



# Kakamega County Water And Sanitation Company



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## CEO To Contractors: Spare Us From Pipe Destruction



### Ongoing road construction

The Company's acting CEO Ms Christabell Ashiono has appealed to road contractors to work in liaison with the Company to avoid destruction of water pipelines during road construction.

She said the Company continues to suffer huge losses occasioned by pipe bursts during road construction.

"We appeal to road contractors to inform us so that we can avoid such incidents. If they notify us in advance we can plan on how we can relocate to avoid them being destroyed," said Ms Ashiono during the Consumer Summit held at Golf Hotel in Kakamega.

She noted that when the pipelines are destroyed water consumers who rely on water supply from the Company are greatly affected as a result of the disruption forcing them to seek alternative yet unsafe sources of water.

"When the pipelines are destroyed,

they cut off our consumers from the water supply. This causes them to get water from springs, streams and other sources and this water is not clean and safe," she said.

The CEO said the incidences of pipe bursts during road construction had contributed to high levels of non-revenue water which contributes to water and revenue loss.

Currently the Company's non-revenue water stands at 44% which is much higher than the country's target of 25%.

To address this, she continued to appeal to contractors to work closely with the Company, this even as it continues to intensify crackdown on illegal connections which also contribute to non-revenue water.

Ms Ashiono revealed that the Company has put in place proper measures and laid the necessary infrastructure to distribute water in pro-poor areas

like slums in Kakamega.

She said people in such areas will get water at affordable rates as a measure to ensure they access clean and safe water for consumption.

She affirmed that water from the Company meets the regulatory requirements of high quality and is safe for human use.

"We ensure our water meets the highest water quality requirements as per WASREB and KEBS standards," said Ms Ashiono.



Ms Christabell Ashiono



## In Brief...



The Company took part in the County's monthly Service Delivery meeting at the County Chambers to share on the status of various projects, programmes and initiatives.

The acting CEO Ms Christabell Ashiono represented the Company in highlighting the status and progress of various projects.

The meeting which brings together County Executive Committee Members (CECMs), Chief Officers, CEOs of County parastatals among others was chaired by CECM for Public Service and County Administration Madam Rachel Okumu.

KACWASCO is set to start bottling branded water for individual and commercial customers.

The acting CEO Ms Christabell Ashiono revealed that at the opportune time they will implement the idea as part of efforts to improve on revenue.

"We produce and supply clean and safe water that meets high quality standards and now we have the idea of starting packaging KACWASCO branded water. When the right time comes then we will start implementing it as an alternative source of revenue," she said.

She noted that the project will help in selling the brand KACWASCO to more customers.

## KACWASCO; Serving The Might And Lowly In The Society

The Company has embraced pro-poor initiatives aimed at improving access to clean and safe water and sanitation services in the low income areas within the urban centers.

As per the WASREB regulations, it's mandatory for all Water Service Providers (WSPs) to ensure access to water and sanitation services to underdeveloped areas.

Josephine Ikua, who is the pro-poor initiatives coordinator has been at the center stage of ensuring equality in access to water and sanitation services in these areas and under her stewardship, KACWASCO has always been rated highly in such initiatives.

Among the initiatives undertaken by the Company include; the construction of ablution blocks, safisan toilets and water kiosks.

Kakamega and Mumias towns whose portion of their population residing in the lower income areas have benefited a lot from the pro-poor initiatives including safisan toilets and water kiosks.

"The high population in these areas and in which majority are poor call for improved access to clean and safe water and sanitation services," said Ikua.

She thanked WSTF for supporting them in the safisan toilets project in Mumias which has seen the Company construct at least 212 modern toilets distributed in Lumino, Mjini, and Shibale areas of Mumias town.

According to Ikua the Company takes

charge of draining the toilets at no fee once full.

"Ablution units in Mumias and Kakamega have also helped us improve basic sanitation and the Company is planning to put up more in other areas," she said.

For the water Kiosks, the Company has set up 24 in Kakamega, eight in Mumias, six in Tindinyo, five in Shinyalu and two each in Butere and Shitoli areas.

Ms Ikua noted that in line with the WASREB regulations, the Company had significantly subsidized cost of water for Kiosk owners.

"We charge Ksh 35 for every 1m3 (Cubic Meter) of water a kiosk owner receives as opposed to the Ksh 80 charged for the same volume for regular customers.



**A Water Kiosk at Butere Lower Market**

In view of this, Ikua said if the kiosk owner sells a 20 litres of water at Ksh 2, which is affordable to many, he/she is still able to reap high profit.

As for Ikua the Company has achieved a lot through pro-poor initiatives in a bid to improve hygiene, access to clean and safe water in the

urban poor areas.

"Our target is to ensure everyone in Kakamega County get access to clean and safe water. We are committed to enhancing sanitation services. The issue of people attending to the calls of nature anywhere will remain history," she noted.

# CEO: Walking The Talk

When she took over office as the acting CEO, Ms Christabell Ashiono promised reforms aimed at transforming the Company.

Top on her agenda was to increase water production capacity through rehabilitation of Tindinyo raw main water pipeline, seal corruption loopholes and improve efficiency at the Company.

She also promised to embrace team work and open door policy in handling operational and administrative issues, capacity building for staff and creating a friendly working environment for all staff.

She would be readily available and accessible to all who needed her input putting an end to the many bureaucracies that characterized such an office.

True to her words, Ms Ashiono has embarked on a journey of visiting all Areas and schemes in her efforts to meet field staff and share with them her vision for the Company and give them an opportunity to give ideas that will improve and better services at the County owned parastatal.

It is notable that this shift from the previous regimes has left many staff feeling encouraged and motivated to work.

For staff, it is a new dawn they wish would never end.

“We are motivated and encouraged by our CEO. She has embraced all staff even those at the lowest level and now everybody feels part of the Company. Her door is always open to everyone and she gives a listening ear to each one us,” said Ms Nancy Tarus, Shitoli Area Manager.

The CEO also pledged to enhance revenue collection

as part of her priority area.

To achieve this, the Company has improved in revenue collection from Ksh 19 million to now at least Ksh 24 million as they target to hit Ksh 30 million mark.

She has also encouraged Debt Management Unit to work around the Clock to ensure recovery of over Ksh 287 million arrears owed by water users.

The Unit has managed to collect part of the money leading to reduction of the debt.

“Top on my agenda now is ensuring proper implementation of the Strategic Plan so that we meet the objectives in a view of delivering service to the consumers,” said Ms Ashiono.

The Strategic Plan targets to reduce non-revenue water from 44% to 35% by 2026.

She noted that her short stint at the Water Company has seen improvement in efficiency and enhanced service delivery.

“We have improved on our efficiency in service delivery through purchase of motorbikes, laptops, meters and other equipment to ensure we achieve our best in serving our customers,” she said.

Ms Ashiono said staff have undergone training and capacity building to enable them discharge their duties effectively.

“I thank the County Government under the leadership of H.E Dr Wycliffe Oparanya, the Board of Directors under the chairmanship of Prof Laban Peter Ayiro, stakeholders and staff for their support that has seen us achieve a lot in this short time,” she said.

She added; “There is a lot in store for us to achieve and our resolve is to better services and improve on efficiency in all areas we serve.”

#### MAIN AGENDA

- > Enhance revenue collection
- > Implementation of the five year Strategic Plan
- > Increase water production
- > Improve on debt recovery
- > Improve efficiency at the Company
- > Embrace team work and open door policy in handling operational and administrative issues
- > Capacity building for staff and create a friendly working environment for all staff.



## Shitoli Area: The Secret Behind Our Improved revenue



**Ms Nancy Tarus (L) receiving an award during the Consumer Summit at Golf Hotel**

Shitoli Area was hailed and awarded as the most improved in revenue and debt collection outshining other Areas and Schemes.

The Ms Nancy Tarus led Area was recognized during the Consumer Summit for its efforts to improve revenue and debt collection.

“We have remarkably improved on revenue collection. In 2021 we could collect Ksh 800,000 and now we can even collect as high as Ksh 2.9 million,” said Ms Tarus.

She said they are now targeting to collect at least Ksh 3 million per month.

Ms Tarus attributed the improved revenue to accurate meter reading and timely billing.

She said change of attitude by her staff has also contributed to the success of the Area.

“Our patron has also been closely

monitoring this Area and encouraging us to work hard. We also get motivation from the CEO who is keen on performance and is very close to all staff even those at the lower cadre and this has always boosted their morale at work,” she said.

She noted that the support from CEO together with her open door policy is the much needed cure that the staff wanted to jump-start their working spirit.

And for Ms Tarus, there is room for more improvement as more people want to be connected to the Company’s clean and safe water to shun away from using water from boreholes and springs.

“We have over 50 new applications. We have received the meters and we will be moving in to connect them to our water. The demand for water is very high and we are committed to serving them better,” Ms Tarus said.

## Oruma: Always on the call to fix water related matters

Samuel Oruma is always a call away even odd hours whenever there is work that needs his urgent intervention especially pipe bursts and repair.

Oruma who is an artisan said he supports the Operations and Maintenance team to fix pipe bursts to save the Company from losses.

“I start my day by handling controls at the main tank. We do controls to avoid bursts by reducing pressure especially at night,” said Oruma.

After doing his control work, Oruma shifts focus to revenue collection and his efforts have always paid off as Mumias area is among areas that have recorded improved revenue collection.

“At 8.00am I am assigned to revenue collection to get revenue from our customers and disconnect those who have defaulted,” he said.

Oruma who joined KACWASCO in March 2018 said that to ensure the Company meets its targets, it calls upon individual and collective responsibility and sacrifice from the staff.



**Mr. Samuel Oruma**