

About the Project

“Our County – Our Responsibility” aims at building the capacity of the staff in community radio stations to enable them to contribute towards ensuring that responsible citizens actively participate in the democratic process and demand transparency and a voice in the planning and implementation of development policy goals. The direct target group of the project is about 200 programme staff in 14 community radio stations and theatre groups located in eight counties, Nairobi, Saburu, Homa Bay, Taita Taveta, Tana River, Isiolo, Kajiado and Wajir. The indirect target group is the potential audience of around 2.2 million people. The project is implemented by Jesuit Hakamani Centre and Kenya Community Media Network. The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.



Radio personalities during the implementers' workshop.



Focus Group Discussions in Tavete and Voi Towns



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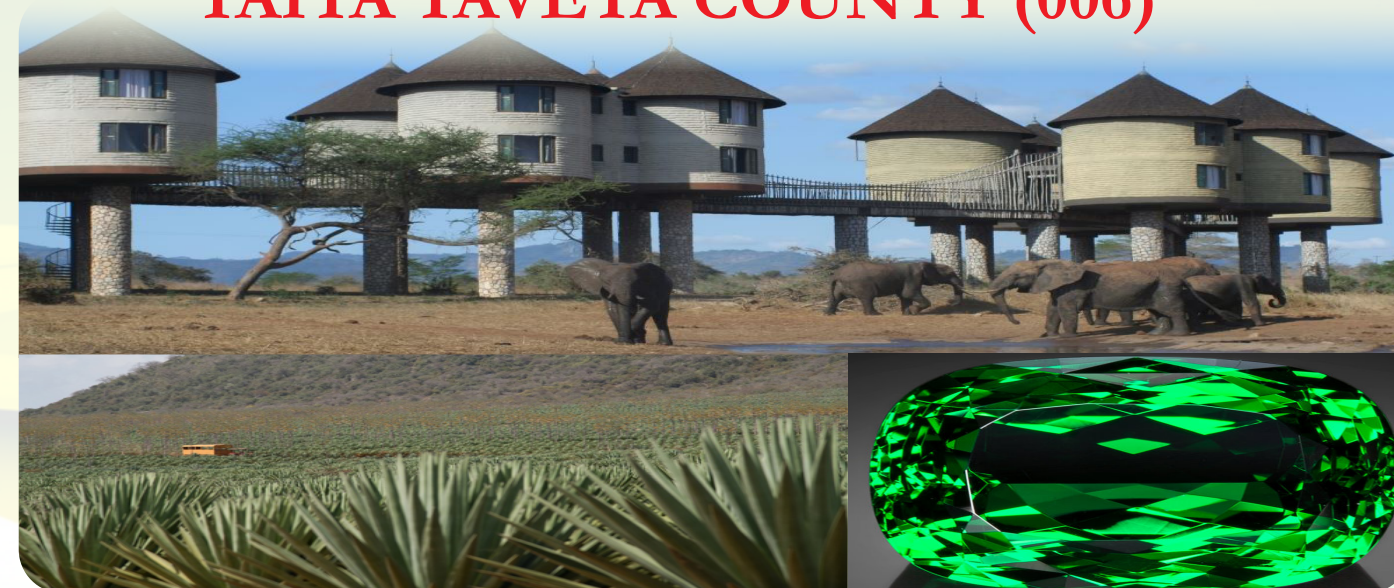
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Community Media Mobilising for Accountability in Kenya TAITA TAVETA COUNTY (006)



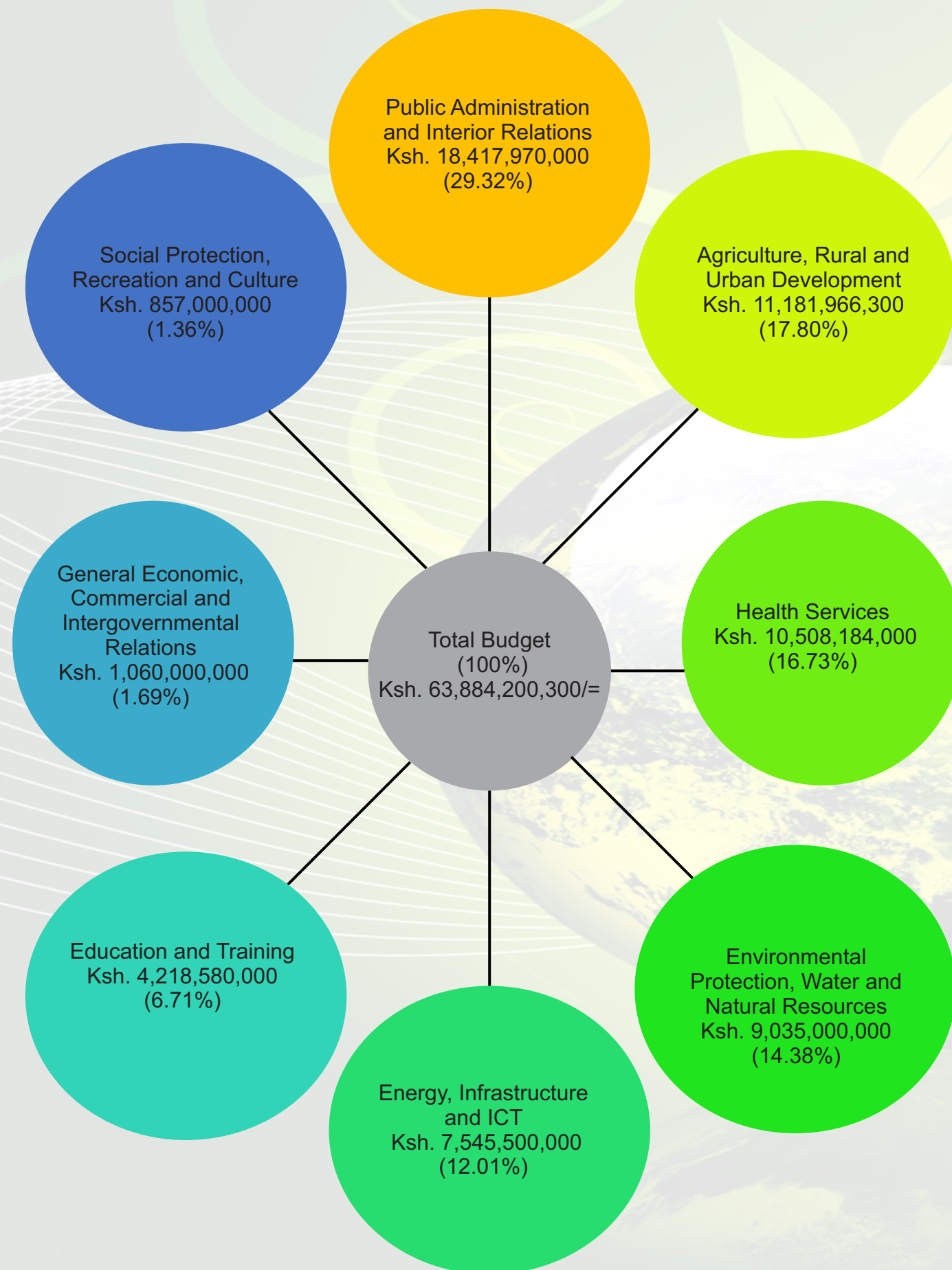
COUNTY PROFILE

Taita Taveta County is approximately 200km North West of the coastal city of Mombasa and 360km South East of Nairobi. The county covers an area of 17,084.1km² with 10,649.9 km² (62.3 per cent) being within Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks. The county borders Kitui, Makueni and Tana River Counties to the north; Kilifi and Kwale Counties to the east; Kajiado County to the north-west and the Republic of Tanzania to the South. There are 48 forests in Taita Taveta County, 28 of which are gazetted and managed by the national government. The forests range in size from 500 m² to 2 km² encompassing both exotic and indigenous forest mountains. Water bodies within the county occupy 106 km² comprising of Lakes Jipe and Chala in Taveta sub-county. Land available for household farming activities is further reduced drastically due to the presence of a total of 28 ranches which combined, cover an approximate area of 773.5 Km². The land in the County is communally owned with approximately 35% having title deeds. Sisal estates and hilltop forests occupy less than 100 km². The total acreage under food crops is 18,125 ha while the total acreage under horticulture (excluding sisal estates) is 3,296 ha. The total acreage under food crops is 18,125 ha while the total acreage under horticulture (excluding sisal estates) is 3,296 ha. The average farm holding in the areas that have agricultural potential ranges between 0.5 ha to 30ha, while that of rain fed ranges between 2ha - 20ha. The average farm size for small scale farmers is about 0.4 ha in the highlands, 1.3 ha in the midlands, and 4.8 ha in the lowlands. The main crops grown are in the county are cereals (Maize, sorghum, Rice), pulses (beans, cowpeas, green grams, pigeon peas), root crops (cassava, and sweet potatoes), horticultural crops (kales, tomatoes, cabbages, French beans, snow peas, capsicum,

Asian vegetables), fruit crops (bananas, mangoes, oranges, passion fruit, guavas), nuts and oil crops (macadamia, groundnuts, sunflower, coconut, cashew nut) fibre crops (cotton, sisal), emerging crops (jojoba, moringa, mushroom, aloe vera, jatropa). The County is a major livestock rearing zone, with the main types of livestock being beef cattle, dairy cattle, goats, sheep, camels, donkeys, poultry, bee keeping, rabbit and pigs. Chicken is the main poultry reared, although guinea fowl quills, turkeys, geese, ducks, peacock, pigeons are emerging poultry. The projected 2018 population of the county stands at 347,909 with a gender split of 50.2% being male and 49.8% being female. The population density per km² in the county ranges from 3 persons in rural areas to more than 800 persons in urban areas. The County's total labor force between 15-64 years was 162,928 which represents 54% of the total Population (KNBS, 2009). The composition of this labor force is 48% (80,222) female and 52% (86,720) male. The county is divided into 4 sub-counties i.e. Taveta, Wundanyi, Mwatate and Voi with a total of 20 wards. There is a marked variation in population density in the county with Taveta and Wundanyi sub counties having the highest densities while Voi and Mwatate sub counties have the least densities. The county's 2018 population density stands at 20.36 persons per square kilometer. Taita Taveta County has a total road network of 1832.29km. of which 283.2km are of bitumen standards, 168.09km. of murrum, and 1381km earth road. The main sources of energy in the county include electricity, solar and wood fuel. The 2009 population and Housing census report indicated that the distribution of housing with regard to main walling materials is 51.1%, 42.5%, 2.4% and 2.1% for brick/block, mud/wood, mud/cement and stone respectively. The main economic activities include ranching (livestock farming), sisal farming, mining, tourism, and conservation. (Source: Taita Taveta CIDP, 2018 - 2022).



Taita Taveta County Budget Breakdown as Per the County CIDP 2018 – 2022



Development Priorities that are Important to the Citizens

• **Health:** Most of the dispensaries in the county lack diagnostic equipment, the necessary drugs, ambulances for emergency evacuation and medical personnel. The available health facilities do not operate 24 hours 7 days a week thus forcing many of the County residents to seek health services from the nearby Mombasa County or Arusha in Tanzania. The County Government needs to equip the hospitals with the necessary machinery as well as human resource.



• **Youth Unemployment:** Unemployment rate in the County stands at 45% and 70% among the youthful and productive population. Unemployment is attributed to inadequacy of technical and business skills among the population and the limited capacity of the industrial sector. Other causes of unemployment in the County include undeveloped agricultural and mining sectors as well as low access to information leading to low entrepreneurial culture, financial and business development support service sectors. There is need for the County Government to create job opportunities and fund income generating projects for the youth so as to enable them to cater for their own basic needs.

• **Protection of People Living with Disability (PWD):** Visual impairment is the leading case of disability in the County accounting for 31.05% of the total persons with disability. Physical disability follows at 28.2% while mental cases accounts for 13.05 %. Through the Social Welfare Department, the County Government should ensure that the rights of PWD are protected and that they have equal opportunities to associate, be presented and participate in political, social and economic activities as stipulated in the Constitution.

• **Education:** There is need for the County Government to engage in educational improvement through: increasing the number of Early Childhood Education (ECDE) centres and village polytechnics, increasing the burasaries, education loans and scholarships allocation to needy students and fully implement policies geared towards improvement of the education sector such as: the Taita Taveta County Education Fund Board (Amendment) Act, 2015, the Taita Taveta County Early Childhood Development and Education Act 2014 and the Taita Taveta County Village Polytechnics Act 2014.

• **Water and Sanitation:** A large section of the County is water stressed due to a number of reasons such as: environmental degradation and drying up of rivers and springs. An approximate of about 58% of households in the county have access to safe drinking water thus meaning that many households lack access to safe and clean water. There is need for the county government to ensure provision of clean and regular water supply especially in Voi town and complete the stalled water pans in different wards in the county.



• **Recreational Facilities:** Drug and substance abuse is rampant among the youth in the County which in turn affects their development and that of the County as majority of the youth make up the productive population. Through construction and setting up of recreational facilities which will help the youth to engage in other useful activities, drugs and substance abuse prevalence may decrease with time. There is need for the County Government to follow up on the Moi Stadium, Mwatunge stadium and basketball pitch for the youth in Voi town.



• **Human Wildlife Conflict:** Loss of wildlife habitats in most parts of the county has led to the increase in human-wildlife conflicts. Wildlife such as elephants invade private lands in search of water which in turn lead to crop destruction; this affects the county's food security and endangers human and livestock life and therefore needs to be addressed urgently through partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).

• **Mining:** Current estimates indicate that Taita Taveta is one of the leading producers of minerals produced in Kenya. There is need for local industries which will carry marketing and value addition for minerals like Tsavorite (green garnets), ruby, sapphire, rhodolites, tourmalines, red garnets etc. These industries will create employment opportunities for the youth as well as speed up development in the county through increase in revenue collection. There is need for full implementation of the Taita Taveta County Mining Act, 2016.