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KIRINYAGA TODAY



THE KIRINYAGA DOCTOR MAKING GREAT MOVES

Leadership. Service. Impact.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Profiles shaping Kirinyaga

UNLOCKING AI & DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES

Unlocking digital skills by founder Tech Africa

KNOW OUR HISTORY

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Kirinyaga Young Professionals

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- Kirinyaga Comedian of the year
- Kirinyaga Medic of the year
- Kirinyaga Entrepreneur of the year
- Kirinyaga Sportsperson of the year
- Kirinyaga Young Leader of the year
- Kirinyaga Agriprenuer of the year
- Kirinyaga Huumanitarian of the year
- Kirinyaga Mc of the year
- Kirinyaga Dancers of the year
- Kirinyaga Startup of the year
- Kirinyaga Teacher of the year
- Kirinyaga Best Skilled Youth of the year
- Kirinyaga Bodaboda Rider of the year



Deadline

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From the Editorial Desk



A philosopher once observed that excellence is not a single act, but a habit. That idea captures the spirit of Kirinyaga. This is a county shaped by consistency, resilience and a quiet determination to improve life across generations.

Located at the foot of Mount Kenya and nourished by rivers such as Nyamindi, Thiba, Rupingazi, Rwamuthambi, Sagana and Ragati, Kirinyaga has always drawn strength from its land. Agriculture is not accidental here. It is intentional, disciplined and deeply cultural. From rice in Mwea to coffee and tea in Gichugu, Ndia and Kirinyaga Central, the land continues to reward hard work and patience.

Over time, agriculture has evolved. Cooperatives, irrigation systems, value addition, branding and market access have transformed farming into a serious economic engine. Kirinyaga coffee consistently ranks among the best, not because of volume alone, but because of quality. Tea continues to provide stable livelihoods, while horticulture now links farmers directly to urban and export markets.

Yet an economy is only as strong as its people. Kirinyaga has produced leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, scholars, artisans and innovators who carry the county's values into national and global spaces. Their success reflects discipline learned early and a strong sense of purpose.

Work has always mattered in Kirinyaga because it is tied to meaning. Farming feeds families. Industry creates opportunity. Education opens doors. Leadership shapes the future. Today, the county is steadily expanding agro-processing, manufacturing and small-scale industries that add value locally instead of exporting opportunity elsewhere.

Kirinyaga Today is not simply a record of achievements. It is a conversation across generations. It speaks to the farmer adapting to new markets, the professional navigating a changing economy, the young person searching for direction and the leader reflecting on responsibility.

There is an African saying that a river never forgets its source. As Kirinyaga grows and modernizes, it remains grounded in its people, its land and the values that shaped it. This edition celebrates that quiet strength. Not because the journey is complete, but because it deserves to be documented.

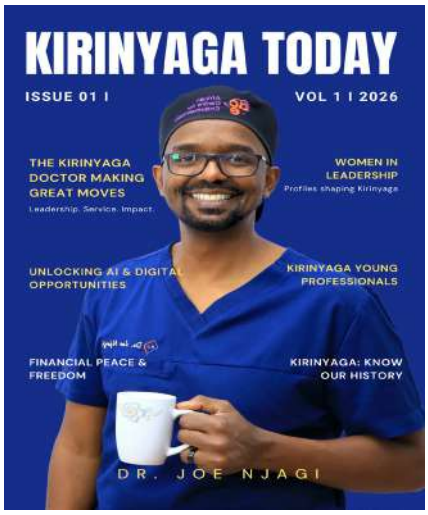
Anthony Murigu
Chair & Editor
Kirinyaga Today

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Know Our History

Kirinyaga's roots, leadership and early resistance



Kirinyaga County traces back to Bantu migration with a strong tie to agriculture, clan system and a strong tie to Mt. Kenya. Leadership was guided by elders and age-set systems, shaping governance long before colonial administration.

Kirinyaga's leadership history evolved from respected local elders like Njega wa Gioko and Gutu wa Kibetu, who were co-opted by colonial powers into the Chief system around 1908, shaping early governance alongside missionary influence. Senior Chief Njega wa Gioko who ruled over western part of Kirinyaga County was born in 1865 and died in 1948. The current Njega Boys Senior School and Njega Village are named after him.

The other pioneer Chief in Kirinyaga county was Gutu wa Kibetu (1860–1927) who reigned in the Eastern part of Kirinyaga county. Kutus town was known as "Kwa Gutu" before graduating to Kutus.

Njega wa Gioko initial name was Maingi wa Gioko. He was renamed Njega (meaning the Good One) wa Gioko and was also elevated as a Muthamaki (leading elder) in 1901 after several heroic strides.

He was a great swimmer who saved several people from being swept away by the erratic flooding rivers Ruthu, Rwamuthambi and even the mighty River Sagana (Tana).

The locals were thus pleased with Maingi wa Gioko's strides, as they saw Ngai's omnipresence in his superhuman efforts, and hence, he became a Muthamaki in 1901.

As the colonial authorities looked for the local leading Africans who could be promoted as Chiefs, Muthamaki Njega wa Gioko was the undisputed choice in Kirinyaga West of Central Kenya.

"I son of Gioko, have allowed my people to use a pen as a spear and paper as shield."

Another heroic act that led to the reverence of Maingi wa Gioko into a Muthamaki Njega wa Gioko was his triumphant stopping of John Boyes' (1875-1951) team who attempted to cross over from Mbiri (now Murang'a county) to the present-day Kirinyaga county, in mid-1901.

Without superior arms, Maingi wa Gioko was able to successfully engage Boyes' team and repulsed them; hence they did not enter his jurisdiction at that time.

However, Boyes was a youthful European imperialist who had settled in the neighboring Murang'a Town (then called Mbiri) in as early as 1898.Because of his love for the Turtle Beans, the locals nicknamed him Karianjahi (the one who likes to eat Turtle Beans.

He subtly made the locals in the neighboring Murang'a to think he was ritualistically initiated in their religion-culture when he married three local Kikuyu women, thereby becoming the first known European polygamist in Kenya's history.

Apart from this pro-African gesture, Karianjahi (Boyes) disrupted farming activities when he and other 'strange people' (Europeans) came with all manner of indiscipline. Boyes formed a warrior-army of 5000 uniformed Kikuyu men in 1899.

He then made a weird claim that he had bought Mount Kenya after subtly giving 10 cows to 'Chief' Wang'ombe wa Ihura and 10 cows to 'Chief' Olomondo of Dorobo people. This did not go well with the Gikuyu community.

Shortly after the 1901 Boyes-wa Gioko warrior's contest, along river Sagana, a more brutal conquest was experienced, as the sadistic and ruthless British imperialist, Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, took the area by storm.

"A pen became a spear, and paper a shield. A quiet turning point for a people."

Prior to this punitive attack of 1902-1904, Meinertzhagen had just replaced Francis Hall, the pioneer European administrator in the present-day Murang'a county who died in 1901 some months after settling there.

As Colonel Meinertzhagen moved from the present-day Murang'a county, through Njega wa Gioko's area, and towards the present-day Embu County headquarters, and where he finally established a Fort, in 1904 after a protracted war with local warriors, Meinertzhagen committed atrocities that are hard to record accurately.

Emily May Crawford cites the case of Chief Gutu wa Kibetu of the present-day Kirinyaga county, Njega wa Gioko's counterpart in the present day Kirinyaga County, who, despite being treated with modern medicine twice by Dr. Crawford (her husband), a medical missionary based in Kigari in Embu county, still rioted against them after recovery. Perhaps, it is worthwhile to recall that Kirinyaga county, Gioko's jurisdiction, neighbours Embu County on the eastern side and Murang'a-Nyeri on the western side.

The defiance of Gioko and Kibetu against western medicine, western foods and western education resulted in painful encounters.

One year before he died (1947), he took all people by surprise when he went to a local Church in Kiamuthambi or Kanyeki-ini Church whilst holding a pen and a paper, and then went on to make a short speech thus, 'I son of Gioko, have allowed my people to use a pen as a spear and paper as shield'. In my view, it is after wa Gioko's pronouncement of 1947 that Christianity and western education gained broad acceptance amongst the people of Kirinyaga West, who were eagerly awaiting wa Gioko's direction in religio-social matters. Later Njega wa Gioko died in 1948.

Political leadership and administrative evolution in Kirinyaga County

In 1957, Bernard Mate was elected to represent the entire Central Province, covering settler territories in Thika and Nanyuki and African reserves. In 1958, a new Nyeri-Embu constituency was created, and Jeremiah Nyagah was elected.

Following Kenya's independence in 1963, Kirinyaga District was formed from the western section of the former Embu District. Under self-government, Kimamu Gichoya and James Kibuga were elected to represent Gichugu and Ndia, while Romano Gikunju became Kirinyaga Senator.

During the 1966 little general election, Gichoya was replaced by Bernard Kathanga. In 1967, boundary changes abolished the Senate, and Romano Gikunju was assigned to Kirinyaga South (now Mwea).

In the 1969 election, Gichoya retained his seat, James Njiru replaced James Kibuga in Ndia and Lucas Ngureti replaced Gikunju in Kirinyaga South. In 1974, Nahashon Njuno replaced Kathanga in Gichugu, James Njiru retained Ndia and Stephen Kiragu replaced Ngureti in Kirinyaga South. All leaders retained their seats in the 1979 election.

The 1983 snap election saw Matere Keriri replace James Njiru in Ndia, while Kathigi Kibugi replaced Stephen Kiragu in Mwea. Nahashon Njuno retained the Gichugu seat. In the 1988 queue election, James Njiru replaced Matere Keriri in Ndia, Geoffrey Kariithi replaced Nahashon Njuno in Gichugu and Kathigi Kibugi retained Mwea. During this period, Eliud Mahihu served as Kirinyaga's nominated MP.

Multi-party democracy returned in December 1991 with the formation of Kibaki's Democratic Party and FORD. Kibaki and Kariithi defected and lost their seats, which were not declared vacant, leaving constituencies without MPs for a year.

In the 1992 multi-party elections, Martha Karua (Gichugu), Nicholas Mbui (Ndia) and Allan Njeru (Mwea) were elected on DP tickets. Martha Karua and Mary Wanjiru of Nyandarua became the region's first female elected MPs. In 1997, Kerugoya-Kutus was created, electing Matere Keriri, while Karua retained Gichugu, James Kibicho won Ndia and Alfred Nderitu won Mwea. In 2002, Karua and Nderitu retained their seats, while Robinson Githae (Ndia) and Daniel Karaba (Kerugoya-Kutus) were elected on Narc tickets.

In 2007, Martha Karua was re-elected for a fourth term on a PNU ticket, Robinson Githae retained Ndia, Peter Gitau was elected in Mwea and John N. Kariuki won Kerugoya-Kutus before his election was nullified in 2011 and replaced by Joseph Gitari.

The promulgation of the 2010 Constitution introduced a new system of governance, transforming Kirinyaga into a county. In 2013, Joseph Ndathi was elected Governor, Daniel Karaba Senator and Winnie Njuguna Women's Representative. Ejidius Barua (Gichugu), Peter Gitau (Mwea), Stephen Ngare (Ndia) and Joseph Gitari (Kirinyaga Central) were elected MPs.

In the 2017 General Election, Anne Waiguru was elected Governor, Charles Kibiru Senator and Wangui Ngirici Women's Representative. Robert Githinji (Gichugu), Kabinga Wachira (Mwea), George Kariuki (Ndia) and Munene Wambugu (Kirinyaga Central) were elected MPs.

During the 2022 General Election, Anne Waiguru was re-elected Governor, James Murango Senator and Jane Maina Women's Representative. Robert Githinji was re-elected in Gichugu, alongside Mary Maingi (Mwea), George Kariuki (Ndia) and Joseph Gitari (Kirinyaga Central).

This shows the leadership history which defined Kirinyaga County.

Facts About Kirinyaga County



Kirinyaga county is located at the slope of Mt. Kenya. It has an estimated area of 1,478 km2 and a projected population of 664,000 by 2025. Rivers such as Nyamindi, Thiba, Rupingazi, Rwamuthambi and Ragati are the principal source of water for the county.

The county is blessed with a thick, indigenous forest at the foot of Mt. Kenya covering an area of 350.7 Km2.

The county has a tropical climate and an equatorial rainfall pattern which is influenced by the equator position and being on the windward of Mt.Kenya. The county experiences two rain season; Long and short rains.

The county is divided into five districts; Kirinyaga East, Kirinyaga West, Kirinyaga Central, Mwea East and Mwea West. The districts are further subdivided into 12 divisions, 30 locations and 81 sub-locations. The county has four constituencies namely Mwea, Ndia, Kirinyaga Central and Gichugu.

Kirinyaga County has twenty (20) wards where Mwea has 8 wards, Ndia has 3 wards, Kirinyaga Central has 4 wards and Gichugu with 5 wards.

Agriculture being the backbone of Kirinyaga's economy, it is evolving from traditional production into diversified, high-value farming and processing.

The county's geography, reliable water from rivers and dams, and the drive of local farmers combine to shape one of Kenya's most productive agricultural landscapes.

Rice is one of the dominant crop in Kirinyaga, which covers about 30,600 acres and supports more than 15,900 farmers in Mwea. The scheme now produces far more than earlier decades, making it the largest rice producer in Kenya.

In recent years, annual rice production has climbed significantly. In 2024, farmers harvested around 160,270 metric tonnes of rice, a record output that reflects both better water management and expanded acreage. Rice farming now injects significant revenue into local households.

The value of production in the wider Mwea cluster is estimated at about Sh25 billion annually, with farmers directly earning around Sh12.7 billion from rice.

Coffee is another Kirinyaga's most valuable cash crops, especially in the middle and upper highland zones where altitude and climate favour high-quality Arabica beans.

Facts About Kirinyaga



In the 2023/24 coffee season, Kirinyaga produced about 8.93 million kilograms (kg) of clean coffee, representing roughly 18 percent of Kenya's total coffee output and placing it among the top producers in the country alongside Kiambu and Nyeri. The area planted with coffee in Kirinyaga covers more than 10,400 hectares, with smallholder farmers accounting for the majority of that acreage.

In the 2024/25 season, Kirinyaga continued to lead central Kenya in coffee production, contributing nearly 17 percent of the national coffee harvest. During the first seven months of the 2024/25 coffee year, the county sold more than 5.48 million kg of coffee cherries at the Nairobi Coffee Exchange, earning local farmers around Sh4.9 billion.

There are about 75 wet coffee mills (factories) in Kirinyaga, spread across some 15 cooperative societies that process cherries into parchment before they are dried and sold.

Tea is another traditional cash crop grown in parts of Kirinyaga, especially in its highland zones where rainfall and altitude favor the crop.Nationally, Kenya's tea sector produced around 49,500 tonnes of clean tea in 2023/24, with smallholder producers playing the lead role in the industry.

In 2024, total tea export earnings reached about Sh215.21 billion, up from around Sh180 billion in 2023, making tea one of Kenya's top agricultural exports.

Kenya has over 180 tea processing factories, including those operated by the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) and private manufacturers, with a combined processing capacity of millions of tonnes of green leaf annually.

While staples like rice, coffee and tea define Kirinyaga's agricultural identity, horticulture is rapidly emerging as a major income stream for farmers. Over recent years, vegetable and fruit production has expanded in both acreage and value, supported by county initiatives, improved farming practices and growing domestic and export markets.

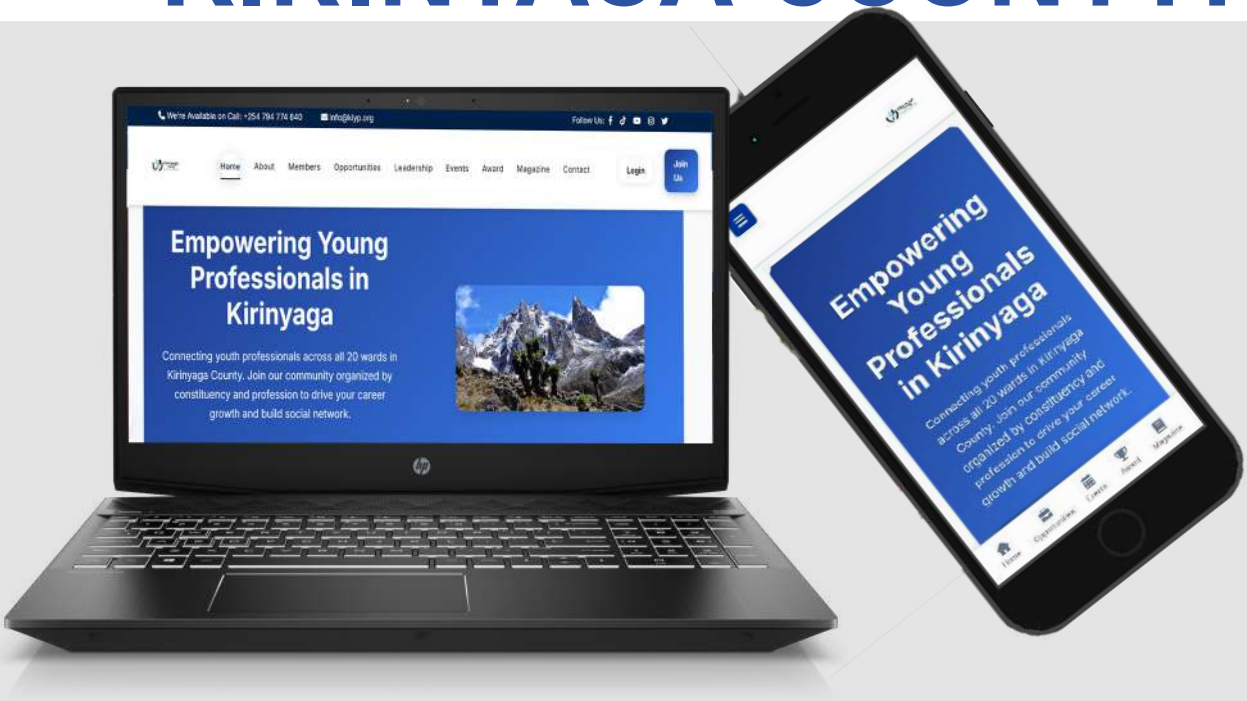
The county is regarded as one of the largest tomato producers in Kenya, with annual production estimated at around 60,000–63,000 tonnes, generating roughly Sh1.5–1.6 billion in earnings for farmers each year. Areas such as Kangai are known as tomato producers due to availability of water for irrigation.

Avocado farming is another key farming products which is regarded as green gold .It has expanded significantly, buoyed by strong market demand both locally and internationally, especially for the high-value Hass variety.

According to recent agricultural data, Kirinyaga produced about 16,647 metric tonnes of avocados in 2023, placing the county among the top ten avocado-producing counties in Kenya. The area under avocado production in the county was around 871 hectares in the same year. This production is increasing year after year.

Kirinyaga Young Professionals

ARE YOU A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL FROM KIRINYAGA COUNTY?



Join our movement

Kirinyaga Young Professionals (KYP)

and let's grow together

Join Now

www.kiyp.org

Women In Leadership

“

A community that listens to its women learns how to endure, adapt and grow.

SC Hon. Martha Karua

She has a record of being the longest serving MP in Gichugu Constituency. She has run for presidential seat in 2013 through a Narc Kenya Ticket. She Was running mate to Raila Odinga in an Azimio coalition in 2022. She is the Currently Party Leader of PLP





Hon. Jane Njeri

She is the current Kirinyaga County Women Rep.

H.E Anne Waiguru

She is on her second term as Kirinyaga County Governor. She was among the first female governors to be elected since the introduction of devolved system.









Hon. Wangui Ngirici

She was voted in 2017 as women Rep and Vied as Governor in 2022 as an Independent Candidate. She is the current Board of Director Chairperson Kenya Seed Company



SC Hon. Martha Karua
PLP Party Leader

There is no serious conversation about women in leadership that can take place without mentioning Senior Counsel Martha Karua. Her principles stand out most clearly at moments when compromise would have been easier.

Her long leadership journey speaks of courage, discipline and an unshaken belief in justice.

Often referred to as the Iron Lady, Martha Karua was born on the slopes of Mount Kenya in 1957.
She grew up in Kimunye Village, Kabare Ward, Gichugu Constituency, Kirinyaga County, at a time when leadership spaces were overwhelmingly male-dominated.

She began her primary education at Mugumo Primary School and later completed it at St. Michael's Boarding School, Kerugoya.

She was admitted to Kiburia Girls High School, later transferring to Ngiriambu Girls High School and eventually completed her O-Level education at Karoti Girls High School.

During her time at Karoti Girls, she was expelled just five months before her final examinations. Undeterred, she studied independently and travelled 25 kilometres daily to sit for her exams. She emerged with the best results in her year, earning admission to Nairobi School for her A-Level studies.

She performed exceptionally well and was later admitted to the University of Nairobi, where she pursued a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree. She graduated in 1980 and proceeded to the Kenya School of Law for a postgraduate diploma in legal practice.

Upon completion, she was admitted to the Bar and became an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya.From the very beginning, her professional life reflected a deep respect for institutions, rules and fairness. These values would later come to define her political career.
Martha Karua entered Parliament in 1992, when she was elected Member of Parliament for Gichugu Constituency.



She was among the first women from the region to be elected to Parliament. This was a defining moment in Kenya's political history, as the country was emerging from single-party rule.
Politics at the time was rough, exclusionary and openly hostile to women. Winning an election in such an environment required resilience, credibility, and courage. Martha not only won but went on to serve five consecutive terms, from 1992 to 2013, earning respect across political divides.

During her time in Parliament, she distinguished herself as a legislator who spoke plainly and remained principled. She served as Minister for Water Resources and Management, where she oversaw key water reforms and infrastructure programs aimed at improving access and sustainability.

Later, as Minister for Justice, National Cohesion and Constitutional Affairs, Karua played a central role in Kenya's constitutional reform process. She was instrumental in pushing for accountability, separation of powers and respect for the rule of law, principles that were later entrenched in the 2010 Constitution.

What set Karua apart during this period was her willingness to challenge power, even when it came at personal or political cost. She resigned from cabinet when she felt constitutional principles were being undermined, a rare move in Kenyan politics. That decision cemented her reputation as a leader who placed integrity above position.

After leaving Parliament in 2013, she vied for Presidency using NARC-Kenya. After the election Martha did not retreat from public life. Instead, she reinvented herself as a defender of constitutional-ism and democracy. Through her political party, NARC-Kenya, and later through civic engagement, she became a vocal advocate for electoral justice, judicial independence and human rights.

In 2022, Martha Karua made history when she became the first woman to run for Deputy President in Azimio coalition. That moment carried symbolic weight far beyond the election itself. It challenged long-held assumptions about women's place in national leadership and showed young girls across the country that the highest offices were not out of reach. While the ticket did not win, the impact of that candidacy reshaped conversations about gender, leadership and credibility.

For Kirinyaga, Martha Karua remains one of its most prominent national figures. Her leadership journey reflects the values many associate with the county: discipline, education, self-belief and quiet strength. She has shown that leadership does not have to be loud to be firm, and that consistency over time can matter more than short-term applause.

Martha Karua's story is important for women in leadership because it tells a deeper truth. That leadership is not about perfection, but about choosing what is right even when it is costly. And above all, it is about understanding that power is most meaningful when it is exercised with restraint and responsibility.

In a time when leadership is often reduced to slogans and spectacle, Martha Karua's legacy reminds us that substance still matters. For young women in Kirinyaga and across Kenya, her life stands as quiet proof that integrity can endure and that leadership anchored in principle can leave a lasting mark.

Enjoy her book Against the Tide: My Journey on a Less Trodden Path. A book worth reading





H.E. Anne Waiguru
Governor: Kirinyaga

Time is ripe for women to take up bigger leadership

As Israelmore Ayivor stated: "Don't be a pepper on the eyes of people; Rather be the salt on their tongue and make a difference that influences their sense of belonging to the earth."

In 1955, at the heart of American civil rights movement, one woman, Rosa Parks, brought the issue of segregation to national attention when she refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus.

Her arrest sparked Montgomery Bus boycott that eventually led to desegregation of public transport – a major win in the fight for equality.

It is such small but impactful acts of bravery that, when multiplied by millions of people, transform the world.

History is replete with women like Rosa – women of valour who stood for what they believed in, and through blood, sweat and tears, effected change through the ranks of governance and society.

In Kenya, we celebrate women like Wangari Maathai, Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch, Phoebe Asiyo, Effie Owuor, Zipporah Kittony among others, who paddled against raging tides, spoke against repressive forces pushed through the walls of repression to pave the way for the current crop of women leaders in different spheres.

These women made a bold decision to protest against the exigencies of primeval ages that confined their roles within the four walls of the kitchen square and tore down the veil of discrimination that masked gender imbalance as an acceptable norm.

Their courage, resilience and commitment shook the foundations of chauvinism, created a shift in the status quo and made the world see women as equally up to the task of leadership.

Picking on this cue, the big question now remains, what must we do as women leaders to create even better spaces for future generation of girls and women?
First, it is incumbent upon us to be intentional in our policies and politics by creating lasting legacies that coming generations can emulate.



Upon my election as Kirinyaga Governor in 2017, I set out to build a legacy that will transcend my tenure through the implementation of a 15-year vision, dubbed Mountain Cities Blueprint. This vision guided our implementation of people-cantered policies touching on key sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, health and tourism, linked to the four sub counties of Mwea, Ndia, Kirinyaga Central, and Gichugu respectively.

The journey, now in its eighth year, has seen the transformation of Kirinyaga Central into the county's health city with Kerugoya Level 5 County Referral Hospital as the biggest health facility not just in Kirinyaga but the region at large. In Sagana, we are in the process of building a County Aggregation and Industrial Park that will enhance agro-processing and value addition therefore putting more money in the pockets of farmers, women and the youth.

Mwea now stands as one of the country's biggest agricultural towns accounting for the largest rice production in East Africa, buoyed by the operationalisation of the Thiba dam. Secondly, it behoves us as leaders to speak against ills perpetrated against girls and women, be an inspiration to them, and encourage them to seek leadership roles.

On this front, owing to the unity of purpose and the confidence that the electorate has in women leadership, Kenya has recorded great progress, moving from three elected women Governors in 2017 (the late Joyce Laboso of Bomet, Charity Ngilu of Kitui, and myself) to seven in 2022 (myself, Fatuma Achani of Kwale, Cecily Mbarire of Embu, Gladys Wanga of Homabay, Wavinya Ndeti of Machakos, Susan Kihika of Nakuru and former Meru Governor Kawira Mwangaza).

It is our belief that in 2027, we will have more women elected to various positions as a way of entrenching the gains we have made so far, and moving gender reforms to the next level. Further, mentorship is another key factor that can increase women participation in politics, governance and leadership.

Organizations like Daughters of Kenya, which is held under my patronage, endeavors to achieve this by bringing together visionary and aspiring women leaders to canvass matters politics, policy and leadership.

This year's event held in December 2025 in Kirinyaga, under the auspices of Daughters of the Mountain Chapter, brought together women from 10 Mt. Kenya counties and provided an opportune moment to discuss women entry into elective and appointive positions and policies that are critical in expanding women spaces in leadership circles.

Even as we do this, it is imperative to know that we are as strong as our weakest link. There is urgent need for women to come together and rally each other to challenge the existential stereotypes instead of tearing each other down.

The gains we have achieved so far in political and corporate spaces risk getting washed away if we do not show unity. Further, the push for a gender balanced country will also require the input of men, many of who, are ardent supporters of women leadership.

Through such collaborative engagements, open discussions and political goodwill, we will be able to create safe and enabling environment where women can take up even bigger leadership roles and leave a lasting legacy for our young girls and women by inculcating in them the belief that what men can do, women can do better!



Hon. Jane Njeri Maina
Women Rep: Kirinyaga

Hon. Jane Njeri Maina is the current Woman Representative for Kirinyaga County and a strong advocate for the rights and empowerment of youth and women. She is also an advocate of th High Court of Kenya.

Born and raised in Kibingoti, Ndia Sub County, Kirinyaga County. Her educational journey reflects discipline and determination. She began her primary education at Kiangoma Primary School before transferring to Mugi Junior Academy, where she sat for her KCPE. She later joined Kabare Girls High School, where she performed well in her KCSE, earning admission to the University of Nairobi to pursue a Law degree.

She completed her undergraduate studies in 2016 and proceeded to the Kenya School of Law for her Postgraduate Diploma. In 2018, after successfully completing her training, she was admitted to the Bar and became an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya.

Her leadership journey began early. In 2022, at just 28 years old, she made history by becoming one of the youngest women elected to 13th Parliament. Since then, she has consistently used her platform to champion issues affecting women, youth and vulnerable groups.

Hon. Jane Njeri Maina has been at the forefront of initiatives that promote girls' education, youth empowerment and leadership development. She firmly believes that leadership is not defined by age, but by courage, commitment and service to the people.

Before joining elective politics, she gained valuable experience through legal practice and public service, shaping her strong understanding of governance, advocacy, and public interest law.

Her work continues to inspire young women across Kirinyaga County to believe in themselves and pursue leadership with confidence.



Hon. Wangui Ngirici Chairperson: Kenya Seeds Company

We celebrate another outstanding leader from Kirinyaga County, Hon. Wangui Ngirici. Born and raised in Kirinyaga, she has remained deeply connected to her roots and committed to serving her people. In 2017, she was overwhelmingly elected as the Woman Representative for Kirinyaga County, serving in the 12th Parliament.

Hon. Ngirici is a distinguished scholar with a strong academic foundation. She holds a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. She also has a Bachelor of Commerce degree, alongside a Higher Diploma and a Diploma in Business Management.

Her professional journey reflects firm leadership and dedication to public service. She currently serves as the Chairperson of the Kenya Seed Company, one of the leading seed producers in East Africa. Under her leadership, the company has recorded improved performance and consistent growth.

During her tenure, Kenya Seed Company experienced aggressive expansion, with seed sales growing from 18 million kilograms in 2023 to 45 million kilograms in 2025. The company also successfully expanded its regional market reach to the Democratic Republic of Congo. In recognition of this performance, Kenya Seed Company was awarded Star Parastatal of the Year.

Her strong work ethic and results-driven leadership did not go unnoticed. In 2025, Hon. Ngirici was honored as Star Board Chair of the Year at the East Africa Star Brand Awards.

Hon. Wangui Ngirici's achievements continue to inspire, particularly young girls and women aspiring to leadership.

Her journey reflects the power of education, determination and resilience. She stands as a clear example that with focus and courage, it is possible to rise and make meaningful impact in leadership and public service.



Hon. Mary Maingi

Hon. Mary Maingi currently serves as the Member of Parliament for Mwea Constituency. During the 2022 election, she was voted and made history as the only woman elected to represent her constituency in Kirinyaga County.

Hon. Mary Maingi was born and raised in Kiarukungu Village, Tebere Location, within Mwea Constituency. As the eldest in a family of five, she faced responsibilities early in life, especially when her mother suffered a serious eye injury that led to prolonged health challenges.

Hon. Mary attended Karira Primary School, then continued to Kabare Girls' High School for her secondary studies.

She later pursued professional courses in business and insurance, earning a Diploma in Public Relations from the London Chamber of Commerce & Industry, a Certificate and Diploma in Insurance and both a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) and Master of Business Administration (MBA with Honors) from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

She built a distinguished career in the private sector. She founded and led HP Insurance Brokers Limited, serving as Chief Executive Officer from 1999 until her transition to public service in 2022. Beyond her business leadership, she served as a Board Director and Chairperson of the Audit Committee at the Postal Corporation of Kenya and as Chairperson of Vetlab Golf Club.

She was later elected as an MP in 2022 for the Mwea Constituency where, she has championed projects that support education, health and infrastructure in Mwea.

Her story is one of resilience. From a young person balancing family responsibilities to a seasoned professional and now a legislator. She is a strong voice for women and the girl child.

She encourages girls to pursue education with confidence and urges women to take up leadership roles without fear.

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Kirinyaga Young Professionals

Kirinyaga Young Professionals (KYP) was founded in 2025 with a clear purpose: to nurture talent, expand opportunity, and strengthen community impact within Kirinyaga County. Built on the pillars of career growth, mentorship, empowerment and service. The organization brings together young professionals who believe in progress through collaboration.

Guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Quality Education **(SDG 4)**, KYP identifies less fortunate children within the community and supports them through their education. Beyond financial support, the organization connects these learners with mentors drawn from KYP's membership. Where a child expresses interest in a specific career, professionals in that field are intentionally linked to guide, inspire and walk the journey with them.

The organization also advances Decent Work and Economic Growth **(SDG 8)** by supporting members' career development, sharing job opportunities and linking young professionals to employers, partners and markets.

Through its digital platform, www.kiyp.org, registered members access a personalized dashboard where opportunities are shared and received within the network.

In recognition of Kirinyaga's strong agricultural and business base, KYP supports young people in agribusiness and entrepreneurship by enhancing market access and promoting digital sales opportunities, contributing to Zero Hunger **(SDG 2)** and Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure **(SDG 9)** at the local level.

In addition, KYP has established an innovation and research hub that enables members to develop ideas, build firms and create products that generate employment beyond themselves. This initiative reflects the organization's belief that sustainable development comes from locally driven solutions.

Membership is open to young professionals who share this vision.

Interested individuals can register through www.kiyp.org/register and become part of a growing network committed to shaping Kirinyaga's future.



Opportunities & Networking





Mentorship & Empower-ment



Community Service

Kirinyaga Young Professionals Leadership



Anthony Murigu
Chairperson



Beatrice Muthoni
V. Chairperson



Nicholas Bundi
Secretary General



Haron Mwai
Organizing Secretary



Faith Muriithi
Secretary



Eliud Uki
Treasurer



Paul Kariuki
Program Manager



Kelvin Ndambiri
Legal Lead



Ken Muriithi
Media & Publicity Lead



Dennis Muriithi
Member Rep



Jeffither Waigwa
Communication Lead

PICTORIAL



Kirinyaga Chapati Fest Kerugoya Edition



Digital AI BootCamp By Chomba



Kirinyaga Chapati Fest Kerugoya Edition



Kirinyaga Chapati Fest, Kerugoya Edition



Kamuiru Boys Mentorship



Digital AI Bootcamp By Chomba



Kiaga Seconday Mentorship



Kiaga Secondary Mentorship



Kirinyaga Chapati Fest Tebere Edition

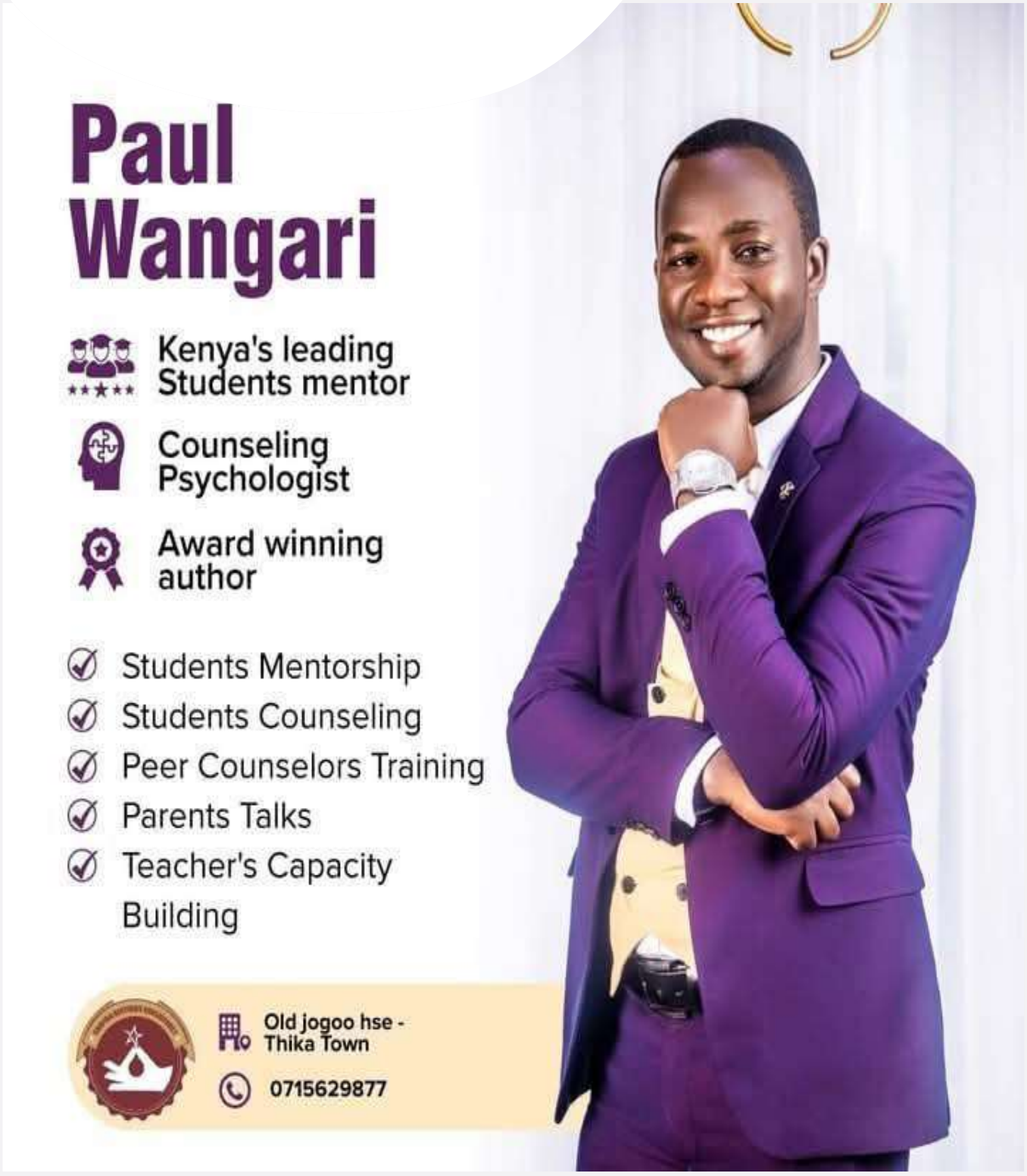


Kirinyaga Chapati Fest, Tebere Edition



Digital AI Bootcamp By Chomba

From Street to Authorship



From the Street to Authorship

Paul Wangari's journey from hardship to purpose

Paul Wangari is a Kenya's leading youth mentor and Author. He is a Certified Counselor by Counselors and psychologists board under Registration no. C&P/C/1145/2024. He has authored seven books so far. Behind these achievement lies a story shaped by hardship, faith and uncommon resilience.

Paul was born to a single mother and raised in extreme poverty. Life was harsh from the beginning. The home he grew up in was a small, muddy structure, dilapidated and constantly on the verge of collapsing. His mother survived on manual and menial jobs, doing everything she could to put food on the table. When Paul was just nine years old, she passed away, leaving him vulnerable and burdened with responsibility far too early.

He was taken in by his elderly grandmother. Her frail health limited what she could do, and hunger became a frequent visitor in their home. Many nights were spent without food. Even then, Paul held onto faith. He believed that God was guiding him and that one day his life would change.

Two years later, tragedy struck again. His grandmother passed away, leaving Paul completely on his own. Just when life seemed unbearable, help came from an unexpected place. A Good Samaritan rescued him and took him to a children's home. For Paul, it felt like heaven on earth. He ate three meals a day, wore new clothes and shoes, and slept on a proper bed with clean sheets, a duvet, and a pillow, comforts he had never known before.

Most importantly, Paul was taken to school. From the beginning, he understood that education would shape his destiny. He believed that discipline in the classroom could lift him out of poverty. That belief drove him to study with uncommon focus, a journey he would later reflect on in his book *My Grade, My Destiny*.

Paul became the first child in his family to complete primary school. He passed well and earned a place in high school. At that stage, one truth became clear: if he advanced to university, his future would change permanently. Failure was not an option.

In high school, Paul chose discipline over distraction. While classmates mocked him for avoiding drugs and relationships, he stayed focused. He lived by a principle he now shares widely: in life, direction is more important than speed. His dedication paid off, earning him strong grades and a place at university.

Today, Paul is a counseling psychologist, inspirational speaker, and mentor whose programs have shaped the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people across Kenya. He is also a two-time award-winning author. His book Sex & Teenagers was recognized among the top 100 youth books in Africa by AfriCAN, while Becoming a Man earned him the Men Advocate of the Year Award in 2023 from KEMEN Kenya for his work in empowering the boy child.

Paul's journey reflects a powerful truth echoed by Eliud Kipchoge: no human is limited. As Lupita Nyong'o reminds us, every dream is valid. By applying the life skills outlined in his book Life Skills You Must Not Miss, Paul rose from being a helpless orphan to becoming the CEO of Shaping Destinies Consultancy, an organization dedicated to empowering young people. It is a journey from survival to purpose, from hardship to impact.

Today, Paul's passion lies in helping young people discover their potential, make informed decisions, and live intentional lives. Through mentorship and speaking engagements, he continues to share hope with those facing hardship, reminding them that no excuse is strong enough to justify failure. With clarity, discipline, and purpose, it is always possible to become more.

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Contact : 0715629877


PAUL WANGARI
SHAPING DESTINIES CONSULTANCY
Kenya's leading youth mentor
Certified Counsellor (C&PB)
Men Advocate of the Year 2023
Author of 7 Titles
Award-winning Author
Becoming A Man (2023)
Sex & Teenagers (2020, South Africa)
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YOU MUST NOT MISS
@KSH: 500

TVET Education in Kirinyaga

From inherited skills to modern opportunity



Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Kirinyaga County tells a powerful story of transformation from informal skills passed down through generations to a structured, modern system anchored in national policy and county-level investment. Today, TVET stands at the county's strategy for youth empowerment, industrial growth and sustainable development.

Long before classrooms and workshops were built, the people of Kirinyaga were already practitioners of vocational training. In the pre-colonial era, skills were transferred through informal apprenticeships. Young people learned blacksmithing, pottery, weaving, masonry, carpentry and farming techniques by observing and assisting elders.

These skills were practical, community-centered and directly linked to survival and local economies.

The colonial period introduced formal technical education, largely aimed at producing artisans and clerks to support colonial administration.

> "TVET has become Kirinyaga's practical answer to youth unemployment and skills mismatch."

Trade schools and vocational centers began to emerge, though access for Africans was limited. After independence, Kenya expanded technical education through government trade schools and later through the Harambee (self-help) movement.

Kirinyaga County benefited significantly from this movement, laying the groundwork for today's TVET institutions.

In the last decade, TVET in Kirinyaga County has experienced renewed momentum, driven by both the National Government and an increasingly proactive County Government.

Recognizing rising youth unemployment and the mismatch between academic education and labor market needs, leaders turned to vocational training as a practical solution.

One of the most impactful initiatives has been the County Polytechnics Modernization Program, which targeted all village and youth polytechnics across the county.

The program delivered:
•Construction of 18 new classrooms, workshops and hostels
•Upgrading of training equipment
•Recruitment of additional instructors
•Improved learning environments to attract and retain trainees

These investments revitalized institutions that had long struggled with outdated facilities and low enrollment.

Growth of Technical Institutions Across the County

Kirinyaga County now hosts a growing network of technical and vocational institutions serving different sub-counties:

Kirinyaga Central Technical and Vocational College (KCTVC)

Launched in May 2018, this institution filled a long-standing gap in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, which previously lacked a public TVET.

Established as part of the national rollout of 60 TVET colleges, KCTVC offers courses in building construction, electrical installation, ICT, business studies and mechanical engineering. Its presence has reduced travel distances for learners and boosted local enrollment.

Ndia Technical and Vocational College

Opened in 2018 with just 33 students, Ndia TVET has grown rapidly. It is notable as the first TVET institution in Kirinyaga initiated under the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF).

With support from both NG-CDF and the National Government, the college has expanded workshops, classrooms and student capacity, becoming a model for constituency-driven TVET development.



Gichugu Technical and Vocational College

Gichugu TVET further expanded access to technical training in the eastern part of the county. It plays a critical role in training artisans and technicians aligned with local economic activities such as agriculture, construction and small-scale manufacturing.

Mwea Technical and Vocational College (Mwea TVC)

Mwea Technical and Vocational College has emerged as a key institution serving Mwea and the wider lower Kirinyaga region.

Strategically located within Kenya's major rice-growing zone, the college plays a critical role in training youth in courses aligned with local economic activities. These include electrical installation, building construction, ICT, agribusiness-related programs and mechanical and automotive technologies.
Mwea TVC complements village polytechnics such as Mucii wa Urata Youth Polytechnic by providing progression pathways for trainees seeking higher-level technical skills.

Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC) – Kirinyaga Campus

The ground breaking of the first KMTC in Kirinyaga marked a historic milestone.
The institution is expected to strengthen healthcare training, reduce shortages of medical personnel and support county health facilities by training nurses, clinical officers and other health professionals locally.

TVET Education in Kirinyaga



While large TVET colleges attract attention, village and youth polytechnics remain the backbone of vocational training at the grassroots level.
Spread across wards and villages, these institutions provide affordable, accessible training for school leavers and out-of-school youth.
Courses commonly offered include:
•Tailoring and fashion design
•Hairdressing and beauty therapy
•Motor vehicle mechanics
•Welding and fabrication
•Carpentry and masonry
•Electrical installation

In Mwea Sub-County, institutions such as Mucii wa Urata Youth Polytechnic have played a vital role in transforming livelihoods. Located within the rice-growing zone, the polytechnic trains youth in tailoring, hairdressing, electrical installation and basic mechanics.

Graduates from Mucii wa Urata have gone on to establish tailoring shops, salons and small repair businesses within Wang'uru and surrounding villages, contributing directly to the local economy.

In Kirinyaga Central, Kaitheri Polytechnic stands out as a success story of institutional growth. What began as a modest village polytechnic has steadily expanded in enrollment, infrastructure, and course offerings, eventually earning recognition as a county polytechnic.

Through sustained community support and county government investment, Kaitheri has transitioned into a more comprehensive training institution.

The impact of village polytechnics is visible across Kirinyaga County like in Mwea, graduates of tailoring and fashion design courses have formed cooperative groups supplying school uniforms and clothing to local markets, in Ndia and Kirinyaga Central, trained welders and fabricators from youth polytechnics are actively engaged in door, window and water tank fabrication and motor vehicle mechanics have opened small garages, offering affordable services and employing fellow youth.

These institutions not only impart skills but also promote self-employment, reducing rural-urban migration and stimulate micro-enterprises.

The results of these investments are measurable. Enrollment in TVET institutions in Kirinyaga County grew from 889 students in 2017 to over 1,300 by 2025. This growth is attributed to improved infrastructure, better perception of vocational training and policy reforms.

The County Government has been vocal in advocating for increased capitation for county-level TVET students, seeking parity with national institutions. This move aims to make vocational training more attractive and accessible, especially to learners from low-income backgrounds.

TVET in Kirinyaga is increasingly linked to local development priorities such as the Sagana Industrial Park, agribusiness value chains, housing and healthcare.

By aligning training with these opportunities, the county is positioning its youth not just as job seekers, but as skilled contributors to economic growth.

From village polytechnics like Mucii wa Urata to expanding institutions such as Kaitheri Polytechnic and modern technical colleges across the county, Kirinyaga's TVET journey reflects a broader national realization: skills matter.

Kirinyaga University

A Community Dream Transformed into a Catalyst for Regional Growth



Kirinyaga is privileged to have one of the best centers for science, technology and innovation in Kenya. Kirinyaga University (KyU) story began in 1971, when residents of Kirinyaga petitioned for the establishment of a technical institute to equip local youth with practical skills.

Responding to this call, the County Council allocated land and in 1977, Kirinyaga Technical Institute officially opened its doors.

The institute admitted just 72 students, offering training in Building & Construction and Clothing & Textiles programs designed to address immediate workforce needs. For many years, the institution remained a key provider of technical and vocational education. However, as Kenya's development agenda evolved, so did the institution's ambitions.

A major milestone was achieved in 2011, when it was upgraded to Kirinyaga University College, becoming a constituent college of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and four years later, in 2016, the institution was granted a charter by President Uhuru Kenyatta, officially becoming Kirinyaga University, an independent public university.

KyU has since transitioned from a diploma-focused technical institute to a fully-fledged university offering Bachelor's, Master's, and postgraduate programmes. Its academic focus spans Engineering, Health Sciences, Information and Communication Technology, Business, Agriculture and Applied Sciences.

Guided by its vision to be a world-class university in science and technology and its motto "*Innovative Technology for a Dynamic World*," KyU positions itself as a hub for innovation, entrepreneurship and research aimed at solving real-world problems.

The university's growth has been shaped by strategic leadership under Vice Chancellor Professor Mary Wambui Ndung'u, whose tenure has focused on strengthening academic quality, expanding infrastructure, promoting research and fostering partnerships with industry and government. Supporting the Vice Chancellor is the University Council, chaired by Dr. Idris Muhumed Kosar, alongside an experienced administrative and academic team that has enhanced governance and institutional stability.

Kirinyaga University has played a transformative role in the economic and social development of Kirinyaga County and neighbouring towns such as Kerugoya, Kutus, Kagio and Wang'uru. Beyond economics, KyU has contributed to human capital development, producing skilled graduates who serve in schools, hospitals, businesses and public institutions across the region.

Today, Kirinyaga University stands as a powerful example of how community-driven initiatives can evolve into institutions of national importance. From its humble beginnings in 1977 to its status as a chartered university. To enroll check courses in their website *www.kyu.ac.ke*

From Healthcare to Plumbing



Paul Kariuki
Hp Plumbing Solution

After completing my course as a healthcare assistant at Transafric Accountancy College, I joined the health sector and worked in three different facilities. My first salary was Ksh 12,000, the second was Ksh 15,000, and the third was Ksh 15,000. With time, I started to reflect on my situation. Almost half of my income was going to daily expenses, and I realized that growth would be slow. I knew I needed to think differently. That is when I decided to look for an alternative path.

I chose to enroll in a technical course at Christian Industrial Training College. I had several options to choose from, including electrical work, welding, carpentry, and plumbing.

After consulting widely and evaluating myself honestly, I settled on plumbing.

I joined the college to study plumbing and pipe fitting and started at the master craft level.

After completing my training, I joined the industry as a laborer, earning KSh 600 per day. At that point, it honestly felt like I had made the wrong decision.

The first six months were very tough. I was constantly being instructed by fundi's on what to do and what not to do. It was not easy, but it was during this period that I learned the most.

> "The start may be tough, but with patience, discipline and commitment, the rewards are great.

One day, while working on a construction site and chasing walls for pipe installation, the owner of the building came by and observed my work.

He was impressed by my commitment and asked to know more about me. I shared my journey with him, and after listening, he encouraged me and asked if I would be interested in working as an independent plumber.

I was excited and said yes, but I explained that taking over the site we were working on would not be right since my boss had already secured the contract. He reassured me and told me not to worry, as he had several other construction sites underway. That moment changed everything.
That is how HP Plumbing Solution was born.

Today, HP Plumbing Solution is a growing firm, steadily building a strong customer base. Looking back, I am grateful that I made the decision to change careers and pursue a technical skill. It was not easy at the beginning, but it was worth it.

I encourage anyone considering their career options to think seriously about skill-based courses.

The start may be tough, but with patience, discipline and commitment, the rewards are great.

Role of the Juakali Industry



Ken Muriithi
CEO,
Vinsking Plumbers

Kirinyaga hosts several agro-processing and industrial firms, including maize and rice millers such as Joy Millers, Spenza, Maruti Millers, Nice Millers, Tupike, Softy, Top Taste

When you switch on light at home, Jua Kali is at work. When clean water flows from a tap, Jua Kali is involved. When you rest on a well-made bed or sit comfortably after a long day, that comfort is the work of Jua Kali.

Behind these everyday moments are skilled hands shaping wire, wood, metal, paint and stone. Electricians wire our homes, plumbers connect water systems, masons raise walls, painters bring buildings to life, carpenters craft furniture, welders secure gates and mechanics keep machines running. Their work is practical and often unnoticed, yet impossible to live without.

Jua Kali represents Kenya's vibrant informal economy, made up of artisans and small-scale entrepreneurs who operate in open spaces, roadside workshops and small yards. They provide affordable and reliable goods and services that support households, farms and businesses across the country.

Value, as thinkers have long observed, is measured not by visibility but by usefulness. The Jua Kali sector demonstrates this every day.

National data shows that more than 80 percent of Kenya's workforce earns a living in the informal sector, with millions depending directly on Jua Kali activities.

Despite operating outside formal structures, the sector contributes roughly a quarter of Kenya's GDP, anchoring the economy in real production and service delivery.

In Kirinyaga County, Jua Kali is deeply woven into daily life. An estimated 75 percent of small business operators in the county are part of the Jua Kali ecosystem. From busy town centers to rural villages, artisans provide services that keep homes functioning, industries operating and communities moving forward.

The story of Jua Kali in Kirinyaga reminds us that development often begins not in offices or boardrooms, but on construction sites, in workshops and in open yards where skilled hands turn necessity into lasting solutions.

This reality places technical skills at the very pivot of any economy. Kirinyaga is no exception.

Is Teaching a Career Worth it?



Haron Mwai
Teacher

Teaching give's purpose, growth, influence and the power to shape generations.

They say, "A teacher affects eternity; they can never tell where their influence stops." If you are a young Kenyan thinking about your future, consider teaching. It is a career that goes far beyond standing in a classroom. Teaching is about shaping lives, inspiring dreams and leaving a mark that lasts a lifetime.

Think about it every great professional once had a teacher. Doctors, pilots, software engineers, artists and leaders all started in a classroom. By choosing teaching, you place yourself at the very beginning of someone else's journey. You become the spark that lights ambition and the guide that helps others discover their potential. As an African proverb reminds us, "Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it alone." Teaching allows you to pass that wisdom on.

In Kenya's Competency Based Education system, teachers are not just instructors. They are mentors, innovators and talent developers. Your work can shape futures in ways that go far beyond lessons.

Many young people want more than a job. They want purpose. Teaching gives that. Your words can build confidence. Your guidance can change behavior. Your belief in a student can transform a life. There is no reward like hearing a former student say, "You believed in me." That kind of impact cannot be measured in money.

Teaching today is dynamic and full of possibilities. Technology is changing how we learn and teach. Young teachers can explore online teaching, creating educational content, school leadership, curriculum development and even international teaching opportunities. It is no longer only chalk and textbooks. It is a chance to create, innovate and make a difference anywhere.

In Kenya, teachers can work through the TSC, private institutions or international schools.

Kenya needs young, energetic and creative teachers who understand today's learners and tomorrow's challenges. If you are passionate, patient and ready to make a difference, teaching is a career where you can thrive.
Do not choose a career simply because it sounds prestigious. Choose one that allows you to change lives including your own.

Teach today. Shape tomorrow. Build Kenya.



Stanley Wangari, commonly known as Mopao Mhakiki (Founder Hadithi Kwa Tunda) distributing books

Hadithi Kwa Tunda

There is an old African wisdom that says when a child stops asking questions, the village should worry. Hadithi Kwa Tunda was born from this worry and from hope. Hope that stories can rescue curiosity, that fruit trees can nourish bodies and that reading can protect a society from manipulation.

Hadithi Kwa Tunda is a community-rooted initiative that brings together storytelling, reading culture, nutrition and environmental conservation.

It's simple but powerful premise is this: a well-read child is harder to deceive; a well-nourished child learns better and a tree planted today secures tomorrow. Why does Reading Culture Matters Now More Than Ever?

Kenya is facing a silent crisis: the erosion of a strong reading culture. When people do not read whether schoolbooks, newspapers or even their own religious texts they become vulnerable to half-truths, emotional manipulation and outright deception.

Tragic episodes such as Shakahola shocked the nation, not only because of what happened, but because of what they revealed: a dangerous gap between belief and understanding.

> Hadithi Kwa Tunda Feeds the Mind by Feeding the Body

By nurturing a habit of reading early, we raise a generation that asks questions, verifies claims and resists charlatans whether they wear religious robes, political suits or social media masks. Stories as Shields Against Manipulation Stories are not entertainment alone; they are tools of thinking.

Through age-appropriate storybooks placed in schools, children learn cause and effect, moral reasoning, empathy and critical thought. A child who reads regularly learns that authority must be questioned, ideas examined and truth sought.

Hadithi Kwa Tunda deliberately places books where children are, public primary schools, ensuring access for learners who may never own a book at home. In doing so, the project quietly builds intellectual immunity against future manipulation.

Hadithi Kwa Tunda

Learning does not happen in a hungry body. Yet across rural Kenya, a painful contradiction exists: many parents grow fruits but rarely feed the best of them to their own children. High-quality produce is sent to market for cash, while bruised or overripe fruit or none at all remains for home consumption.

Hadithi Kwa Tunda challenges this mindset by integrating fresh fruits into the school environment. Through fruit tree planting and direct fruit provision, learners access nutritious food during school days. The results are practical and immediate: improved concentration in class, better overall health and increased school attendance, especially in lower primary. When children know that school also means a healthy meal or fruit, absenteeism drops. Education becomes not just an obligation, but a place of care.

This approach aligns nutrition with education, turning schools into safe and nurturing spaces where children thrive both intellectually and physically.

Environmental Conservation: Learning From the Land
Every fruit tree planted under Hadithi Kwa Tunda is a classroom without walls. Learners participate in planting, nurturing and protecting trees, gaining practical lessons in:
Environmental stewardship
Climate change mitigation
Responsibility and patience

Founder's Vision

Founded by Stanley Wangari, popularly known as Mopao Mhakiki, Hadithi Kwa Tunda draws from a deep commitment to education, culture, faith and social responsibility. The project is guided by the belief that ignorance is more dangerous than poverty and that reading is the first line of defense for any society. The vision is not charity, it is empowerment. Not dependency but capacity.



Despite Challenges, there is a proven Impact in Kirinyaga and Embu Counties. Hadithi Kwa Tunda has recorded successful activities in a good number of public primary schools across these counties. These engagements have included:
Fruit tree planting
Storybook donations
Reading sessions with learners
Community sensitization on nutrition and reading culture
The response from learners, teachers and parents has been overwhelmingly positive affirming that the model works.

A Call to Partners and Supporters

Hadithi Kwa Tunda is a seed that needs watering.
We invite corporate partners, publishers, environmental organizations, faith-based institutions and well-wishers to walk this journey with us.

Planting Stories. Growing Futures.

When we give a child a book, we give them a voice. When we give them fruit, we give them strength. When we plant a tree, we give them a future.

Hadithi Kwa Tunda is not just a project it is a movement to raise readers, thinkers and caretakers of both truth and the earth.
The seeds are already in the soil. With your support, the harvest can nourish a nation.

From Hills of

Mt. Kirinyaga to Big Screen

A Letter to the Young Dreamers with Cameras



Mr Jeffither Murimi Kariuki (Waigwa)
Film maker, script writer, actor & content creator

There is something about Kirinyaga County that teaches you how to see before it teaches you how to speak.
Maybe it's the way Mt. Kenya wakes up before everyone else.

Maybe it's the red soil that stains your shoes and reminds you where you come from.
Or maybe it's the silence between villages, the kind of silence that forces your imagination to talk.

I grew up here. And long before I knew what a "film angle" or a "story arc" was, I knew stories. I knew how a grandmother pauses before the punchline. I knew how a boda boda ride can feel like a chase scene. I knew how laughter, grief, love, and madness all live in the same homestead.
That, to me, is cinema.
The Creative Burden of Being Young and Kenyan

Young people in Kirinyaga are not lacking talent. We are lacking permission.
Permission to fail loudly.
Permission to dream beyond survival.
Permission to believe that a phone camera can be a passport.

Many of us were told creativity is a hobby, not a future. That film is for Nairobi.

That art doesn't pay. That stories don't change anything. But if stories didn't matter, why would they be the first thing politicians fight to control?

Film is not just entertainment.
Film is memory.
Film is protest.
Film is healing.

A Letter to the Young Dreamers with Cameras

Why I Chose Film and Why Film Chose Me
I didn't choose film because it was easy. I chose it because it wouldn't leave me alone.
Every village argument felt like dialogue.
Every funeral felt like a long, painful scene.
Every love story felt unfinished begging for a rewrite.
Film gave me language when words failed. It gave me courage when life felt heavier than my pockets.
It taught me discipline, patience, humility and the brutal truth that talent alone is never enough. If you don't tell your story, someone else will and they won't tell it kindly.
Kirinyaga Young Professionals (KIYP): More Than a Website. When you visit www.kiyp.org, you don't just see a website you see intention. KIYP represents a growing belief that young people from Kirinyaga are not waiting to be rescued. We are building. Learning. Collaborating. Creating spaces where creativity is not mocked but mentored.

Many of us were told creativity is a hobby, not a future. That film is for Nairobi. That art doesn't pay. That stories don't change anything. But if stories didn't matter, why would they be the first thing politicians fight to control?
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Film gave me language when words failed. It gave me courage when life felt heavier than my pockets. It taught me discipline, patience, humility, and the brutal truth that talent alone is never enough.
A Message to the Young Creative
If you are a young person in Kirinyaga with ideas you can't sleep on this is for you.
Your story matters.
Your accent is not a weakness.
Your background is not a limitation.
The future of Kenyan film will rise from counties, villages, and courageous storytellers.
Philosophy of a Camera in the Right Hands
A camera in the wrong hands is noise.
A camera in the right hands is truth.
We don't want to create filmmakers who copy Netflix aesthetics with no soul. We want filmmakers who understand why a story must be told, not just how it should look.
We want young people who can ask:
Why does this story matter now?
Who is being silenced? What does Kirinyaga look like when no one is trying to impress Nairobi?
Because the most powerful films are not polished they are honest.
A Message to the Young Creative Reading This
If you are a young person in Kirinyaga with ideas you can't sleep on this is for you.
If you shoot skits, write scripts, edit videos at night, act in mirrors, or dream in scenes you are not foolish. You are early. If you've been told "*hakuna pesa kwa hiyo kitu*" remember, there was no money in the internet once either. Your story matters. Your accent is not a weakness. Your background is not a limitation. The future of Kenyan film will not come from skyscrapers alone. It will come from counties.
From villages. From people brave enough to believe that their ordinary lives are worth documenting. Closing Frame
Kirinyaga is not just a place. It is a character.
And it is time we let it speak through our lenses, our voices, our scars, and our dreams. The bootcamps are coming.
The collaboration is real.
The generation is ready.
All that remains is courage.
And courage, like film, begins with pressing record.
All that remains is courage.
And courage, like film, begins with pressing RECORD.

Kirinyaga
Doctor Making Moves



Dr.Joe Njagi

Dr. Joe Njagi was born and raised in Kirinyaga County, where his journey into medicine began. He is a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynecologist with a strong focus on advanced gynecological care.

He practices in Kerugoya Town, Kirinyaga County and in Nairobi at Park Medical Center in Parklands. He completed his medical degree in 2012, after which he undertook his internship.

In 2013, he began his postgraduate training in Obstetrics and Gynecology and successfully completed it in 2017. Over this period, he has deliberately built a practice centered on laparoscopy and gynecology, with limited focus on obstetrics.

Since then, Dr. Njagi has been in active medical practice, accumulating over seven years of experience.

Dr. Njagi has undergone extensive specialized training in minimally invasive surgery, particularly in laparoscopy and endometriosis management.

His training spans several regions of the world, including Europe, India, the United States and South America. These global exposures have shaped his expertise and strengthened his commitment to making advanced gynecological care accessible within the region. One of the most notable recognitions in his career is the Voice Achievers Award for Medical Excellence in Africa.

This award acknowledged his work across East Africa in advancing laparoscopic surgery and promoting access to minimally invasive procedures, especially in underserved and Mashinani areas.

He has also been recognized by iCareBetter, a global platform that vets endometriosis specialists worldwide, placing him among a select group of experts in the field.
His area of specialization is minimally invasive surgery, with a strong focus on complex endometriosis surgery.



Endometriosis surgery is considered one of the most challenging procedures in gynecology, and Dr. Njagi's expertise includes advanced cases involving bowel endometriosis, diaphragmatic endometriosis, pelvic endometriosis and bladder involvement.

His work has helped restore quality of life to patients who have lived for years with chronic pain, infertility, and repeated misdiagnoses.

Dr. Njagi's philosophy in healthcare is grounded in equity and access.

He strongly believes that quality healthcare is a right, regardless of gender, race, background or economic status.

He is particularly passionate about women's health, recognizing women and children as some of the most vulnerable populations globally. While obstetrics and gynecology may have initially seemed like a career choice, he often reflects that the specialty chose him, especially through his calling to care for women suffering from endometriosis.

He describes the most fulfilling part of his work as seeing patients regain their lives. For women who have endured years of pain and uncertainty, the ability to offer relief and hope is deeply rewarding. Hearing words of gratitude from patients, he says, remains the most meaningful recognition of his work.

Dr. Njagi's weekly schedule is demanding but purposeful. His time is split between clinic days and operating theatre days.

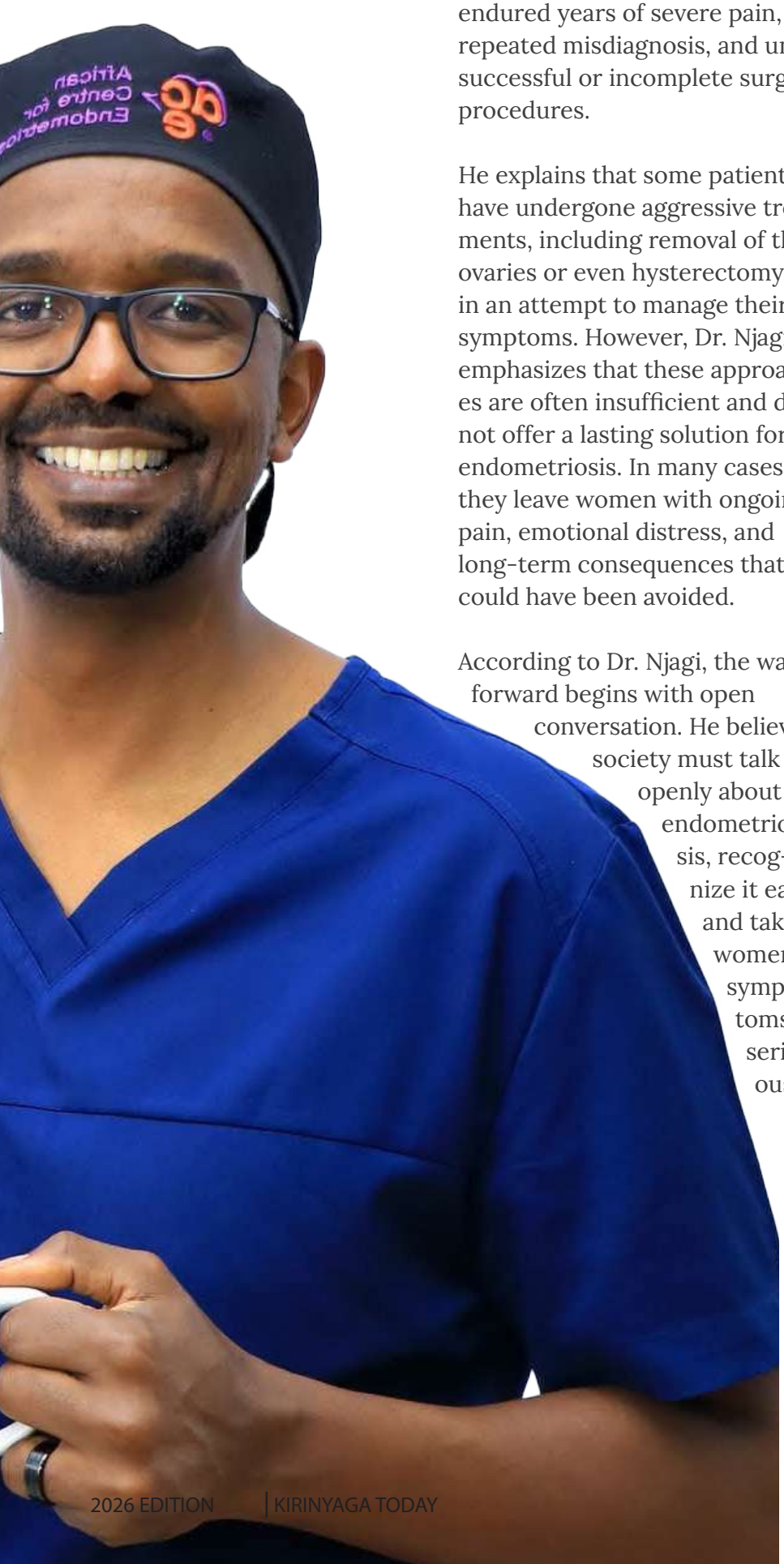
In a typical week, he performs between eight and ten surgeries, with approximately half being endometriosis-related. Some of these cases are extensive and may involve bowel surgery.

Theatre days often begin at 8 am and can run until 6 pm, while clinic days may involve seeing 20 to 25 patients.

He credits his efficiency and patient-centered care to the strong team he works with, emphasizing listening, empathy, and creating a welcoming clinical environment.
Dr. Joe Njagi observes that there is a growing and overwhelming number of endometriosis cases among African patients.

> **"Dr. Njagi's philosophy in healthcare is grounded in equity and access.**





He notes that one of the greatest challenges is that many women seek treatment when the disease is already advanced. By the time they present for care, many have endured years of severe pain, repeated misdiagnosis, and unsuccessful or incomplete surgical procedures.

He explains that some patients have undergone aggressive treatments, including removal of the ovaries or even hysterectomy, in an attempt to manage their symptoms. However, Dr. Njagi emphasizes that these approaches are often insufficient and do not offer a lasting solution for endometriosis. In many cases, they leave women with ongoing pain, emotional distress, and long-term consequences that could have been avoided.

According to Dr. Njagi, the way forward begins with open conversation. He believes society must talk openly about endometriosis, recognize it early and take women's symptoms seriously.

He stresses the importance of validating the pain, experiences and challenges these women endure, rather than dismissing or normalizing their suffering.

He is convinced that awareness, timely diagnosis, and appropriate specialized care are critical steps toward improving outcomes.

Outside the hospital, Dr. Njagi enjoys travel and nature. He is an avid mountaineer and recently summited Batian, an experience he describes as both challenging and deeply fulfilling. He values travel not only for rest but also for learning, networking and personal growth.

To women facing reproductive health challenges, Dr. Njagi offers reassurance. He emphasizes that medicine has made significant progress and that hope exists. Access to quality gynecological care is improving, and he is proud to be part of a generation driving that change.

Dr. Njagi offers laparoscopic and endometriosis services at his clinics in Kirinyaga and Nairobi.

Kerugoya contact: 0799 500 555
Nairobi contact: 0111 341 955

He welcomes patients and remains committed to advancing women's health through skill, compassion, and innovation.

Reimagining

Healthcare in Kirinyaga



Joshua Macharia
Medical Doctor

One of the realities in our health facilities is that many of the conditions filling our wards could have been prevented

Kirinyaga County is at a pivotal moment in its development journey. With a growing population and an increasingly youthful workforce, there are rising expectations for service delivery and the choices we make today will shape the county for decades to come.

Healthcare is unique among all sectors in that it serves as both a foundation and a multiplier of development. A healthy population is more productive, more resilient and better positioned to take advantage of educational and economic opportunities.

Healthcare is often discussed in terms of hospitals, equipment, and medicines. While these are essential elements, strong healthcare systems go beyond infrastructure. They are built on people and prevention and sustained through sound leadership that values accountability.

Over the years, Kirinyaga has made significant investments in expanding healthcare facilities and services. For many residents this has meant shorter distances to hospitals and better access to healthcare than in the past. However, access alone is not enough.

Quality, efficiency, equity and sustainability must guide the next phase of healthcare development. This phase depends heavily on people- especially young professionals who form the majority of the workforce across hospitals, health centers and dispensaries.

These professionals include Doctors, Clinicians, Nurses, Pharmacists, Laboratory staff, public health officers, Health Records personnel, Biomedical technicians and Health Information Specialists. Their daily work places them in direct contact with patients and communities.

They see the long queues, the missed follow up visits, the preventable complications and the small system gaps that can have big consequences. Yet despite being at the center of service delivery, young professionals are often underrepresented in leadership and decision-making spaces.

For healthcare systems to improve, the voices of those on the frontline must be heard. Involving them in leadership, planning and innovation is not just fair- It is essential for designing solutions that reflect the realities on the ground.

Shifting Focus from Treatment to Prevention

One of the realities in our health facilities is that many of the conditions filling our wards could have been prevented.

Non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and their complications continue to rise, while maternal and child health challenges persist despite available interventions. Preventive Healthcare offers a more sustainable path forward. Early screening, routine follow-up, vaccination, nutrition counseling, mental health support and lifestyle education can significantly reduce disease burden. This also lowers long term Healthcare costs and reduces pressure on already stretched facilities.

Community engagement is important for effective prevention and improving health seeking behavior. Young professionals, who are more energetic and often identify with the communities they serve, are well placed to lead Health education conversations in hospital set-ups and beyond hospital walls to schools, community groups, faith-based institutions and digital platforms.

Harnessing Innovation and Technology

Technology offers one of the most practical opportunities to improve how healthcare is delivered in Kirinyaga: electronic health records reduce the frustration of missing files and allow clinicians to follow a patient's journey more accurately over time; telemedicine helps bridge gaps in access, especially for rural populations; and mobile phone–based platforms support follow-up care, appointment reminders and health education.

Beyond individual patient care, digital health records strengthen data-driven decision-making. County health departments are better able to identify trends, anticipate needs and allocate resources more efficiently.

With the right training, mentorship and institutional support, they can develop and manage digital health solutions that are affordable and locally relevant.

Health Is a Shared Responsibility

Healthcare does not exist in isolation. It is shaped by factors beyond hospitals and clinics. Education levels influence health literacy and health seeking behavior.

Economic stability affects nutrition and mental wellbeing. Poor roads affect emergency referrals. Environmental conditions shape disease patterns. This is why collaboration across all sectors is essential and why platforms like Kirinyaga Young Professionals become valuable. By bringing together professionals from different fields, they create spaces where ideas are not confined to one discipline.

Conversations move from isolated problems to shared solutions that have lasting impact and integrated approaches that address the root causes of poor health rather than just the symptoms.

Leadership, Ethics and Accountability

Sustainable healthcare systems require strong leadership grounded in ethics and accountability. When resources are used responsibly and decisions are made openly, confidence grows not only among healthcare workers, but also within the communities they serve.

Accountability and transparency are not just management concepts; they are felt on the ground. They determine whether medicines are available when needed, whether staff feel supported and whether patients believe the system is working in their best interest. Trust, once earned, strengthens the entire health system

Looking Ahead

Kirinyaga has immense potential to become a model county for people-centered healthcare. Investing in prevention, innovation, collaboration and youth leadership is necessary to achieve this vision. Additionally, it requires a change from temporary solutions to long-term system strengthening.
By collaborating across disciplines and generations, we can build a healthcare system that reflects our shared values and serves the needs of present and future generations.

Silent Pillar of
Modern Healthcare



Eng. Faith Muriithi
Biomedical Engineer

Biomedical engineers & technologists are among the most critical yet least visible professionals in Kenya's healthcare system. As hospitals and clinics increasingly depend on technology for diagnosis, treatment and life support, biomedical engineers & technologists ensure that this technology works safely, accurately and reliably.

From the smallest health center to national referral hospitals, every healthcare facility depends directly or indirectly on their expertise.

Who are Biomedical Engineers & Technologist?

Biomedical engineers and technologists are professionals trained to apply engineering principles to medicine and healthcare.
Their training combines electronics, mechanical systems, information technology and basic medical sciences, all aimed at ensuring the safe, effective and reliable use of medical devices.

In Kenya, these professionals serve across public, private, faith based and non governmental health facilities, supporting clinical care and strengthening health systems.

Currently, Kenya does not have a statutory regulatory body specifically for biomedical engineering. Instead, the profession is represented by the Association of Medical Engineering of Kenya (AMEK), which is the recognized professional body. While AMEK is not a regulator, it plays a critical role in advocacy, professional development, ethical practice and the promotion of standards in medical equipment management across the country.

What is the role of Biomedical Engineers and Technologist in Healthcare Facilities?

Biomedical engineers and technologists are responsible for ensuring that medical equipment is properly installed, commissioned, and maintained in line with manufacturer specifications and safety standards.

They ensure that critical devices such as ventilators, patient monitors, imaging systems, laboratory analyzers, theatre equipment and dialysis machines remain functional, accurate and reliable at all times.

They play a vital role in patient and user safety by carrying out regular calibration, performance testing and safety inspections.

Through this work, they help prevent equipment related injuries, misdiagnosis and treatment errors, thereby protecting both patients and healthcare workers.

Beyond technical maintenance, biomedical engineers and technologists provide essential guidance to hospital management during the procurement of medical equipment.

Their expertise helps health facilities select appropriate, cost effective, and durable devices, reducing wastage and preventing the purchase of unsuitable or substandard equipment.

They also support healthcare workers by offering training on proper equipment use and basic troubleshooting, which improves efficiency, minimizes misuse, and extends the lifespan of medical devices.



Why should every healthcare need a Biomedical Engineer or a Technologist?

Across Kenya, many health facilities grapple with idle or non functional medical equipment due to limited technical support. Biomedical engineers address this gap by reducing equipment downtime, extending the lifespan of medical devices and ensuring uninterrupted delivery of healthcare services. Their involvement results in meaningful cost savings by limiting costly emergency repairs and avoiding unnecessary equipment replacements.

Reliable medical equipment is central to quality healthcare. Accurate diagnosis, effective treatment and timely medical interventions all depend on technology that works as it should. In this way, biomedical engineers contribute directly to better patient outcomes and play an important role in advancing Kenya's Universal Health Coverage agenda.



Value Of Mental Health



Hon. Shujaa Rose Wachira, OGW
Psychologist, Mental Health & Addiction Expert and Consultant.

What is Mental Health?

It's a person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being.

What Causes Mental Breakdowns?

Overwhelming stress, trauma, and life pressures, often layered on pre-existing mental health conditions, genetics, or brain chemistry issues, leading to an inability to cope with life due to this chronic stress.

It worsens because of poor sleep, substance use, or lack of support.
With family and/or social support Mental Health stable rises and normal life is realized. However, if Drugs and Alcohol is used, the brain is interfered with chemically and it gets hard to bring back such brain to normal/stability because Addiction takes over.

What is Addiction?

It is a chronic, relapsing behavioral disorder. This means it is a complex disorder which is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and abuse and by long-lasting chemical changes in the brain. It is therefore a brain disease expressed as a compulsive behavior and comes with it the continued abuse of drugs despite negative consequences.

Addiction is a Mental Disease

From the Disease Model of Addiction, addiction is defined as a disease by most medical associations, including the American Medical Association and the America Society of addiction Medicine.

This is because the initial and early decisions to use substances is out of free will and choice, but thereafter the brain is changed by addiction so that the choice or willpower is rendered useless, meaning that there is loss of control.

It is therefore a chronic disease that can only be controlled but not cured unless a long term treatment with continued monitoring and support is sustained with the help of the family, friends, peers and community.

For this reason, those who were once addicts but have stopped using alcohol and/or drugs/substance, continue to be referred to as recovering addicts.

Like any other disease, addiction is caused by a combination of biological, environmental and behavioral factors. Indeed, genetic factors account for about half of the likelihood that an individual will develop addiction.

Untreated addiction is more dangerous than diseases such as diabetes, cancer, malaria, heart disease etc, because it brings many physical and mental health disorders that require special medical attention. In fact it becomes more severe, disabling and life threatening as time progresses.

Addiction is a Monster

It's no wonder then, Alcohol and drug addiction has become today's monster. Most families and institutions are crying and mourning over the same.

Parents are desperate. This monster is not intimidated by class, both poor and rich, hustlers and dynasties are affected. Some families are stranded with no hope and of not knowing what to do with their loved ones, including their young ones. The situation is worsening by the day.

Those with means are opting to take their children abroad just to secure their safety from this menace. Our high schools and higher institutions of learning are no longer the safe havens they used to be some years back. Sadly, even the primary schools are currently threatened. Some unscrupulous people and drug barons have targeted the young ones in schools to ensure that they get hooked for life, early enough. This guarantees them of continuous and permanent source of income.

Once addiction sets in, it becomes almost impossible to kick out. Treatment is a complex affair and therefore it's important to nib it before it buds: Prevention is better than cure.

It brings about loss of control and compulsive use of a mood or mind-altering chemical or chemicals, along with the inability to stop the use in spite of the fact that such use is causing problems in one's life. It means having a physical and/or psychological dependence on a substance.

Types of Addiction

There are two basic types of addiction namely:-

1. Drug and Substance addiction.
This is addiction brought about by Drugs, alcohol and other psychoactive chemicals.

2. Behavioral/Process addiction.
This is addiction brought about by excessive desire for sex/love, Gambling/lottery, Internet/ social media, Exercise, Shopping, Work, social-media Pornography, Food, looks etc.
What motivates the youth to experiment on drugs and alcohol?
* Curiosity
* Risk taking
* Peer Pressure
* The thrill, adventure

AN ADDICT WILL HARM HIMSELF OR OTHERS EVENTUALLY!

So then, why do addicts kill those closest to them?
To answer the question why addicts kill the people they love most, it is important to look back at the chemically dependent person.

In a moment of sobriety and with a wish of hoping to get back to their original self, the addict/chemically dependent person may eventually, look at their journey to addiction and analyze the role played by the enabler, who he or she feels that there was something they would have done to stop them from harming themselves.

Finding it extremely difficult to return to sobriety, as much as he/she tries, he will start blaming the enabler, who in most cases is the wife or the mother and they will feel frustrated.



When such moment comes, it creates a 'moment of madness' where the addict feels so bitter and may want to revenge and harm the culprit. He may end up killing the parent, wife, husband or the children.
if the wife for example escapes, the addict will tend to hurt those closely related to the wife, including a child.

Most deaths in families of addicts either originate from the drug itself or crime committed by the drug addict themselves, though reported to the rest of us as accidents, suicide or just disappearances.

CLASSIFICATION OF DRUGS & ADDICTION RISK FACTORS

Drugs are classified according to how they affect the brain and the body, as well as on their potentiality for abuse and dependence. This means that drugs interfere with the functionality of the brain and the total Central Nervous System (CNS) in one way or the other including one's perception, memory, feelings, thoughts, mood, cognition and behavior. These drugs include:-

1. DEPRESSANTS

These are drugs or substances that suppress the Central Nervous System (CNS) or slow the brain and nerves activities to bring about calmness and a sedating effect.

They may include alcohol, if it is not taken in excess, barbiturates, gamma hydroxybutyrate and benzodiazepines.

In most cases some of these drugs are prescribed in hospitals to relieve anxiety, promote sleep and manage seizure activity but they however fall in the wrong hands.

2. STIMULANTS

These are the drugs and substances that stimulate the activities of the Central Nervous System (CNS). They make the user feel alert, Energetic and focused. They will also make you feel angry, paranoid and edgy. They include cocaine, amphetamine (ecstasy is derived from it), methamphetamine (most abused drug after bhang). Interestingly caffeine falls in this group as a stimulant.

3. HALLUCINOGENS

These are drugs that act on the central nervous system to alter one's perception of reality, time and space. They may cause you to hear or see things that hardly exist or imagine situations that are not real. In other words, they cause hallucinations e.g. Cannabis (including bhang and hashish oil), lysergic acid diethylamide (LCD) among others.

4. OPIOIDS

Opioids are the most prescribed medicines globally. They are usually used to treat pain and cough. The drugs in this category include heroin, codeine, morphine, hydrocodone, methadone, oxycodone and buprenorphine

5. INHALANTS

These are drugs and substances that are consumed through inhalation. They include paint, glue, paint thinners, gasoline, marker or pen ink among others. Most of these exist in vapor form even in room temperature.

They are commonly abused by children and adolescents. Inhalants include house paints and paint thinners, glue, petrol, pen ink among other house hold liquids. They get to the bloodstream through the lungs.

NB// Combination of these Drugs causes total brain collapse that may make it irreparable.

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Financial Peace and Freedom



Dr. Munene Gachau, Author, Trainer & Entrepreneur.

In a country where over a million young people enter the job market every year and an economy that creates only a handful of opportunities to absorb the new talent, financial independence easily sounds a pipe dream.

According to the UN report on Kenya's demographic data, out of a population of about 58 million people, 75% are young people below the age of 35, with 13.7Million of them being aged 18-34. 40% of whom are unemployed or underemployed.

With these statistics, and the rising costs of living, limited opportunities and a surging population, one is right to be concerned.

Is it possible for the youths to become financially independent? Can they build income streams? Can they take care of their financial futures? Can they ever move from survival mode to become economically productive?
The answer is YES!! Many Kenyan youths are rewriting the traditional scripts.
So, how can a young man/ woman move from survival mode to financial independence?

Below are seven basic tips to financial freedom:

1. Rethink the meaning of Financial Independence

Financial independence if not about having lots of cash, expensive machines and gadgets, fancy clothing or massive property ownership. No.

The first most important steps towards financial independence include;

•Ability to meet basic needs in life without accumulating debt.
•Sparing some money for savings (however small).
•Ability to generate some cashflows (income).

Your mindset is the most important enabler of financial independence and a shift to looking at money as a tool to be managed is paramount.

2. Gain some Income-Generating Skills
The world has already changed. In not about academic certificates anymore. It's about practical skills. Marketable skills. What skills do you have that can earn you income?

Some of the most valuable and marketable skills include Digital skills like graphic design, content writing and creation, social media management, virtual assistance etc, Technical skills like plumbing, electronics and electrical works, phone and computer repair etc,

Creative skills like photography, videography, music production etc
These are skills that you can get sometimes for free both locally and internationally. We have examples of young people who learned important skills just by watching free clips and tutorials online. You too can. Master one skill as early as you can and commercialize it.

3. Side Hustles.
Whether employed or not, one can earn good money from side hustles, whether in their professional line or totally different fields.

Think of a teacher who has an online clothes shop, or a banker who does tutoring in the evenings, or a chef who also runs a poultry farm in the backyard, an engineer who does baking during free time, an accountant who also does trainings on the side or content creation. The possibilities are endless.

Through entrepreneurship you learn discipline, resilience, and money management. Even when you don't succeed in one hustle, the experience gained is important and prepares better for success in another hustle in the future. The secret is in keeping on trying and never giving up.

4. Master Personal Finance Early
"Personal finance is 80% your behaviour and 20% head knowledge" Dave Ramsey.
Making some e arnings is just the first step towards financial independence, managing it wisely is where the line is drawn.
What do you do with your money? Are you able to track your money movement? Are you in control or money is?
Simple basic behavioral tips towards your financial freedom.
i. Earn a little at a time. A hundred shillings earned today is always better than expected thousand in the future.
ii. Tell your money where to go – use a budget.
iii. Save consistently whatever the amounts and save then spend instead of trying to save the surplus.
iv. Invest the savings. Amounts don't matter. Let the cash never stay idle in your wallet of bank account.
v. Avoid bad debt. Good debt makes you money, bad debt only costs you interest and leaves you financially worse off.

5. Exploit technology
The internet has removed geographical barriers. A Kenyan youth in Kenya can access global opportunities as long as they are connected to the internet. There are many platforms that offer online work.

All you need is stable internet and a big deal of self discipline – you can easily start earning in currencies stronger than Kenya shillings. Digital work is no longer the future; it is the present.

6. Networking and mentorship.
Your network is your net worth. Success rarely happens in isolation. Get a mentor who is already established and let them guide you. Take their advice and criticism with equal importance. Joing professional communities, youth groups, volunteering forums and take every opportunity that enables you meet people. Attend trainings, workshops, seminars etc. Connection opens up the world of opportunities and new ideas. Mentorship helps avoid mistakes and accelerate your growth.

7. Practice Patience and Consistency
Financial independence is a journey, not a sprint. There will be setbacks failed businesses, rejected job applications, and slow progress. Continuous practice, patience and consistency form the foundation for sustainable long term success.
Small, consistent steps taken today saving a little, learning a skill, starting a side hustle compound into meaningful financial stability over time.

Credit Finance in Kirinyaga County



Mr. Kennedy Irungu Maina- Credit Analyst, Family Bank

There is a common saying in rural finance that credit does not create wealth on its own, but it gives effort the chance to grow. In Kirinyaga County, this truth plays out daily across farms, markets, workshops, and households.

Access to credit has become one of the most important determinants of economic participation, resilience, and upward mobility.

Across Kenya, credit finance supports households, enterprises, and agricultural producers to invest, expand, and withstand economic shocks.

National financial inclusion studies show that approximately 81 percent of Kenyans rely on Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations, commonly known as SACCOs, to access financial services.

This makes cooperative finance a dominant force in the country's financial landscape, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. In Kirinyaga County, credit finance is deeply woven into socioeconomic life.

Agriculture remains the backbone of the local economy, with tea, coffee, rice, horticulture, dairy farming and related activities supporting thousands of livelihoods. In such a setting, access to timely and affordable capital often determines whether productivity improves, businesses expand or households remain vulnerable to seasonal income fluctuations.

This article examines the credit finance ecosystem in Kirinyaga County, exploring how credit is provided, who the key players are, its impact on development, the challenges that persist and the policy directions that can strengthen inclusive and sustainable growth.

Credit finance refers to the provision of financial resources in the form of loans, advances or credit facilities, with repayment expected over time. Economically, credit enables capital formation, entrepreneurship, risk management and consumption smoothing.

In Kirinyaga, its role is visible across multiple dimensions of development. For smallholder farmers, credit is a critical production input. Access to finance allows them to purchase quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, farm tools and seedlings. It also enables early land preparation, adoption of improved farming technologies and investment in irrigation infrastructure. These factors significantly influence yields, income stability and food security, especially in a county where rainfall patterns can be unpredictable.

Credit finance has also played a key role in the expansion of small and medium enterprises. Traders, artisans, transport operators, hospitality businesses and informal sector players depend on working capital to sustain operations. Loans make it possible to stock goods, acquire equipment, hire labor and respond to market demand. For many businesses, credit is the bridge between subsistence trading and structured growth.

At the household level, credit supports welfare and human capital investment. Families rely on loans to pay school fees, meet medical expenses, improve housing and manage consumption during lean periods.

Credit finance also promotes inclusion. Women, youth and marginalized groups are increasingly integrated into the formal financial system through tailored credit products.
The credit finance ecosystem in Kirinyaga comprises a mix of formal and informal institutions, each serving distinct segments of the population. At the center of this system are SACCOs.

SACCOs operate on a member-based model, where savings are pooled and members borrow against their contributions. In Kirinyaga, agricultural SACCOs serve farmers and agribusinesses across key value chains. Employment-based SACCOs cater to teachers, public servants and traders.

Their appeal lies in relatively low interest rates, flexible repayment schedules aligned with agricultural seasons, dividend payouts and the promotion of savings discipline. However, SACCOs face challenges including limited capital, occasional governance weaknesses and vulnerability to loan defaults during poor agricultural seasons.
Commercial banks also play a visible role. Institutions such as Equity Bank, KCB, Cooperative Bank, Family Bank and Absa operate branches and agency banking networks across Kirinyaga. They offer personal loans, SME financing, agribusiness credit and asset finance. While banks provide larger loan amounts, strict collateral requirements and documentation often exclude smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs, limiting access for a significant portion of the population.

Microfinance institutions and non-bank financial institutions fill part of this gap. Organizations such as KWFT, Faulu and Vision Fund extend credit to women, youth and micro-enterprises through group lending models and minimal collateral requirements.
Digital credit platforms have further transformed access to finance. Mobile-based products such as M-Shwari, Fuliza, Branch and KCB M-Pesa provide instant micro-loans based on transaction histories, eliminating the need for physical bank visits.

Alongside formal systems, informal financial networks continue to thrive. Chamas, merry-go-rounds, and community lenders operate on trust and social bonds, offering flexible terms and quick access to funds.

The impact of credit finance on Kirinyaga's development is substantial. In agriculture, access to seasonal loans has supported value addition in tea processing, rice milling and coffee production. Farmers who access credit on time are better positioned to plant early, improve post-harvest handling and increase productivity and incomes. In trade and enterprise, credit finance has enabled SMEs to expand operations, maintain stock, and create employment.

Credit has also strengthened human capital investment. Loans for education and healthcare improve long-term economic prospects, while community SACCOs reinforce savings culture, financial literacy and mutual support. Dividend earnings and shared responsibility contribute to collective empowerment.

Despite these gains, challenges persist. High borrowing costs, especially from digital lenders and informal money lenders, strain household finances. Collateral constraints continue to exclude many borrowers from larger loans. Financial literacy gaps lead to poor borrowing decisions and over-indebtedness, while climatic shocks and market volatility increase default risks in an agriculture-dependent economy. Regulatory oversight, particularly in the digital credit space, remains uneven.

Looking ahead, Kirinyaga has clear opportunities to strengthen its credit finance system. Building SACCO capacity through improved capitalization, stronger governance and tailored products can expand access to affordable credit. Financial literacy programs targeting communities, youth and digital credit users can improve decision-making. Partnerships between formal institutions and informal groups can extend credit through shared-risk models, while insurance products and price stabilization mechanisms can help manage agricultural risks.

My Story

Mary Mutumba Business

Mary is a 28 year old entrepreneur who runs a mitumba shop in Kerugoya town. She started the business two years ago with just one small bale of clothes and, through consistency and good customer service, has built a loyal customer base. Her shop focuses mainly on ladies' wear and children's clothes, items that move fast, especially over weekends and during school reopening seasons.

Her biggest challenge is capital. Whenever she manages to get high quality bales, they sell out quickly.

The problem is restocking. Limited funds mean she cannot buy in bulk or take advantage of better prices. To grow her business, Mary plans to start sourcing higher grade bales directly from wholesalers in Nairobi. For this next step, she needs about Ksh 200,000 to increase stock levels and stabilize her cash flow.

Before taking a loan, Mary decided to seek professional financial advice. She consulted Munene Gacau, a financial expert known for guiding small business owners on smart financing decisions. During their discussion, Munene helped her understand the different credit options available and how each one could affect her business. They discussed SACCO and chama loans first. Munene explained that these are often the most affordable options for small traders. Since Mary saves regularly, she could qualify for a loan of up to three or four times her savings, with interest charged on a reducing balance and a repayment period of six to eighteen months.

He advised her that this option was ideal for stocking a business like mitumba because it does not require land titles and relies on group guarantees.

hey also looked at SME loans from commercial banks. Munene noted that banks consider account activity, consistency of deposits, and basic business records. While interest rates are generally reasonable, monthly repayments can be demanding. He advised Mary to consider a bank loan only after strengthening her records and cash flow.

Microfinance loans were the next option. Munene explained that microfinance institutions offer quicker access to credit with minimal paperwork, making them suitable for traders who want to grow fast. However, the interest is slightly higher, and repayment schedules are tighter. His advice was to use this option cautiously and only when the expected returns can comfortably cover the repayments.

Finally, they discussed digital credit. Munene warned that while digital loans are convenient, they come with higher interest rates and short repayment periods. He advised Mary to use digital credit only for short term needs, such as topping up stock during peak seasons, and not as a primary source of business financing. After weighing all the options, Munene advised Mary that a SACCO or chama loan would be the best starting point for her expansion plans. It offered affordable interest, flexible terms, and enough capital to help her buy better stock without straining her business.

Armed with this guidance, Mary walked away confident and clear headed. Her story shows that growth is not just about accessing money, but about understanding it. With the right financial advice, disciplined saving, and smart borrowing, a small mitumba business can grow into a stable and profitable enterprise.



Daniel Tomato Farm

Daniel owns a tomato farm in Mwea, Kangai, an area well known for its fertile soils and reliable irrigation. For the past three years, he has been growing tomatoes on a small scale, supplying local markets and steadily improving his production skills. With rising demand and better yields, Daniel saw an opportunity to grow beyond subsistence farming and turn his work into a more sustainable agribusiness.

To prepare for the next planting season, Daniel planned to lease additional land near the Mwea Irrigation Scheme. He also needed to invest in quality seeds, fertilizer, pest control, irrigation equipment and labour. After doing his calculations, he estimated that he required about Ksh 350,000 to cover the land lease and all the necessary farm inputs.

Before committing to any loan, Daniel sought financial advice from Munene Gacau as well, a financial adviser with experience in agricultural financing. Daniel wanted to understand the available options and choose a facility that would match the realities of farming, especially the seasonal nature of income. Munene first walked him through SACCO financing. He explained that farmer friendly SACCOs understand agricultural cycles and offer flexible repayment terms. Since

Daniel was already saving, he could qualify for a loan of up to four times his savings, with interest charged on a reducing balance and a repayment period of between twelve and twenty four months. Munene advised that this option was suitable because it allowed repayments to be planned around harvest periods and did not require heavy collateral.

They then discussed commercial bank financing from institutions such as Equity Bank and KCB. Munene explained that banks can provide higher loan amounts, especially for farmers planning major expansion.

However, they require more documentation, including land lease agreements, cash flow projections, and acceptable collateral.

While interest rates are reasonable, Munene advised Daniel to consider this option only if he was ready with proper records and could comfortably manage structured repayments.

Munene also introduced Daniel to the Agricultural Finance Corporation. He explained that AFC is specifically designed to support farmers and offers loans with relatively lower interest rates and seasonal repayment plans.

However, the application process is more formal and requires a clear project proposal, proof of land access, and security. For Daniel, this option made sense if he was willing to prepare the necessary paperwork and wait for approval.

Finally, they discussed digital and mobile credit. Munene cautioned that while digital loans are quick and convenient, they come with higher interest rates and short repayment periods.

He advised Daniel to use digital credit only for urgent, short term needs such as emergency inputs and not for major investments like land leasing.

After reviewing all the options, Munene advised Daniel that SACCO financing or AFC loans would be the most practical and affordable choices for his expansion plans.

These options aligned well with farming cycles and offered manageable repayment terms without excessive pressure.

Daniel left the meeting with clarity and confidence. His experience shows that successful farming is not only about good soil and hard work, but also about making informed financial decisions.

How to Utilize
50 x 100 (1/8th) Plot

Increased population is causing pressure on our lands, resulting in forest degradation, land subdivision, and fragmentation. Land sub-division is reducing food production and we need to come up with ways of using small pieces of land. Youth are beginning to see the viability of agribusiness.

In an urban or small plot size like an eighth, it is still possible to practice profitable farming. The following are some of the ventures that can make good profits from an eighth piece of land:

1.Goat Farming

Other than cow meat, goat meat is highly consumed in Kenya. Since less capital is required to start this type of business it has good returns for a small space. A goat reared specifically for meat can be sold at around ksh 7000. If one rears 100 goats, he/she can reap over ksh 700,000.

2.Mushroom Farming

Introduction of several varieties of mushroom like oyster, shiitake and button. Mushroom farming do not require a bigger piece of land. For this small piece of land you need to make a mud house and utilize the vertical shelves.
On average a 1/8th an acre farm with 1000 bags can produce as much as 2 tonnes of mushroom. Each Kilogram of mushroom goes at around ksh 600 which translates to Ksh 1.2 million. Mushroom can be sold to supermarkets, hotels and households.

3.Garlic Farming

This is one of horticulture from the onion family. Garlic takes around 6 months to harvest. An eighth acre of land can give you around 1.5 tonnes of garlic bulb. One kg of garlic bulb goes at ksh 150 meaning you can generate ksh 225,000. Garlic onion have good demand in the local and external market.

4.Poultry Farming

Poultry farming is the process of rearing chicken which can be Indigenous (Kienyeji), layers, or broilers. Chicken rearing requires a small space of land. The demand for chicken meat in fast food hotels is very high. Similarly, we have a very high demand for eggs in hotels, shops, schools, hospitals and supermarkets.

5.Fish Farming

We have a very high demand for fish in the local market. This is due to increased health concern of more Kenyans. Fish farmers are nowadays rearing fish in ponds with the popular ones being African cat fish, Nile tilapia and the rainbow trout. You can make 100 square meter ponds within the eighth sized plot. The main cost for this venture is labor, polythene, feeds and the fingerlings. If modern farming methods are adopted, you can maximize fish production. A kg of fish goes at around ksh 500. For this size of land you can rear few thousands of fish.

6.Passion Farming

This is one of the most exported fruit in Kenya. The local demand is also very high. There two varieties of passion fruit in Kenya; the purple variety which grows in high altitudes and the yellow variety which has higher yields and is disease resistant.
For an eighth sized land one can grow around 150 passion plants with one tree producing around 15kg per year. If a kg of the fruits sells at ksh 80 you can get around ksh 180,000.

7.Beekeeping

The demand for honey and bee products is very high in the Kenyan market. According to NAFIS only 20% of the 100,000 per year metric tonnes of honey production have been tapped. Beekeeping requires a small a piece of land. For an eighth piece of land, you can rear around 25-30 colonies of bees.

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Value Of
Data in your Business



Rachael Wairimu
Data Analyst.

There is a simple truth in business and life today that, good decisions come from good information. In a world full of numbers, records and reports, data analysis has become a key tool for businesses, institutions and individuals who want to plan well and avoid expensive mistakes.

Every business collects data, whether it is sales figures, customer feedback, expenses, stock records or employee performance. On its own, this information does not say much. Data analysis is what gives it meaning.

By studying trends and patterns, businesses can understand what is working, what is failing and what needs to change. This allows leaders to make decisions based on facts rather than assumptions and guessed numbers.

Data analysis plays a major role in business planning. Looking at past performance helps businesses plan for the future. Sales data helps forecast demand. In 2025 for instance, Safaricom Mpesa transactions volume grew nearly 30% year-on-year to 37.15% billion transactions. This key sales data help forecast demand for mobile money and data services in telecommunications sector.

Cost data helps control spending. Market data shows opportunities and risks. With this knowledge, businesses can set realistic goals, allocate resources properly and prepare for changing conditions.

In agriculture, data analysis is becoming increasingly important. Farmers and agribusinesses use data to decide the best planting seasons, crop varieties, fertilizer use and irrigation schedules. Yield records help farmers know which practices work best.

Weather and market data guide decisions on when to plant, harvest and sell produce. For counties like Kirinyaga, where agriculture is the backbone of the economy, using data helps reduce losses, improve productivity and increase incomes.

The health sector also depends heavily on data. Hospitals and clinics use patient data to track disease patterns, manage supplies and improve service delivery. Health data helps identify common illnesses, evaluate treatment effectiveness and plan staffing and resource needs. During health emergencies such as the Covid-19 pandemic, data analysis guided decisions on resource allocation, vaccination planning and public safety measures.

> Fintech lenders such as Mshwari use hundreds of micro-indicators from smartphone and transaction data to

Data analysis is equally important in personal and financial decision-making. Individuals generate financial data through income, expenses, savings, loans and investments. By tracking and analyzing this information, people can budget better, reduce unnecessary spending, manage debt and plan for future goals such as education, housing or retirement.

Financial institutions also use data to assess credit risk, design loan products and promote responsible lending. Fintech lenders such as Mshwari use hundreds of micro-indicators from smartphone and transaction data to assess credit risk. Understanding customers and communities is another key benefit of data analysis.

Businesses use customer data to improve products and services, while governments and development organizations use population, education and employment data to plan interventions and measure progress. The Kenyan government relies heavily on data collected by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) to plan and allocate resources.

For example, data from the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census which recorded approximately 47.6 million people, guides the distribution of funds to counties, the construction of schools and placement of health facilities. In today's digital economy, data analysis sits at the center of innovation. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, mobile platforms and online services rely on data to function effectively.

From mobile banking and e-commerce to transport and farming, data-driven systems improve efficiency and open new opportunities. Businesses and professionals who embrace data are better prepared for the future.

Data analysis is not about making things complicated. It is about making things clear. When used wisely, data helps businesses grow, farmers plan better, hospitals save lives, and individuals make smarter financial choices. The future belongs to those who can turn data into understanding and use that understanding to make better decisions.

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Insurer Perspective



Nicholas Bundi
Actuarial Scientist

"Insurance is the silent guardian of our tomorrow."

After years spent working at the intersection of mathematics, risk, and real-world uncertainty, one lesson stands out clearly: insurance is far more than policies and premiums. It is a carefully built financial safety net that quietly holds households, businesses and entire economies together.

As an actuarial scientist with experience across life, health and general insurance, I have seen how well-designed insurance solutions protect families from financial collapse, help businesses survive crises and strengthen national economic resilience.

I have also seen the other side of the story. Poor understanding of insurance often leads to underinsurance, unrealistic expectations and mistrust in a system meant to provide security.

When insurance is poorly structured or poorly explained, it fails the very people it is meant to protect. As the saying goes, "Insurance is bought in hope, claimed in despair."

This gap between what insurance truly is and how it is commonly perceived is what drives this discussion. Insurance is not a reluctant purchase. It is a deliberate financial decision grounded in probability, data and long-term planning.

From pricing life policies using mortality trends, to modeling medical costs in the face of rising healthcare inflation, to assessing catastrophic risks affecting property and agriculture, actuarial science turns uncertainty into something that can be planned for.

This article draws on that professional perspective to demystify insurance by explaining its key types, how policies work and the logic behind their design.

In a time marked by economic volatility, climate uncertainty and changing health risks, understanding insurance is no longer optional. It is essential. Viewed through an actuarial lens, insurance is not just protection against loss. It is one of the strongest tools available for long term financial security.

At its core, insurance is about turning uncertainty into stability. Simply put, it involves transferring risk from an individual or organization to an insurer in exchange for a premium. This works because of risk pooling. Thousands or even millions of policyholders contribute to a shared pool, allowing the losses suffered by a few to be covered by the contributions of many. Actuarial science forms the backbone of this system. By analyzing historical data, probability patterns and financial assumptions, actuaries estimate how often losses are likely to occur and how severe they may be.

These insights guide pricing, product design and capital planning, ensuring insurers can meet future claims while remaining financially sound. Regardless of the type of insurance, most policies are built around a few common elements.

The premium is the price paid for coverage and reflects expected claims, operating costs and risk margins. The sum assured or coverage limit defines the maximum amount payable in the event of a claim.

Deductibles, also known as excess, represent the portion of a loss the policyholder bears before the insurer pays. The policy term defines how long coverage lasts, while exclusions and conditions clarify what is not covered and what the insured must do to remain engaged on benefits

Insurer Perspective

From an actuarial perspective, these elements are not arbitrary. They are carefully adjusted to balance affordability, fairness and sustainability. For example, higher deductibles reduce frequent small claims and help keep premiums affordable for everyone. Life insurance is one of the clearest examples of insurance as financial protection. Its purpose is to shield dependents from the economic impact of premature death by replacing income, settling debts and supporting long term plans.

Whole life insurance provides lifelong coverage and includes a savings component that builds cash value over time. Its main advantage is certainty. A payout is guaranteed whenever death occurs. The tradeoff is higher premiums, reflecting the lifelong risk and savings feature.

Endowment policies combine protection and disciplined saving. They pay out either on death during the policy term or on survival to the end of the term. These policies are commonly used for education funding and long-term financial goals.

Health insurance addresses one of the most unpredictable financial risks: medical costs. Healthcare expenses are often sudden, high and affected by inflation, making health insurance a necessity rather than a luxury.

Health cover can be structured in several ways. Individual plans cover one person, while family floater plans share a single sum assured across multiple family members.

Group health insurance is commonly offered by employers or associations. Critical illness cover provides a lump sum upon diagnosis of specified serious conditions.

General insurance, also known as non-life insurance, protects assets and operations against a wide range of risks. Motor insurance, often mandatory, covers road related risks.

Third party insurance protects against injury or damage caused to others, while comprehensive cover includes damage to the insured vehicle, theft and third-party liabilities. Pricing reflects driver behavior, vehicle type, usage patterns and claims history.

Property insurance protects buildings and contents against risks such as fire, theft, floods and earthquakes. It applies to both personal property like homes and commercial property such as offices, factories and warehouses. In this area, catastrophe risk modeling is critical, especially in regions prone to natural disasters.

Liability insurance shields individuals and organizations from legal claims arising from negligence or legal responsibility. Public liability cover addresses injury or property damage to third parties. Employer's liability or workers' compensation covers employee injuries. Professional indemnity insurance protects professionals against claims related to errors or omissions. From an actuarial standpoint, liability insurance is particularly complex. Claims may take years to settle, and outcomes are uncertain, requiring careful reserving and conservative assumptions.

As risks evolve, insurance continues to adapt. Agricultural insurance helps farmers manage weather and production risks. Microinsurance provides simple and affordable cover for low-income populations. Cyber insurance addresses data breaches and system failures. Travel insurance protects against medical emergencies and trip disruptions. These products show how actuarial models continue to evolve in response to new forms of risk.

In the insurance lies trust. Policy holders trust that claims will be paid when needed. Actuaries help protect that trust by ensuring products are priced correctly, reserves are adequate and risks are clearly understood. Their work influences insurers, regulators, policymakers and financial markets alike.

Insurance is not about expecting loss. It is about preparing for uncertainty. When chosen wisely, it protects livelihoods, preserves wealth, and supports progress. Understanding how insurance works empowers individuals and businesses to make informed and confident decisions.

In an increasingly complex world, insurance remains one of the most powerful financial tools available. Guided by actuarial science, it continues to transform risk into resilience, quietly and consistently.

Importance of Procurement



Beatrice Muthoni
Business Administrator

In the procurement profession, there is a saying that quietly captures its true value: procurement is not about buying cheaply, it is about buying wisely. This idea reflects how far procurement has come. What was once viewed as a routine administrative task has grown into a strategic function that shapes how organizations perform, manage risk and plan for the future.

In today's business environment, procurement is no longer confined to purchase orders and supplier lists. Effective procurement balances cost, quality, timing, compliance and sustainability. When done right, it supports stable operations and long-term growth. When done poorly, it exposes organizations to inefficiencies, losses and reputational risk.

My journey in procurement, grounded in academic training in Business Administration with a focus on procurement and supply chain management, complemented by a Diploma in Information and Communication Technology and shaped by experience across corporate, tourism and entrepreneurial spaces, has made this reality clear.

Procurement decisions are never neutral. They directly influence how smoothly operations run and how resilient an organization becomes over time.

At its core, procurement ensures that the right goods and services are available when needed and at a cost that makes sense. Beyond this basic function, procurement plays a key role in reducing wastage, enforcing financial discipline and strengthening supplier relationships. It is one of the quiet systems that keeps organizations moving without disruption.

This became evident during my time as an Operations Assistant at Paytech Ltd. In a fast-paced, technology-driven environment, procurement was closely tied to system reliability and service delivery. Timely sourcing, proper vendor evaluation and adherence to clear procedures were not optional.

A single delay or poor supplier choice could interrupt operations and affect clients. Procurement, in this setting, was not a support function. It was a backbone. Procurement's influence becomes even more pronounced when linked directly to operations.

My experience as Head of Operations at Kachumbari Tours reinforced how procurement decisions shape service quality. In the tourism sector, everything from transport and accommodation to food supplies and travel logistics depends on reliable sourcing. A weak supplier can damage customer experience just as quickly as a strong one can enhance it.

Technology has also transformed the way procurement works. With a background in ICT, I have seen how digital systems improve transparency, accuracy and accountability.

Automated processes for requisitions, approvals, inventory tracking and supplier management reduce human error and provide data that supports better decision-making. While large institutions rely on advanced platforms such as IFMIS or enterprise systems, small and medium-sized businesses (SME) can still benefit greatly from simple digital tools.

Even basic record-keeping and supplier comparison systems improve control and planning. Running my own business has further sharpened my understanding of procurement from an entrepreneurial perspective. In small enterprises, resources are limited and margins are tight.

Poor procurement decisions quickly affect cash flow and profitability. For entrepreneurs, procurement must be intentional. Building dependable supplier relationships, negotiating fair terms, planning purchases in advance and keeping clear records are practical steps that support stability and growth.

Procurement may not always be visible, but its impact is felt everywhere. As organizations continue to evolve, procurement professionals must embrace technology, uphold ethical standards and align their work with broader organizational goals. In today's economy, procurement is not just a function. It is a strategic necessity.

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Kirinyaga KNCCI

The impact of KNCCI Kirinyaga is reflected in stronger SME growth, increased job creation and higher participation in trade and investment activities. Its continued engagement with policymakers contributes to more responsive and supportive business policies, while its convening power fosters collaboration across sectors.

By connecting people, ideas and opportunities, the Chamber is helping build a more cohesive and competitive business ecosystem. In strengthening businesses, KNCCI Kirinyaga is ultimately strengthening the county itself.

A vibrant private sector means more jobs, greater innovation and a more resilient local economy. Through consistent advocacy, practical support and strategic partnerships, the Chamber remains a key driver of economic progress in Kirinyaga County. KNCCI Kirinyaga exists to serve one clear purpose: to strengthen and represent the business community of Kirinyaga County. As a non-profit, member-based organization, the Chamber acts as the official voice of the private sector.

It works closely with the government institutions, development partners, and investors to shape an environment where businesses can grow and compete with confidence. At its core, KNCCI Kirinyaga brings together enterprises of all sizes.

This is from startups and small businesses to established corporates. This diversity creates a strong platform where ideas are exchanged, partnerships are formed and collective interests are advanced.

Through advocacy and engagement, the Chamber ensures that the concerns of businesses are not only heard but also reflected in policy discussions and economic planning. Its work goes beyond representation. It is about enabling growth, encouraging innovation and building resilience within the local economy.

Membership in the Chamber opens doors to practical support that many businesses would otherwise struggle to access on their own. Through structured networking forums, entrepreneurs and business leaders connect, learn from one another and explore partnerships. Market linkages expose local enterprises to regional and international opportunities.

While trade fairs and expos help businesses showcase their products beyond county borders. Capacity-building initiatives strengthen skills in areas such as financial management, export trade, compliance and overall business strategy, equipping members to operate more professionally and competitively. For businesses looking beyond local markets, KNCCI Kirinyaga plays a critical facilitation role.



Christine Wangeci
Political Scientist

By linking enterprises with embassies, trade missions and international partners, the Chamber helps bridge the gap between local production and global markets.

It also provides timely trade information, including updates on market trends, tariffs and export procedures, enabling businesses to make informed decisions. Exporters benefit from the issuance of certificates of origin, an essential requirement for participating in cross-border trade. The Chamber's role is especially important for small and medium enterprises and young entrepreneurs, who form the backbone of Kirinyaga's economy. Many of these businesses face challenges related to visibility, credibility and access to markets.

Through KNCCI Kirinyaga, they gain recognition, networks and mentorship that support their transition from informal operations to structured, scalable enterprises. Young entrepreneurs, in particular, benefit from exposure to seasoned business leaders and opportunities that accelerate learning and growth.

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Where Waste Becomes Work



Eliud Kangangi
Sheriff's Organics

Sheriff's Organics grew out of a simple tension. Too much organic waste is discarded every day, while many young people are told to wait for opportunities that may never arrive. The project sits deliberately between those two realities.
The goal was never to rescue anyone. It was to show that income can be built through understanding systems, especially natural ones, and working with what is already available.

At Sheriff's Organics, agriculture is treated as a process rather than a tradition. The first questions are practical. What is being wasted. What costs can be reduced before profits are chased. These questions matter to young people because most small ventures fail not from laziness, but from high inputs and thin margins.

Many youths avoid farming because it appears expensive and slow. Land, fertilizer, and feed quickly turn ambition into debt. Sheriff's Organics approaches agriculture from the opposite direction. Start with organic waste from homes and markets. Use small, consistent spaces. Build systems that compound value instead of consuming cash.
The Black Soldier Fly is central to this approach. BSF larvae convert organic waste into protein rich feed and nutrient dense frass. The systems are simple, require little space, and reward attention rather than scale. Waste that once caused problems becomes a productive input.

Frass is used deliberately as a soil amendment. Over time, it improves soil structure and fertility, reducing dependence on chemical fertilizers. Crops respond steadily, which lowers losses and stabilizes production. For youth enterprises, this directly lowers the cost of farming.

Cost control is where the model proves itself. Feed produced through BSF reduces livestock expenses. Frass cuts fertilizer budgets. Waste disposal becomes unnecessary. These savings give young farmers room to start small, learn through mistakes, and grow without pressure from debt.

Income does not come from one source alone. Larvae, frass, produce, and training services create multiple streams. When one slows, another supports the system. Youth learn that resilience comes from diversity, not size.

Perhaps the most lasting impact of Sheriff's Organics is how it reshapes perception. Agriculture becomes thoughtful work, not a fallback option. There are challenges, odors, and failures along the way, but there is also progress that builds quietly.
Sheriff's Organics stands as proof that alternative paths to income already exist. They require patience, skill, and respect for natural cycles. For young people willing to learn those cycles, the work offers more than money. It restores control over one's livelihood.

From Waste to the table

In food value chains, there is a simple saying that carries deep truth: food is only valuable when it reaches a plate. Between the farm and the table, however, too much food is lost, wasted or forgotten. In Kenya, this gap is one of the quiet drivers of hunger, rising food costs and environmental strain. According to Anthony Maina, founder of Food Cloud Kenya, food loss remains a critical challenge across Kenya's production and supply chains. Losses occur at every stage, from farming and processing to distribution and consumption.

What should nourish families instead ends up discarded, often while nearby households struggle to afford basic meals. A report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations paints a stark picture. Nearly 40 percent of food produced in Kenya is lost after harvest. This level of waste limits access to nutrition, weakens farmer incomes and undermines national food security. In informal markets, which supply a large share of urban households, losses are driven by poor infrastructure, limited cold storage and inadequate handling practices.

At the household level, fruits and vegetables are wasted most frequently, followed by staples such as maize, rice and wheat. Much of this food ends up in dumpsites, where it contributes to environmental pollution rather than human nourishment. This is the problem Food Cloud Kenya is working to solve by rethinking how surplus food moves through the system.

The Food Cloud Initiative connects farmers and food suppliers with surplus produce to consumers seeking affordable food options. Through USSD technology and a simple web platform, farmers and suppliers register products available for sale, indicating the type of food, quantities and subsidized prices. Consumers also register, sharing basic details such as location and contact information. Using a refined matching system, Mr Maina's team links suppliers with nearby consumers based on availability, location and preferences. Once a match is identified, both parties receive notifications detailing the discounted products and collection or delivery arrangements.
Consumers can place orders online, collect food directly from suppliers or opt for delivery where available. Transparency is central to the model, with consumers encouraged to provide feedback and rate suppliers after each transaction.



Anthony Maina
Founder Food Cloud

While Food Cloud Kenya works with several markets, Githurai Market in Nairobi serves as its operational hub. Here, the team trains traders on food safety, hygiene and proper storage practices to improve standards and reduce spoilage. Farmers also receive training in post-harvest handling and preservation to extend the shelf life of their produce.

Staff and volunteers play a hands-on role by negotiating subsidized prices for unsold or at-risk food, assessing quality to ensure safety, and grouping products for redistribution. Food that would otherwise be thrown away is redirected to households that need it most, strengthening both access and dignity.

"We aim to eradicate hunger by refusing to waste edible food," says Mr Maina, noting that the initiative aligns closely with Sustainable Development Goal 2 on zero hunger. Beyond nutrition, the work also contributes to climate action. When food decomposes in landfills, it releases methane, a potent greenhouse gas. By intercepting surplus food before it reaches dumpsites, Food Cloud Kenya helps reduce emissions and environmental harm.

Despite its impact, the initiative faces challenges, particularly around sustainable funding, staffing and infrastructure. Mr Maina calls on individuals, businesses and government agencies to support investments in cold storage and aggregation centers.
To reduce spoilage further, Food Cloud Kenya is currently fundraising for a cold room at Githurai Market, a move that would significantly extend the freshness of perishable goods.

In a country where both hunger and food waste exist side by side, initiatives like Food Cloud Kenya remind us that the issue is not always scarcity, but systems. When food value chains are reconnected with intention and care, surplus becomes sustenance, waste becomes opportunity and food finally reaches where it matters most, the plate.



Climate Action by Greenspace

Kenya's economy and the livelihoods of its people are closely tied to the country's rich natural resources. From forests and water towers to fertile soils and biodiversity, nature supports agriculture, energy, tourism and everyday life.

However, this natural capital is increasingly under pressure. Human activities continue to strain the environment, leading to degradation, resource depletion and growing vulnerability to climate change.

The real challenge facing Kenya today is how to use natural resources sustain-ably while ensuring their protection for future generations. Across the country, the effects of climate change are becoming more visible. Rising global temperatures, driven largely by deforestation and heavy reliance on non-renewable energy, are already affecting ecosystems and livelihoods.

These changes are evident in prolonged droughts, severe floods, rising temperatures, surface water warming and the gradual retreat of glaciers on Mount Kenya. Coastal ecosystems are also under threat, with rising sea levels and coral bleaching adding to the growing list of environmental concerns.

Mount Kenya Forest is one of Kenya's most important water towers and a vital national asset. Beyond its physical resources, the forest provides essential ecosystem services that sustain both local and national life. It plays a critical role in climate regulation, water storage, flood mitigation, soil erosion control, biodiversity conservation and soil formation.

It also supports livelihoods through timber, fruits, medicinal plants and other forest products. Despite its importance, Mount Kenya Forest continues to face serious threats. Pressure on the forest has increased due to unsustainable resource use driven by poverty, rapid population growth, weak management systems and limited institutional oversight. Both human and natural factors contribute to this decline. Illegal logging, unsustainable charcoal burning, forest encroachment, frequent fires, excessive firewood harvesting and overgrazing have all contributed to forest degradation.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, a group of concerned individuals conducted a baseline assessment to identify priority actions needed to protect and restore the forest. Two key intervention areas emerged. The first was reforestation of degraded areas through large-scale planting of indigenous and selected exotic tree species, combined with proper tree management practices such as weeding, pest and disease monitoring and seedling protection. The second was community empowerment through public awareness, particularly by strengthening Community Forest Associations and educating local communities on sustainable forest use and conservation.

These efforts led to the formation of Green Spaces, a Community Based Organization registered in November 2018 under the Department of Social Services. Green Spaces was established to promote environmental conservation, with a special focus on Mount Kenya Forest on the Kirinyaga side.

Climate Action by Greenspace

The organization draws representation from all sub-counties of Kirinyaga County, ensuring inclusive community participation. The core objective of Green Spaces is environmental conservation and public awareness on the importance of protecting natural resources. Its long-term goal is to fully rehabilitate degraded sections of Mount Kenya Forest and contribute to climate change mitigation through afforestation and reforestation. Equally important is the effort to build a culture of environmental responsibility among local communities.

Green Spaces pursues this mission through tree planting initiatives such as "adopt a tree" and "adopt a forest" programs, community mobilization and training and sustained environmental education. The organization works closely with partners including Kenya Forest Service and Community Forest Associations to safeguard forest ecosystems.

Even before formal registration, members of Green Spaces organized tree planting activities in several parts of Mount Kenya Forest including Kimunye near Castle Forest Lodge, Murinduko Forest, Njukiini Forest and the Gathuthuma block. Through these efforts, over 45,000 indigenous trees were planted.

The organization's first major project after registration focused on improving sanitation and livelihoods in Shauri Yako slum in Gathuthuma-Mutira Ward. Five latrines were constructed to address sanitation challenges and reduce pressure on forest resources. Many residents of Shauri Yako had previously lived within the forest, making awareness and engagement critical in preventing further encroachment after eviction.

In May 2019, Green Spaces implemented its second major project in Kangaita and parts of Gikumbo within Mount Kenya Forest. The initiative aimed to plant 10,000 trees following the rainy season. The project involved fundraising for seedlings, land preparation, and mobilizing volunteers, including residents from Shauri Yako, reinforcing community ownership of conservation efforts.

Funding for Green Spaces activities is sourced from individual member contributions, corporate partners and institutional support. Contributions are made transparently through M-Pesa pay bill and cheque payments, with expenditure reports shared with members. Past partners have included the Tana Water Works Development Agency, KIRIWASCO, Kirinyaga County Government and the Kenya Water Towers Agency.





Looking ahead, Green Spaces plans to conduct at least three major tree planting activities each year while continuing advocacy on sustainable resource use. The organization believes that today's generation must use resources responsibly so that future generations can meet their own needs. This philosophy guides its focus on engaging children, youth, students and young professionals, embedding conservation values early so they endure over time.

Green Spaces envisions a stable and healthy environment supported by informed communities and active stewardship. Environmental conservation is not the responsibility of a few institutions, but a shared duty. Through collaboration, awareness, and consistent action, the organization continues to work toward restoring environmental integrity and safeguarding Mount Kenya for generations to come.

This work highlights emerging environmental challenges that require close monitoring and timely action. It is our hope that these efforts will encourage stakeholders across sectors to take responsibility, strengthen environmental planning and act decisively to protect and restore Kenya's natural heritage.

How to Buy GENUINE LAND



By James Ploti Optiven

A Practical, No-Nonsense Guide for Every Smart Investor

Buying land in Kenya is one of the most empowering decisions you can make — but only if you do it right. The truth is simple: genuine land exists, but so do fraudsters, shortcuts, and costly mistakes. A wise investor follows a clear, legal, and verifiable process. Below is a refined, step-by-step guide based on Kenya's current land laws and best practices, supported by credible sources.

1. Identify the Land & Confirm Its Zoning

Before anything else, visit the land physically.
- Ask for a copy of the title deed.
- Confirm zoning at the County Physical Planning Office (residential, commercial, agricultural, etc.).
- Check if the parcel is digitized on Ardhisasa and linked to the seller.

Why it matters: Zoning determines what you can build, how high, and whether subdivision is allowed.

2. Conduct an Official Title Search

Go to the Ministry of Lands (or Ardhisasa) and run a search using the title number.
This reveals:
- The true owner
- Any encumbrances (loans, caveats, disputes)

Never skip this step. It is your first legal shield.

3. Do a Professional Site Visit with a Surveyor

A registered surveyor should:
- Confirm the beacons
- Verify the land's actual size
- Match the ground map with the Registry Index Map (RIM)

Why: Many disputes arise from fake or shifted beacons.

4. Land Valuation

Hire a licensed valuer to determine the true market value based on:
- Location
- Accessibility
- Development potential

This protects you from overpricing and helps with bank financing if needed.

5. Draft & Sign a Sale Agreement

Prepared by a lawyer.
The agreement should clearly state:
- Purchase price
- Payment terms
- Completion period
- Obligations of both parties

A deposit (often 10%) is paid at this stage.

6. Conduct Due Diligence on the Seller

Confirm that the seller is:
- The legitimate owner
- Mentally and legally capable of selling
- Not under any court restrictions

For companies, verify CR12 and board resolutions.

7. Transfer of Ownership

Your lawyer lodges transfer documents at the Ministry of Lands.
You will pay:
- Stamp duty (at a a%)
- Registration fees

Once approved, the title is issued in your name.

8. Post-Purchase Steps

- Fence the land
- Place beacons
- Keep copies of all documents
- If buying for development, apply for approvals

This protects your investment from encroachment.

THE GOLDEN RULE

If a seller discourages due diligence, walk away. Genuine land survives scrutiny.

CONCLUSION

Buying land in Kenya is not complicated. It is procedural. Follow the law, involve professionals, and never rush. As James Ploti, I always remind investors:
"Land is not just bought with money, it is bought with wisdom."

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Why Digital Literacy is Important



Martin Chomba
Founder Ujuzi Space

We are living in one of the most defining eras of human history. The digital revolution, accelerated by artificial intelligence (AI), is fundamentally reshaping how people learn, work, relate, govern and dream. Across the world, nations that have deliberately embraced digital transformation are rapidly advancing, while those that hesitate are finding themselves increasingly marginalized.

This reality presents both a warning and an invitation to developing societies: adapt intentionally or risk leaving entire generations behind. For Kenya, and particularly for counties such as Kirinyaga, this moment calls for courageous investment in people especially the youth through digital and AI literacy, values-based mentorship and hope-centered engagement.

Digital literacy and AI training bootcamps have emerged as one of the most practical, inclusive and transformative responses to this global shift. They are not merely technical programs; they are social interventions, economic catalysts and platforms for national renewal. At UjuziSpace, these bootcamps are designed to address the whole person skills, mindset, character, family values, intergenerational harmony and national consciousness because the future we seek to build demands more than technical competence alone.

The global economy has already changed. Work is increasingly digital, borderless and knowledge-driven. Artificial intelligence is redefining productivity, creativity, problem-solving and decision-making across every sector agriculture, health, education, finance, logistics, media and governance. Young people in Asia, Europe and North America are being deliberately prepared for this future through early exposure to digital tools, data, AI systems and global collaboration platforms. If our youth are not given similar exposure, they risk falling behind not due to lack of intelligence or ambition, but due to lack of access and opportunity.

Digital literacy bootcamps respond directly to this challenge. They equip young people with foundational skills that are now essential for modern life: effective use of digital devices, professional online communication, critical information literacy, cybersecurity awareness, digital productivity tools, and responsible internet engagement. These skills form the entry point into the digital world. AI training builds on this foundation by introducing learners to how intelligent systems work, where they are applied and how they can be used ethically and creatively to solve real-world problems.

At UjuziSpace, AI is not presented as something mysterious or threatening, but as a tool one that must be understood, guided by values and applied responsibly. Young people are taught to see AI as an enabler of human potential, not a replacement for human purpose.

This understanding empowers them to engage confidently with emerging technologies rather than fear or resist them. The importance of embracing new technologies cannot be overstated. History consistently shows that societies that resist innovation are overtaken by those that adapt. From the agricultural revolution to industrialization and now the digital age, progress has always favored the prepared.

Digital and AI bootcamps create that preparedness. They help young people shift from being passive consumers of technology to active creators, innovators and problem-solvers.

One of the most profound impacts of digital and AI literacy bootcamps is their ability to connect youth to the global digital economy. Today, work is no longer confined to physical offices or national borders. Freelancing platforms, remote employment, digital entrepreneurship, e-commerce, online consulting, software development, data services and content creation allow individuals to earn and contribute from anywhere in the world.

"A young person in Kirinyaga can now design for a client in Europe, analyze data for a company in Asia or create digital content consumed across continents."

Digital literacy is the bridge that makes this possible. Through UjuziSpace bootcamps, young people are exposed to global platforms, international standards of work, and emerging digital career pathways. They learn that their ideas have value, their skills are competitive and their location does not define their destiny.

This exposure expands ambition, builds confidence and dismantles the mental barriers that have long limited rural and peri-urban youth. Beyond skills and exposure, these bootcamps are intentionally designed to restore and sustain hope.

Many young people today face deep uncertainty unemployment, underemployment, rising living costs, social pressure and a rapidly changing world that often feels overwhelming. In such an environment, despair can easily take root. Skills without hope breed frustration.

Opportunities without guidance breed recklessness. That is why UjuziSpace integrates mentorship talks and life-skills conversations into every training program.
These talks are aimed at instilling optimism, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Young people are encouraged to believe in the dignity of labor, the value of patience and the power of consistency.

They are reminded that meaningful success is often gradual and built through discipline, learning and perseverance. In a culture that celebrates instant gratification and viral success, these conversations re-anchor youths in reality, purpose and long-term thinking. Equally central to these engagements is the emphasis on culture and values. As young people embrace global technologies, it is vital that they remain grounded in their identity, ethics and sense of responsibility.

Digital power without values can be destructive. Digital skills anchored in character become tools for nation-building. UjuziSpace therefore emphasizes integrity, accountability, respect, service and community-mindedness as non-negotiable foundations of digital empowerment.

The question of family is also intentionally addressed. As societies modernize, traditional family structures often come under strain. Yet the family remains the foundational unit of any stable and prosperous nation. Strong families produce confident children, resilient youth, and responsible citizens. UjuziSpace encourages young people to value the institution of family not as a limitation, but as a source of strength, identity, and continuity.

Discussions around family life naturally open space for deeper intergenerational understanding. One of the defining challenges of our time is the growing gap between Generation Z and their millennial and Generation X parents.
Differences in upbringing, communication styles, technology exposure and worldviews can easily lead to misunderstanding, frustration and conflict. Digital and AI bootcamps provide a rare and valuable platform to foster dialogue, empathy and congruence of mind across generations.

By helping parents understand the digital realities shaping their children's lives and helping young people appreciate the wisdom, sacrifices and experiences of their parents, we create space for synergy rather than tension. Intergenerational understanding strengthens families, enhances mentorship and builds social cohesion. When generations listen to each other and work together, they are better positioned to navigate change and build shared prosperity.
This alignment of minds and values is critical for national development. A country thrives when its youth are innovative and hopeful, its adults are productive and stable, and its elders are respected and engaged. Digital literacy and AI training, when combined with values-based mentorship and intergenerational dialogue, help align these groups toward common goals. The result is a citizenry that is technologically competent, socially responsible and civically conscious.

The broader impact of such programs extends into every dimension of national life. Socially, digitally literate youth are better informed, more connected and more capable of building inclusive communities. Culturally, they become storytellers and ambassadors who preserve heritage while engaging the world through digital platforms. Politically, they are better equipped to participate meaningfully in democratic processes, counter misinformation and advocate for accountability and transparency. Economically, they contribute through entrepreneurship, innovation and participation in the global digital economy.

A nation with digitally empowered youth is more resilient. It adapts faster, competes better and innovates more boldly. Such a nation is not merely reacting to global change; it is shaping its place within it. UjuziSpace envisions this kind of future a wholesome and vibrant youth population that is skilled yet principled, ambitious yet grounded, global in outlook yet deeply rooted in community.

However, there is a deeper social reality that must be acknowledged if we are to fully understand the urgency of this work. Today, the greatest cause of distress and indeed illness among parents aged fifty years and above is no longer the lack of material possessions. It is the silent heartbreak of watching their children desolate, discouraged and despairing in life.
It is the pain of seeing young men and women, full of promise, slide into vices such as drugs and substance abuse not always out of rebellion, but often out of hopelessness, frustration and a sense of abandonment by society.

Ujuzi Space

No parent sleeps peacefully when their child has lost direction, dignity and belief in tomorrow. This quiet suffering is one of the deepest social wounds of our time. If we genuinely desire to salvage our society as a whole socially, culturally, politically and economically we must confront the root cause of this despair. Restoring hope to the youth is not a secondary agenda; it is the central task of our generation.

Digital and AI literacy bootcamps, when designed holistically, offer a powerful response to this crisis. They restore dignity through skills, purpose through opportunity and meaning through mentorship. They show young people that they are needed, capable and valued. They replace idleness with engagement, despair with direction and vulnerability with vision.

Hope, in this context, is not a vague emotion. It is practical, structured and actionable. It is hope that comes from learning a new skill, accessing a new opportunity, being mentored by someone who believes in you and seeing a future that is worth working toward. Hope is and will always remain, the panacea the magical bullet answer to healing families, restoring dignity and rebuilding nations.

When the youth are hopeful, parents find peace. When parents find peace, families regain stability. When families are stable, communities thrive. And when communities thrive, nations secure their future. This is the logic, the vision and the moral imperative behind digital and AI literacy bootcamps as championed by UjuziSpace.

As technology continues to evolve and artificial intelligence reshapes the world of work, the question before us is not whether change will come, but whether our youth will be ready.

By embracing new technologies, investing in skills, nurturing values, strengthening families and fostering intergenerational understanding, we lay a solid foundation for a prosperous, cohesive and hopeful society.

UjuziSpace remains committed to this vision: connecting skills to opportunity, technology to values and local communities to the global digital village so that our youth are not left behind by their global counterparts, but stand confident, competitive and courageous in shaping the future of their country.

How to Unlock AI Digital Opportunities



Bonface Macharia
CEO & co-Founder TechAfrica



The world is changing at an unprecedented pace and artificial intelligence stands at the center of this transformation. For young Kenyans, particularly those in counties like Kirinyaga, AI is not merely a technological buzzword from Silicon Valley it is an accessible gateway to global opportunities, economic empowerment and career transformation.

Having recently facilitated the Twende Digital na Chomba bootcamp in Kerogoya, where over 200 youth gathered to learn about AI and digital freelancing, I witnessed firsthand the hunger for knowledge and the immense potential that exists within our communities.
This article aims to demystify AI, present realistic opportunities and provide practical guidance for anyone ready to embrace the digital future. Understanding Artificial Intelligence

At its simplest, artificial intelligence refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. These include understanding language, recognizing images, making decisions and generating content.

Unlike traditional software that follows rigid instructions, AI systems learn from data and improve over time.

The AI tools available today are remarkably accessible. ChatGPT, Claude and Google Gemini can write articles, answer questions and assist with research. Image generation tools like DALL-E, Midjourney and Leonardo AI create stunning visuals from text descriptions.

Video creation applications such as Benime allow anyone with a smartphone to produce professional whiteboard animations. Design platforms like Canva have integrated AI features that enable users to create marketing materials, social media content and presentations in minutes rather than hours.

What makes this moment particularly significant is accessibility. These tools do not require computer science degrees or expensive equipment.

A smartphone, internet connection, and willingness to learn are sufficient to begin.

The CLEAR Framework: Mastering AI Communication

The difference between mediocre and exceptional AI results lies in how we communicate with these tools. Through experience and research, I have developed the CLEAR framework for effective AI prompting:

Context — Provide background information. Instead of simply asking for a business plan, explain your industry, target market and available resources.

Length — Specify desired output length. Request 500 words, five bullet points or a two-page document.

Examples — Show the AI what you want. Provide sample formats, writing styles or reference materials.

Audience — Define who will receive the output. Content for university students differs from content for corporate executives.

Role — Assign the AI a specific expertise. Asking it to respond as a senior marketing consultant with fifteen years of experience yields different results than a generic request.

Applying this framework consistently transforms AI from a novelty into a powerful professional tool.

Real Opportunities: From Kirinyaga to Global Markets

The global freelancing economy is valued at over 1.5 trillion dollars and Kenyan professionals are increasingly claiming their share. Platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, and Freelancer connect skilled individuals with clients worldwide, regardless of geographic location. AI tools dramatically accelerate the work these freelancers deliver.

Content writing remains highly lucrative, with articles commanding between fifteen and one hundred dollars each. Social media management packages range from three hundred to one thousand dollars monthly per client. Graphic design projects using AI-assisted tools like Canva fetch between twenty-five and two hundred dollars. Translation services, particularly combining Swahili-English expertise with AI polishing, earn five to fifteen cents per word. Virtual assistance roles pay ten to thirty dollars hourly, while AI consulting teaching others to use these tools commands fifty to one hundred fifty dollars per session.

An emerging category deserving special attention is "vibe coding" platforms like Windsurf, Lovable, Bolt, and v0 that allow users to build functional websites and applications simply by describing what they want in plain language. This development means that entrepreneurship no longer requires coding knowledge. A farmer in Kirinyaga can create a website for their produce, or a young entrepreneur can build a booking system for local services, all without writing a single line of traditional code.

Practical Steps for Getting Started

Beginning the AI journey requires neither significant investment nor technical background. Start by creating free accounts on ChatGPT or Claude and experimenting with different prompts. Observe how changing your instructions affects outputs. Use the CLEAR framework to refine your requests progressively.

Simultaneously, establish presence on freelancing platforms. Fiverr is particularly beginner-friendly, allowing you to create service packages at prices you control. Build a portfolio through practice projects even if initial clients are friends or local businesses charging minimal fees. Reviews and experience compound over time.

For payment processing, services like Wise, PayPal, and Payoneer enable Kenyan freelancers to receive international payments directly to mobile money or bank accounts. Wise offers particularly favorable exchange rates and direct M-Pesa integration.

A Word of Caution: AI as Tool, Not Replacement

While enthusiasm for AI is warranted, realistic expectations are essential. AI tools make mistakes, sometimes confidently presenting incorrect information. They cannot replace critical thinking, domain expertise, or human judgment. Professionals who thrive will be those who use AI to enhance their capabilities rather than substitute for them.

Always verify AI-generated content, particularly facts, figures and technical details. Develop genuine expertise in your chosen field AI amplifies competence but cannot create it from nothing.

The Future Belongs to the Prepared

The young people of Kirinyaga County stand at a remarkable crossroads. The same AI tools used by professionals in Nairobi, London and New York are available to anyone with internet access and determination. Geographic location no longer determines economic destiny.

The question is not whether AI will transform our economy it already is. The question is whether our youth will be participants or observers in this transformation. Through initiatives like the Twende Digital bootcamp and continued digital literacy efforts, we are ensuring that Kirinyaga's young professionals are not merely ready for the future but actively shaping it.

The digital revolution is here. The tools are accessible. The opportunities are real. What remains is the courage to begin.

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Why Your Goals are Holding You Back



Derrick Ngari
Founder AkiliNova

At Akilinova, we don't build software to hit targets; we build software to automate the "1% gains." By engineering systems that remove friction and prioritize process over guesswork, we ensure that your organization doesn't have to "rise" to a challenge. You simply fall to the level of the systems we've built for you.

Every January, millions of people engage in a collective ritual of architectural fantasy. We draft blueprints for our "best selves," sketching out lofty targets, the novel written, the marathon run, the debt cleared. Yet, by mid-February, these blueprints are often relegated to the drawer of deferred dreams.

The failure, it turns out, is rarely a lack of ambition. It is a fundamental misunderstanding of the physics of progress.
We are taught to obsess over the finish line, but as James Clear, the influential strategist of habit formation, famously posited: "You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems."

The Mirage of the "Someday"
A goal is an orientation; a system is a direction. The difference is the gap between a wish and a reality.

A goal lives in the "someday", it is a binary state where you are either a failure (pre-achievement) or a success (post-achievement). In contrast, a system is a commitment to the "today." It is the assembly line of habits and immediate choices that dictates your trajectory regardless of the destination.

The 1% Revolution
Nowhere is the supremacy of the system more visible than in the storied transformation of British Cycling.

For a century, the program was a footnote in the sport's history, so lackluster that manufacturers reportedly refused to sell them bikes for fear of reputational damage.

The pivot began with the introduction of "Marginal Gains", the radical idea that if you break down everything you can think of that goes into riding a bike, and then improve it by 1%, you will get a significant increase when you put them all together.

This was not a goal-oriented strategy; it was a systemic overhaul. The team began obsessing over the invisible variables:
•The Micro-Environment: They hired surgeons to teach riders the most effective way to wash their hands to avoid the common cold.
•The Recovery System: They tested different types of massage gels and traveled with their own pillows and mattresses to ensure identical sleep quality regardless of the hotel.
•The Equipment Audit: They even went so far as to dust the floor of the team bus to prevent even the smallest particles from compromising the maintenance of the bikes.

The Compound Interest of Habits. The results were not incremental; they were explosive. After adopting these micro-system tweaks, British Cycling captured 28 Olympic gold medals in just ten years. They didn't win because they

"wanted it more" than their competitors, everyone at the starting line has the goal of winning. They won because their systems were superior to everyone else's. When we focus solely on the goal, we are effectively waiting for a future moment to be happy or successful. But when we fall in love with the system, we give ourselves permission to succeed every time the process is executed.

The gold medal is merely the byproduct; the pillow, the hand-washing, and the dust-free floor are the work.

Reflecting on Your Process

•The Shift: Are you currently measuring your life by the targets you haven't hit, or by the systems you followed today?

•The Micro-Gain: What is the "1% tweak" in your current routine that could lead to a massive payoff over time?

To conclude our exploration of British Cycling's metamorphosis, we must move from observation to application. If goals are the "what," then an audit is the "how." Transitioning from a goal-oriented mindset to a systems-oriented one requires a clinical, almost dispassionate look at your daily architecture. Here is how to conduct a systemic audit to ensure your daily habits are actually capable of carrying the weight of your ambitions.

The Systemic Audit: A Practical Framework

To move beyond the "fantasy of the finish line," one must adopt the role of a performance engineer. Use these four steps to recalibrate your trajectory.

1. Inverse Mapping

Start with your goal, then work backward until you hit a repeatable action. If your goal is to "write a book," the system is not "writing." The system is "sitting at the desk at 7:00 AM with the Wi-Fi toggled off."

•The Question: What is the smallest, most boring unit of work required to make this goal inevitable?

2. The "Friction" Inventory

British Cycling looked for dust on the bus floor because it was a source of friction. In your life, friction is anything that makes the right choice difficult.

•The Audit: Identify three things that slow your start. If you want to exercise in the morning, is your gear packed? If you want to eat better, is the junk food visible?



•The Fix: Redesign your environment so that the "good" system is the path of least resistance.

3. The 1% Variable Test

Select one area of your routine that feels "settled" and apply the marginal gains theory. Much like the athletes who brought their own pillows to ensure consistent sleep, look for a micro-variable you currently ignore.

•Examples: Instead of just "working," try optimizing your desk ergonomics to reduce back fatigue, or using a specific playlist to trigger a "flow state" instantly.

4. Success as a Lagging Indicator

Shift your metrics. In a system-first world, the scoreboard is a "lagging indicator", it tells you what happened in the past. Your "leading indicators" are your systems.

•The Metric: Stop tracking how many pounds you lost or how much money you saved. Start tracking the "System Compliance Rate." Did you execute the process today? If yes, you have already won.

The Sovereignty of the Process

We often believe that greatness is reserved for those with the most intense desires. But the history of elite performance suggests otherwise. Success is not a lightning strike of willpower; it is the compound interest of a well-designed life. When you stop obsessing over the podium and start obsessing over the pillow, the results tend to take care of themselves.

The gold medal is not the achievement, the system that made the medal inevitable is the true masterpiece. In the digital age, the "pillows and tire dust" of a corporation are found in its code. If your team is struggling to reach a goal, the flaw is rarely in their talent; it is in the systems they are forced to inhabit.

Youth in Politics and Governance



Jacinta Kariuki
Applied Mathematician.
Gen-Z Leader, Kirinyaga.

For a long time, the Kenyan youth populace, Kirinyaga County youth not excluded, have been told directly and indirectly that it is not our space. We have been labeled as "less experienced" to contribute to what affects us day in and day out.
An IRONY – because the very challenges we face are political in nature.

Outside politics, we are often told that no one is coming to save us. But save us from what?

From unemployment, struggling business, barriers in education, shrinking civic spaces – realities shaped by political decisions. This raises a critical question on the role we the young people of Kirinyaga play in politics and governance.

Beyond Elections

Over time, we have defined and limited our role in politics to voting once every five years. After that most of us disengage not out of apathy but because the system becomes unresponsive and feels distant. Yet politics is not seasonal.

It is not confined to campaigns and ballots. It happens every day; in budgeting, policymaking, service delivery, infrastructure development and markets. For Kirinyaga youth, political participation must go beyond the ballot. We must engage differently if we desire to have different outcomes.

Kirinyaga's young population is educated, exposed and greatly aware of how policy shapes development. We understand that county government development is not a favor but a right funded by public resources.

Young people have shown interest in governance participation through online advocacy, mobilizing peers, organizing community initiatives, professional associations and civic accountability. Participation is not the problem – it is lack of inclusion and recognition.

There is a saying: Participation is being invited to a party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.
Belonging is choosing the music.
Well, no one invites you to your own party.
Politics and governance affect all of us.

Young people have already shown up – we have invited ourselves. The real question is: Who holds the microphone? Because the one with the mic decides who dances and to what music.

Being present but unseen is exclusion. Being unheard is marginalization.

That is governance; how decisions are made, who makes them and who benefits. We have too often been left like outsiders in a space that directly determines our future.

This is a reminder that we are in the right party. Participation is not optional. Ownership is essential. We must engage fully as young people, not only during elections, but in shaping agendas, influencing decisions and demanding accountability. The power to belong lies in our collective action.

Elders, Where is the trust?
A deep trust deficit remains one of the greatest barriers to the engagement of Kirinyaga Gen-Z in politics. We have been conditioned to believe that politics rewards loyalty over competence.
Incompetent loyalties? Isn't it how we end up with the faulty systems we are criticizing?

Many young people are mobilized during election periods, only to be forgotten afterward.
Opportunities, appointments and platforms circulate among a familiar few. Understandably, this breeds disengagement. But disengagement comes at a cost: decisions are made without our perspectives, and the cycle of frustration continues.

The challenge hence becomes to rebuild the civic trust through accountability, continuous engagement and ethical leadership both from the young people aspiring to lead and those holding various positions.
Involved, Not just participants. Participation alone is not enough. Intentional participation demands involvement.

Development agenda; whether in infrastructure, education, healthcare or agriculture cannot succeed without meaningful youth involvement. Kirinyaga Gen Z occupy a unique position in that we understand institutional systems while remaining rooted in grassroots realities. This makes us critical bridges between government and citizens.

Our expertise, innovation and ideas must be valued over political lineage or age. We must be seen as co-creators of solutions, not merely beneficiaries of projects. Inclusion should be meaningful, not symbolic.

Why not open county advisory committees, boards and task forces to young professionals?
Why not support youth-led policy research and civic education? Kirinyaga Gen z have more than a seat to fill we have value to add.

Kirinyaga Gen-Z Alliance: A New Generation
Leaders are not born overnight, nor are they made on election day. Like a seed, leadership is nurtured through integrity, competence, service and accountability.

Kirinyaga needs a new generation of leaders who see politics as a responsibility not a shortcut to power. As a county, we must nurture leaders early in student leadership, professional spaces, community work, civil society and issue-based advocacy.

Not all of us must run for office, but all of us must understand governance well enough to demand better.

A Call to action for Kirinyaga Gen Z

Politics will always be interested in you, whether or not you take interest in it. The political decisions made today in Kirinyaga will not be felt most by the elderly, but by us in the future.

Let us reshape governance now; constructively and courageously. Let us organize around issues, not personalities or handouts. Let us hold leaders accountable firmly, respectfully and consistently.

Let us stay informed and support ethical leadership, even when it is inconvenient.
Kirinyaga Gen-Z:
Let us show up.
Let us dance.
Let us choose the music and make it loud enough to be impossible to ignore.

LET'S MOVE IN BOLDNESS.
FROM SPECTATORS TO STAKEHOLDERS.

Top Kirinyaga Comedian

Kirinyaga County has quietly become a strong home for comedy talent. Over the years, many comedians and talents have grown their craft from local stages, radio stations, villages and everyday life experiences. Their humor speaks directly to the people because it comes from the people.

One of the most well-known names is Morey Wakibiru aka Bwana Fransis. His comedy is deeply rooted in Kikuyu culture and everyday village life. Through sharp humor and relatable stories, Morey wa Kibiru has managed to make people laugh while also passing strong messages. His rise showed many young people that local language comedy has power and value.

Another strong voice from Kirinyaga is Linus Marangi. Known for his energetic style and natural storytelling, Linus Marangi uses humor to reflect real-life situations that many people experience daily.

Kirinyaga also celebrates Mzee Ndekei, whose comedy is built around wisdom age and village humor. He won the Tally Track Africa award as the best comedian under 40. Alongside him is Macent, who brings a modern and youthful energy to comedy.

Kirinyaga has also produced comedians who are genius in what they do. Guka wa Nyumba Kumi who owns FaraFara FM is indeed a talent worth mentioning. His comedy bring laughter and enjoyment. He use community issues in a way that feels familiar and comforting.

Other notable names include CEO. Bruce and Mr. Mbilimbili, who have also grown their talent within Kirinyaga before reaching wider audiences. Their journeys show that comedy does not need big cities to grow. Sometimes, all it needs is honesty, creativity and consistency.



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Kirinyaga Sports

Among football clubs in Kirinyaga, Fortune FC stands out. It was formed in 2011 as a corporate social responsibility initiative by Fortune Sacco, with a clear goal of addressing the growing challenge of drug and alcohol abuse among young people in Kirinyaga County.

From the beginning, Fortune FC was more than just a football team. It provided young people with structure, discipline and a positive alternative to harmful habits. Through training, competition and mentorship, the club created a platform where talent could grow while promoting healthy lifestyles and social responsibility.

On the pitch, the club's growth was steady and impressive. Fortune FC rose through the local leagues and earned recognition as one of the strongest teams in the Mt. Kenya region. Their hard work and consistency saw them compete at the national level in the National Super League, a major achievement for a club rooted in community development.

However, the club's journey was not without challenges. During the 2021/2022 season, Kenyan football was affected by a ban imposed by FIFA. As a result, the season was declared null and void. This decision invalidated Fortune FC's hard-earned promotion to the top league, dealing a major setback to the club and its supporters.



In 2025, we celebrate Kirinyaga talent, ELias Mugane who had an impressive campaign at Fortune Sacco.

Elias Mugane enjoyed an outstanding season with Fortune FC, where he delivered one of the best individual performances in the National Super League. He finished the campaign as joint top scorer, netting 22 goals and providing 9 assists. His strong form throughout the season did not go unnoticed and earned him a move to one of Kenya's biggest football clubs, AFC Leopards, where he signed a two-year contract.

orn and raised in Kirinyaga, Elias' football journey began at a young age. He started by playing for local community teams, including Kavote FC from Karumandi Ward. These early years helped shape his discipline and love for the game, laying a strong foundation for his professional career.

He later joined Fortune FC, where he spent six years developing into a reliable and dangerous forward. During the 2018/2019 season, Elias topped the scoring charts in Division Two with 18 goals, a clear sign of the talent that would later shine at the national level.

Elias Mugane's journey is a powerful reminder that local talent, when nurtured and given the right opportunities, can rise to the highest stages of the game.

Our Local Leagues

Kirinyaga Rising FC

There is a saying in football that a good team wins matches, but a great team refuses to lose. This is exactly the story of Kianyaga Rising FC, the team that has become the pride of Kianyaga and one of the strongest sides in Kirinyaga County.

Kianyaga Rising FC were crowned champions of the Governor Waiguru Minji Minji Cup after an incredible run that saw them finish the entire tournament unbeaten. From the first match at ward level to the final whistle in the finals, the team showed discipline, unity, and strong belief. Their journey started well at the ward level. Kianyaga Rising FC beat Limbua 1–0, then followed it with a solid 3–1 win over Rwambiti. A tough match against Kiandai ended 1–1, but the team stayed calm and won on penalties to qualify for the pool level.



At the pool level, the team proved their consistency. They drew 3–3 with Githure in an entertaining match, then beat Jubilee 2–0 and Kiandai 2–0. Another draw came against S. Mukuba, ending 2–2, but the team remained focused.

They went on to beat Castle 1–0, Falcon 2–1, and Kavote 3–0.



Felix Njeru Munene

A narrow 2–1 win over Home Base kept the momentum going before they delivered a big statement with an 11–0 victory over Hot Star. With 23 points, Kianyaga Rising FC comfortably qualified for the round of 16.

The knockout rounds tested the team's character. In the round of 16, they drew 1–1 with Mutitu and won on penalties. The quarterfinal against El Muslim ended 0–0, and once again penalties favored Kianyaga. In the semifinal, they drew 1–1 with Kiburu and won on penalties for the third time, proving their mental strength.

The final against Kiamaina was tense and competitive. Kianyaga Rising FC stayed disciplined and took their chance, winning the match 1–0 to lift the trophy.

Kianyaga Rising FC finished the tournament unbeaten showing element of resilience.

One player stood out throughout the tournament. Felix Njeru Munene was named the best player of the tournament after an outstanding performance. He finished with 8 goals and 6 assists, playing a key role in almost every important moment for the team.

Kiamaina FC

Every champion lifts the trophy, but every strong team earns respect. Kiamaina FC, a team based in Kirinyaga Central impressed many fans during the recently concluded Governor Waiguru Minji Minji Cup. They finished second in the county tournament after a strong and disciplined run to the final.

In the quarterfinals, Kiamaina faced Jubilee and delivered a confident performance, winning the match 3–1.
The semifinal match against Kaitheri was a tough contest. The game ended in a 1–1 draw after normal time, pushing the match to penalties. Kiamaina won the shootout, earning a well-deserved place in the final.



In the final, Kiamaina faced a strong Kianyaga side. It was a tight and competitive match, but Kiamaina narrowly lost 1–0.



They showed Character during the fixtures.

Their Best player was Joe Kiragu who scored 9 goals and had 5 assists in 15 games.

In other matches, Kiburu FC finished 4th while Kaitheri FC finished third.

Mwea United is another team to watch from Mwea. They are currently playing in Division two. Kagio FC, Barcelona FC and Ndindiruku FC are other teams to watch from Mwea.

From Ndia we have teams like Al-Muslim FC, Young Eagles FC , Gathuithiini FC and Gathata FC doing well with Players like Alex Ngare to watch.

In Gichugu we have teams like Kavote FC, Jubilee FC doing well and others like Mutitu, Castle, Oracle Rangers, Kiandai among others.

In Kirinyaga Central, the teams are very competitive. The likes of Njegas FC, Kiamuruga FC and Kamuiru FC.



The ladies' final brought together Lakers Queens FC from Murinduko and Kiaga Queens FC in a competitive and well-fought match.

In the end, Lakers Queens FC emerged as the champions with a 4-1 victory, winning the tournament and lifting the Minji Minji Cup. Kiaga Queens FC put up a strong fight and finished second which was a commendable achievement.




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