

# BOMA YANGU News



A PUBLICATION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME STAKEHOLDERS

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State Department for Housing (SDHUD) PS Charles Hinga, State Department for Diaspora Affairs, PS Roseline Njogu, and representatives from the Diaspora led by Chairperson of the Diaspora Technical Working Group (DTWG) Danson Mukile, pose for a photo after a joint consultative meeting on opportunities for investing back home, held at a Nairobi hotel in June.

## Kenyans Abroad Eye Affordable Housing Units

*Government Launches Partnership Plan with Kenyan Diaspora for Housing Program*

In the month of June, the government, through the State Department for Housing and Urban Development, the State Department for Diaspora and the Diaspora Technical Working Group (DTWG), announced plans to create a platform for members of the diaspora to own homes in Kenya under the Affordable Housing Program (AHP).

Speaking at a joint session with diaspora members, the State Department for Housing and Urban Development, Principal Secretary, Charles Hinga, highlighted the government's focus on ensuring that the diaspora has access to this program. He further called upon members of the diaspora to partner in this initiative as an avenue to provide value add to remittances provided towards the housing initiative.

"If you look at the Ksh. 634.1 million remitted to the country, the largest component of that is for housing. The people in the diaspora want houses for their loved ones, and we will develop a framework that allows them to save and gain access to housing units in Kenya," he explained.

He further noted that the government is working out the details to ensure potential homeowners living in the diaspora can apply, register, and save towards owning a housing unit with power and ease.

Affirming this, Principal Secretary, State Department for Diaspora Affairs, Ms Roseline Njogu, underscored the importance of the relevant state departments working together in ensuring that Kenyans living and working abroad have an opportunity to own a home, under the living homes initiative.

“**The people in the diaspora want houses for their loved ones, and we will develop a framework that allows them to save and gain access to housing units in Kenya.**”

"Under the Diaspora Investment Support, we will provide for our members with avenues to access affordable housing units in Kenya. We remain committed to bringing their wishes to life," she noted.

The Affordable Housing Program is part of the government's agenda to provide affordable housing units to all Kenyans across the country. It aims to address the current housing deficit by increasing access to quality, safe and dignified homes, for all Kenyans across and beyond our borders.

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State Department for Diaspora Affairs, PS Roseline Njogu and State Department for Housing (SDHUD) PS Charles Hinga, share an update on the affordable opportunities of homeownership available for Kenyan Diasporans, at a recent meeting held with representatives of the Diaspora Technical Working Group (DTWG).

Meanwhile, Kenyans' dreams of using a seamless platform to purchase housing units under the Affordable Housing Program has been made easy following a major upgrade of the security features of the Boma Yangu portal. Employers, diaspora Kenyans and other organised groups can now select a unit and directly pay for select units via the portal, at the click of a button.

The Affordable Housing Board (AHB) acting Chief Executive Officer, Sheila Waweru, encouraged the diaspora to kick start their savings and purchase journey via the Boma Yangu platform. The portal's security features have been strengthened with new functions, making it possible for any individual or registered group to purchase units through their employers or saving schemes.

"Organised groups such as cooperative societies, chamas, employers, religious organisations, SACCOs and Unions can now bulk purchase units for their members and also be able to track their payment on the platform" she explained.

The platform allows users to monitor their savings, receive updates on the allocation process, monitor construction progress and get notifications about the handover timelines.

The portal also allows organised Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to advertise their wares via the portal where participating developers will be required to source for various building materials locally.

"There are 79 key building inputs that must be sourced locally from registered MSMEs and Jua Kali industries. The Jua Kali industry and MSMEs are a key plank of the Kenya Kwanza manifesto and Bottom up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)," she said.

The Boma Yangu portal, [www.bomayangu.go.ke](http://www.bomayangu.go.ke) is the sole selling point for all AHP housing units under construction in various parts of the country.

## The Affordable Housing Program (AHP) Sets Green Building Agenda In Practice



The Boma Yangu Homa Bay Affordable Housing Estate has received global recognition after it received the prestigious Global Certification in Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies (EDGE) issued by the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

The conferring of the EDGE certification, rewrites the conversation of integrating green building technologies into residential developments. EDGE celebrates projects that save energy, reduce carbon emissions and save on water consumption.

According to Thomas Ofwa, the Engineer in charge of the project, this award highlights the measures taken in support of the SDG 13 climate action. He says the EDGE design reduces energy use by 30 per cent, water use by 37 per cent and embodies use of energy in materials by over 50 per cent.

"Prior to issuance of the IFC EDGE recognition, the project was subjected to a compliance process including key stages like preliminary modeling, design and construction audits, and final certification," he explained.

This affirms that Boma Yangu Homa Bay Affordable Housing programme has integrated green building technologies in accordance with global standards that ensure environmental sustainability and reduction of carbon footprints to net zero.

Beyond sustainability, the local economy has benefited immensely with many youth, women and local artisans being employed. The jua kali sector has also been engaged in the crafting of window fittings and other fin-

ishes. This has ignited numerous economic activities around the housing projects helping improve local incomes.

Youth who joined the project as unskilled workers have been provided with an opportunity to upskill in masonry, electrical work, plumbing and painting through hands-on training. The government has also introduced a certification process Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where artisan skills will be assessed and certified through the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA).

### About Edge

EDGE ("Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies") is a free software, a green building standard, and an international green building certification system. IFC created EDGE to respond to the need for a measurable and credible solution to prove the business case for building green and to unlock financial investment.

EDGE is a globally recognized standard with third-party certification, ensuring transparency and credibility. The compliance process includes key stages like preliminary modeling, design and construction audits, and final certification.

## Editorial Team

*Boma Yangu News* has been developed by the communication team at the State Department for Housing.

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# Suswa and Ntulele ESP Markets Power Economic Growth in Narok



*H.E the President Dr. William Ruto with traders from Narok and its environs at the commissioning of the Suswa ESP market on 6th May 2025.*

**T**raders in Ntulele and Suswa, in Narok County are set to experience a new economic chapter, with the recent completion and handover of two new markets under the Economic Stimulus Program by the State Department for Housing and Urban Development.

These developments signal the government's commitment towards facilitating trade at the grassroots level, ensuring dignity for small businesses and traders while enhancing local commerce. The construction of the Suswa and Ntulele markets is part of a broader national initiative aimed at promoting economic growth and supporting small businesses.

The Government recently embarked on building 400 markets across the country, with 201 Economic Stimulus Markets and 29 modern markets currently at various stages of completion. Once fully operational, each ESP market is expected to host up to 300 traders.

For years, open markets in towns across the country, characterized by human traffic congestion, poor sanitation, cramped-up trading spaces among other challenges such as exposure to harsh weather elements and no access to basic infrastructure. However, the narrative is changing thanks to the new markets under construction across the country.

In the month of May, two new markets were handed over to the Narok County Government, for allocation to the traders who had been operating in the open-air markets spaces. This is set to replace the makeshift stalls that symbolized informal trade.

These new markets are designed not just for trade but to support broader community needs. They include amenities such as cold storage rooms, ablution blocks, ICT hubs, lactation rooms/daycare centres, and essential utilities like running water and electricity. These new facilities offer permanent, clean, and organized trading environments that are expected to significantly improve how business is conducted in both Suswa and Ntulele.

Beyond infrastructure, the initiative has also created local employment, youth and local artisans were engaged during the building process, with approximately Ksh. 3.88 million set aside specifically for artisan participation. This approach has not only created short-term employment but has also reinforced the Government's commitment to local empowerment and community inclusion in public projects.

The Suswa ESP market has been described as a symbol of hope by many and among them, Benard Mbugua, a shoe vendor in the area. "This new market is truly transformative, we finally have a clean, secure place to do our

business. We hope that space allocation will be fair for everyone," he said. The new market introduces infrastructure that had been missing for years with traders expressing optimism and gratitude for the government's commitment to improving their business environment.

The Ntulele market, a one storey building located on the Mai Mahiu-Kamandura- Narok road stands out, has a modern design, that accommodates a large footfall, thus serving the growing number of traders converging in the areas on market days.

The traders are calling for additional investment to match rising numbers of customers and traders, particularly in Ntulele. Rose Kisutu, a trader, has implored the government to build another market on the remaining piece of land, to accommodate the surge in trader numbers during market days.

The Suswa and Ntulele ESP markets are not only physical upgrades, but also a reflection of a broader vision of economic transformation at the grassroots level for small businesses in driving local wealth generation, job creation and supporting livelihoods.

The projects serve as a clear indication of what's possible when public infrastructure is matched with policy intent that's rooted in the everyday aspirations of the local wananchi.

# Affordable Housing Projects Renews Dignified Living Dream as Over 4,000 Units are Released to the Market



Machakos AHP



Gichugu AHP



Homa Bay AHP



Mukuru AHP

**K**enya's Affordable Housing Program (AHP) is transforming lives with beneficiary-families enjoying the security of stable living away from demolition of their makeshift houses, sudden fire incidents and inadequate access to basic amenities. Children now have a better environment to live in and explore their full developmental potential through excelling in their studies and in sports.

The main goal of the Affordable Housing Pillar is to ensure that the Country's population is provided with adequate and decent housing in well-planned urban areas.

Over 4,000 houses have been completed in different parts of the country with numerous new projects at different stages of completion. The Affordable Housing Initiative aims to increase availability of dignified affordable housing units for middle and low income earners.

Speaking during the handover ceremony at Mukuru Boma Yangu

Housing estate, the Principal Secretary for Housing and Urban Development Charles Hinga, said "Affordable Housing Programme is not about just buildings, it is about restoring dignity, creating jobs and ensuring inclusivity in urban growth. This is a people driven agenda that speaks to the heart of socio-economic empowerment."

The developments incorporate sustainability principles through natural ventilation, energy-efficient lighting, storm water management, and centralized waste treatment systems. Water supply will be supported by onsite boreholes, while all buildings will be equipped with CCTV systems, fire suppression infrastructure, rooftop water tanks, and ICT connectivity. Universal access has also been prioritized, with the inclusion of elevators, ramps, and accessible stairways, ensuring the estate is inclusive to persons with disabilities and the elderly.

This project is more than just affordable housing, it symbolizes hope, dignity and stability.

# Government Builds Ksh. 345 Million Modern Fish Market in Homa Bay



The **Ksh. 345 million** modern fish market in Koginga, Homa Bay County recently opened by President William Ruto will benefit 2,000 fishmongers providing them with a modern marketplace to process and sell their wares.

The clean, well-organised and dignified space for fish handling and trading also boasts of cold storage facilities that will help fishmongers preserve their produce from spoilage thereby increasing the shelf life for fish on offer. This will ensure round the clock availability of fish on sale.

Speaking about the commissioning of the market, Ms. Lilian Kieni, Director of Urban Development at the State Department for Housing and Urban Development, said: “This new fish market has a dedicated fish processing area that will play a key role in harnessing maritime resources for economic empowerment. The market will also give Fish traders a decent place to do business, because initially they were operating in shacks and had no place to store their fish, which is perishable. We want to assure all traders, especially mama samaki, and other small traders who we are working to ensure they have access to decent and well-serviced trading areas for their day-to-day activities.”

The modern market will feature:

- Hygienic trading spaces.
- Retail stalls and a food court.
- Fish processing and storage facilities (cold/dry rooms).
- Gutting and scaling areas.
- A mooring deck and fish landing shed for fishermen.
- Stores for processed fish.
- Washrooms, kitchens, and sanitation systems.
- A high-level water tower and underground water tank to ensure a reliable water supply.
- Adequate lighting for the market and surrounding areas.
- An ICT hub to support digital operations and financial recordkeeping.
- Mother-and-child facilities and PWD-friendly access ramps.

This initiative is part of the government's wider plan to formalize informal trade and promote inclusive economic growth by providing dignified workspaces across the country.



*A fishmonger displays her catfish catch for sale, at the newly commissioned Homa Bay Fish Market*



## Defining Decent Living Standards on a National Scale

For ages, the living standards for middle and low income earners in urban centres has been wanting. Lack of running water, electricity, toilets, playgrounds, roads, paved pathways, sewer lines, drainage and proper security just to mention a few. While the dwellers may abhor and detest their lifestyles, they lack an option that can set minimal standards of what a dignified living space can be and continue living in the makeshift structures.

This kind of living, studies show, adversely affects Kenya's development agenda where slum dwellers lack access to essential social resources that would improve their well being enabling them to make meaningful contributions to the national development. Most of them are jobless and lack any meaningful opportunities to provide basic necessities for their families.

To boost their ability to fend for themselves is an urgent need of creating job opportunities as well as availing new decent housing units that people living in the slums can occupy. The affordable housing programme unlocks this quagmire and offers slum dwellers an opportunity to own a quality home that boasts of social amenities that are decent, secure and affordable.

The journey towards participatory planning in the delivery of housing for Kenyans through the Affordable Housing Program (AHP), has projected social inclusion in provision of quality affordable housing as one that goes beyond physical structures. Through this initiative,

the Government has tapped on better urban planning to improve the quality of life of the vulnerable in the informal settlements.

The social housing typology is one of the three typologies under AHP, that incorporates urban reconstruction, leveraging use of tomorrow's technologies today. A key highlight of the social housing model is provision of internet connectivity, gas reticulation and clean safe water in every housing unit. The access to these urban basic services at affordable rates is testament to the delivery of better outcomes for social inclusion.

In addition, integration of shared infrastructure such as paved walkways, green public spaces, shops, ECD learning centres, health centres, sports recreation facilities brings the feeling of home beyond physical structures. The housing units enclosed in secure gated wall fences with guards and caretakers provides a feeling of inclusivity, safety and community.

Mukuru, one of Nairobi's largest informal settlements, epitomizes the journey towards ensuring equity and justice for sustainable cities. The landscape of homes within Mukuru, dotted with makeshift, fire-prone, and lack access to basic services is set for a major facelift and a fair chance to thrive.

The Government has initiated promotion of equal access to housing, services and economic opportunities by constructing the Boma Yangu New Mukuru Housing Estate. The Estate upon

completion will host 13,248 housing units. The first phase of 1,080 studio apartments has been delivered to new homeowners. This project has injected Ksh 11 billion directly into the local economy and is expected to generate a ripple effect of nearly Ksh 28 billion when accounting for auxiliary economic activities.

The future of AHP lies in converting public policy into public pride. For decades, slum dwellers were viewed as statistical footnotes in urban planning. Today, they are beneficiaries of a structured, transparent, and scalable housing model and with this transformative agenda, urban crime has drastically reduced due to elimination of ghetto gangs, and improvement of public health through better sanitation, as well as bolstering education by providing safe environments for children to learn.

Social inclusion begins with a roof, a door that locks, and a space where children can dream. The AHP is not just constructing buildings; it is building the Kenyan spirit. And if Mukuru is anything to go by, then the rest of Nairobi—and indeed the country—can dare to dream of a future with dignity.

By leveraging on local and grassroots data, AHP will empower the communities using localized approaches to urban development. Through coalition and alliance building, communities, county and national governments, private sector and civil society will promote people-centered smart cities.

# The Affordable Housing Program (AHP): a Milestone of Sustainability, Economic Revitalisation and Youth Empowerment



The newly built housing units under the Affordable Housing Program (AHP) are not only a beacon of hope for locals but a blueprint when it comes to building affordable and eco-friendly houses.

The Homa Bay Project is part of the ambitious programme of building decent and affordable housing units across major towns in Kenya. Located in the outskirts of Makongeni - Homa Bay town, the first phase of the Homa Bay project, which is now complete, includes 110 housing units comprising 38 two-bedroom apartments, 40 one-bedroom units, 30 studio apartments, and two combined studio-shop units. The housing units

are priced affordably from as low as Ksh 896,000 for studios to Ksh 3.2 million for the two bedroom units.

For the project, about 2,000 skilled and unskilled workers drawn from the community were employed. Moreover, an estimated KES 11 million was paid to local Jua Kali artisans for the supply of doors and windows while local women groups contracted to provide landscaping services, earning about KES 1 million.

Through this project, many youths have been able to improve and learn new skills. Many who had joined the project as casual

laborers are now skilled in crafts such as masonry, electrical work, wood work, plumbing and painting through hands-on training.

Over time, these workers are set to benefit from the government-supported certification process, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), where artisan skills will be assessed and certified through the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA).

Through the Affordable Housing Projects, the government has made significant strides in effort to complete decent and affordable housing units to Kenyans from all walks of life.



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