I sold them it was headline in the financial times, and you remember what people were saying, we invested in Equity Bank because James had invested in it because if he protected his investment he would also protect ours? And that is the only first time in my history of 20 yrs of service of Equity I had to say No I never intended to sell I was forced and arm twisted. It was after saying that this people said that it is okay he is with us.

We have 2 Universities here and I am privileged to be the chancellor of one, for those who didn’t know, I am the chancellor or Meru University of Science and Technology. In Universities I agree on the focus of Sciences, there is one skill that everybody in the county of Meru needs to learn, the skill of making money. That is what is called entrepreneurship. The skill that creates labor in production is Entrepreneur.

I want lastly to close by giving you my example, when I was a young student at an age of 28 yrs, and I come from a village of great entrepreneurs, they had a gang and at that time they ran into trouble in terms of managing their businesses, they were great entrepreneurs but they didn’t have the knowledge and capacity of managing. So after 11 years some of them were technically insolvent and Central Bank had asked them to close, which is the noble way. By that time I was a senior banker working in a bank and I asked if I could intercede with Central Bank. I did go to Central Bank, and I was told by the governor ‘why are you pleading with them to give them more time, they have had this number of years, they have done nothing with it, they are grinding to a halt, we are just reducing their suffering and pain’ and I joked to them, can you just give me a chance, and the governor pushed the writing pad to me and said do your resignation letter on that paper. All I had was nothing but a young family, and I was making these crazy decisions, but remember without money I went to where you see I went to the world and marketed a financing proposal which was not seen anywhere in the world, and they backed us up with 16% capital, you can see capital flew from Washington, 3 yrs later in 2005 I won the global vision award for initiating a concept of the future that would lead the global economy, with just that 1 paper I went to JIC and asked them if I could get more money? And with that idea I got 185 million dollars, and Equity became the most capitalized bank in East and Central Africa, capital flows where there are good ideas, and the rest is history. Now East and Central Africa has Equity as the biggest African majority owned company. Capital follows to ideas, it is not the other way round, if we got very great entrepreneurs, if we trained people who are willing to take risks then this county is change, if we ourselves invest others would be attracted to invest, we are very lucky that naturally, Isiolo will host our in-land refinery, so Meru can choose that the Petro Chemical industries would be in Meru, Isiolo will have one of the in-the-resort centers and Meru, if you look where you are located, in between 2 valleys that look like heaven, I would wish to live there myself, where particularly the northern slope where you can look at the mountain when you wake up in the morning and there is nowhere in the world that would be a better location than in Meru. That whole population needs to be fed, Meru then has a competitive advantage.

The last thing is how we take that road with people is the biggest challenge to the governor and senator and the county reps and leadership, is how to create linkages between the airports, LAPSSET project and the refinery, resort city with the ordinary person in Meru. How do you create liquidity? If only you solved that, then you do not have a problem, why? This is because the in-catch in Meru will be very high.

A big market is defined by its purchasing power, as long as the Meru county people are not rich, investors will not set a branch here, but relatively you are rich because I have 8 branches in Meru, more than all other counties. In Lodwar for example I have only 1 branch, it’s not that I like you too much, it is because I have something I can get from you. Banking you is an expense in the bank’s books, what they see is the potential of picking money and giving loans in Meru now and that potential can grow exponentially if we focus on increasing the incomes of our people. There is no industry that you cannot attract to Meru why? This is because industries are attracted to purchasing power. Don’t deceive yourself that putting roads, rails, airports will bring people, if there is no Market to sell to. China was growing very fast initially because of export market but now it is because of domestic market. The purchasing power of the market is very important to an investor; out of central province Meru was the first stop for Equity bank, why? because there was purchasing power.
Attracting Investments in Meru – The next big ideas and how to make them reality/Trends in the new world of investing by Mugo Kibati – CEO Vision 2030.

Mugo’s presentation was based on how Vision 2030 can contribute to development in Meru County and how Meru can develop projects as a subset within the national projects that deliver on vision 2030. Table 1 below gives highlights for Vision 203 projects where Meru development projects can be anchored and fall in line with the national development agenda.

Mugo singled out one of the Vision 2030 projects a flagship project that has major implications for development in Meru. This is the LAPSSET project which will see the establishment of Lamu port that will link the northern Kenya port with Juba in South Sudan with a junction at Isiolo with the branch to Addis Ababa. The links will be not only by railway and road but also by air where an international airport is already under construction at Isiolo. In addition to the three ways of transportation links, an oil pipeline will be constructed to in the same pattern and all will intercept at Isiolo (figure 1). An oil refinery will be constructed at Isiolo. All these planned activities present big opportunities for development in Meru County.

Table 1: Vision 2030 Pillars the project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISION 2030 PROJECTS</th>
<th>Economic Pillar</th>
<th>Social Pillar</th>
<th>Political Pillar</th>
<th>Macros and enablers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moving the economy up the value chain</td>
<td>Setting up of five livestock Disease-Free Zones in the ASAL Regions</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and protection of indigenous forest in five water towers</td>
<td>Implementation of the national value policy by ensuring it is incorporated in county strategic plan</td>
<td>Modernization of land registry</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME parks</td>
<td>Develop county sports stadia</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of Rural Health facilities to offer integrated comprehensive healthcare</td>
<td>Construction of Meru bypass</td>
<td>Construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underutilized parks</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) mainstreaming by training school committees PTAs, BOGs in management of Early Childhood and Secondary education for managing school resources and teachers</td>
<td>Establish county EMIS/EFMIS</td>
<td>Rural Electrification programme</td>
<td>Construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Producer Business Groups</td>
<td>Establish county EMIS/EFMIS</td>
<td>Establish Housing Technology Centers in Each Constituency</td>
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In addition to all these, Isiolo is to be developed as a mega Resort City. Isiolo is at the center of Kenya and at the frontiers of the agricultural and pastoral livelihoods of Kenya. The opportunities for Meru in the development of Isiolo are enormous because the towns of Isiolo and that of Meru are close enough to be economically integrated. More over the LAPSSET project will link Kenya with central and west Africa as the highway joins Lamu with Juba, Bambari, Bangui, Yaoundé and Douala.

Figure 1: A map of Kenya showing the centrality of Isiolo in the LAPSSET project

Figure 2: A map of Africa showing how the LAPSSET project will link Lamu and Isiolo with central and west Africa.
Building for Growth – real estate and infrastructure development

by Emma Mugisha on behalf of Mr Jeremy Awori, MD Barclays Bank Kenya

The Agenda for the presentation from Barclays was centred on where is Meru now in terms of development and where it is going in the future; what must Meru offer to the world and who do we need as partners to help us to get there; the lessons we can learn from some of the successful places in the world and the type of questions we should be asking ourselves.

The economic activities that can describe Meru today are largely found in the agriculture sector where we find cash crops like tea, coffee, cotton, that are mainly for export and some that could be categorized as agribusiness such as dairy and horticulture because they have developed into small scale processing industrial businesses. Meru is also known for its high quality timber and of course the Miraa.

Meru is known for hosting one of the biggest numbers of financial institutions away from Nairobi and Mombasa. There are 22 banks, 13 micro finance institutions and also a branch of the central Bank of Kenya. Meru is the commercial capital of northern and eastern Kenya.

To deliver a message on where we are going the presenter needs to set up Kenya as a leader in ICT investment and innovation by the Year 2017. Meru is well positioned to take part in the Kenya’s BPO cluster given the arrival of a large anchor MNC (IBM), INTEL and the creation of the BPO park (Konza City). In telecommunications the coming of the fifth fibre optic Cable to Kenya will boost the country’s internet and telecom sector and Meru should take advantage of the opportunity. Creation of data centers to take advantage of the national interest to construct two more Tier 4 data centers.

Meru needs to find its way into newly rolled out master plan that seeks to setup Kenya as a leader in ICT investment and innovation by the Year 2017. Meru is well positioned to take part in the Kenya’s BPO cluster given the arrival of a large anchor MNC (IBM), INTEL and the creation of the BPO park (Konza City). In telecommunications the coming of the fifth fibre Optic Cable to Kenya will boost the country’s internet and telecom sector and Meru should take advantage of the opportunity. Creation of data centers to take advantage of the national interest to construct two more Tier 4 data centers.

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Meru needs to offer the world good governance with a willingness to be exposed, audited and rated against other investment destinations; internal/local Management capability to plan and execute dreams; long term plan dealing with physical infrastructure taking cognizance of the state of current assets and future maintenance requirements. Meru also needs to offer a culture of sophisticated evaluation / optimization of investment and funding structures including costs; ability to consider alternative service delivery / procurement systems with the focus on life cycle costing, especially where the private sector will be invited to participate e.g. PPP’s. We need to offer investment incentives – tax breaks, land availability, one stop shop and conducive legal framework.

We need to select our potential partners in finance while developing financial institutions (World Bank, IFC, African Development Bank); capital market investors (Pension funds, Insurance companies); investment banks (structuring, advisory and financing skills); and export credit facilities (imported component of capital goods). We also need to select carefully our major private sector companies that may participate in servicing provision in the traditional procured projects and in Public Private Partnership procured projects. We need to engage credit rating agencies and county project risk rating specialists. We need to work with international risk management specialist service providers, major local and international construction companies and consult with engineering specialists to assist with international best practice- institutional structuring.

Table 2: Sources of Funding (from Barclays Bank Presentation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bond Market Funding</th>
<th>Traditional Bank Funding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Covenants</strong></td>
<td>Limited – Normally unsecured</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Debt</strong></td>
<td>Subject to negative pledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pricing</strong></td>
<td>Usually more competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume</strong></td>
<td>Medium to large, diverse investor base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Redeems only at maturity unless there is an early redemption trigger event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Repayment</strong></td>
<td>Normally bullet, efficient cash flow management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coupon / Interest</strong></td>
<td>Quarterly or semi-annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Rating Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Mandatory for public listing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investor Spread</strong></td>
<td>Wide range of investors include insurance companies, asset managers and conduits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
<td>Limited management required subsequent to bond issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific legal documentation</strong></td>
<td>Governing funding raised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: An example of City Bond Issue

Table: VOLUME ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spread to 91 day Tbill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful bids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful bids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure: POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTION BY INVESTOR TYPE

- Banks: 25%
- Development Finance Institutions: 17%
- Pension Funds: 21%
- Professional Fund Managers: 17%
Plenary on Building a competitive Meru County: A Panel discussion

Presenters: James Mworia-MD Centum; James Muratha-Regional Director and MD Stanbic Investments Services Martin Mugambi - MD Citi Bank, South African

James Mworia started by indicating that his task was very simple he said he would like to add to the dialogue: I would like to add solutions to the challenges and opportunities that are facing Meru County. We have heard extremely exiting insights, presentations. What is important is the execution, after this session the key follow up and the take away is how we execute, how we put into action what we have talked about today. The session that we had with the distinguished chairman, alluded to the briefs is on competitiveness, what does Meru county need to do to be competitive? As much as we want to aspire to be as good as Murang’a, our contusion is not Murang’a, our contusion are not the 47 counties in Kenya, our contusion is the global benchmarks that we need to aspire to globalize. This is the concept that has been talked about in various forums here, so the 3 themes, I would like us to talk about are:

- **Urbanization**: What does Urbanization mean from the context of Nairobi.
- **Digitization**: means embracing technology, Meru needs to embrace technology it needs to re-define itself.
- **Globalization**: – we have talked about being part of the global economy. Africa is a very small part of the global economy, 4% to be exact, and how does Meru fit into the Global Economy?

We need to think on how we connect, we talked about LAPSSET and linkages that LAPSSET provides into the bigger global picture.

Let us start with some facts, in terms of benchmarks, that is global competitiveness and from a city perspective, Cities in Africa, Cities globally, Top 5 New York, London, Singapore, Hong Kong and Paris. Most competitive cities are measured into 6 categories:

- **Economic strength**
- **Physical capital/ infrastructure**
- **Financial Maturity**
- **Institutional effectiveness** – how effective are our institutions in Meru county, our revenue management systems, we had from the honourable Governor with challenges he faces in Revenue collection, we need to talk about our institutions in order to attract and be competitive
- **Human Capital**: Very positive efforts has been made to increase the Human capacity that is here and how do we translate that to add to the dialogue, to add to the world’s competitiveness
- **Environment**: The environment has to be conducive to attract investment to attract capital. Capital, does not like adverse environments, it is driven by returns, it is driven by safety.

In the context of Meru we have to grow the base to be an Agricultural county, and to create wealth to Meru County we have got to Urbanize, which means investments in infrastructure.

We do not need capital but we need to create the right environment. Meru needs to move towards urbanization, on getting the capital we are blessed in being the Junction City of the proposed LAPSSET project.

Meru’s success will be based on our Global benchmark processes. To succeed we need to focus on the following areas:

- Focus on diversity
- Focus on providing lower costs
- Focus on infrastructure
- Focus on IT connectivity
- Focus on providing the essentials e.g., water
- Focus on marketing and planning, especially branding the County
- Focus on tourism –the quality of tourists that we are able to attract
- Focus on Meru as a food basket and value-addition
- Agro-processing, storage facilities
- Research
- Branding Meru products

Investing in Human capital, HELB has made offers to the county governments and made suggestions that they should have an education board, and have funds that the HELB will be able to pay them in return, the speaker also spoke on getting funds from the foundations so as to educate children in Kenya.

- **A very solid regulatory and Legal Framework**
- **Procedures of starting a business ( making it easier than other counties)**
- **Human capital development, what type of skills do we need to make workers in Meru be more marketable than other counties.**
- **Capital development**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Provision of Security**
- **Access to Credit ( how cheap are those loans), mechanism that will evaluate small scale farmers to access credit and make it affordable**
- **Transparency- zero rate corruption**
- **Image building (Ethics)**
- **Linking development to higher education especially within Research institutions**
- **Access to information**
- **Getting data of key economic indicators**
- **Installing the right mindsets in the Meru people.**
**Excellence in Education**
by: Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi Cabinet Secretary – Education

Ladies and gentlemen, we are all gathered here to discuss the development of Meru County. He said that there is a need to transform the county into development. In this regard he reminded the people that if you want to succeed in transformation then we must change the mindset of or people, the leaders of the county should take the responsibility given to them by the Meru people and make Meru County the best in the Country. They should not let the people down. They should make sure that there is enough people participation in all key projects in the county.

In Kimaru we have a saying that translates into saying there no one who knows without being told. The people here have come to know. We must listen carefully to whatever is being said in this conference without prejudice. If you want to succeed you must consider the thoughts of others by articulating a very consultative approach to your decision making. We know that Meru stands on the shoulders of its people. These people must be informed people and the information must be shared among all who are participating in development activities. Therefore the leaders in this room have the responsibility of making sure that Meru takes the rightful place in the development of this country.

In the old days Meru as district was one of the best in the country in many ways, but today we are not. Taking education as an example our schools performed poorly in the national examinations in the country despite having a good number of schools. This is not because we don’t have facilities but because we don’t use our facilities wisely. We need to inculcate a culture of responsibility. We need to know that success starts with education.

In Kenya there has been an increase in the enrolment of Children in Primary schools from 893,000 in 2010, to 305,000 pupils in 2013. In secondary schools the number has also risen from 65,000 in 2010 to 74,000 pupils in 2013. Where does Meru stand on this? However, despite the increase in school enrolment statistics show that there are still children out there who are not enrolled in schools. Our capacity as a people lies in the knowledge of our people. We must invest in our people so as to benefit in the opportunities available in development. The best economies in the world are those with high levels of education. One of the transformations that is needed by our people is that of investing in the education of our children. The county should take it as a responsibility to make accessible education. Success of any venture requires planning. The average of Meru County was D+ indicating that most children cannot go to Universities.

The county should invest in Education, as Education is the reason why some Countries have developed through research. Education is Key. The people in Meru County have invested heavily to education, Meru County, is the home of private universities and constituent colleges. Search for Nectar where the flowers are.

The county has great potential, endowed with resources especially in Agriculture. The things that we should watch out as a County: (Challenges of the county)
- Misplaced belief amongst our people that since the County is endowed with resources like Tea, Coffee then one does not need Education.

**Transformation for Excellence**
by Julius Kipng’etich –Chief Operations Officer- Equity Bank

Devolution-Turning the county into a process of development is not a one-time event; it requires multiple generations and time. Technology is a very important aspect that should be involved in the process of Development for the Meru people. Devolution should encompass all groups within the county such as the disabled, women and the aged; The County should involve all groups within the county.

- Kenya is in a very evolutionary trend today, which is also reflected in the county system –Kenyans demand so much so fast which is not realistic, so Kenyans should turn the notch down and realize not all can be achieved in a one go.
- Implementation of the policies put in place will determine how Meru County will compete with other counties.

An example is how Singapore which was a third world country just a few decades ago to what is now a first World Country. Looking at some of the steps that Singapore took could help Meru County to learn from, but don’t copy.

Dubai used Trade so as to become what it is in the global system as compared to their counterpart in Abu Dhabi, they created airports, and hotels. The advantage of Meru in this regard is that if is in the Middle of Kenya. Meru should focus on:
- Tourism
- Agro-processing
- Child Labour, poses as a serious threat to the maximization of Education in the County and the future of the County. No Children should be away from school, as the County will not achieve much, particularly the enrolment of students to universities.
- The need to be more ambitious as a County, and not settle for less as a county.
- Poverty in the County, where it becomes to enrol students in School, even though it is compulsory – Lead your people to take your children to school
- Retractive Cultural practices where children are not taken to school because of their Gender
- Failure of Cultural institutions of taking charge and strengthen them in some aspects within the community for example Njuri Nchele to deal with the conservation of the environment and conflict resolutions

As the development progresses in Meru County, it will help to solve the unemployment problem not only in Meru but in Kenya as well.

Clean up the town so as to encourage more investors. Discipline and Ethics should be promoted as the foundation and should spread to all parts of Meru using the Rwanda Model of accessibility of toilets and other health facilities to its residents.

Security should also be enhanced as the county develops.

Infrastructure should be improved especially, road and water, e.g. road for mobility and dams where water can be stored which Meru can export to Isiolo and Garissa Counties.

How does Meru county, attract investors?
- Inspire and mobilize people, through Leadership.
- Organization, work as a team, co-operation.
- What is Meru County Foreign policy - those who are outside Meru need to know the things that they can do together? Make a Strong Foreign Policy
- Property rights - so as to protect the image of the county and also attract investors, create a conducive Environment
- Efficient Leadership from the County Assembly to the Executive.
Mobilizing resources to finance county developments - possible innovations
by Luke Kinoti, Group Chief Executive, Fusion Capital Financing County Developments

Financing County Developments

On the issue of financing county development, it was pointed out that Meru County is one of the most resource-rich counties in Kenya given its central location, good climate and economic activities. In the recently read 2013 budget, the central government projects the country’s economic growth was reported to be 5.8 percent up from 4.6 percent recorded in 2012. With this, the government has allocated KES 210 billion, to be distributed to the 47 counties through a revenue sharing plan where Meru County has been allocated KES 5.5 billion. The question is, is this enough for the county? The obvious answer is it is not enough and much more is needed

Possible Innovations

In order to raise funds for development, the county government can:

1. Invest directly
   Invest in enterprises directly through the Youth Fund and Women Fund

2. Provide a vehicle for mobilizing local savings and investments
   Introduce investment opportunities for the local people such as county bonds. This will encourage circulation of money within the county

3. Research and new product development
   Research is a costly activity for an enterprise. The county government can invest in researches and make these studies available to enterprises and institutions for implementation

4. Initiate entrepreneurship education
   Through training and skills development to ensure that existing businesses are well run and profitable entities

5. Value addition
   Invest more in traditional economic activities such as agriculture to increase output, for local consumption and export trade to other counties and international markets

6. Creating an enabling environment for investment
   Introduce incentives for local investors such as tax holidays, provide infrastructure needed for businesses to set up, and provide economies of scale such as land through leasing out to enterprises for development
   Encourage investors not only within the county but also from other counties and regionally to attract a rich pool of investments

7. Public private partnerships
   Develop partnerships with private companies such as private equity firms who can invest the necessary capital in a co-sharing agreement with the local enterprises
   This will help spread the business risk, align interest and reduce any financial burden on the entrepreneur

Nurturing Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation
by Peter Gitonga, Sameer Group

The production of novel and useful ideas leads to “Transformation of a new idea into a new product or service, or an improvement in organization process”. Creativity and innovation is central to entrepreneurial process. There is a need to anchor entrepreneurial process in line with the Kenya vision 2030 perspective which stands on three pillars: the economic pillar, the social pillar, and the political pillar.

In the Meru Sameer mango/avocado project the focus is on empowerment of Meru County as it has done for other counties through agriculture. Sameer group has invested in Kenya in several areas and in different agricultural crops as follows:

1. Tea Estates in Kericho and Nandi Hills
2. Coffee Estates in Kiambu and Nyeri
3. Coffee Milling Plant in Kiambu
4. Milk processing in Nairobi and Nyahururu
5. Fruit juice processing in Kilifi

Investments in lower Meru County
- Suitable for mango, avocado, cereals, cotton and other fruits
- Invested $1.5 million on purchase of land
- Leased kariene horticulture cold stores for 15 years
- Applied for 5 acres of land around Isiolo airport
- Engaged consultants and farmers for investment partnerships

Mango processing in Meru County
- How to increase production
- How to increase Exports
- Full and sustainable absorption of the increasing produce
- Reduction of Post-harvest losses – currently estimated to be over 50%
To develop as a county there is a need to identify and nurture the homegrown entrepreneurial initiatives and see them grow to successful businesses that are operated professionally and efficiently. To do this as a county you need to develop a good working environment that will attract big well run businesses that can serve as role models for the young entrepreneurs. The role that the county can play includes setting up policies to set the path for action by all stakeholders that includes the government, business, individual, etc.

Attribute of a good policy:

- Comprehensive and integrated
- Equitable
- Sustainable
- Efficient
- Flexible (to address emerging needs and concerns)

At the institutional level these policy instruments should serve as the basis for the following guidance mechanisms that are important to all successful entrepreneurship

1. **Legal Arrangements:** referring to the framework of laws, executive orders, and other legal instruments that set the ground rules for governmental and non-governmental activities.

2. **Institutional Arrangements:** The institutional framework is comprised of organizations or institutions - governmental and non-governmental, with a recognized role to play in implementing national value policy.

3. **National Framework:** Guidance not Guidelines
   - The National or County Framework is intended to provide a reference point to promote an ongoing dialogue on values and ethical principles relevant to Article 10
   - The National Framework does not provide enforceable directions. These values and ethical principles are a guide but are not mandatory

4. **State or County Organ:** a commission, office, agency or other body established under the Constitution.

5. **Values:** a fundamental set of beliefs that drive choices and behavior

6. **Innovation:** The process of creating and delivering new values to customers in the market place.

There is a need to sensitize the society at all levels of development in order for them to own up the process. They should be committed to creating impacts and be determined to have superior performance in all their endeavors and show lasting endurance to success. Figure 4 below summarizes the linkages between community participation, the performance of development agenda and governance.

### Attributes of a good policy

- **Flexible** (to address emerging needs and concerns)
- **Equitable**
- **Comprehensive and integrated**
- **Efficient**
- **Sustainable**

### Challenges to innovations

Challenges to innovations fall into three categories. First is creating innovation opportunities such as public procurement and regulations, secondly, putting innovation enablers in place in our institutions and intellectual property. Lastly, funding innovations such as strength-risk capital industry and new funding models for public venture companies.

### Nurturing Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation

Professor Midamba thanked the conveners of the conference for inviting him to contribute on a very important and timely topic "Nurturing Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovations in Meru County". According to our new constitution and our national Value policy, access to descent public services is no longer a privilege, it is now one’s right especially for those who were previously disadvantaged to lack these services. This is why our guiding principle to public service transformation and reforms should be guided by the simple phrase "people first". The transformation of our public service must therefore be rightly judged by the practical differences people see in their everyday life.

Innovation in the public sector can be divided into the following six types:

1. New or improved service
2. Process innovation
3. Administrative innovation
4. Radical change of rationality
5. Conceptual innovation, and
6. System innovation

According to Parthenon Education centre 2012 study, the wealth of a nation or country is strongly correlated to the education of its populace. In Meru, 71.4% of the people can read and write, 84% between ages 15-18 attend school and 13% of people have secondary school education. Meru county has one of the highest literacy levels in the country. This is great and citizens of this county should be commended. In the face of such an impressive achievement, the county faces some major development challenges; insufficient and unreliable telephone services, most feeder roads are poor thus inhibiting access to markets. The county lacks appropriate technology and skills to process and preserve agricultural and dairy products. As the population grows there is evidence of encroachment on public utility plots including access roads, and lastly pressure on land continues to increase leading to further subdivision into uneconomical units.

As a county you need to revamp or overhaul your education system to respond to the needs of people. Instead of carrying children on our heads and cerebrating the primary and secondary school exam results, you need to cerebrate the achievement of young people who can successfully create the next generation of MPESA. Your educational outcomes must be judged by the skill building blocks as opposed to the results of public exams.

As Kenyans we must declare Vision 2030 to be the time for Innovation Movement. In order to stay competitive in the global Market place, our national and county government services must therefore be judged by the following three criteria:

- Satisfying the need of the people
- Utilizing resources efficiently, and
- Adding value to Kenyans

### Challenges to innovations

Challenges to innovations fall into three categories. First is creating innovation opportunities such as public procurement and regulations, secondly, putting innovation enablers in place in our institutions and intellectual property. Lastly, funding innovations such as strength-risk capital industry and new funding models for public venture companies.
Using the co-operative enterprises for social and economic transformation of the Meru County by Silas K. Kobia

The modern model of co-operative business is over 170 years old. It is a product of the Industrial Revolution in Europe of the 18th Century. The first recognized formal co-operative society was a consumer retail shop that was started in 1844 in Rochdale Village, Manchester, England. This presentation will not go into the details of the definition, identity, principles and values of co-operation. The assumption is these details are more academic and are well known to you as experienced co-op-operators or beneficiaries of co-operative enterprises.

Mutual self-help and co-operation are old traditions practiced by Kenyan societies long before the colonial era. The first formal co-operatives in Kenya were organized by white communities, beginning in 1908. In 1931 Kenya’s first co-operative legislation allowed self-help groups such as Kenya Farmers Association (KFA) to become registered and recognized by the then colonial government.

Although the early registered co-operatives were exclusively organized by and served white farmers, the passage of the Co-operative Ordinances in 1945 allowed Africans to organize their own co-operatives. In 1946, a Co-operative Department was established, headed by a Registrar (at that time Musungu) of Co-operatives. The department was charged with promoting, registering, supervising and controlling co-operatives and liquidating those that were not viable.

In those early days Africans were not allowed to grow cash crops such as coffee, pyrethrum, tea or even keep dairy cattle. It was not until the mid 1960s that indigenous farmers in Meru, Kisii, Embu and Taita were permitted to grow such special cash crops. The farmers in these few districts were enabled to organize co-operatives to process and market their produce to consumers and industries in the White Settler’s home countries.

Meru African Co-operative Union (MACU)

Early co-operatives in Meru were in coffee farming societies, which later founded the Meru African Co-operative Union (MACU). It is a fact in the 1960s MACU was reputed as the largest, best managed and most progressive and innovative co-operative union in Kenya. The Union recruited Mr. Henry Kinyua, who had graduated from Makerere University College in early 1960s to take over as the general manager from a European general manager, a Mr. Benson.

In 1964, Kinyua was hired by Kenya Planters Co-operative Union (KPCU) and soon became again the first African managing director of KPCU. When Henry Kinyua left MACU, he was succeeded by Mr. Jason Kimbui. Kimbui lead the Union up to 1969 when he was appointed the first general manager of the Co-operative Bank of Kenya (CBK). Mr. Kimbui was appointed a director of KPCU to represent Meru coffee farmers.

Visionary Meru Co-operative Leaders

Kenya National Federation of Co-operatives (KNFC) was started in 1964 and Mr. Kinyua, the MD of KPCU became its first chairman. The management of KNFC teamed up with the Kenya government and development partners to conceptualize and start the Co-operative Bank of Kenya (CBK), the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operative Organizations (KUSCCO), the Co-operative Insurance Company (CIC) and the Co-operative University College of Kenya (CUC). The CIC was incubated under KNFC as an insurance agency for 10 years before it was transformed into an insurer. Mr. Kinyua was the first chairman of CIC and Mr. Kimbui its second chairman.

Indeed sons of the Meru County played key leadership roles in the early period of Africanization and development of co-operatives in Meru County and in Kenya generally. CBK, KUSCCO the CIC and the CUC are the iconic co-operative institutions in Kenya. They are model and envy of other countries in East Africa and the whole of Africa. They command large membership and customers from other co-operatives, farmers, workers from all sectors, and all kind of businesses. What is forgotten and not easily appreciated is these co-operative giants are products of the many ordinary rural and urbanized co-operative societies comprising farmers and employees from businesses of all kinds.

Co-operative activities and their potential

The co-operative movement, despite many challenges, is entrenched in Kenya and Meru in particular. In Meru co-operatives are active in the sectors of agricultural input supply, agricultural produce processing and marketing, dairies, savings and credit, banking, insurance, transport, housing and many others. Altogether co-operatives in Meru County, contribute directly and indirectly to the economic livelihood of large numbers of the people. But the greater potential contribution of co-operatives in Meru is yet to be exploited.

In comparison with many other counties in Kenya, Meru has a truly rich history (not yet well documented) of visionary, vibrant, diversified and progressive co-operative movement. At the beginning the co-operatives focused on basic agricultural produce and marketing activities. Today, the co-operatives are more diversified, including in provision of financial services, insurance, housing, transport, entertainment, agro-processing and human resource development. The Meru County and its co-operative leaders should be challenged by her pioneer co-operative sons to unleash the full potential of co-operative enterprises to transform the social and economic well being of her citizens.

How co-operatives can become an awesome partner in the socio-economic transformation of the county

When he opened the 9th African Ministerial Co-operative Conference of International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) in Nairobi, the retired President, Mwai Kibaki stated: “An estimated 70 percent of Kenyans depended directly or indirectly on co-operatives. Co-operatives offer the best avenue for fighting poverty in Africa because of their ability to reach out to many people in the rural and urban areas. Africa accounts for less than 10 percent of the world co-operative population. This ratio needed to be increased to reap the benefits of pooling savings and other resources for common investments. Co-operatives should be innovative, open up to new ideas of interest to the young and educated as well as to adapt modern technology to make them appealing and relevant to youth rather than be perceived as a reserve for the older generation and always slow to Innovation.”

The following significant issues if addressed appropriately and strategically would spur co-operatives to be the invaluable partner in the transformation of the livelihoods of the Meru County citizens.

a. Mainstreaming co-operatives as a priority County development policy
b. Focusing co-operatives on Vision 2030
c. Involving the Youth in co-operatives enterprises
d. Deepening co-operative entrepreneurship through innovations
e. Undertaking studies and research and producing education materials on and about co-operatives
f. Leveraging on visionary leadership and good co-operative governance.

a. Mainstreaming co-operatives as a priority County development policy

The County has the choice to evaluate the role of co-operatives in her development plan. This presentation takes the view that co-operatives would rank among the top priorities for policy and strategic mainstreaming in the development plan of the County. The reality that the new National Government has no stand-alone ministry in charge of co-operatives should, in my view, persuade the County to take a more active role to empower co-operatives to become even more vibrant.

b. Focusing co-operatives on Vision 2030

The Vision 2030 is the long-term development blueprint to transform Kenya into a rapidly industrialized middle income country by year 2030. Among the priorities of the Vision 2030 is eradication of poverty, equitable distribution of resources through wealth and employment creation and social justice. Co-operatives
are one of the best vehicles to accelerate realization of Vision 2030.

Unfortunately and due to a lapse in advocacy, the Vision 2030 blueprint has not given the co-operatives their strategic role they deserve in terms of policy and challenges to roll out flagship projects. The Meru County has the opportunity to define economically beneficial flagship projects for key co-operative organizations in its jurisdiction. The co-operatives in turn can educate and propagate their members to set individual targets in line with such and other projects in line with Vision 2030. Through co-operatives, Vision 2030 aspirations can be achieved much sooner.

C. Involving the Youth in co-operative enterprises

Co-operatives, particularly in the rural areas have not attracted the youth to have passion for co-operative vocation. There is therefore generational and succession leadership gaps in the co-operatives, not only in Meru County, but nationally. There must be deliberate efforts to address this challenge, as the former President stated in the above quote. The youth are digitally proficient and would be invaluable in sustaining competition and innovations in co-operative enterprises if well motivated, and integrated, both as members and employees.

d. Deepening co-operative entrepreneurship through creative innovations

The potential in value additions and agro-industries is phenomenal. The food industry should be given priority alongside agro-industries. There is a big and growing market for food industry in Kenya. It should be remembered that the Co-operative Bank and the Co-operative Insurance Company of Kenya are by-products (children) of agricultural co-operative societies. These two institutions have branches in all counties and are now establishing branches in the Eastern Africa region. Every co-operative society has potential to grow, diversify and start other related and supportive businesses.

Let us always remember when the White Settlers started the first co-operatives in Kenya, their priority was to satisfy the needs and requirements of their mother countries through the co-operatives they started. We need to have our priorities right.

e. Undertaking studies and research and producing education materials

All that is prophesied in this brief paper cannot be realized unless it is backed by accurate information and knowledge about the current status, performance, expectations, resources and capacities available within the various communities and regions in Kenya. A study and evaluation of the status of the co-operatives in Meru is the starting point. Meru County can initiate such study and has sons and daughters who can do a good job in such a project. We require to first understand and map-out their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The history of Meru co-operatives and organization biographies of key successful co-operatives with best management and leadership practices are recommended to provide education and learning materials, even for the universities to encourage the young people to develop passion for delivering co-operatives to higher levels of excellence in performance. Research assignments and feasibility studies are suggested before introducing new products or and new lines of co-operative activities, for example cotton production, consumer co-ops and related industries.

f. Leadership and governance

Without visionary leadership, entrepreneurship and good co-operative governance, the rosy achievements anticipated from co-operative enterprises in Meru County would be in vain.

Conclusion

Visionary leadership and good co-operative governance are the key pillars for ensuring co-operative play a useful role in unleashing the potential in the Meru County.

"Every day in Meru County, the lives of numerous people and their dependants are affected in one way or another through the co-operative movement. For decades since the advent of the co-operatives among the Ameru in the mid forties, thousands upon thousands have secured for themselves and their households a life of dignity, economic well being and expanding opportunities by belonging to the co-operative movement, either as members or as employees.” Discuss!

Land reforms and physical planning for Meru County – the road forward - by Francis Mbae Ndereba

Introduction

Meru requires a holistic approach in the use of available land resource by way of drawing up appropriate strategies that when applied will lead to optimal use of land and present best possible returns (outputs), from the resource. Physical planning is variously referred to as spatial planning of land use. It may be applied to urban and rural planning of land uses. It may be applied regionally and also locally depending on levels of administration. Land planning may be integrated into the general development planning of an area or the whole county. It may also be part of an environmental planning. The purpose of overall planning process is to create efficiencies in the use of resources for maximum returns and in a sustainable manner.

A resource would be defined as a possession that would be used to help cope or support a situation. Resources are therefore the means available to a county for use to achieve their objectives. Such means could be in various forms, including natural environment, people, mineral wealth, assets, raw materials, finances, land, and infrastructure.

The potential for Physical Planning in the County of Meru is enormous. The County holds enormous resources that if developed and managed well would lead to improved standards of living of the people in the County. To unravel this, we will need an environmental scanning. One such scan is a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) analysis.

The table below Table 1 provides details of a SWOT analysis for different sectors and covering various resources and also showing strategic interventions required to link the strengths to opportunities and the actors who are best placed to conduct linkage.
**Table 3: A SWOT Analysis for Physical Planning in Meru County**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESS</th>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>THREAT</th>
<th>STRATEGIC INTERVENTION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE</td>
<td>Size of population</td>
<td>Fairly large (1.4M)</td>
<td>- High poverty index (28.3%)</td>
<td>- More devolved funds - Potential demand</td>
<td>- Shared Function (CG+NG) - High population growth</td>
<td>Development of programmes to create employment opportunities and wealth - Programmes to check on fast growth of population</td>
<td>CG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy levels</td>
<td>Fairly educated population (60% of people can read and write)</td>
<td>72% with primary education</td>
<td>- Low skills levels Only 12% have secondary education - Not enough training opportunities at lower level</td>
<td>- Tertiary education opportunities within and without County - Financing opportunities exist</td>
<td>- High cost / affordability - Shared function (CG + NG)</td>
<td>Development programmes that increase opportunities for affordable education and training</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td>Accommodative · Respect for diversity</td>
<td>- Generally in small holder agriculture and merchandise trade</td>
<td>- Value addition - Kilimo biashara - Divesting to other business ventures</td>
<td>- High cost of capital - Competition - Shared function</td>
<td>Develop policies and programmes that cushion local enterprises from unfair competition</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora</td>
<td>Large number of people from County working in foreign countries and countries</td>
<td>No structured engagement of this group in the county yet</td>
<td>- Remittances - Investments - Technology transfer</td>
<td>- Competition with local entrepreneurs - Bringing in of foreign value systems</td>
<td>- External influences</td>
<td>Develop programmes to engage the Diaspora and motivate them to invest locally</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Very rich culture: material, practices, governance, religion etc.</td>
<td>- Not well collected, documented and stored</td>
<td>- Existence of National Museums of Kenya - Existence of some traditional institutions e.g. Nuri</td>
<td>- External influences</td>
<td>- Develop programmes that collect, document and store and promote culture attributes</td>
<td>CG</td>
<td>NG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>Size is fairly large (6,936km²)</td>
<td>- High density (196 persons/km²) - Low per capita holding (1.5 acres per household)</td>
<td>- More devolved funds - Urbanization - Intense use of land</td>
<td>- High growth rates</td>
<td>Development programmes that attract people to urban employment opportunities (business etc.)</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Fairly fertile</td>
<td>Not optimally used</td>
<td>- Agril-business - Agricultural financing institutions</td>
<td>- High cost of alternative agricultural practices</td>
<td>Develop programmes for affordable finances</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Interests on land registered in some areas (title deeds)</td>
<td>- Adjudication of interests on land not complete in the County. - Not using title deeds as collateral</td>
<td>- Collateral for investment funds - Shared functions</td>
<td>- Land ownership conflicts - NG not moving as fast as desirable in adjudication</td>
<td>- Roll out a programme for fast tracking of adjudication and registration of interests on land.</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Fairly favourable: adequate rains, favourable temperature</td>
<td>- Not adequately utilized for farming, sporting, solar energy etc. - Infrastructure support services lack</td>
<td>- To invest in more viable agriculture (agri-business) - Shared function (collaboration between NG + CG)</td>
<td>- Rain damage to road infrastructure - Not getting the NG to move fast</td>
<td>Conduct feasibility for more intensive use of climatic conditions for various beneficial uses</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Diverse and usable for many activities: -Mountains/hills -Valley/gorges -Pains, waterfalls etc.</td>
<td>- The potential not investigated</td>
<td>- PPP - Private Sector - Shared function (collaboration between NG + CG)</td>
<td>- High cost of infrastructure</td>
<td>Conduct feasibility for their use</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Over 10 rivers traverse the county</td>
<td>- Not adequately tapped, utilized</td>
<td>- Not adequately protected</td>
<td>- Shared function (collaboration between NG + CG)</td>
<td>Climate change - Deforestation - Draw policies and programmes for sustainable development and use of water resources</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers and other water sources</td>
<td></td>
<td>Swamps, wetlands exist</td>
<td>- Not protected - Not documented</td>
<td>- Shared function (collaborative approach)</td>
<td>- Silation - Encroachment</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Underground water resource</td>
<td>- Not widely utilized - Not fully documented</td>
<td>- Shared function (collaborative approach)</td>
<td>- High cost of access and extraction</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Diverse and usable for many activities: -Mountains/hills -Valley/gorges -Pains, waterfalls etc.</td>
<td>- The potential not investigated</td>
<td>- PPP - Private Sector - Shared function (collaboration between NG + CG)</td>
<td>- High cost of infrastructure</td>
<td>Conduct feasibility for their use</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geomorphology</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Diverse rocks and soils that could support any industry</td>
<td>- Not sustainably developed</td>
<td>- Commercial production of building materials - Shared service</td>
<td>- High cost of investment in the sector</td>
<td>Develop policies and programmes that support sustainable use of the rock and soil resources</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managed by National Government</td>
<td>- Collaboration with NG to draw community into protection of forests</td>
<td>- Encroachment by settlement</td>
<td>- Draw collaborative policies and programmes for sustainable use of forest resources</td>
<td>- NG</td>
<td>CG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>National parks in the County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed by NG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with National Government to draw local community into protection of wildlife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poaching - Conflict with other land uses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw collaborative policies and programmes that support sustainable use of wildlife resources</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human settlement</th>
<th>Urbanization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 urban areas: (Muru and Masaa) with town status: about 100 smaller settlements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No city or municipality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated development planning in collaboration with National Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG not moving in as fast as county would wish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw programme for preparation of integrated development plans for settlements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Private sector actively involved in provision of houses in towns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out put low - High cost of investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora investment - Incentive to investors who want to invest in large schemes - PPPs - GOI (CG + NG)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing investment opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a programme that motivates private investors and diaspora to invest in housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural settlements</th>
<th>About 40% of population of county in rural areas have decent housing units - portable water, permanent &amp; semi permanent structures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High cost of investment - Taking up of agricultural land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of alternative housing technologies for households</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging people to live in towns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of access to finance - Lack of opportunities in towns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw programmes and policies that attract people to live in towns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport and communication</th>
<th>Road infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatively well developed road infrastructure - 5.4% of roads paved - 27% of roads all weather - Existence of crop cess funds for road maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 67% of network in poor state - Regularly destroyed by floods/ runoff - Cannot be applicable to whole County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative funding avenues - CG/NG donors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction by rains - High cost of development and maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach out to donors for possible financial support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a common programme for County for use of all road funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Air transport</th>
<th>Access to Isiolo International Airport - Existence of airstrips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public air transport not yet available - Airstrips not fully developed - Not devolved function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying NG to upgrade existing airstrips to airports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of funds to do it soon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobby NG to complete Isiolo International Airport and to upgrade Galu and Mitunguru airstrips to airports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Railway transport</th>
<th>Proximity to Nanyuki (end of the existing railway line) and Isiolo (where the LAPSET railway line will pass)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No connection to county - Not a devolved function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close proximity to county</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High costs involved for extension to Meru County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying NG to upgrade existing airstrips to airports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a programme to lobby the inclusion of the County into the railway line extension plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water transport</th>
<th>Many rivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low potential due to rugged terrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boats sports and transport in small sections of rivers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do feasibility study to document the potential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICT</th>
<th>Accessible in the county</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access rate is low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in ICT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobby NG to roll out programmes of ICT access to rural areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Human Capacity</th>
<th>Physical Planning Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic structure exist in the County at NG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG is yet to establish a structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging on NG structure - Outsourcing some services - Creating CG structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of competence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a programme for establishment of CG planning structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development control</th>
<th>Basic structures exist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging on NG Capacity - Creating CG structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of competence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a development control structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constitution and legal</th>
<th>Mandate of County Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well spelt out in Constitution and Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structures evolving albeit slowly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing from experience of others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing unsuitable experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing programmes for learning experience trips to similar jurisdictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>County assembly in place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly settling to make Laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing from other jurisdictions and domesticating by use of ICT and visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All supportive laws in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapting Laws that may not work well for the County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing by-laws and regulations from similar jurisdictions by use of ICT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a programme for experience sharing visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing laws/ regulations</th>
<th>By – laws previously used by LA applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not comprehensive enough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be challenged with repeal of (former) CAP 265</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the Acts of Parliament Applicable (EMCA, PPA etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not comprehensive enough to cover all devolved functions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw a comprehensive legislation programme to develop laws/ by-laws and regulations to support development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| CG |

| NG |

| CG |

| NG |

| CG |

| NG |

| CG |

| NG |

| CG |

| NG |
Background of Meru County

Meru is one of the counties in the eastern part of Kenya with a population of over 1.3 million people, and covering an area of 6,936.2 km². Most of the people live in the rural areas with only 12% of the total population is urban. Meru County borders Isiolo County to the North and North East, Tharaka County to the South West, Nyeri County to the South West and Laikipia County to the West.

The main economic activity is agriculture, with focus on growing of coffee, tea and French beans, and Miraa (KHAT), timber and it also a business hub/center for Eastern and Northern parts of Kenya.

Meru County constitutes of the following constituencies and districts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>CONSTITUENCIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meru Central</td>
<td>Igembe South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imeini North</td>
<td>Igembe Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igembe</td>
<td>Igembe North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigania West</td>
<td>Meru North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigania East</td>
<td>Meru South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Imenti</td>
<td>South Imenti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buuri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic Structure of Meru County

Agriculture
Wholesale and Retail Trade and Commerce
Hospitality/Tourism
Manufacturing
Real Estate
Transport
Education
Healthcare

Socio-economic challenges
- Population growth and its impact on the environment
- Agricultural productivity being affected by increasing acidity of soils, subdivision of land, increasing costs in crop and animal husbandry, access to markets, etc.
- Employment opportunities and skills development for youth
- Rural roads/Access
- Diseases e.g., HIV/AIDS, Flu, Malaria, etc
- Need for more and better educational and health facilities to raise standards.
- Access to markets and
- Other external shocks affecting demand for agricultural produce from the county.

Roadmap

We have to generate wealth within our lifetime. Hence a need for ways that will move us from dependence on inherited wealth to created wealth. Hence we have to acknowledge why we need to transform: self acknowledgement of what we are (from what); to the aspired (To What); and the means (How)
There is need for structural changes in the way we do things in order to increase competitiveness. The principal role of the county government is to create an environment that enables competitiveness in business and creativity.

Looking at the demographic statistics, Meru County has the numbers that matter to drive a business. However, production should not only aim at the local market. Investments should aim wider in addition to providing to the local market.

Technology — in today’s world there can be no development without conforming with the changes in technology. Technology is a major driver to business. In many cases, consumers go with technologies.

De-corporatization is the process of moving from the formal sector to the informal sector. Most of Meru’s population is below the age of 45 years. This gives a very good opportunity for production technology uptake and the potential for investing. Generally, younger generations have a higher appetite for investing than the older generations. The younger generations like trying new ideas and like doing things they are not familiar with. These are good ingredients for development. They like taking risk as they know they have enough time ahead of them to manage the risk and besides they may have fewer responsibilities.

During the 1990’s people in Kenya tended to be more in the formal sector than in the informal sector. The trends over the years show that opportunities in the formal sector seem to have remained stagnant while those in the informal sector have been increasing steadily. This is encouraging for development especially as we know most of these changes are in the uptake of technologies in the Jua Kali sector.

Figure 6: Kenya’s population structure 2005

![Population Structure](image)

**Figure 6: Kenya’s population structure 2005**

**THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA: ENABLERS AND INDICATORS OF COMPETITIVENESS**

- Export Market Share for the County
- Inbound Foreign Direct Investment into the country
- Outbound Foreign Direct Investment into Other Regions
- Domestic Investment by Residents
- Domestic Innovation in the County

Productivity (delivered by entrepreneurs like Bonafide Group)

Competitive Environment (Role of the County Government)

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**Figure 5: The Transformation Agenda**

**Key Economic Drivers**

- Fewer barriers to trade and investment
- Rapidly increasing stock and diffusion of knowledge
- Competitiveness upgrading in many countries/location

**Market Reactions**

- Globalization of markets
- Globalization of capital investment
- Globalization of value chains Supra/National/Sub-National
- Increasing knowledge and skill intensity of competition
- Value migrating to the service component of the value chain

- Microeconomic competitiveness is increasingly important to succeed in the global economy

**Figure 7: The De-corporatization trends**

![De-corporatization Trends](image)
The economic growth in Kenya has been erratic with years of growth and years of downturn. It is important for the county government to learn from the experiences of the parent national economic trends. The idea is to avoid a down turn; either maintains the upward growth and at worst maintains at same point rather than take a downward trend. If one observes the events that took place during the periods of downturn trends we can interpret these in terms of the county economic growth.

Factors that contribute to instability in economic growth

- Politics: the fundamentals of politics are on power patronage, conflicts over resources, like land and water, and distributional grievances
- Regionalization of the representation in the decision making team
- Social Challenges - the biggest social policy change is getting our youth to work

The Real challenge is lack of skills and Youth Unemployment

Whilst many challenges face young people, undoubtedly the most acute is the inability to access real practical skills and employment. That is, they lack the means to earn a DECENT and HONEST living. Consequently, this drives young people into crime and drugs, and into a general state of hopelessness and despair.

Unemployment is also a factor of education and skills. There are more unskilled people without employment than the skilled people. Most of the unemployed people lack basic education having terminated their education either at primary or secondary level.

Opportunities available for development in Meru includes:

1. Modernized (Value addition) in Agriculture
2. Tourism (Revitalize the Mt. Kenya Circuit)
3. Infrastructure (The foundation for the economy)
4. ICT/BPO (Maximize the Fibre Optic cable)
5. Retail and Wholesale Trade (a major source for Jobs)
6. Manufacturing (Build on Agricultural Processing)
7. Real Estate and Construction (High growth rates)
8. Diaspora (Kenyans abroad want to contribute)
9. Services (Business Services; Education, Healthcare; etc)

In conclusion the presenter called for good leadership. Good quality in leadership is the answer to transformation for excellence. Let us rededicate ourselves in whatever we do and success will be in our way. The quality of the leadership and diligence in doing what we need to do will determine our ability to steer the County’s Socio-Economic Development.

Figure 8: Size and structure of employment, 2005/6 millions

Figure 9: Unemployment - A youth problem

Figure 10: Kenya economic growth 1968 - 2008...It’s the politics!

Figure 11: Unemployment - A youth problem

Figure 12: Meru County Vision 2030 should be anchored on 3 pillars and a strong foundation
Meru County Profile
by Julius Chokerah, UNDP

Meru County is in the middle of Kenya traversed by the equator and on the eastern slopes of Mt Kenya. It is on the wettest side of the mountain and along with Embu and Tharaka Nithi Counties receives the highest amount rainfall compared to other counties around the mountain.

Meru borders Isiolo County to the North and North East, Tharaka Nithi County to the South West, Nyeri County to the South West and Laikipia County to the West. It has a total land area of about 6,936 km² spread out in 9 constituencies, and administratively in 28 divisions, 133 locations and 351 sub-locations.

The county’s position is on the eastern slopes of Mt Kenya and equator has highly influenced its natural conditions. Altitude ranges from 300m to 5,199m above sea level. This has influenced the atmospheric conditions leading to a wide variety of microclimates and agro-ecological zones. The drainage pattern in the county is characterized by rivers and streams originating from catchment areas such as Mt Kenya and Nyambene ranges in the north. The rivers cut through the hilly terrain on the upper zones to the lower zones and drain into the Tana and Ewaso Nyiro Rivers. The rivers form the main source of water for both domestic and agricultural use.

The main source of energy for homes is wood fuel which provides about 81.9% of energy needs and charcoal provides about 12.6%. Electricity therefore provides a meager 5.5% of the energy used in Meru County. The number of households connected to electricity is 6,509 out of a total of 319,616 households in the county. The proportion of people using fuel to light their homes is about 13.6%; and those using paraffin as the main cooking fuel is about 2.6%. Those using gas (LPG) are about 1.5% of the population, while those using biogas are about 0.5%. Those using solar as the main lighting fuel are about 5.5%. Major public and private institutions are connected to the national grid.

One of the major challenges for the county is to connect the majority households that are without electricity.

While agricultural production is doing very well; tourism and industry are lagging behind due to lack facilities especially for tourism. The table below (table 6) gives the number of trading centers and manufacturing industries in the county. There are five main urban centres, and one hundred and one trading centres in the county. Meru Town, Nkubu, Laare, Timau and Maau are the major urban centres. Meru Town is the largest in the county. All the trading centres are agricultural markets with all centres having two market days per week.

Education is another challenge in the county. Although there are many educational institutions offering all levels of training, performance of these institutions remain very low. Elsewhere in this publication performance of educational institutions in the national has been dwelt with in detail and mine here is to show that although the performance is poor, we have a good number of institutions (table 7).

There are 792 Early Childhood Development Centres (ECD), 647 primary schools and 192 secondary schools. The county has 15 education divisions and zones. The implementation of the Constituencies Development Fund has enabled the construction of various facilities in the mixed day secondary schools.

Table 5: Administrative divisions of Meru County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-counties</th>
<th>Area (Km²)</th>
<th>No. of Divisions</th>
<th>No. of Locations</th>
<th>No. of Sub-locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tigania East</td>
<td>557.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigania West</td>
<td>567.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igembe North</td>
<td>908.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igembe South</td>
<td>1,879.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imenti North</td>
<td>569.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imenti South</td>
<td>661.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buuri</td>
<td>971.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru Central</td>
<td>790.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6,936.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13: Meru County: In the Eastern part of Kenya

Figure 14 Population Projections 2012 - 2017
The University of Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology, and Chuka University are the public universities with campuses within the county. Methodist University is the only fully pledged private university in the county. Other private universities such as Mount Kenya University and Nazarene University have campuses in the county.

In addition there are two teacher training colleges namely Meru and Igoji Teachers Training Colleges. There are five technical institutes and various private colleges most of them offering training in ICT.

On Health the county has a one Level 5 hospital, six Level 4 hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity hospitals, 23 health centres, 102 dispensaries, 158 private medical clinics, five nursing homes and three maternity homes. Due to high population growth the number of health facilities need to be up scaled to cater for the increasing populace. What appears to be in daring need of attention is the ration of doctors to patients which stands at 1 doctor to 5,500 patients (table 8).

The county has enormous potential in value-addition, tourism, light industries, horticulture, financial, health & educational services provision, carbon trading, SMEs among others. Based on market statistics of coffee, unprocessed coffee sells at approximately US$ 1 per Kg whilst the processed product sells at US$ 20 per Kg. This shows that adding value to coffee makes the produce sell 20 times higher in price. Since we know that Meru produces the best type of coffee, value addition will make even better in the market and earn the producers much more than selling it unprocessed. The main issues that need to be addressed are as follows:

- Poor marketing systems
- High unemployment levels
- High population growth
- HIV and AIDS
- Environmental degradation
- Poverty

Learning from India/China’s experience focus should be placed on social and economic transformation in the following areas:

- Agriculture key in the County: food security and productivity
- Natural resources: Extraction & management
- Trade and Investment: Expansion
- Infrastructure Development: Roads, Bridges, access to markets, energy and development of telecommunications system

Opportunities

The university of Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology, and Chuka University are the public universities with campuses within the county. Methodist University is the only fully pledged private university in the county. Other private universities such as Mount Kenya University and Nazarene University have campuses in the county.

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In conclusion the need for short, medium and long term strategy was emphasized. The strategy should capture land use planning – which is critical as population is increasing rapidly, and should also include investment priorities for social and economic development. The strategy should be built on a partnership framework where old alliances should be enhanced and new ones be formed especially in resource mobilization.

There is a need for a strong political will, pragmatic policies, and capable institutions for development transformation. We should invest in people for skills development to take charge in the county or engage those already with the skills at an advisory level. Care must be taken to manage the transformational development to avoid negative impacts (environment, disparities).
Sector Workshops Session

During the second day the participants went into a breakout session where they freely joined any one of the eleven sectors, each group discussion was facilitated by a number of well informed discussants who are experts in the sector. To lead and guide discussions. The need to have the experts was to provide a contextual background and backstopping on discussions in the group.

The participants had an opportunity to give comments, suggestions and recommendation in the smaller group. The discussions were guided to contribute to three main suggestions and recommendation in the smaller group. The participants had an opportunity to give comments, suggestions and recommendation in the smaller group. The discussions were guided to contribute to three main suggestions and recommendation in the smaller group.

The outcome of the breakout group discussion was as follows:

I. What should be done to bring about development in Meru County in this sector?

II. How it should be done in order to bring about the desired development?

III. What are the quick wins in this sector?

The discussions were guided to contribute to three main suggestions and recommendation in the smaller group.

The presentations in this section highlights the presentation made in the plenary by each of the groups. The sessions were requested to deliberate on three main topics namely:

I. What should be done to bring about development in Meru County in this sector?

II. How it should be done in order to bring about the desired development?

III. What are the quick wins in this sector?

**Group One: Spurring an Agriculture Revolution in Meru County – Opportunities for Value addition**

Group one discussed agriculture. Agriculture in the Meru County context of ministerial or departmental responsibilities include, agriculture (cultivation of crops), livestock, and fisheries. In addition to all that appertain to crop production agriculture also includes irrigation both small scale and large scale.

The presentations in this section highlights the presentation made in the plenary by each of the groups. The sessions were requested to deliberate on three main topics namely:

I. What should be done to bring about development in Meru County in this sector?

II. How it should be done in order to bring about the desired development?

III. What are the quick wins in this sector?

**Where are we?**

- Low production per unit area
- Food supply declining in Meru county
- High post harvest losses
- Poor unreliable rains
- High cost of farm inputs- fertilizers, feeds, chemicals
- Unreliable markets
- High level of bureaucracy
- Unscrupulous agro dealers – supply adulterated seed and other inputs
- Non compliance to laid down standards
- Many small and scattered production groups for example in dairy

**Where do we want to go?**

- We want to have agri-revolution to make the county self-sufficient in food production with excess for sale to other regions (“Make Meru a food basket”)
- Change over from subsistence to commercial agriculture (farming as business)
- To have a green revolution where we carry out farming in a responsible manner taking care of the environment
- Bring dignity the sector
- To increase the level of value addition through agro processing thus reduce marketing of raw produce.
- To market certified and Meru branded products
- To make Meru be known for quality produce
- Ensure only quality inputs are distributed to our farmers
- Make available appropriate machinery – for production and processing

**How do we get there?**

Ensure Sustainable value chains

**Production**

- Provide more water for irrigation
- Promote climate smart agriculture

- Have a soil lab in the county which can carry out soil analysis
- Use of agro-forestry friendly trees
- Promote conservation agriculture –
  - Minimum soil disturbance
  - Leave crop residues on the farm
  - Crop rotations
  - Use of 2-wheel tractors, row seeders
- Organize farmers into groups or clusters - county wide organizations
- Use of zero grazing units for dairy farmers
  - Good quality Artificial Insemination that is affordable to farmers
  - Put in laws that only agricultural experts can deal with input sales
  - Government to protect our farmers from dumping of cheap agricultural products
  - Address issues that led to death of farmers’ cooperative societies
  - Promote irrigation farming in marginal areas
  - Miraa growing – encourage food production in those areas as alternative enterprises
  - Address the problems/causes of declining productivity
  - Increase funding to farming business
  - Use of local materials for organic manure to replenish our soils
  - Farmer support through training and credit financing
  - Farm inputs
    - Purchase bulk inputs through coops – e.g. fertilizer and agrochemicals
    - Partnership with financial institutions
  - Zone areas for specific production for internal county marketing
  - Mechanisation
    - Encourage acquisition of appropriate machinery for Conservation Agriculture

**Marketing**

- Explore value addition for coffee
- Value addition –
  - Use of solar driers to dry fruits and vegetables
  - Dairy – milk processing plants of at least 10,000 litres per day
- Contract farming to undercut brokers
- Provide market information
- Quality and branding of products
- Organized marketing in groups
- Deal with laws that hinder marketing
- Registration and Regulation of middle men
- Value addition and processing
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

Others Interventions

- Organize CBOs and NGOs in agriculture in the county – have a platform for sharing information
- Agricultural expertise
  - encourage more of our youth to study agricultural courses and change of mind-set
  - to encourage our farmers to seek agricultural experts/advice in their farming business
- Organized agricultural extension services

Group Two: Water Utilization and Irrigation to Spur Economic Growth

1.0 Brief Introduction

Meru County straddles two water towers namely the Mt. Kenya catchment and the Nyambene hills catchment. The group identified the following water sources; groundwater, surface water and rainwater. Meru County has six permanent rivers, a number of seasonal rivers and numerous dry river valleys (see figure 1). Meru County is predominantly agricultural with the northern part largely dry grazing zones.

The discussions centered on the following with the objective of ensuring sustainable use of water resources in Meru County; water security, water governance and water education. Water is one of the key pillars of development according to the Kenya’s vision 2030 and clean affordable water is a constitutional right to all. Some residents have to walk several kilometers to get water in some parts of Meru County, thus there is an urgent need to improve how water resources are developed and managed as a way to promote growth and reduce poverty while, at the same time, ensuring environmental sustainability. Water uses in Meru County include the following agriculture, industrial, domestic, power production (mini hydros), recreation and tourism as well as in commercial bottling.

2.0 Water Security and Irrigation

Water resources are under stress by various users and available natural and appropriate water resources are being degraded there is dwindling water quality, which in turn, affect net water availability and use. Water should be harvested and secured through various methods of water storage. Meru County is largely hilly with deep valleys which can trap large volumes of water and subsequently hold water for a long time. Flood irrigation is possible in the lower flat areas of Meru County. It was noted however there is need to diversify and implement other irrigation methods suitable for small scale farming in the hilly parts of Meru County. There is need to build new water supply infrastructure and rehabilitate dilapidated ones. These include broken water pipes and cleaning of water sources. The discussions emphasize the need for construction of Earth Dams in the short term. The Irrigation board official offered to immediately support this initiative.

Other means of mini irrigation and water supply include the construction of rivers Canals to join other rivers especially in the low lying areas. A good example is the Yatta furrows in Tal Rangundo.

3.0 Water Governance and Education

Management of water and water supplies face major challenges in the sustainability of many projects in the counties. Cases of inability to control the usage of water supplies were cited leading to collapse of many schemes due to poor management. There is need to put control measures in the use of the water facilities, pollution by contaminant and waste through spillage, because every drop drawn should be accounted for. Waste water should be recyclable and purified. Concern was raised on poor water handling practices and in particular lack of water treatment especially at the household level. All water supplied must be trucked for contamination and treated or isolated. There is need for innovation that presents a unique opportunity of addressing these issues.

Educate people water users and community involvement. Incorporating conservation practices in Shallow wells and boreholes. There is need to show the locals how to harvest water and clean it for various uses. Communities must own the projects and participate in the whole project cycle from conception to inception to completion and must be ensured. Water affects the health and living standards of the community and enables them to participate in the country’s economic developments.

The county needs to work very closely with the various organizations such as the National Irrigation Board, the within Kenya and water management organizations. Corporate with other water users e.g. power generation companies and generate power from water. Trans-county water issues should be addressed for effective water management with the neighbouring counties and to alleviate ethnic conflict on natural resources. All data should be by contributing water use data etc… There is need to establishment of water coordination offices, shared information with related stakeholders and to work closely with organizations such as water and sanitation coordination (WESCOORD).

4.0 Forests

The discussants noted the need to conserve forests as part of our water towers. There is need to rehabilitate all the wetlands and ensure efficient conservation. The policy of cut one tree plant two should be applied. Alternative and innovative ways of conserving forests such as bee keeping, nature walks and bio-tourism were suggested to enhance forest conservation.

5.0 Summary/Way Forward

- The county must continue to focus on improving access to safe water and ensuring food security.
- People need to be educated on how to harvest and store rain water, surface water and groundwater. There is need for capacity building to farmer’s extension workers. The education will empower local community on resource management for the benefit of all.
- The county needs to supplement rain fed agriculture by irrigation to allow for farming through the year.
- There is need for accelerated availability of irrigation kits, greenhouses, water pumps and other equipment. Also there is need to establish irrigation funds, subsidies and incentives.
- The insurance companies need to write-off loans when poor harvest crop occurs.
- A forestation and Protection of water towers.

Short term plans on water resources

a) Construct water storage facilities, e.g. earth dams along dry river valleys
b) Mapping of groundwater resources in the dry areas
c) Construction of shallow boreholes and specific deep drill holes

d) Install new water supply infrastructure and rehabilitate dilapidated ones e.g. broken water pipes etc...
e) Rehabilitate and protect water sources e.g. Springs and boreholes which had been left unattended over time.
f) Installation of water meters to monitor water demand
g) Educate water users on water harvesting, water conservation and irrigation.
h) Identify strategic partners and private water providers for additional funding and input

Short term plans on forests

a) Put mechanisms to protect the forests
b) Encourage tree planting through incentives and implement appropriate policy that encourage the afforestation
c) Encourage bee keeping

NB: Ensure community involvement in all activities

Long term plans on water resources

a) Setting up of large water infrastructures such as construction of large dams along permanent rivers
b) Map all water sources in the county (create a database) of surface water and groundwater
c) Setting up of proper sanitation to reduce water pollution
d) Establish water recycling plants
e) Diversify water uses through innovation such as recreation and village mini-hydros for power generation

Long term plans on forests

a) Reclaim all forest areas
b) Encourage indigenous tree farming
c) Establish and encourage Bio-tourism in the county
Group Three: What’s ailing Education in Meru County- Building centres of excellence to place Meru County in the global Map.

Group two focused on education in Meru. It is to be remembered that as a county there are some functions that have not been devolved in Education. County responsibility can only be placed on the functions that have been devolved. The devolved functions include: pre-primary education, management of educational institutions, vocational technical training institutes and adult learning. In Meru County the docket of education is also handling technology, although IT (Information Technology) is placed in another ministry. It is expected that the training aspect of IT will be handled in the ministry of education.

Results of breakout group discussion on Education:

The Education and Technology Sector

Education and Technology sector is very important to the development of the county. Education is key to development as it determines the level at which people can participate in development activities including uptake of technologies that serve as a vehicle for development interventions. An educated society has a better capacity to understand development interventions, business transactions and can do good bookkeeping that is required for development.

The participants in this sector discussions recommended the following interventions as needed in county education department.

Establishment of centre’s of excellence in education and training.

The members started with accessing the current situation by asking the question ‘where are we?’ It was agreed that the education standards in the county were average at primary and secondary levels, and below average at the university level. From earlier discussions, the K.C.P.E mean score for 2012 stood at 247 and the county was ranked position 33 out of 47 a position that has been retained even in the 2013 examinations. At K.C.S.E, the county was ranked position 26 out of 47 with a mean score of 5.0, which is a C. This shows low standards in the education sector at the county and an obvious low transition rate from the secondary level to the tertiary level.

Challenges facing the education sector

1. The belief and attitude that the county is endowed with foodstuffs and cash crops like Coffee, Tea and Miraa, hence the people do not cherish education/ are not enthusiastic about education.
2. Child-labor whereby the school children are engaged in the horticultural sector e.g. selling French beans. They are also involved in Miraa and boda-boda businesses.
3. Poverty; there are pockets of poverty in certain parts of the county which experience frequent droughts and famine.
4. Shortage of vocational institutions and negative attitude towards the existing ones (village polytechnics) to absorb the high school leavers who do qualify for university education.
5. Prevalence of HIV/AIDS which results in orphans and vulnerable children who are stigmatized.
7. Inadequate syllabus coverage at all levels and lack of commitment by curriculum implementers. This coupled with poor system of education and assessment leads to poor results.
8. Poor methods of resources mobilization and also mismanagement of the same resources.
9. Retrogressive cultural practices e.g. early marriages, circumcision of boys at the primary level and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
10. Boarder conflicts especially between Tharaka and Tigania, Igembe and Tharaka, just to name a few.
11. Lack of ICT integration in education and high cost of ICT facilities.
12. Political interference with teacher transfers and staff balancing.
13. Teachers lack motivation and are ill-prepared for content delivery e.g. schemes of work (work plans) lesson plans and lesson notes.
14. High level of parental illiteracy which leads to poor parenting and lack of commitment by parents who leave everything to the teachers.
15. Drug and substance abuse by parents, teachers and pupils/students.
16. Emergence of street families and young sex-commercial workers.
17. Insecurity and cattle rustling around the boarders between Tigania/Igembe-Isiolo boarders.
18. Inaccessibility to some areas due to poor road networks which become almost impossible during the rainy season.
19. Contentment with low levels of education e.g. the first degree. Therefore, there are very few PhDs in Meru.
20. Failure by community to recognize and exploit cultural institutions like the Nyuru Ncheke to help promote education standards in the county.
21. Lack of exposure in the case of graduates who have not left Meru.

Quick wins

It was felt that achieving equity and inclusiveness is important not only because education is a universal right but also because the county needs an educated workforce to compete in the global technological world.

The following quick wins were cited:

• Establish two centers of excellence per ward at the ECDE and primary levels.
• Establishing two centers of excellence per sub-county and at the secondary level.
• Establish one centre of excellence per sub-county at the tertiary level i.e. the polytechnics.
• Rebrand the youth polytechnics so that they become “Talent and innovation centers.”
• Involve the community members and all stake holders in the establishment of centers of excellence.
• Redeploy the non performing teachers.
• Introduce integrated education for pupils and students with special needs in an integrated format at the basic education level.
• Use the county assembly to come up with laws that ensure all schools aged children attend school, to achieve free and compulsory education for all-EFA.
• Strengthen the quality assurance and standards departments by ensuring quality evaluation/assessment at the school, ward, sub-county and county levels (formative).
• Ensuring integration of ICT long term in education to promote technology.
• Foster high levels of access, retention, completion, transition and rates without compromising quality and standards.
• Strengthen disaster preparedness and management by formulating strong safety measures strategies and emergency preparedness in all institutions of learning.

• Accreditation should be channeled to all institutions of all levels-ISO certified especially the tertiary level institutions to ensure the quality.
• Establish skill training centers through rebranding of the youth polytechnics.
• Physical education and health issues should be taught in schools.
• Teacher training colleagues and universities should train teachers on quality and talent identification.
• Engage part time teachers especially the retirees to case the problem of understanding.
• Carry out civic education to sensitize the citizens on county policies partnering to education.
• Broaden the curriculum in talent and innovation centers to sharpen technical and vocational skills.
• Ensure linkages between the universities and industries to ensure job opportunities for graduates.
• Formulate a system of continuous capacity-building for the teachers, ministry of education and TSC Staff through seminars workshops and refresher courses to ensure quality and professionalism.
• Need for community mobilization through meetings, stakeholders forums, workshops etc.
• The universities, both private and public should develop programs according to the community needs and county policies e.g. Agri-business and tourism.
• Hold annual education conference for the county to set targets, review progress and chat the way forward.
• There is urgent need to start a teacher technical training institute to produce tutors for the youth polytechnics.
• Embrace the policy of mentorship for all the primary schools in the county by involving the old students i.e. one mentor per primary school to work with alumni or association of old students, to propel healthy competition and to promote quality and students in our schools.
Meru County is characterized by poor road network in several parts in the interior where people live and cultivate crops in the rural areas. Although the county has several good roads, most of the areas where crop production is done lack access roads during the rainy seasons. In several parts the roads have poor drainage resulting into flooded parts that cause damages to the road. This situation is also found in the urban centers where drainage is also poor and even where there is drainage infrastructure; they are most of the time blocked and unable to function properly. Within the towns there are no sewerage systems and although they are not directly part of transport infrastructure, they in some way affect transportation especially the tourists.

The county also lacks proper planning in property development especially in towns. Energy is key to enabling industrial and technology development. The county has no energy source. To speed up development the county needs to increase availability of energy. The county needs to harness the available potential of renewable energy.

The situation on transport and infrastructure conditions can be summarized as:

- Poor road network in several parts
- Poor drainage along our roads/in urban centers
- Lack of maintenance on our roads
- Poor sewerage system in our towns
- Lack of proper planning in property development
- Inadequate renewable energy sources
- Delayed approval of property development plans

### Roads

Roads are the only means of transport in the county. The markets link the rural residents to the towns and markets. Activities that need to be done urgently include:

- Controlled movement of vehicles in our major towns.
- Mapping of all roads in the county.
- Lack of proper planning in property development.
- Inadequate renewable energy sources.
- Delayed approval of property development plans.

### Energy

- Energy reticulations and development in Meru County.
- Formation of community cooperatives to exploit renewable energy resources like small hydro power stations.
- Tapping of renewable energy e.g. wind energy, small hydro and solar energy.
- Encouraging investors to come up with new technologies of tapping electricity.
- Seeking carbon credit for renewable energy resources.
- Installing data loggers to gather data on wind potential.
- Manufacture of renewable energy technologies like solar panels and biogas kits.

### Quick wins and means to win this target

- Liaison amongst KeRRA, KURA, KeNHA and the county government officials.
- Upgrading all the class D&E roads to bitumen standards.

### Long term plans

- Review of existing master plans.
- Implementing the master plan.
- Examination existing going on means to development of sewer and drainage in the county.
- Immediate planning and development.
- Constructing a major sewer for all the major towns in the county.

### Real-Estate Development

- New and revision of existing master plans.
- Proper approval of development plans.

### Light / Sewerage Services

- Connecting all the homesteads to mains electricity.
- Solar street lighting for towns, market centres and domestic areas.
- Poor road network in several parts.
- Prioritization of the roads.
- Sustained maintenance plans for all the roads.
- Road networks to all constituencies.
- Improve roads connectivity to hospitals, schools and other public amenities within county.

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### Group Five: Making Meru County the ICT Hub of Choice

Discussions in ICT were preceded by two presentations that aimed at laying the backgrounds for ICT development in Meru and assessing the entry points for ICT in different sectors of development in the county. Presented here are the highlights of the two presentations.

**PRESENTATION 1**

**Presenter: Mr. Antony Imathiu (Ernst and Young)**

### Driving Development through ICT.

- The role of ICT cuts across all the development sectors in the county i.e.
  1. **Governance and Service Delivery:** For the county government to give timely delivery of information for better service delivery to the citizens it must embrace ICT. Through ICT the government is able to empower the people through access to information without the bureaucracy, improve productivity and do cost saving in doing business with suppliers and customers. It is also able to give a chance to the citizens to participate in public policy decision-making. In service delivery systems like IFMIS for expenditure control, tender system, and revenue collection system are used.
  2. **Agriculture:** ICT will be vital in the storage of agricultural business data for future reference. Farmers can improve herd management by using the data gathered by the computer. By analyzing effects of various feeds on milk yields, farmers may adjust accordingly to obtain optimal milk yields. Up-to-date market information on prices, inputs and consumer trends are available in the internet.
  3. **Planning:** Communication infrastructure is very vital in day to day running of the county where information and knowledge can rapidly be transferred to different levels of the county through communication networks. Security is monitored through use of ICT systems where data can be stored for reference and used later if need be. Land mapping/ surveying and physical planning will be done through ICT.
  4. **Education sector:** Education web site programmes where views are exchanged by different scholars from the county and beyond is possible through ICT. Telecollaborative activities in school system empower students to become active, collaborative, creative, integrative, and evaluative learners. Higher educational institutions offering distance education courses can leverage the internet to improve the programme’s reach and quality. Software development by our institutions of higher learning in the county is another area that can be explored.
  5. **Utilities:** ICT will be very important in the improving water efficiency in the county. To lower per capita water usage in the county, the technology must be used to survey or map, monitor usage, design or redesign, build and operationalize the water system. Billing to the consumers will be easy if the system is automated so that the consumers can read their bills and settle payments via mobile phones. This will also apply to power billing plus bill settlement hence improving efficiency in the county i.e. Use of prepaid meters will be vital.
  6. **Health:** Sharing of expertise by health specialist within the county and beyond. Transmission of health data from one level of health facility to the next especially during referrals can be done easily instead of patients carrying bulk document that are sometimes misplaced on the way. Follow ups on drug defaulters can be made easy through the technology. Health practitioners will be able to share information on certain ailments and so as to give the best approach to treatment will become efficient with proper ICT connectivity.

### What need to be done:

The following suggestions were presented on what the county needs to do in order to make the county an ICT hub of choice. The county will need to:

1. **Come up with priority areas that need to be addressed.**
2. **Develop the county strategic plan.**
3. **Come up with a County ICT strategic Plan.**
4. **Develop an implementation roadmap where prioritization of ICT programmes is done and clear timelines drawn.**

### Challenges that might be experienced in the ICT sector

1. Lack of structured approach to ICT programs
2. Lack of buy-in by the stakeholders
3. Lack of direct impact on the Mwananchi
4. Inadequate resources in terms of finances and human resource
v) Dependency on the central government on some ICT initiatives e.g. IFMIS
vi) Difficulties in integrating the ICT systems i.e. IFMIS and the already existing revenue collection system and any other system developed in future.

PRESENTATION 2
Presenter: Tony Githuku (Business Connexion)

During the discussion the following pertinent issues came out:

i) Developing a transaction system or network that will be used in the county offices. This is meant to serve the internal customer of the county government. There is also need to develop a system that will support all the transactions with the external customers of the county i.e. tendering process, revenue collection etc...

ii) Branding of the county must be done.

iii) Meru is centrally located and can support the surrounding counties with technology. The county can attract investors to establish their data centres here hence creating jobs.

iv) There is need for the county to get to the global domain through internet sites like Wikipedia, Google, You-tube, Face-book, Twitter etc.. and especially those that are international for marketing the county programs.

v) Public Private Partnership (PPP) is very fundamental in establishing a strong ICT structure in the county.

Key issues drawn from the discussions
The following are some of the pertinent areas that came out of the discussions;

Structure and Administration
The group came up with the following areas that the county needs to address in the structure and administration. ICT becomes the heart of all other systems because it interconnects the sectors for better management. There is need to have an ICT infrastructure that will see the following systems put in place;

- Local Area Network (LAN)
- Wide Area Network (WAN)
- Wi-Fi for a fast connectivity before the fibre optic cable layout
- Fibre Optic cable laying to the interiors of the county.

Service Delivery
Service delivery will be easy through integration of ICT into all key sectors of the county. The following are suggestions for the county to implement;

- Developing an interactive County Portal that will be used by the county citizens and others to communicate or interact with the county government, and
- Mainstreaming ICT in the entire key sectors of the county development program i.e. Education, Health, Utilities, Agriculture, Tourism, and Governance etc.

Branding
The group was for the opinion that the county should brand itself through;

- Developing a website that must be updated regularly. This will market the county in terms of what it can offer i.e. tourism, and Agribusiness,
- Establishing a strong social media to create, share, and exchange information and ideas within and without the county.

Quick wins for the County
The following are areas that the group felt needed to be addressed with agency;

- Development of Portal for the county,
- Automation of county processes, and
- Information management in transactions.

Medium Term Projects
The following are some of the areas the group felt that needed to be implemented in the medium term.

- Lay of ICT infrastructure in the whole county
- Establishment of digital kiosks
- Establishment of hot ICT spots
- Attract organizations to establish Data Centers in Meru.
- Develop ICT systems to complement the already central government established systems i.e. IFMIS.
- Partner with institutions of higher learning in the County to establish ICT innovation centers.

Service cooperatives are the closest to communities and are organized on a shareholder basis formed by individual members of organizations voluntarily working in a specific geographic area.

Core Areas
The cooperatives have made remarkable progress in the following business:

- Agriculture,
- Banking,
- Credit,
- Agro-processing,
- Storage,
- Marketing,
- Dairy and other areas

More significantly, they are involved in economic activities in the following business:

- Coffee marketing
- Dairy marketing
- Saccos - Rural and Urban and Transport- Matatu Saccos
- Housing projects
- Multipurpose activities
- Irrigation-based farming activities.

Challenges
The following challenges face the movement within the county;

- Marketing systems especially in Coffee industry bedevilled by Cartels that dictate on producer prices without considering the farmers’ production costs.
- Farm input acquisition complications due to import restrictions, mobility and tariffs applicable in international trade.
- Housing projects
- Under-capitalization more particularly in Saccos and other co-operative institutions which access credit for onward lending.
- Poor loan management that at times lead to delinquencies
- Milk hawking that lead to adulteration frequencies and levels
- Politicizing aimed at satisfying individual interests.
- Wrangles due to mismanagement of some co-operatives.

Limited management capacity in Irrigation-based co-operatives.

**Group Six: Using Cooperative movement to spur economic growth in Meru County- Imperatives for success**

**Co-operative movement in Meru County**

**Background**
The co-operative movement is considered a crucial infrastructure in harnessing and fast tracking economic development especially when the various activities aimed at income-generation are considered.

The movement handles a number of activities from which the majority of the citizens of the Meru County derive their livelihoods.

Currently, a vast number of families depend whether directly or otherwise on co-operative undertakings. The county policy objective of the cooperative movement is to spur sustainable economic growth by focusing on achievement of desired outcomes through:

- Strengthening of the Movement,
- Improving Cooperative Extension Service delivery,
- Corporate Governance,
- Access to Markets and Marketing Efficiency.

The cooperatives have an immense potential to deliver goods and services in areas where both the public and the private sector have not ventured. In most cases cooperatives are local institutions that address “local needs”, employ “local talent” and are lead by “local leaders” either directly or through local affiliates (applicable in secondary co-operative organisations – Unions).

The Cooperatives in Meru County are organized into service and producer cooperatives. The producer cooperatives’ objectives are to promote the use of modern technology and contribute to the county development through production.

The service cooperatives are responsible for:

- Procurement especially farm inputs and allied services,
- Marketing and Expansion Services,
- Loan Disbursement,
- Sale of Consumer Goods and
- Member Education.

**Challenges**

**Core Areas**

The cooperatives have made remarkable progress in the following business:

- Agriculture,
- Banking,
- Credit,
- Agro-processing,
- Storage,
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- Under-capitalization more particularly in Saccos and other co-operative institutions which access credit for onward lending.
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- Milk hawking that lead to adulteration frequencies and levels
- Politicizing aimed at satisfying individual interests.
- Wrangles due to mismanagement of some co-operatives.

Limited management capacity in Irrigation-based co-operatives.
UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

Objectives include:

• Alignment to Vision 2030 Flagships which will call for the Youth participation in co-operatives.
• Improvement of societies management/leadership through inculcating corporate governance.
• Enhancing societies’ regular inspections and spot-checks.
• Streamlining marketing systems for commodities handled.
• Branding of commodities handled by co-operatives aimed at confirming their originality and identity.
• Consider with a view to support the level of women participation in co-operative activities and undertakings.
• Farm input procurement systems to be improved.
• Aiding affordable credit to boost production.
• Conduct economic viability studies with view to promotion of Mira.
• Co-operatives to discourage exploitation by middlemen.
• Promote Agri-processing facilities for value-addition especially in coffee, dairy and horticulture.
• Reorganize banana farmers to form co-operatives.
• Revive dormant cotton co-operatives and where the exercise proves futile, promote new societies to handle the commodity marketing.
• Modern farming practices to be emphasized-Good Agricultural Practices and Good Processing Practices and practice Farming as a Business.
• Mobilization for more people to join or form co-operatives so as to participate in economic activities.
• To encourage the Bills of Rights on property ownership.

Imparting the potential of Meru County

The said capacity building will:

• Ensure and enhance Co-operative philosophy that will be well spelt out and articulated correctly.
• Emphasize professionalism in management and recruiting of staff.
• Explore various innovations aimed at coming up with the emerging markets e.g. the Niche markets.
• Formulate Co-operative Business models to take care of the changes in the business world.
• Train on Enterprise Development that should be given more attention through incorporating other service providers through Private-Public Partnerships.
• Conduct studies to find out how the youth in Meru County spend their time with a view to organizing them so that they can be brought together to form co-operatives for meaningful gains.
• Liase dairy farming closely with Meru Central Dairy Union for assured markets and quality due to value-addition.
• Improve managerial skills in Savings and Credit co-operatives.
• Ensure that misappropriation of funds in all co-operatives to be addressed and totally eradicated.
• Consider the Economies of Scale and ensure vibrant units to enhance economic development.
• Set minimum qualifications for one to be elected in society management.
• Initiate Value-Addition programs in the commodities marketed.
• Regular timely Audits to enhance member participation due to increased transparency and accountability.

The cooperative sub sector in Meru County cuts across all sectors of the economy and is an area that may be exploited for strategies on improved livelihoods. The cooperatives take care of agricultural production, processing, marketing and service industry.

Overall, the major benefits that accrue to the county through cooperatives include:

• Creation of employment.
• Settlement of the people and provision of decent housing.
• Generation of income and acquisition of property.

In addition to the more conventional functions of marketing and production, cooperatives increasingly serve as agents of social and economic change, and are therefore vibrant civil society actors. In this regard, cooperatives are unique institutions that balance and negotiate relationships between their members, communities, Service providers, the county and national.

It is envisaged that directing the operations of cooperative societies to addressing poverty related issues is one of the possible Livelihood Strategies. Each particular strategy is geared towards achievement of livelihood outcomes associated with the richness of the potential livelihood goals set by the co-operative movement that has defined a common purpose and destiny.

The proceedings of the group were summarised into the following requests to the County Executive:

1. Establishment of the School of Co-operatives Management and Accountancy to be considered in the County in the near future.
2. Promoting an umbrella Savings and Credit at the county level to handle the activities similar to those currently handled by Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives-KUSCCO.
3. Convene an interactive county forum to further brainstorm and formulate a work plan for inclusion in the Meru County Integrated Development blueprint.

Considering the various points raised during the discussion, it became manifest that there is still potential that could be exploited in collective approach and integrating the youth into co-operative activities that are critical in spurring economic growth in Meru County that will raise the per capita incomes and improve the quality of life.
Group Seven: Attracting Tourism to Meru County for Wealth and Employment Creation.

The group identified many opportunities for improving tourism in Meru. They noted that Meru county has about one half of Mt. Kenya ecosystems and this being the second largest mountain in Africa provides unique and rare opportunities not found in other counties. Of the two big mountains in Africa i.e., Kilimanjaro and Mt. Kenya, it is Mount Kenya that has a higher diversity of ecosystems and scenarios for tourism than Kilimanjaro and among the ecosystems of Mt. Kenya the highest diversity in the Meru region. This is because of the geographical location in relation to monsoon winds that bring more rainfall on the Meru side of Mt. Kenya making it wetter and able to support diverse flora and fauna.

In addition to presence of Mt. Kenya, Meru is in the frontier for northern Kenya where crop cultivators meet with livestock herders, (the pastoralists) creating a zone of agro-pastoralists that a transition to pastoralists of northern Kenya. From a touristic point of view this is a very important area both in terms cultural, land use and livelihood studies and that presents a totally different landcover, land use and ethnicity and all other human spheres of life.

There were two lengthy presentation one from Prof. Kinyangi the proprietor of Ikweta hotels and the other from Mr. Gitau of Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). Both presentations explored the tourism potential in Meru county with examples of sites Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS). Both presentations explored the tourism potential in Meru county with examples of sites.

Like in other sessions of the conference the structure for the discussions in this group was guided by the conference organizers who requested that we direct our discussions to answer two key questions; (i) What needs to be done, and (ii) how to do it.

To focus on these two questions the group and the discussants made the following recommendations:

What needs to be done?
The first and the overriding recommendation was that tourism has a very big potential and it needs to be developed in order to be more profitable. To achieve this goal, the county government was urged to do the following:

• Take an inventory of the sites and resources that have a tourism potential
• Develop Mt. Kenya tourism
• Develop Njuri Ncheke shrine as tourism centre
• Establish gold courses in Meru
• Develop man-made lakes to act as tourist attraction centers even if they are local tourists
• Organize annual cultural events like cultural festivals that can attract tourists
• Identify the tourist class that you need to target. Tours and travel agents can be useful in identifying the tourist class that needs to be targeted.

The county needs to profile itself in terms of tourist facilities and consolidate the information into a one stop point and present the information in Meru County tourism guidebook.

There is an urgent need to clean Meru town and indeed other towns in Meru. Makutano in particular was singled out as being in a very deplorable state and unfortunately all the tourists to Meru National Park have to pass through it. It is currently characterized by littered polythene bags of all colours and sizes. Waste water is usually seen flowing along the surface of the roads. Kiosks of all sorts and made of different materials are all over the roads and if they are removed the part of town would look better. The kiosks could be designed to be of a standard approved design and made of specific materials that look good and presentable. There is an urgent need to relocate some of the roadside activities that paint a bad image for the town.

Another issue that was discussed by the participants was the issue of branding Meru as a tourist destination and use the branded information to market tourism in Meru through local, national and international media. The publicity should focus on tourist resources, facilities, talents and the services offered in the county.

It was also pointed out that the county should partner with identified international hotels and institutions to provide experiences and networks in reaching out to the potential tourists. In the way the county should channel the information to all the stakeholders and the neighbouring counties.

What to do and How to do it

• Developing tourism facilities on Mount Kenya. A presentation made by a KWS official showed in detail the number of tourist attraction sites on the Meru side of the Mount Kenya that could attract tourists. These comprise of lakes, caves, river head waters, big trees (like King Moi), historical sites like Lake Rutundu, Meenwe, Lake Nikunga, Sacred Lake, etc.

It was reported that KWS had a few years ago advertised leasing of the sites for development of hotels. Many of the sites were taken by some investors but still some remain available. However, none of those taken has been developed and members recommended that the tendering be re-opened to get more serious bidders.

• Njuri Ncheke scenario Cultural tourism was identified as an important form of tourism. Meru is known all over the republic and to some extent the world over on Njuri Ncheke. This should be developed as a tourist site with modern facilities and with a good presentation of the Njuri Ncheke institution, how it was formed, how it operated and the significance of the institution to the Meru society.

• Man made establishment that attracts tourism. It was pointed out that Meru has significant sites that can be developed into man-made lakes for tourism. These include sites like Lake Nikunga.

• Inventory of sites and resources. It was reported that the first thing to do is to develop an inventory of tourist sites in Meru County and prioritize their potential and start with those of the highest potential and move down the list in a progressive manner.

• Establishment of a golf course. There is a need to establish a golf course in the county to attract tourist golfers and create an activity for tourists. There is also a good number of local residents who are golfers who need services of the sport.

• Cultural festivals and Meru Cultural Centre. Meru is known for its strong and unique culture. Annual festivals of cultural events could be attractive. There are festivals held by institutions but one that is organized by the county could be more attractive as it would be more inclusive both geographically and ethnically. There are lots of traditional Ximeru songs and folklores that are very rare only confined to the old and the younger generations would like to see them sung and danced in the traditional way in the cultural festivals. In the same line of investing in cultural richness, the group thought that developing a cultural center more or less like a museum where tourists would be able to access authentic artefacts of traditional Meru culture would by itself create a tourist attraction at all time of the year.

• The existing plans to hold a Meru marathon was praised and members encouraged the county to make this an annual event. The event should be planned in such a way that it will become like one of those international marathons that attract tourists from all over the world.

How to Market Meru County

• Media promotions When all the systems are put in place and the facilities are up and running, the county should organize media promotions to market the facilities and services. The promotions should target all types of media and reach out to as far as possible.

• Partner with internationally recognized brands within Meru County. Development of tourism is not a new concept. There are many places that have made it in it through all the things we are planning for Meru. It is in order to learn
from other but not to copy others. Without copying we can learn from those who have made it and shorten the time we may take to get there and also reduce the cost of getting there. Let us first identify the good examples of such good examples and learn from them.

Other supporting activities / services

- Developing the northern grazing area as a conservancy
  The northern grazing area has been for a long time proposed for a conservancy and now is the right time to do so now that decision making has been brought to us here in Meru. We should not waste time talking without action. A conservancy is more beneficial to the community than a National Park in many ways and it is for the benefit of Meru County and the Meru people that the conservancy is developed.

- Improving Security in Meru County
  Security is paramount to establishment of a thriving tourism industry. Without security no tourists will come. With an international airport in Isiolo Meru can attract tourists from abroad even when there is poor security elsewhere in the republic. If people can know for sure that being in Meru is safe, they will fly in and out of Isiolo to get to Meru.

- Developing a culture of Visitor’s hospitalities
  The people of Meru are known for the good hospitality they give to visitors. This should be maintained and made the norm for Meru County across the divide of the people of Meru.

- Good road, clean towns
  This has been discussed earlier and its importance in tourism cannot be over emphasized. The roads must be good and the towns must be clean.

Group Eight: Enhancing Security and Governance in Meru County to create a 24 hour Economy

Security and Governance

Security is mainly about the well-being of people since insecurity weakens the basic foundation for development. As technology advances, so does the tactics used in causing insecurity advance. Insecurity mainly falls under youths and unemployment, youths and underemployment. Security is interlinked with governance; the sound management of public affairs.

There are three main and interrelated dimensions that are in security and governance:

- Legitimacy
- Capacity to implement policies
- Respect of citizens and institutions

Legitimacy

Citizens should be given space for participation and the voice to be able to hold the county government accountable. Alternative mechanisms should be used not just through legal means. Legal means should include enforcing the law and the enforcers should respect the law. The people in authority should not be biased in any way and should respect the law that is passed.

Policies

Policies determine the overall quality and conditions of a county. The policies should be able to take care of the people in the counties and the policies should be of good quality. The quality of service and the effectiveness of the service form the foundation. The civil service should have a mark of quality. Civil services need to be independent of political pressure thus allowing the services offered to be of good quality and non-biased.

Main purpose of having laws and regulations is to enforce them and have the desired output from the regulations. The regulations should be of quality and should be easily enforceable.

Respect

This holds the most sand since it defines the relationship between everyone. Respect of the law should be mandatory and the law should hold every individual equal irrespective of power and political affiliations.

Corruption should be reduced and fought through the respect of citizens and institutions. Petty corruption is caused by the inefficient application and delivery of services.

Targets and priorities

Threat Assessment:
- Mind-set and attitudes about security
- Crime levels within the county
- Governance
- Belief systems and legitimacy

Main sources of insecurity in Kenya:
- Militia
- Cattle rustling
- Terrorism
- Generalized criminal violence

Recommendations:

Since the system of decentralization is new, there cannot be any clear and precise recommendations. The place of government in the new system is still not clear and the problem of security is also hanging. The clear element is that the government will make policies and the counties will implement them. Security is also provided by the central government. Each decentralized section has its own goals of development to be met.

Roles of the commissioners in conceptualization and in practise needs to be clearly understood. Security and governance are not and end in themselves but a means to an end; development.

1. Identify the main drivers of insecurity:
   - Poverty
   - Youth Unemployment
   - Drug and Substance abuse
   - Security awareness
   - Dispute over resources
   - Identify challenges to women, men, youth, children and persons with disabilities

2. Clear division and delegation of duties and power should be made
   - There should be a clear indication of who should perform what and in which manner
   - Policing and security are different terms and tasks. The governor is the head of policing in the county.
   - The power and authority vested in the given divisions should be set.
   - Counties should enforce security measures that are made from the government above and should not take its own intelligence
   - Community policies and methods of application should be clear and enforceable
   - The county government should structure and put structures to enforce the security
   - Alternative methods for conflict resolutions should be made.

3. Ensuring cohesive leadership in the county.
   - The challenge of the capacity of the county government is questioned together with the aspect of inequalities
   - Leadership; divided by the mind-set and traditions of people; leads to the decentralization of leadership between government and traditional leaders.

4. County forums should be held together with experts who will provide details.
   - Citizen county forums should be structured to allow communication between the county government and the citizens.
   - Means on how to send and voice the citizen’s requests and desires should be free and open.

5. Making county a crime free county by 2015 through:
   - Civil education and general knowledge sharing to the citizens on the issue of insecurity and ensure that each citizen knows who their neighbours are
   - If one has an alien who will visit the county for a period of more than a month, let them be registered and accounted for and their location be known
   - The citizens and businesses that are conducted in the county should be registered and their official land and/ or street location details should be known
   - Increase the number of street-lights to provide security during the night
   - Provide CCTV services in the towns
6. Security and disaster management should be practiced at the county level
   • This allows the government to supply resources to the county in case of any disaster.
   • Set up meetings with the representatives of the neighbouring counties.
   • Set up committees to deal with disaster management.
   • Disaster management should be factored into the county policies.
   • Joint events and occasions should be held between worrying parties and communities, also including counties.
   • Inclusion of marginalized people with disabilities.
   • Autonomous agency funding should be included in the county government.
   • Involve key factors responsible in disaster management and include them in the county budgets.

7. Information pertaining insecurity should be shared at the right time to the right authorities.
   • Reports should be clear, precise and correct.
   • Reports should be made as soon as possible in order to aid in assessment of security and ways and methods of reducing the threat.

8. Attitudes and mind-set of the people
   Intervention mechanisms will be hard to enforce when the attitudes and mind-set of the people is fixed in a way that one person is seen superior and respected than another in the same position.

9. Intra and Inter policies should be made and enforced.

10. Corruption has also taken a huge part in insecurity
    Value systems should be made and applied.

Quick fix – short term
• Increase the number of street-lights to provide security during the night.
• Provide CCTV services in the towns.
• Community peace committees should be formed.
• Use other alternative means of conflict resolution.
• Utilize Njuri Ncheke in solutions of security.
• Structuring of citizen county forums.
• Joint events and occasions.
• Civil education
• Appreciating the role of security agents.
• Interlink counties and foreign securities measures.

Long term
• Removal of unplanned settlements and upgrading them to current standards.
• Clearly define and appreciate the role of the security agents.
• Define the rule of law including but not limiting to corruption.

Summary
Targets and priorities
• Community policing
• Disaster management
• Cohesion among the people.
• Belief systems and legitimacy

Group Nine: Lands Reforms and Physical Planning for Meru County-
The way forward

The workshop identified a number of activities that need to be done to facilitate land reforms and physical planning in the county. Some of the identified activities are as follows:
1. Identify flagship projects for 8 pillars
2. Prepare integrated land use plans
3. Identify Meru county unique resources
4. Technology and innovation
5. Fast track land delivery service
6. One common goal for county

In order for these activities to achieve their objectives conclusively and in a quick way the county government could take the following quick actions where it is necessary
1. Hold land forums with technical people
2. Complete survey exercise as a the prerequisite for development
3. Distinguish urban and rural planning unit and handle the two distinctively.
4. Delegation of authority should also be accompanied by close monitoring
5. Rural planning is a combination people settlement and land use for subsistence and commercial purposes and the planning should target at piping of the whole package
6. Management of land rights

In realization that:-
1. Land is contentious and a sensitive issue.
2. Meru county is dichotomous in land adjudication and management
3. Land cases are enormous

The suggestions for the way forward were:
1. Strict adherence in the rule of law
2. Adjudication
3. Mapping
4. All government assets need to be mapped and asset register drawn
5. Integrated land development and plan need to be drawn
6. As a matter of urgency, a consultative land forum

• Technocrats
• Policy makers
• Stake holders

The County government should establish a GIS to be used in mapping all physical assets in the county. This is a source of revenue for the county because the services could be contracted out to private clientele.

Physical planning
Physical planning need for cooperation since to some it is painful. Clear policies on rural and urban planning need to be instituted and implemented to quicken development. This can be achieved through the following:
• Urgent planning open the further development
• Land development on infrastructure-vertical
• Urban plan first for rapid development
• Attempt to reform people’s minds

Land adjudication
• Fast track land adjudication services especially after the enactment of the pending bills
• The county need to acquire Meru web portal instead of Meru web address
• Valuation rolls need to be established for taxation and hence revenue

Policies on land planning
There should be a clear policy on Riparian reserves and Road reserves. In addition, modern urban planning needs to be done in order to: Let every town tell its story and spell its character in addition to becoming more beautiful. This will enable us to focus more on peoples’ health in the county.

Corruption on Land Cases
Corruption has been rampant on land sector countrywide. In order for a meaningful development, these malpractices need to be minimised. Above all people are being turned into squatters in their own territory because of selling land to unscrupulous dealers who buy land at poor rates.
**Concluding remarks**

**Concluding remarks by Dr. Moses Ikiara**

Dr. Ikiara thanked all the participants for a very fruitful conference that lasted for two full days and said their contributions will go a long way to facilitate development of Meru County. He recalled that the objectives of the conference was to chart the way forward for development needs of the county, and added that the conference has made recommendations on what needs to be done and how it should be done in order to address the development of the county. He noted that this objective of the conference has been achieved in a very satisfying manner. In a very brief summary he identified some of the achievements of the conference as follows among many others:

1. A call by the senator with a overwhelming by all others that everyone should participate in making Meru great.
2. A repeatedly echoed emphasis that the upcoming development of the LAPSSET provides numerous opportunities for Meru.
3. A recommendation that Meru should set itself as center of excellence in education at all levels including being a model of transformational leadership.
5. Taking up tourism as a priority in the development agenda.
6. Up scaling agriculture and increasing its value by establishing agro processing plants for various commodities produced.

In order to successfully accomplish these tasks he noted that the conference has made many suggestions on who should do what especially between the private sector and the government of Meru. On the Meru government side the government should do what especially between the private sector and the government of Meru. He noted that this objective of the conference has been achieved in a very satisfying manner. In a very brief summary he identified some of the achievements of the conference as follows among many others:

1. A call by the senator with a overwhelming by all others that everyone should participate in making Meru great.
2. A repeatedly echoed emphasis that the upcoming development of the LAPSSET provides numerous opportunities for Meru.
3. A recommendation that Meru should set itself as center of excellence in education at all levels including being a model of transformational leadership.
5. Taking up tourism as a priority in the development agenda.
6. Up scaling agriculture and increasing its value by establishing agro processing plants for various commodities produced.

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The conference has several times given examples of Singapore and Dubai as examples to emulate without copying. The idea is to learn from best practices. The conference also recommended selecting a few areas where Meru has a competitive advantage and where success is guaranteed to avoid spreading too thin. He recounted that the breakout groups that analyzed development needs sector by sector had made many significant contributions of sector based development needs and characterized them on the basis of quick wins, short term and long term activities.

**Concluding Remarks from Hon. Mr. Peter Munya, Governor, Meru County**

The governor gave his concluding remarks on the way forward after the conference. He first thanked all the participants for spending two full working days on the conference. He noted that this by itself is a significant contribution from them towards the development of Meru County which he expressed his sincere gratitude.

He assured the participants that all the ideas they have contributed will be taken into account and that they should know that their time has been well spent. What remains is now the county government to implement the ideas that have been put forward. He noted that to translate these ideas into actions we will prepare a master plan. I know we have people in this county who are good into preparing master plans with whom we can work. We will develop our programme of what we can do immediately for quick wins and those that we can start for short term and long term objectives.
We will also make this conference an annual event where every year we can take stock and review the progress made, identify the gaps that need to be filled and also identify new approaches and ways of improving the performance.

He said that we will set up the Meru Economic and Social Forum which will be meeting quarterly to discuss on the strategies of doing things and to harness the skills and experiences that are needed. We will focus on a few areas first in order to avoid spreading too thin. Emphasis will be placed in agriculture including livestock as areas where we have a competitive advantage especially in agro-processing; we will also focus on tourism where there are quick gains.

On tourism we will partner with investors to put up hotels in the national parks. Already the county has a hotel in Meru National Park which we will improve and lease out to investors.

We will work out a plan to improve on the standards of education in our schools through mentoring. Some of the interventions required do not need money although many of us think that money is needed for everything. We will establish an Education Endowment Plan to identify and support bright and deserving students. We will establish an Education Board to spearhead the management of schools.

He concluded his remarks by thanking everyone who participated in the historic event.

Concluding remarks from Hon. Kiraitu Murungi, Senator, Meru County
He also started by thanking all the participants for participating in the conference and also thanked the organizers who spent sleepless nights planning all the activities of the conference. The senator pointed out that the conference organisers have done their work and the participants have also done their work. He said the conference has been a great success and now we have all the ideas that have been put forward in the conference. What is left he said is the Governor and his team to publish the proceedings so that we all can have access to a copy. The other thing that the governor and his able team have to do is to put these ideas into action. One of the ideas we have all accepted is to have a Meru Economic and Social Forum, which can be immediate.

The Senator closed by once again thanking everyone for being part of a very well done work.

Conference programme
28TH FRIDAY, JUNE 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>SPEAKER/LEADER</th>
<th>SESSION CHAIR / FACILITATOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07.30 - 08.30</td>
<td>Delegates registration and entertainment</td>
<td>Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>08.30 - 08.45</td>
<td>Opening prayers</td>
<td>Bishop Salesios Mugambi, Catholic Diocese of Meru</td>
<td>Bishop Dr. John Ataya, Dr. Moses Ikira</td>
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<tr>
<td>08.45 - 09.00</td>
<td>Opening remarks</td>
<td>Master of Ceremony</td>
<td>Bishop Dr. John Ataya, Dr. Moses Ikira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.00 - 09.05</td>
<td>Welcome remarks</td>
<td>Speaker Meru County Assembly Commission</td>
<td>Hon. Kabetu Arimba, Mr. Mwangi Chege</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.05 - 09.15</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td>Representative of Members of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.15 - 09.45</td>
<td>A vision for Meru County</td>
<td>Senator Hon. Kiraitu Murungi</td>
<td>Prof. Alfred Mutema, KEMU</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.45 - 10.45</td>
<td>Reinventing Meru County</td>
<td>Governor Hon. Peter Munya</td>
<td>Prof. Alfred Mutema, KEMU</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.45 - 11.15</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 - 12.00</td>
<td>Imperatives and priorities for Meru County</td>
<td>Dr. Ambassador Francis Mathaura</td>
<td>Mr. James Mworia, MD, Centum</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.00 - 12.30</td>
<td>Panel discussion</td>
<td>Mr. James Mworia, MD, Centum</td>
<td>Prof. Margaret Kobia, PSC</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30 - 13.15</td>
<td>Plenary discussion</td>
<td>Master of Ceremony</td>
<td>Bishop Dr. John Ataya, Dr. Moses Ikira</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.15 - 14.00</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.00 - 14.15</td>
<td>Highlights by sponsors</td>
<td>Sponsor representative</td>
<td>Master of Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.15 - 15.00</td>
<td>Attracting investments in Meru - the next big ideas and how to make them a reality / trends in the new world of investing</td>
<td>Dr. James Mwangi, CEO, Equity Bank</td>
<td>Ms. Esther Ngaine, Director &amp; Public Sector Head, Citi Bank, Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00 - 15.30</td>
<td>Building for growth-real estate and infrastructure development</td>
<td>Mr. Jeremy Awori, MD, Barclays Bank, Kenya</td>
<td>Mr. Jedidah Muriungi, Chairman, MDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00 - 16.30</td>
<td>Plenary discussion - building a competitive Meru County</td>
<td>Mr. Martin Mugambi, MD, Head of Corporate Finance-Africa Division Citibank N.A. South Africa</td>
<td>Mr. James Mugambi, Micro Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.30 - 17.00</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.00 - 17.15</td>
<td>Nurturing entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation</td>
<td>Prof. Noah Midamba, Vice Chancellor, KCA University</td>
<td>Ms. Catherine Munyiri, Co-operative Bank of Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.15 - 18.15</td>
<td>Nurturing entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation</td>
<td>Naushad N. Merali, Chairman, Sameer Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.00 - 21.00</td>
<td>Cocktails sponsored by Alba Hotel</td>
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<td>Delegates registration and entertainment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>08.30 - 08.45</td>
<td>Opening remarks, placing Meru in global map - excellence in education</td>
<td>Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi, Cabinet Secretary, Education</td>
<td>Bishop Lawi Imathiu</td>
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<tr>
<td>08.45 - 09.30</td>
<td>Meru County profile</td>
<td>Mr. Julius Chokerah, UNDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.30 - 10.45</td>
<td>Transformation for excellence</td>
<td>Dr. Wahome Gakuru, Boniface Group</td>
<td>Dr. Gladys Mwiti, Oasis Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.45 - 11.15</td>
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### S E C T O R W O R K S H O P S S E S S I O N S

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<th>LEAD DISCUSSANTS</th>
<th>FACILITATOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 - 13.15</td>
<td>Spurring an agriculture revolution in Meru County - opportunities for value addition.</td>
<td>Dr. Joseph Karuga, Agricultural Economist, ILRI</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew Karanja, Senior Agricultural Economist, World Bank, Nairobi</td>
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<td>Mr. Kimathi Mutuerandu, Chairman, KPCU</td>
<td>Prof. KibRu Mwirii, KEMU</td>
<td>Prof. Caburu Mbita - Rapporteur</td>
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<td>Mr. Wachira Gichohi, MD, Dairy Board</td>
<td>Mr. Titus Kistat, Bayer EA</td>
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<td>Dr. Stephen Mbithi, MD, Fresh Produce Exporters Association Kenya.</td>
<td>Dr. Pascal Kaumbuzo, KENDAT</td>
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<td>Prof. S O Keya, Chancellor, Dedan Kimathi Univ.</td>
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<td>Mr. Titus Kinoti, Bayer EA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Using water and irrigation to spur growth.</td>
<td>Mr. Johnson Mugambi, National Irrigation Board Eng. Nasibah Muguna, Nairobi Water Co.</td>
<td>Mr. Gitonga Mungania</td>
<td>Dr. Gladys Kianji, UoN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Building centers of excellence in education to place Meru County on the global map.</td>
<td>Mr. Henry Mbaaolu Raichena, Principal, Mangui High School</td>
<td>Mr. Alfred Mutema of KEMU</td>
<td>Prof. E. N. Njoka, Vice Chancellor, Chuka University</td>
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<td>Prof. Alfred Mutema of KEMU</td>
<td>Ms. Helen Nangitha - Rapporteur</td>
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<td>Prof. Leah Marangu, Vice Chancellor, Nazarene University</td>
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<td>Dr. Joe Gitau, Education Specialist</td>
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<td>Ms. Dorothy Kamwiri, Principal, Alliance Girls</td>
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<td>Prof. Kimathi Kigatira, KEMU</td>
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<td>Mr. Mwirigi, Principal, Meru School</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Efficient investments in infrastructure.</td>
<td>Prof. Gerrison Ikiara, UoN</td>
<td>Eng. Erastus Mwongera</td>
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<td>Dr. Wahome Gakuru, Boniface Group</td>
<td>Eng. Baru - Rapporteur</td>
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<td>Mr. Kim June Magambo, Energy Specialist</td>
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<td>Eng. Silas Kizito, KURA</td>
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<td>Eng. Mungeria Kirimania, Kiri Consult</td>
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<td>5 Making Meru County the ICT hub of choice</td>
<td>Dr. Bitange Ndemo, PS, Information Ministry</td>
<td>Mr. Paul Kaminchia, IT Manager, Diamond Trust</td>
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<td>Mr. Anthony Imathiu, PWC</td>
<td>Mr. Muthoni Kimera-Rapporteur</td>
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<td>Mr. Benjamin Mphathiane, CEO, BCX</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Using cooperative movement to spur economic growth in Meru County - imperatives for success.</td>
<td>Mr. Silas Kobia, Cooperative Expert</td>
<td>Mr. James Mpekethu, MKU</td>
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<td>Mr. George Ototo, MD, KUSCO</td>
<td>Hon. Ntholha Mmihlihau - Rapporteur</td>
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<td>Dr. Nelson Githinji</td>
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<td>Mr. James K. Mbui</td>
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### Time Table

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.15 - 12.15</td>
<td>Plenary presentations of highlights and recommendations from each group</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.15 - 14.00</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.00 - 15.45</td>
<td>Plenary discussion on highlights</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.30 - 17.00</td>
<td>Why you must walk the route you have chosen – surmounting the challenges and rig fending the resolutions</td>
<td>Dr. Julius Kipng’etich, Chief Operations Officer, Equity Bank</td>
<td>Mr. Joel Imitira, CCK</td>
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<td>17.00 - 17.30</td>
<td>Way forward</td>
<td>Governor Hon. Peter Munya</td>
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<td>17.30 - 18.00</td>
<td>Vote of thanks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Closing prayers</td>
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### DINNER AND DANCE SPONSORED BY PIG AND WHISTLE HOTEL
## Participants of Agriculture breakout group discussions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adrian Kirai</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agnes Kaburu Nnurua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kimathi Mutuaendu</td>
<td>KPCU</td>
<td>0722797123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucy Mukaria</td>
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## Participants of Cooperative breakout group discussions

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UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF MERU COUNTY

THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF MERU