MY GOVERNOR

MUTHOMI NJUKI

MANIFESTO 2017

MY PROMISE TO THE PEOPLE OF THARAKA NITHI

*"A good leader knows the needs of his people.
By being their servant,
I believe I can actually fulfil them."*

— Muthomi Njuki

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MY FIRST 100 DAYS AS GOVERNOR

1. *Automate revenue administration to reduce pilferage and increase collection*
2. *Reduce licence fee for boda boda operators*
3. *Stock all health centres with quality drugs*
4. *Launch initiative to re-engineer Nithi bridge to save lives*
5. *Provide ample water to Kathwana, the County HQ*
6. *Initiate process to move all leadership, including Governor's residence, to Kathwana*
7. *Introduce a new effective scheme of service for health workers*
8. *Introduce Scheme of Service for ECDE teachers and youth polytechnic instructors*
9. *Establish welfare kitty for People with Disabilities*
10. *Launch investment drive in the County*
11. *Operationalise cereal depots at Mitheru and Mukuuni and intiate construction of a new one at Marimanti and Mukothima*
12. *Launch agricutural and trade fairs*

Jubilee
Tuko Pamoja

We are on a mission to unlock the great potential of Tharaka Nithi. In this forum I expound my vision for our county and the initiatives we will be undertaking together.

I want to be your governor so that we can change the lives of our people in all the ways that matter to them. We want to improve our people's access to healthcare; provide opportunities for wealth creation; give our children an education that is truly world class; improve infrastructure so that we all can move across the county easily and safely; and in general, ensure we are a confident people who take pride in who we are.

We want to harness our immense opportunities so that we are counted among the counties where good leadership and an inspired population have achieved tremendous progress and wholesome development.

We will be guided by three key principles as we do this:

- One, listening carefully to what the people truly want and what their priorities are. As the old saying goes, only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.
- Two, equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across the county. All parts of Tharaka Nithi must feel they are part of the journey we are embarking on to greatness. Our diversity, be it cultural or geographical, must remain a source of strength, not a weakness.
- Three, working in harmony with the national leadership, recognising that we are not in competition, but that we play complementary roles in the service of our people.

My dream is to see our county utilising its vast resources efficiently and diligently, and turning the relatively limited geographical spread of Tharaka Nithi to big advantage. We are a small county, but this should only serve to ensure that each corner of our land can easily access development. After all, we are within arms' reach of each other.

I do not underestimate the task ahead, but we are equal to the challenge. We aim to make major advances for our motherland, such as the creation of a Special Economic Zone to spur industrialisation; transform Kathwana, our county headquarters, from the desolate outpost it is today to a thriving metropolis; and so on.

Give us a chance to serve you and we shall transform your lives in ways that are beyond your imagination.

Yours truly,

MUTHOMI NJUKI

A SHARED VISION

In many ways, Mr Francis Kagwima can be called the father of Tharaka Nithi County.

As the MP for Tharaka between 1989 and 1992, he was not only instrumental in the creation of Tharaka Nithi District but also ensured that the district was ratified through an Act of Parliament. Only districts that had been ratified by Parliament were recognised when it came to the creation of counties after the promulgation of the Constitution in 2010. Many others that were created at about the same time did not become counties. For example, Mwingi - although much bigger than Tharaka Nithi - is still part of Kitui. Kagwima vividly remembers the struggle against powerful politicians such as Jackson Angaine who did not want the larger Meru District split.

"It took heavy lobbying and numerous meetings with President Moi to get it done. Having our own district was very important as we could have our own DDC (District Development Committee). This was very important in those days; it helped us get jobs for our people, be part of the District Focus for Rural Development initiative, and generally assume our own identity."

As it turned out, this lead to the creation of our own county as well.

Kagwima, who is very passionate about community development, sees many opportunities in devolution. In the past, with little or no resources and a limited mandate, leaders struggled to develop their areas.

Kagwima has many achievements to be proud of from the three terms he served as the MP for Tharaka. He was instrumental in the tarmacking of Mate Road all the way from Ena, through Kathwana to Mitunguu. He also fought for the installation of the lengthy electricity line that runs from Chuka through Kaanwa, Kajuki, Kathwana, Chiakariga, and Marimanti to Gatunga.

But his efforts were not confined to his constituency. For example, he was instrumental in the establishment of Weru Tea Factory in Maara Constituency, which also serves tea farmers from Chuka-Igambang'ombe.

Kagwima, who holds the distinction of being the first engineer from Tharaka, previously worked with the Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (KPCU) before going into politics in 1989 when he was first elected MP. He had distinguished himself as a mechanical engineer at KPCU, rising from a trainee to Chief Engineer in just seven years.

A brilliant mind with the physical agility of a much younger man, Kagwima shares running mate Muthomi Njuki's vision for the county. But he has a particular passion for water supply for both domestic use and irrigation "so that people can grow adequate food to eat and to sell."

He also has a passion for and deep knowledge of the mining sector and wants to play a leading role in helping Tharaka Nithi achieve its potential in mineral wealth exploration and exploitation.

No doubt, Tharaka Nithi County will soon be in safe hands.

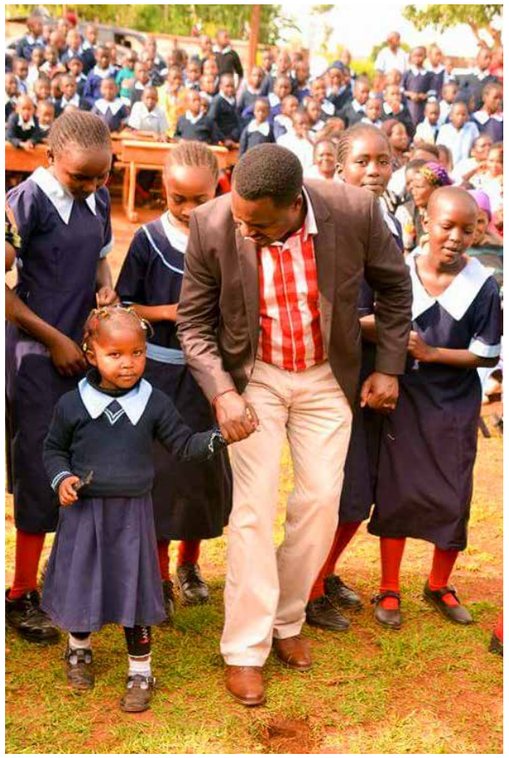
MUTHOMI NJUKI: DEDICATED TO SERVE

Muthomi Njuki has distinguished himself as an outstanding champion of development and an enthusiastic community mobiliser.

He is much loved not only by the residents of Tharaka Nithi but across the country as well. In turn, this has brought national government officials on repeat visits to the County, raising it's profile at the national level.

Njuki has worked for the people before his entry into parliament. As a successful businessman in the telecommunications sector, Njuki had used his knowledge to put the county firmly at the forefront in the information, communication, and technology (ICT) field.

Through his work with Safaricom and Airtel, the holder of a BEd (Science) degree from Kenyatta University and MSc Entrepreneurship and Innovations Management degree from the University of Nairobi helped pioneer network distribution in the larger Mt Kenya and Eastern regions.



As a member of the National Assembly Committee on Energy, Communications, and Information, Njuki has been placed strategically to realise his ambition of making the county an ICT hub. He is also well placed to develop valuable networks with partners and investors in the sector, not just for Tharaka Nithi, but the whole country.

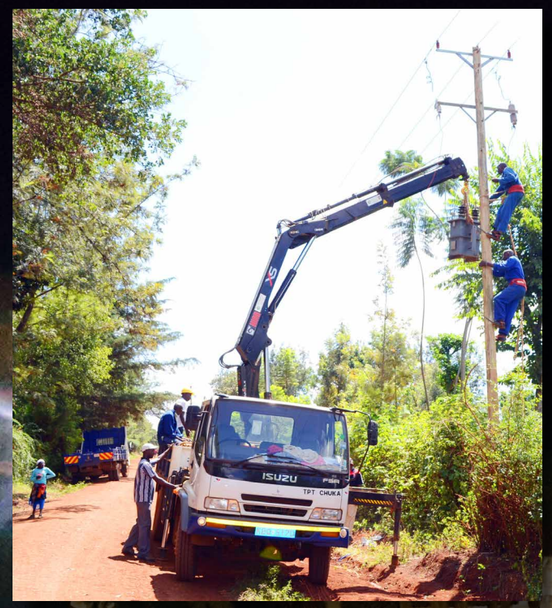
Muthomi Njuki is hailed for initiating the following milestone projects:

- *Through Universal Service Fund, Njuki has lobbied for 10 GSM network boosters to be placed across Tharaka Nithi County.*
- *Inconjuction with other Members of Parliament from the region, he has campaigned for electricity connections to be expanded through the Rural Electrification Programme, and for installation of street lighting in Chuka Town, Kathwana, Marimanti, and Chogoria, with plans for similar undertakings in Mitheru, Gatunga, Mukothima and Chiakariga.*
- *He also lobbied the national government to fast track the liquidation of loss-making cooperative societies. This led to the revival of stalled projects like the grain storage facilities in Chuka, Mara, Mukuuni, and Mitheru, virtually turning these into small-scale cereals and produce depots. There are plans to build a grain storage facility in Tharaka.*
- *Njuki's legislative achievements include a bill passed by parliament that ensures enhanced compensation to farmers for losses incurred when animals destroy crops, or in the event of injury or loss of life.*
- *He lobbied the national government for the tarmacking of roads in Chuka Town. The launch was officiated by the President and his Deputy.*
- *Through Muthomi Njuki Foundation he supports bright students in the County.*

As he seeks the important position of Governor, he undertakes to ensure that the county achieves fast-tracked development in all the critical areas such as agriculture, infrastructure, education, health services, tourism development, trade and industrialisation and provision of piped water for domestic use and farming.

Njuki dreams of a county where people from the different constituencies live in harmony, disease, ignorance and poverty are virtually eradicated, residents are deeply proud of their motherland, and economic development is comparable to the best of Kenya.

INFRASTRUCTURE



We can only realize the ideals of Vision 2030 by building an effective, efficient and interconnected infrastructure as the foundation of the economic development in the County.

PROBLEM
The grading and occasional murraming of roads is done so poorly that every season more work is required, despite the County having a budget of between Sh250 million and Sh350 million for road construction and maintenance.

The county is replete with "missing links" – many areas where communication would be greatly enhanced if we installed modern bridges.

The landmark Nithi bridge has become a blackspot and nothing has been done to solve the problem.

"Even before he was elected MP, he was already serving the community by helping bright, but needy students through his family foundation. He is a man of action who does not give empty promises and will improve our economy."

- Fr Cyprian Mbaka - Catholic Priest

THE WAY FORWARD

- We will construct link roads between trading centres and missing bridges across key rivers.
- Adopt modern road construction techniques such as the low volume seal mechanism.
- Invest in graders and machinery to ensure road maintenance is done cost effectively
- Ensure Nithi bridge is re-designed so that it ceases to be a black spot.
- Widespread installation of street lights in urban areas to curb insecurity.

EDUCATION

It is our duty to comply with the Constitution, which entitles every child to basic, free and compulsory education. Obtaining quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education and basic literacy skills have improved tremendously, yet bolder efforts are needed to make even greater strides for achieving universal education goals.

A good education is the steppingstone to success at the individual level, and ultimately, national prosperity.

PROBLEM
Bursaries are disbursed in a haphazard manner, and the county lacks a comprehensive education plan. Many school lack adequate physical facilities.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Create an enabling environment for educational facilities to thrive.
- Put in place a revolving fund to ensure development of centres of excellence.
- Human resource development with a focus on the three technical training intistutes being assessed to establish their capacity to deliver
- Harmonize public and private bursary schemes for needy students
- Revive school feeding programmes especially for ECDE.
- Support schools that require improvement of their physical facilities.

COUNTY HEADQUARTERS

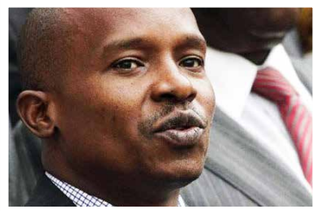
THE WAY FORWARD

- Ensure governor and all key County executives are housed in Kathwana.
- Establish the Kathwana Development Authority funded by the County government to take charge of the town's growth.
- Adopt a master plan to design and plan the town so as to attract investment in the town.
- Ensure all important county business is conducted in Kathwana.
- Ensure a reliable water supply to the town.
- Encourage institutions such as schools, hospitals and banks to set up base here as a catalyst for growth.

PROBLEM

Our County has the dubious distinction of having the least developed headquarters in the country. Basic infrastructure such as piped water, sewerage, roads, housing and offices are lacking. Four years into devolution, Kathwana has failed to achieve the vibrancy that should have come with the status of seat of Tharaka Nithi County Government. Very few institutions have opened branches there, and the place remains lethargic despite its massive potential.

The town is currently growing in a haphazard, unplanned manner, despite the potential that new towns present for modern, futuristic planning.



"I have reviewed the blueprint of my friend and comrade the Honourable Muthomi Njuki outlaying a fantastic vision for Tharaka Nithi, our beloved county. He has set out practical, realistic, achievable priorities that will lift a huge majority our people from poverty in five years. Njuki's vision is the remedy for the current state of incompetence, stagnation and wanton plunder of our County's resources."

- Kithure Kindiki, Senate Majority Leader & Senator for Tharaka Nithi County

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION & ACCESS TO WATER

Economic growth must go hand in hand with protecting our environment. The quality oF our life depends on the environment. It is also our duty to protect, conserve and manage the environment and natural resources for socio-economic development.

PROBLEM

Tharaka Nithi County is blessed with tens of rivers and permanent streams, many homes still do not have running water.

Besides, there is little irrigation in the county, meaning that almost all farming is dependent on rainfall.

The county's great potential for horticultural production has been hampered by lack of well-structured water projects. Most of the existing projects have been built by the ingenuity of our people who, due to years of neglect by successive governments, learnt how to create self-help initiatives that gave them some water.

On the other hand, our water catchment areas and riparian lands are not well taken care of. Many of the rivers have been affected by the current dry spell.

"He is a person who can transform Tharaka Nithi into a highly sustainable and developed County. He is aggressive, a go-getter who will take care of the county and ensure it moves forward. He is an intellectual who is not afraid engaging community intellectuals like some other politicians. He is not afraid of being challenged. No community can develop without involving its intellectuals."

- Prof. Marete Marangu, Office of Former President Mwai Kibaki

THE WAY FORWARD

- Entrench provison of water as a key agenda of the county government.
- Tap our massive rivers to provide water for domestic and other use.
- Build dams and reserviors to tap rain water, with the target of building at least one in every ward in the ASAL areas.
- Promote harvesting of roof water in homesteads for domestic use.
- Encourage planting of vegetation cover on the riparian land to conserve and enhance the rivers.
- Establish large scale water projects in different parts of the county for use in irrigation activities.
- Join in national efforts to conserve and protect the many water towers in the county such as Mt Kenya, Mwimbi HIlls, Kijege and Kirigicha Hills - the source of River Thiiti.

AGRICULTURE

Our county has huge potential for agricultural production. But there is little or no agro-processing, no irrigated farming, little coordinated marketing of produce, and people still rely largely on the same staple crops they did years ago.

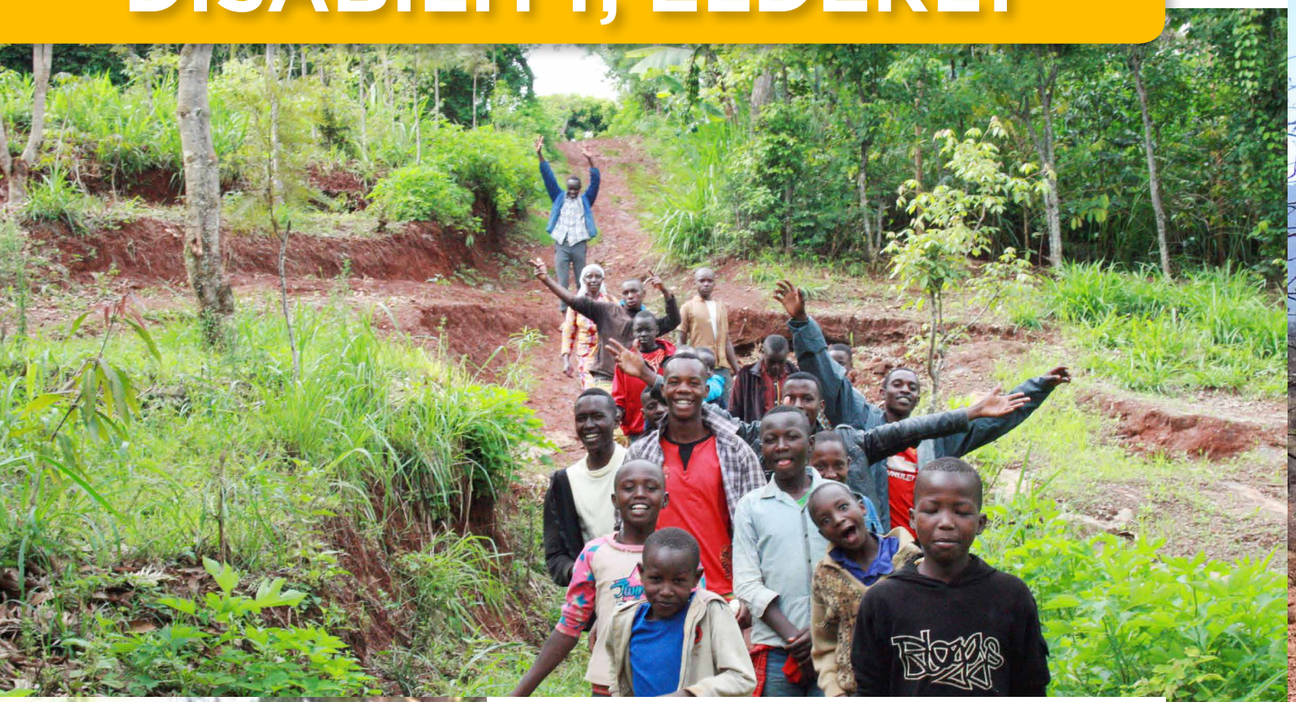
PROBLEM

The county experiences cycles of abundance when farmers are forced to sell their produce at throw-away prices, only to buy the same produce for their use at exorbitant prices a few months later. Our farmers are yet to start enjoying use of storage and cereal drying facilities that were built with public funds. On the other hand, coffee societies are dying, and yields diminishing.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Start leasing storage facilities to farmers and buying produce at guaranteed prices.
- Value addition of dry grains by packaging and selling them to larger markets.
- Value addition for the dairy sector by setting up a milk processing plant.
- Establish cooling plants in every ward. Revive livestock and other extention services.
- Use modern methods for drying and processing of fruits, and help our farmers find local and international markets.
- Investment in alternative agricultural practices such as flower farming and horticultural production through irrigated farming.
- An abattoir built to international standards will be put up to harness the potential of our arid and semi arid arears.
- An agricultural information service will be established to provide farmers with timely and critical information that will help improve farming activities.
- Establishment of a tannery in the County.

YOUTH, WOMEN, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY, ELDERLY



PROBLEM

There is no coordinated system for supporting these groups and harnessing their great potential.

THE WAY FORWARD

- We will set aside funds for special-need groups.
- Encourage development of cooperative societies and self-help groups that will help pool their savings for lending among members as a way of financing their dreams.
- Give them special consideration whenever opportunities arise for them to do business with the county.
- A fair proportion of county tenders will be set aside for these groups.

LAND

Land issues such as undefined boundaries and lack of ownership documents are sensitive and at times result in internal conflicts within communities.

PROBLEM

Land adjudication and issuance of titles is incomplete in some parts of the county such as Tunyai, Ntoroni and parts of Igambang'ombe.

THE WAY FORWARD

- We will work with the central government and its various agencies to ensure that all landowners in the county can access title deeds to their properties.
- Resolve any boundary disputes within the county using the appropriate channels.

EXPLOITATION OF MINERAL WEALTH & OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES

The management of mineral wealth is essentially a function of the national government, but county governments have a role to play in encouraging investment in exploration and exploitation of the deposits, besides ensuring that the county gets its fair share of the wealth.

PROBLEM

We have massive deposits of important minerals in the county but, very little has been done to turn these natural assets into useful resources for the people of Kenya in general, and residents of Tharaka Nithi County in particular.

Also there is lack of proper managed of natural resources like building stones and sand to ensure the county reaps maximum benefit from their exploitation.

THE WAY FORWARD

Our county is blessed with vast deposits of copper, iron ore, and lime, among other minerals. Our focus will be:

- To actively campaign for local and international businesses to invest in the sector; and
- To ensure that as far as possible, rather than shipping out the deposits for processing elsewhere, the processing of the minerals will be done within the county in order to promote industrialisation and job creation.
- In regard to harvesting of building stones and sand, we will ensure efficient cess collection and also encourage mechanised production, in line with the trends elsewhere.

TOURISM AND ESTABLISHMENT OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES

PROBLEM

Despite the immense tourist potential of the county, the many attractions in Tharaka Nithi are undefined and largely unknown, and few tourism facilities have been put up.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Tourism development, which comes with many advantages for the people including job creation and good markets for local produce, will be a central pillar in my development plan.
- We will promote Chogoria as the preferred access route to Mt Kenya, and create the necessary facilities and infrastructure through cooperation with private sector players. We will negotiate with Kenya Forest Service to grant concessions for establishment of lodges within the government forests.
- We will ensure that leisure and tourist facilities are built around the many excellent landmarks - from waterfalls to giant hills and frolicking valleys - that dot the Tharaka Nithi countryside.
- We will promote the Ura Gate as the preferred access to Meru National Park and ensure we get our share of proceeds from the park.
- We will promote Tharaka Nithi as a favoured holiday destination for Kenyans and the world in general.

I endorse Muthomi Njuki for Tharaka Nithi Governor because...

"As MP he has achieved more than any other political leader in the larger Meru region. I believe if elected governor, he will improve many things especially the ailing health sector, improve the roads infrastructure and provide water for domestic and irrigation purposes."

- Dr Stephen Kanyaru-Former Methodist Church Presiding Bishop

TRADE & INDUSTRY

PROBLEM

There is very little industrial production in the county despite the high potential for agro-processing and other industrial activities.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Creation of special economic zone with incentives to attract industrial investment.
- Value addition for our agricultural produce for trade development
- Agroprocessing and diversification of crops, creating a shift from over reliance on subsistence agriculture.

HEALTH SECTOR

Access to health services is critical to the enjoyment of life and one of the fundermantal responsibilities of any government.

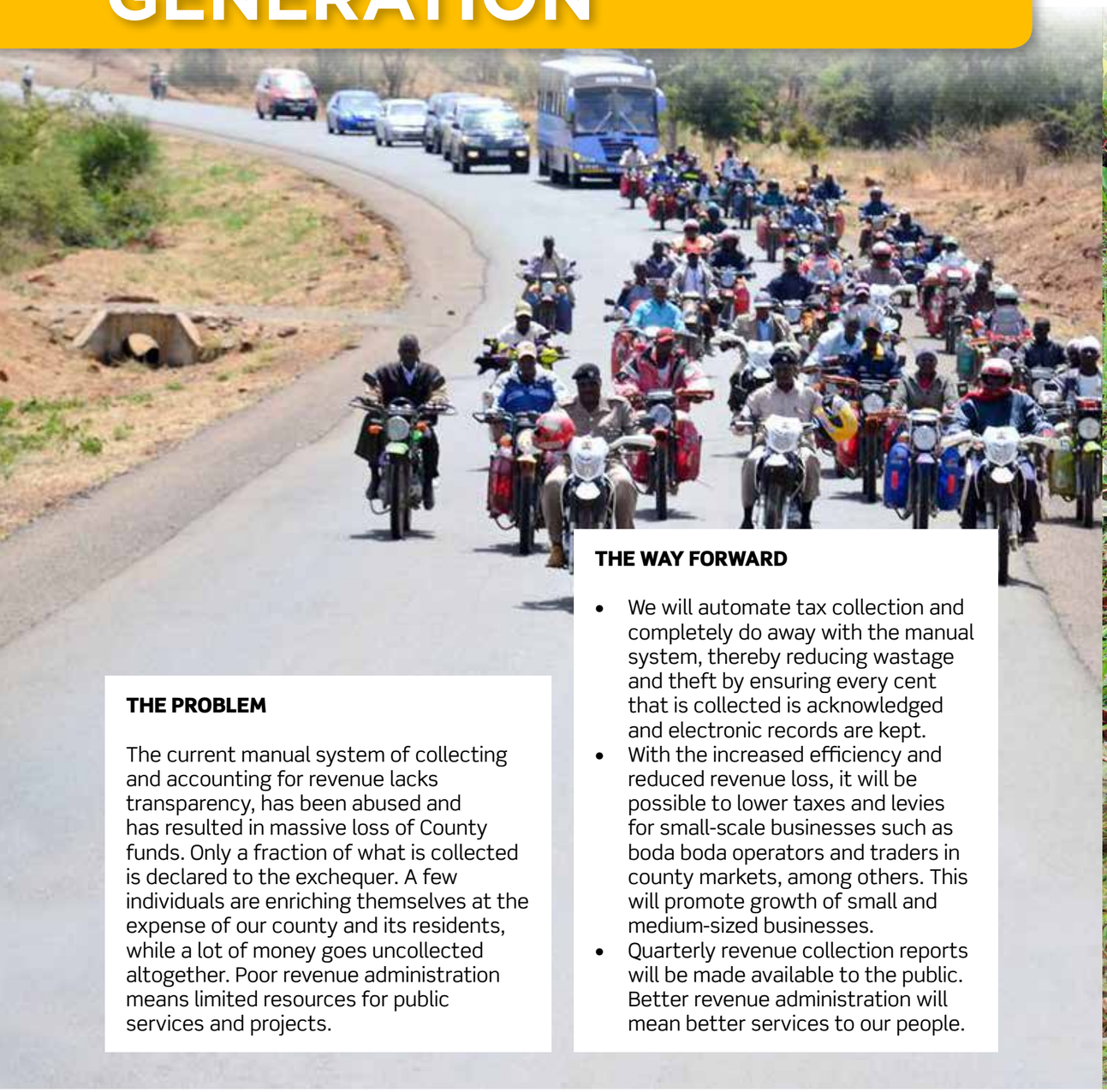
PROBLEM

Our county has experienced many problems in the delivery of health services, with persistent strikes by health workers. Complaints range from delayed and unpaid salaries, lack of career progression and chronic shortage of drugs in hospitals and health centres. F acilities have been distributed largely on political consideration and not on a need basis.

THE WAY FORWARD

- My administration will commission a study to establish the reasons behind these perennial problems in the delivery of health services.
- We will ensure housing is provided for critical medical staff within the health facility to ensure 24-hour service under a new standardised system.
- Sub-county hospitals in Marimanti, Chuka, Magutuni, and Gatunga will be elevated to county referral facilities to end the state of affairs whereby the private sector has better health facilities than the public sector.

REVENUE COLLECTION & REVENUE GENERATION



THE PROBLEM

The current manual system of collecting and accounting for revenue lacks transparency, has been abused and has resulted in massive loss of County funds. Only a fraction of what is collected is declared to the exchequer. A few individuals are enriching themselves at the expense of our county and its residents, while a lot of money goes uncollected altogether. Poor revenue administration means limited resources for public services and projects.

THE WAY FORWARD

- We will automate tax collection and completely do away with the manual system, thereby reducing wastage and theft by ensuring every cent that is collected is acknowledged and electronic records are kept.
- With the increased efficiency and reduced revenue loss, it will be possible to lower taxes and levies for small-scale businesses such as boda boda operators and traders in county markets, among others. This will promote growth of small and medium-sized businesses.
- Quarterly revenue collection reports will be made available to the public. Better revenue administration will mean better services to our people.

GOVERNANCE, EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE

THE PROBLEM

Appointment to county jobs has been riddled with nepotism and favouritism with little regard for competence and the need to ensure efficient delivery of services to residents.

THE WAY FORWARD

- My administration will ensure deserving, competent and able people are appointed to serve in the County Government. That way, service delivery will be improved as people will know they hold their jobs on merit. We will guarantee transparent, accountable and inclusive governance to ensure proper usage of resources and county facilities.
- Further to this, we will ensure that the appointments reflect the diversity of our county so that no region will feel left out while their sons and daughters are able and willing to serve their county.

CULTURE AND SPORTS

PROBLEM: There has been inadequate investment in the provision of leisure and sporting facilities in the county.

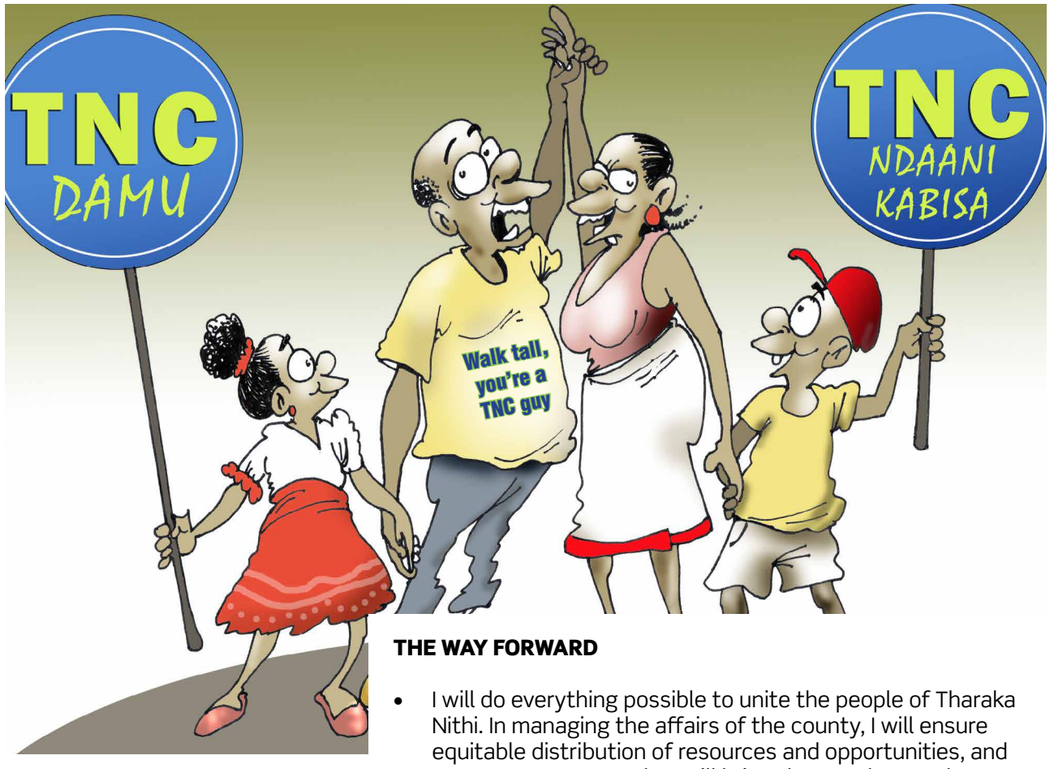
THE WAY FORWARD

- We will ensure every constituency has a modern stadium where people can gather for sports and other leisure activities. Tournaments will be held across the county to encourage talent development in various sports, with the hope that a local team will one day take part in local and international competitions.
- Further to this, we will establish leisure parks in different parts of the county where people can relax after a hard day's work.
- To promote preservation and enjoyment of our culture, we will initiate cultural festivals where artefacts and activities that celebrate our heritage will be showcased for all to enjoy.

"He is an intellectual of high standards; consults, implements things and never lets a chance go. This county needs politicians like him. His development record compares to that of our president though not at the same level. He will fight the three vices identified by Mzee Jomo Kenyatta of illiteracy, hunger and diseases."

- Prof. Erastus Njoka - Chuka University Vice Chancellor

COUNTY INTEGRATION AND BRANDING



PROBLEM

For a long time, different parts of the county have been pulling against each other, not realising that there is more that unites than divides us. On the other hand, branding of Tharaka Nithi is virtually non-existent, you cannot even tell when you enter or leave this great county.

THE WAY FORWARD

- I will do everything possible to unite the people of Tharaka Nithi. In managing the affairs of the county, I will ensure equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, and create programmes that will bring the people together – from sporting tournaments to cultural festivals and religious crusades. Our political messaging will be geared towards bringing our people together and to take pride in their diversities.
- All corners of the county will be represented in my government, and no one will be made to feel left out in any of our development and social programmes.
- Regarding branding, we will create messaging that celebrates us and proclaims the greatness of our county, show the rest of the country and the world what we have to offer in terms of cultural and material possessions, create merchandising that celebrates us, and generally make our people feel very proud of themselves.
- Our branding will be done through a programme that also markets the county as a land of many opportunities for industrial, leisure, agricultural and cultural investments.
- We want our county to be known for the many positive things that thrive within its borders.

HANDS UP FOR OUR GOVERNOR!