



## Governor Barasa Promises Clean And Safe Water For All As He Takes Over County Leadership



### Kakamega Governor H.E FCPA Fernandez Barasa takes oath of office at the Bukhumbu International Stadium

**G**overnor H.E FCPA Fernandes Barasa has promised that his Government will ensure most of the County residents are connected to clean and safe water.

Under his ambitious programme dubbed “Amatsi Mumuliango,” the Governor said his Administration is keen on ensuring residents get water at their doorsteps.

“My Administration shall endeavor to connect as many households as is practically possible to water supply in what I shall call “Amatsi Mumuliango,” water at the door step,” said Governor Barasa in his maiden speech after his swearing in ceremony held at Bukhumbu Stadium.

He noted that connecting households to clean and safe water is not a favor to residents but their right as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

“Ensuring that our households are connected to clean water is not just a moral and administrative obligation, but it is also a Constitutional requirement that binds us,” he said.

The Governor regretted that residents especially women are still covering long distances in search of clean water from streams and springs.

He recalled 40 years ago when he was still young, how they used to walk long distances to fetch water for do-

mestic use.

“Water supply is an essential infrastructure that supports socio-economic growth and sustainable development. While growing up as a young boy in Khabondi village, I recall with a lot of pain and regret the long distances that we covered with our mothers, brothers and sisters in search of water. It cannot be that 40 years down the line, our wives and children are subjected to the same fate,” he said.

By rolling out the programme, the Governor will be picking up from where his predecessor H.E Dr Wycliffe Oparanya left through his Amatsi Khumukuru programme.

## CEO Attends Inauguration Of New Governor

Acting CEO Ms Christabell Ashiono was among hundreds of guests and residents who attended the inauguration of Governor H.E FCPA Fernandes Barasa as the second Governor.

The ceremony held at Bukhungu Stadium saw the Governor take over the County leadership with a promise of transforming the County.

He said top on his priority list will be water and sanitation promising to ensure most of the County residents are connected to clean and safe water and can access it at their doorsteps.

The CEO congratulated the new County leadership saying she is looking forward to a close working relationship and support from the new administration in ensuring the Company meets its mandate of provision of water and sanitation services.

“We are looking forward to working together to fulfill our mandate of providing clean and safe water and sanitation services to residents of Kakamega,” the CEO said.



From Right: KACWASCO Ag. CEO Ms Christabell Ashiono, KCIDA CEO Ms Elizabeth Asichi, Chief Officer for Water Eng. Philip Otenyo and other KACWASCO staff during the inauguration of Governor H.E FCPA Fernandes Barasa at Bukhungu Stadium

## Private Plumbers To Be Licensed To Help Curb Illegal Connections

The Company is planning to roll out registration of private plumbers and sensitize them on the effects of being involved in illegal water connections as a way of tackling the Non-Revenue Water (NRW) menace.

According to the Company’s Technical Manager, Mr Celsus Shilehwa, most of the illegal connections are done by private plumbers and therefore need to register and issue them with a license from the Company, so as to ensure that only the certified private plumbers are able to do water connections for their clients without interference from the Company.

He reiterated the need to also sensitize customers on the importance of engaging certified private plumbers only, so as to save them from being charged for using unlicensed plumbers.

“Water theft is one of the areas that is affecting our operations. We are planning to start registration and issuance of licenses to private plumbers. This will in one way of reduce cases of illegal connections by ensuring that only approved plumbers are allowed to do water connections for their clients. We are also going to sensitize our customers on the effects of engaging unlicensed private plumbers so that, if found, then we have no option other than surcharging the customer,” said Mr Shilehwa.

Mr Shilehwa added that they have also commenced installation of smart meters and capturing all meters on Geographic Information System (GIS) in order to handle meter inaccuracy and cases of meter tampering respectively.

“We have captured all our meters on GIS including their serial numbers whereby a meter number is tagged to an account number in order to pre-

vent meter relocation and bypasses. We are also sealing our meters to ensure that they are not tampered with.

He noted that the Company has also begun upgrading its pipeline by replacing the old worn-out PVC pipes with high density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes so as to reduce water loss due to pipe bursts.

“The HDPE pipes are stronger and resistant to bursts. They will also help reduce cases of illegal water connections since it’s not easy to make a connection on them unless one has the right equipment,” he explained.

He added: “We are also mapping our pipeline network through the GIS to help detect pipe bursts in time and know the material required to repair the pipeline. Mapping will also assist in guiding contractors on the depth of our pipeline in order to avoid damaging pipes during road construction.”

## I Quit Playing Rugby To Focus On My Studies Says Technical Manager Mr Shilehwa



**Mr. Celsus Shilehwa**

“I love watching rugby. That is one sport I played while in High School from form one to form two. I was at Kakamega High School and it being one of the schools that used to perform well in rugby and football, I was lured to join rugby,” said Engineer and Technologist Celsus Shilehwa, the Company’s Technical Manager.

Mr Shilehwa narrated that studying at Kakamega High School, one of the schools that used to perform well in rugby, made him start playing rugby during interclass competitions.

He, however, noted that due to the addictive nature of sporting activities, he decided to call it quits after form two, fearing that concentrating a lot on rugby would negatively impact his studies.

“Sporting activities sometimes consume a lot of a person’s time, so after

form two, I came to understand what I wanted and that is why I decided to fully concentrate on my studies,” Mr Shilehwa noted.

Mr Shilehwa, who is currently finalizing his PhD studies in Civil Structural Engineering at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, is a Professional Engineer and Technologist (PETECH).

He holds a Master’s Degree in Water and Environmental Engineering and an undergraduate degree in Civil and Structural Engineering from Egerton University.

Mr Shilehwa joined the Company in September 2020 after previously working for different water companies between the years 2009 and 2020, among them Nzoia Water and Sanitation Company (NZOWASCO) where he worked as the Head of Research, Planning and Development.

He explained that as a Technical Manager he is tasked with overseeing the implementation of any structured development projects, development and implementation of departmental strategies and also in charge of research and developmental activities.

Mr. Shilehwa stated that the Technical Department consists of 5 main sections; Production, Distribution, Operations and Maintenance, GIS, Water Quality and Waste Water section.

“I joined KACWASCO initially when it was a corporation and by that time, we didn’t have a clear distinction between the 5 sections, which made du-

ties to somehow overlap. I first had to ensure that duties were streamlined through skills analysis, where we had to redefine the job roles of each officer in line with the section,” said Mr Shilehwa.

He added that they also had to add more staff in the Non-Revenue Water (NRW) section and capacity build them, a section he said by the time of joining it had just been formed; so as to make it seriously functional in order to help the Company tackle the challenge of NRW.

He expressed his happiness about being among the team that contributed to the development of the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan and the current tariff that was implemented earlier this year, which he said has enhanced the Company’s service delivery and financial sustainability.

Mr Shilehwa also noted that he is happy to have participated in the automation of the NRW component in the ERP system and also capacity building the staff on how to join and lay the HDPE pipes, which in turn, will help reduce water loss.

“If I happen to leave this great Company, I will be happy to have left behind a Company that is fully automated because this will increase operation efficiency. I will also be proud to see an increase in revenues through reduction in non-revenue water,” he acclaimed.

He added: “To the entire KACWASCO staff; we need to be more focused, embrace team work and dedicate ourselves to our work in order to help the Company achieve its goal. As a staff, it feels good when you see your contribution having a positive impact on the Company.”

## Kakamega O&M Team Conducts Maintenance Of Milimani Main Tanks

**K**akamega Area Operations and Maintenance (O&M) team has repaired Kakamega main water tank located at Milimani which was leaking affecting water supply in town.

According to the Area Manager Mr Idd Osundwa, the leakage was identified earlier this week and his team has been working round the clock to fix

the problem.

“The tank is made of steel plates and nuts which due to immense water pressure causes them to break leading to leakages. When this happens, we replace the damaged bolts and plates,” said Mr Osundwa.

He noted that his team undertakes routine maintenance of the tanks to

fix any cases of leakages to reduce water loss.

He said the O&M team has also been repairing and unblocking different water lines in Kakamega Area to improve on water distribution and supply in the area.

Mr Osundwa said the team recently fixed pipe bursts and water leakages at KANU office main line, Shirere, Koromatangi, Nyayo Tea zone and Maraba lines to restore water supply.

He said they have also upgraded Murram line from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  pipes to meet the growing demand of water.



### Kakamega County Water & Sanitation Company (KACWASCO)



Maji Safi, Maisha Bora

On behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of KACWASCO, I join residents of Kakamega County to congratulate

**H.E FCPA Fernandes Barasa, OGW** on his inauguration as the **2<sup>nd</sup> Governor** of the Great County of Kakamega.

We look forward to working together to fulfill our mandate of provision of clean and safe water and sanitation services to residents of Kakamega.

*Hongera Gavana*

**Ms Christabell Ashiono**

Ag. CEO

Quality Water, Healthy Livelihood

### In Brief...

**T**he Company has embarked on desilting its water intake at Tindinyo in Nandi County to remove accumulated sand and silt.

The intake has accumulated a lot of sand and silt due to heavy rainfall pounding the area.

“Good evening, this is to inform you that tomorrow we are going to do desilting of the Tindinyo intake, due to the heavy rainfall going on, the intake has accumulated a lot of sand and silt.

This process will interrupt normal operations in the morning hours from 8am to 12pm,” read a message from the water production team stationed at Tindinyo.



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