



**Drylands Learning and
Capacity Building Initiative
for Improved Policy and
Practice in the Horn of Africa**

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION FOR ADVOCACY IN KAJIADO COUNTY

By Lorna N. Mpaayei, Communications Intern

Introduction

Kajiado County was formed after the successful implementation of Kenya's Constitutional Referendum of 2010 which yielded the 47 counties in the Country. The county covers an approximated area of 21,901 square kilometers and consists of a number of administrative districts; Isinya, Loitokitok, Magadi, Mashuru, Namanga and Ngong. A few big towns found in the county include: Ngong, Kitengela, Ong'ata Rongai, Kiserian, Kajiado, Loitokitok, Namanga, Isinya, Sultan Hamud and Ilbisil.

Kajiado County has a population growth rate of 5.5%; total population was estimated at 807,070 with 401,785 being females and 405,245 males as at 2012.¹ The population is projected to grow to 1 million by the year 2017.

Kajiado's economic activities include agriculture, horticulture, food crop farming, livestock production, dairy, beef production, hides and skins, poultry farming and other commercial exploits. It also boasts the Amboseli National Park which is a major tourist attraction. Kajiado County like many counties in Kenya is largely water stressed where community members sometimes find themselves covering an average of 10km with their livestock in search of water.

Education

Kajiado county literacy rates are at 55.4%, and is as low as 5% among clans pursuing a purely nomadic lifestyle compared to the national literacy rate of 71.4%. This can be attributed to a combination of factors which include high dropout rates, low transition and socio-cultural practices among others. According to statistics from 2013², the pre-primary population is 52,091 for both boys and girls while the total enrolment is 42,565. Currently, there are 925 Early Childhood Development centers with 2211 teachers. The teacher to pupil ratio is a relatively low 1:19. There is therefore need for more sensitization on the benefits of education and efforts to improve quality and relevance. There are 514 primary schools both public and private with an enrolment of 155,955 pupils, where 48 percent of the enrolled are girls and 52 percent are boys. The transition rate from primary to secondary schools is 54% as at 2013 with majority being boys.

A research conducted in 2013³ indicates that enrolment in secondary school is 32% and there were 104 secondary schools (both public and private) as at 2013; with an enrolment of 20,122 students and 2,614 teachers hence the teacher/student ratio was 1:21. The county has several private universities with Maasai Mara University campus being the only public university. There are also numerous middle level colleges, both public and private.

Land use in Kajiado County

In the recent past, land use has had three key drivers; population, proximity to Nairobi and road corridors. Population affects the size of land units, proximity to Nairobi dictates preference for land use by residents and economic gains whereas road corridors have created opportunities that influence urbanization.

¹ <http://countyonline.co.ke/kajiado/>

² County Government of Kajiado Integrated Development Plan (2013-2017)

³ <https://www.kajiado.go.ke/?mdocs-file=9312&mdocs-url=9311>

The most predominant land use is agriculture; both livestock and crop farming. Crop agriculture occupies a great proportion of the county and is restricted to small areas near Ngong hills and Loitoktok. These two sub counties enjoy climatic patterns that can support crop production - the patterns are however changing – the increased ground water exploitation has helped improve crop production through irrigation. The county government has encouraged individual effort and use of agricultural staff to offer advice to enhance crop production and food security. For livestock NDMA drafts a quarterly Drought Monitoring and Early Warning Bulletin that helps livestock owners adequately plan. For instance, in May 2014⁴ the bulletin highlighted the patterns, increase in livestock costs, water accessibility and provide recommendations on how to handle drought.

Second is wildlife conservation. Amboseli National park, conservancies and sanctuaries in Kajiado County contribute strongly to the overall aggregate growth of tourism/land allocated for this use

Kajiado County borders Nairobi which has opened the county up for urban projects. Housing and industrial development have brought great investments from outside? Development however poses potential danger to traditional practices such as livestock keeping. Besides land in the county has also been used for mining and quarrying in areas like Magadi. Quarrying provides both stones for construction and raw materials to cement factories.

Women's role in governance in Kajiado County

The constituency broke all Maasai custom norms by electing the first woman Member of Parliament, Peris Tobiko, as their representative after she won the Kajiado East constituency seat in March 4, 2013. Mrs. Tobiko is an active member of Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), a membership association of all the women parliamentarians across political parties both elected and nominated in the Senate and National Assembly. Its overall goal is to work towards ensuring that women and men are equitably represented in Parliament and decision making in public and private spheres to promote sustainable development. Kajiado Women leaders are active in this group and have presented the issues that affect the women in Kajiado in their meetings, such as female genital mutilation and economic exclusion.

Kajiado County has a Gender Forum, which is a monthly public dialogue convened by the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Foundation since 2001, encouraging dialogue on pertinent national social issues with a gendered lens. It brings together scholars, law makers and implementers, civil activists, government institutions, students and the general public, aiming at increasing knowledge and effectiveness of policy and programmes. The forum is normally convened in conjunction with Kenya Female Advisory Organisation (KEFEADO) in response to County interests.

⁴ National Drought Management Authority Kajiado County: Drought Monitoring and Early Warning Bulletin, May 2014 <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Kajiado-May-2014.pdf>

The role of the civil society in advocacy

Advocacy set root in Kajiado County in 1994 with education and female genital mutilation being the core issues of discussion. Today, there are more than 30 NGOs spread all over the county with both local and international representation. The NGOs have now diversified from education and FGM issues and are now engaged in climate change, water provision, improvement of sanitation and community empowerment activities.

There are more than 2,000 Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the county which are registered with the Department of Gender and Social Services. CBOs in Kajiado County are a major entry point for NGO and government funded programmes. The county has 255 community based projects; and 53 youth groups mainly funded by the Government of Kenya, NGOs and other development partners.

Some of the organizations at the forefront of advocacy in Kajiado County include:

Mainyoito Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO)

MPIDO was established in 1996 and registered as a non-governmental organization in 2000, as a result of marginalization of the Maasai pastoralists particularly in Kajiado North, Narok, Nakuru and Naivasha by successive governments. MPIDO engages in advocacy around issues of food security, climate change mitigation; governance and conflict transformation, natural resource management; gender equity, and HIV & AIDS responses targeting Maa pastoralists.

Neighbors Initiative Alliance (NIA)

Established in 1996, NIA facilitates community empowerment amongst vulnerable and marginalized Maasai pastoralists through capacity strengthening/ knowledge transfer, influencing and brokerage of useful linkages. NIA also facilitates events in support of citizen participation in policy development or review and related political / decision making processes. It has also been implementing community anchored programs in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), health and nutrition, food security, governance and economic development.

Pastoralist Concern Education Foundation (PACEF)

PACEF is an independent, non-profit organization that was formed by a group of education and community development specialists in 2007 and legally registered in September 2010. PACEF is an NGO that works at the grassroots level in collaboration with various partners, including local and international NGOs, civil society organizations (CBOs) and relevant government sectors and other authorities to promote and support pastoralist community-based initiatives in sustainable livelihoods (agriculture, livestock production, natural resources management, and micro-enterprises development), education, health, peace and conflict resolution, and advocacy in Kajiado County.

Mechanisms for information sharing to the citizens in Kajiado County

Community Radio

Community radio⁵ is often the only effective source of information for local people in most developing countries. Community radio is a vital source of information in an area where no other forms of media or sources of information exist. According to the Kenya Bureau of Statistics⁶, Kajiado County has a total of 833,145 people who can access radio whereas, 557,851 do not. The running of these stations relies upon the enthusiasm of volunteers, as in the developed world, but the output of information and advice has the potential to significantly improve the health and economic wellbeing of isolated communities. The following are some of the radio stations that exist in the county of Kajiado:

(i) Bus Radio (102.5 FM)

Founded in 2013 by Kajiado County's young professionals, Bus Radio Media is a community radio that seeks to empower the community living in Kajiado on developments and government projects. Bus Radio (102.5fm) is the newest radio station in the County of Kajiado to broadcast in Swahili and English. The radio station airs issues, opinions, views and interviews from the community of Kajiado.

Its inception was inspired by the natural resources in the county of Kajiado, the talents and skills in the community and mostly the unity and integrity of the people in Kajiado County. Currently Bus radio is the newest and most listened to radio station in Kajiado community with young professionals on board to broadcast news, views, interviews, opinions, and great ideas of the larger Kajiado County community.

Bus radio is at the forefront in mobilization and empowering community especially women and youth in projects like women empowerment, HIV/AIDs awareness, giving voice to the marginalized people, bringing needs of the society to the attention of local, regional and national leaders to intervene on community developments.

(ii) Nosim FM

On 20th May 2011, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)⁷ launched the first ever Maasai vernacular radio station. The station covers parts of Kajiado and Narok County on 90.5FM.

In the evening, from 5pm -8.30pm, transmission is on FM and MW. It is at this time that all Maasai speaking counties - Kajiado, Narok, Laikipia, Baringo, and Samburu up to Tanzania - are covered. The programming ranges from issues pertaining to politics, culture, economy, health, family, women, youth, children, environment, news, and current affairs.

(iii) Radio Maa - *Enaang' Ena*

⁵ <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/why-africas-maasai-people-need-community-radio/>

⁶ http://www.knbs.or.ke/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=430:access-to-radio-service-by-county-and-district&id=99:detailed-census-results&Itemid=639

⁷ www.kbc.co.ke/nosim-fm/

Owned by Royal Media Services (103.5 FM), Radio Maa is one of the leading informative, engaging, educative and entertaining Maasai stations that Kajiado County residents faithfully listen to. The station covers the entire county.

(iv) Mayian FM

Mayian FM was launched by Mediamax Network Limited on 3rd April, 2013. The station reaches Narok (100.7), Kilgoris (100.7), Kajiado (100.6), Samburu (100.5), Laikipia (100.5) and Baringo (100.5).

Telecommunications Network

There are six post offices situated in Kitengela, Rongai, Kajiado, Ngong, Namanga, and Loitokitok Mashuuru sub-counties. The county is also served by 20 licensed stamp vendors and three private courier service providers. The mobile network coverage in the county is approximately 60% - all urban areas are covered whereas some of the rural areas are not covered by mobile network. The mobile telephone coverage is by four operators: Safaricom, Airtel, Orange, and Yu networks. According to the 2009 census, landline connectivity was 0.9 percent in Kajiado Central constituency, 0.6 percent in Loitokitok and 10.6 percent in Kajiado North.

Internet Accessibility

Kajiado County residents are not well equipped in terms of internet accessibility. There are a number of cyber cafés in the county, but ICT knowledge is lacking among most residents. With that in mind, Kajiado County was the 41st County in Kenya to receive Orange Telkom 3G service⁸. According to the most recent Communications Authority of Kenya report, Telkom Kenya (Orange), has total gained 11.3 percent subscriptions to reach 3.3 million from 3.0 million.

In May 2014, Samsung Electronics East Africa unveiled the first solar powered internet school (SPIS) in Arap Moi Primary School, in Kajiado County to improve the quality of education provision. The SPIS is meant to help address the issue of scarcity of learning materials, lack of electricity in public schools as well as access to information, communication & technologies (ICTs). The SPIS is a 40-foot shipping container that Samsung equips with 24 Samsung Laptops plus one for the teacher, a multi-purpose Samsung printer, a 50-inch electronic board, a server, internet access and the solar panels. All these devices are optimised for use in a solar-powered environment.

The e-Board allows for cross-group collaboration between and among educators and learners across geographical boundaries. It can run video conferencing, access the internet, and connect to the computers in the container, all simultaneously, providing an interactive learning and teaching experience for both the educators and learners.

Through the Hope for Children initiative, Samsung Electronics donated the SPIS to Arap Moi Primary School, in Kajiado County to complement the efforts by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

⁸ <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2000169557/orange-rolls-out-3g-network-in-kajiado-county>

in the implementation of ICT integration in primary schools. The SPIS at Arap Moi Primary School is set to benefit 9 other nearby schools, namely - Kiserian, Nakel, Naro Moru, Nkoroi, Ole Kasasi, Oloosurutia, Olteyan and Rongai Primary Schools – all in Kajiado County.

The initiative focuses on the deployment of ICT infrastructure, professional development of educators, content development and management, school administration and management as well as sharing best practices in the integration of ICTs in enhancing learning and teaching in the classroom.

The schools are built for use in remote rural areas with little or no grid electricity infrastructure and are easily transportable via trucks. In cases whereby schools have electricity and a secure classroom, Samsung is able to supply the Galaxy tablets, e-board, servers and internet. These are known as Samsung Smart Schools.

Access to Television

As per the last Kenya Population and Housing Census conducted in 2009 and statistics offered by the Kenya Bureau of Statistics⁹, TV is accessible to 45.6% of the people where as 54.2% of the people did not own a TV set. By now, 3 out of 5 households in Kajiado County own a television set. All TV stations are accessible to most residents following the digital migration that swept Kenya in early 2015. Most residents are inclined to Citizen TV because of their preference to local programs.

Print and Social Media

Kajiado County Press is an online newspaper that covers news stories on the larger Kajiado County. The Standard, Daily Nation, Business Daily, People Daily, the Star and Kajiado County Press are readily available to residents. Some towns like Suswa and Ewaso residents cannot access these newspapers due to language barrier and inaccessible roads which forces them to resort to radio as a communication access mode. Facebook and twitter are the major social media sites utilized by youth and residents living in towns closer to Nairobi. They use these platforms to advocate for communal issues as well as mobilise, share information and lobby against and harmful cultural practices.

Role of social media in promoting good governance

Facebook Groups

1. Kajiado County Government – is the official Facebook page that offers residents a platform to monitor and interact with the county government and give feedback for provision of better services.
2. Kajiado County Congress (Lehero E Maa) – is a fast growing Maasai lobby group on this platform. The group is a forum for discussing important and priority issues; policy, administrative, operational &

⁹https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCMQFjABahUKewiB4a_Tz7LHAhUIshQKHcSHBL0&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.knbs.or.ke%2Findex.php%3Foption%3Dcom_phoca_download%26view%3Dcategory%26download%3D431%3Aaccess-to-tv-service-by-county-and-district%26id%3D99%3Adetailed-census-results%26Itemid%3D639&ei=oSPTVcGMEoiUUcSPkugL&usg=AFQjCNEma1rHoSEP1pelut8WzGjs9-2_IQ&sig2=zFS99W7pGkHH0cW5v8U51w&bvm=bv.99804247,d.d24

development strategy, communal daily struggles and to encourage each other and the Maa community in general.

- 3.** Kajiado County Youth Alliance (KACYA) – is a group that promotes youth empowerment in Kajiado County.

All these groups seek to promote good governance and leadership in the area of jurisdiction, promote proper land policies, enlighten the community on sustainable development and promote educational opportunities in the county through awareness, motivation campaigns, workshops and seminars in liaison with the district educational stakeholders. These groups are at the frontline in advocacy campaigns against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and its effects and early girl child marriage and discouraging retrogressive cultural practices and traditions to promote progressive Maasai culture.