

VIHIGA COUNTY SHADOW ASSEMBLY BEGIN TO ORGANIZE FOR 2012: THE BALL IS SET ROLL ON AT CHAVAKALI FRIENDS CHURCH-15TH AND 16TH DEC 2010

It's apparent that leaders and ordinary Kenyans are yet to understand the paradigm shift brought about by the promulgation of the new constitution and the possibilities it avails for re-creating and re-imagining the nation's political process and governance structures.

Two examples illustrate this: First, recent by-election campaigns were still fought on strength of individual contestants' wealth and their inferred political patronage. Second, numerous personalities who never achieved much as leaders in the past are showing interest in becoming county governors and senators in the new Kenyan constitution.

The inference is that a lacuna exists in our political system caused by ignorance in the part of many Kenyans about exactly how the implementation should proceed. This may result in decision being made emotionally, rather than logically with several attendant problems including the possibility of a re-embedding of our current political culture as we move into the future.

In order to develop a transition process that gains the critical mass required to get moving in a new direction, VIHIGA COUNTY SHADOW ASSEMBLY FORUM propose to launch a two year Leadership for Counties Program that will attain the following:

1. Create a formal program that fills current gaps in our county's leadership talent portfolio to ensure that various capabilities and capacities are developed so that all critical new positions in the county government can be filled by the youth.
 2. Create new leadership tools and facilitate their use but require that all areas and regions within the county work out and own their particular development priorities.
 3. Teach youth leaders how to oversee development initiatives and to continually communicate their commitment to those initiatives to the elect rate.
 4. Ensure that leader's development is aligned with county development priorities, reinforces leaders skills rather than personality and has support from the electorate.
 5. Identify youth leaders capable of leading the Nakuru county in the initial years of the transition in the system engendered by the new constitution..
 6. Target the un-heralded women and youth with a demonstrated capacity to create change and provide leadership but who have never had the resources or visibility required to launch themselves into leadership positions.
 7. Develop a benchmark for economic planning, job creation, educational systems, transparency, accountability, social welfare and infrastructure development by having potential leaders discuss challenges and solutions to local and develop blueprints for scrutiny by their electorate
- Attain all this objectives rapidly within limited time and cost considerations.
1. Originate a program that can be cascaded vertically to other county government units as well as horizontally to other counties.
 2. Ensure a large talent pool of youth leaders so that there is leadership continuity and smooth leadership transition through elections or in the unfortunate event of the sudden demise of a county leader.

"VIHIGA SHADOW ASSEMBLY FINALLY LAUNCHES ITSELF"

For two days between 15th and 16th December 2010 the leaders of vihiga county came together to deliberate on the future development of the county. More than 300 people drawn from a cross-section of the entire Vihiga leadership participated in the seminar, which was initiated by Mrs. ALICE KIRAMBI OF C.P.D.A.

Vihiga is a small compact area, within Western Province with a very high density of population. It is a large urban or peri-urban centre which requires proper planning by physical planners to facilitate planned development.

This report has been produced as a "Blueprint" for the development of the county. Major keynote speeches that reflect the theme of the seminar have been reproduced verbatim. Speeches by other guest speakers have also been summarized to give the reader a fair account of what took place at the seminar.

The most important parts of the Blueprint are the reports and recommendations from various working groups that discussed I detail problems and possibilities in specific development sectors and the suggested priorities for each sector.

The executive director of C.P.D.A set the ball rolling, when in her speech, she appealed to the Vihiga leaders to come out with viable suggestions on how to attract more investments, to improve education standards, improve health care, uplift the standard of living and to improve the agricultural production. She further said that the type of grassroots leadership that is going to benefit Vihiga is that which is enterprising and capable of inspiring wanan-chi to exploit the dominant potentials available for development.

All the leaders who took part in the four -day seminar have committed themselves to the solutions and recommendations of the seminar. They have pledged to spread the message of the seminar to every corner of Vihiga County. The seminar gave the leaders of Vihiga a new sense of direction and high hopes. The know that development will not be brought to their constituency by anybody else, but themselves. They know that 'together' they can turn vihiga into a highly developed and peaceful area.

We commend this Launch to all those who want to see Vihiga develop.