



SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR HON. ABDI IBRAHIM HASSAN

DURING MASHUJAA DAY HELD

ON

20TH OCTOBER, 2023

AT

POLICE MESS GROUND.

Our Very Able Deputy Governor,
Honorable Speaker of the County Assembly,
Honourable Members of the County Assembly,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly and Senate Present,
The County Commissioner and National Government Officials,
County Executive Members and Chief Officers,
Members of the County Public Service Board
Our Development Partners,
Invited Guests,

Fellow Residents of Isiolo County,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam Aleykum and Good morning?

Allow me to first express immense gratitude to The Almighty Allah *Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* for the current rains. However, with the forecasted El Niño rains, it is my hope and prayer that the rains will be of great benefit to our livestock and farms as opposed to being destructive. In the same vein, as your governor, I wish to report that my administration in collaboration with different stakeholders has put in place contingency measures in the event that our people are faced with flooding.

Fellow Isiolo People,

We have come together today on this auspicious Mashujaa Day to reflect on our successes, challenges we have faced and lessons we have learnt over the years on implementing Universal Health Care (UHC) in our great county. The rollout of the program as a pilot project at Isiolo County Teaching and Referral Hospital (ICTRH) and other health facilities in the County 3 years ago not only increased access to healthcare for patients who face barriers such as distance (especially those in rural areas), transportation, or caretaker availability but also drastically reduced costs related to health care.

In the same breadth, allow me to assert that, in line with UHC, my aspiration is that by 2025 all residents of Isiolo have access to quality and affordable healthcare. This is a pivotal goal that I hold dearly. Accordingly,

my administration remains committed to working closely with the national government and our development partners to ensure that the great people of Isiolo enjoy first class health care services.

Fellow Isiolo People,

As we aspire to achieve on this mandate, financial constraints remain a key hindrance towards actualizing this dream. In this regard, my government is further committed to improving health financing at all levels of service delivery to increase resource generation and prudent use of the resources as captured in the **Facility Improvement Fund Act, 2021**. In line with aspirations of UHC, I wish also to register my administration's commitment to ensuring continuum of care, from primary health to tertiary level of services and that no citizen shall face catastrophic expenditure in pursuit of good health and well-being.

Fellow Isiolo People,

The Community Health Strategy aims at empowering our communities to take control of their health by making households the first center of health production. In this regard, I want to appreciate our 760 Community Health Promoters (CHPs) who play a pivotal role in the realization of UHC through community engagement at the household level.

To enhance on their roles, we as a government have established 50 Community Health Units in our great county; 20 in Isiolo Central, 18 in Garbatulla and 12 Merti. I am happy to report that these efforts have significantly contributed to; sustained community engagement and participation through community dialogue and action days, motivation of CHPs through payment of monthly stipends and successful development and enactment *of Isiolo County Community Health Service Act 2022*. Further to this, my administration will in the near future through the department of health services seek avenues to empower our CHPs.

Fellow Isiolo People,

Health information systems are a critical pillar in informing communities on their health status so as to help them embrace better health seeking behaviors and good health practices. Notably, as your governor, I am fully informed of the national government's plan to rollout electronic Community Health information system (eCHIS). To this end, for us to tap into the benefits of this vital technologies, I do register my administration's commitment to work closely with the national government in the training of our Community Health Assistants (CHAs) and Community Health Promoters (CHPs) on eCHIS.

This in my view, will strengthen community engagement and participation in health among our great people.

Fellow Isiolo People,

I am equally happy to report that, to strengthen linkages from level one to level 4, my administration is working closely with the National Government in scaling up of Primary Health Care. This we have done through establishment of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) with the formation of the initial one at Merti Sub County.

Further to this, my government is also putting in place measures that will witness this partnership establish more PCNs in the remaining two Sub Counties within the next few months.

Fellow Isiolo People,

To enhance healthcare service delivery in line with UHC, we have also as county government adopted digitization of our services at Isiolo County Teaching and Referral hospital, and Garbatulla Sub-County hospital. In this regard, we have fully embraced the application of telemedicine technology which has enabled access to a wide range of healthcare options, including primary care consultations, physical therapy, and some emergency services.

Similarly, the technology has allowed the delivery of affordable specialized health care services in the remotest area while easing costs both to the government and its people.

Equally, to further improve services, my government is working with the national government to upgrade Isiolo County Teaching and Referral Hospital (ICTRH) to level 5 status. This will, in line with aspirations of

UHC, increase operational funding received from the national government to this vital health facility hence improving on service delivery.

Further to this, my government is also in the process of upgrading Merti and Garbatulla Sub-County Hospitals to level 4 status. In my view, this will help us reduce the numbers looking for medical attention at ICTRH thereby reducing pressure at this referral health facility and hence enhance access to health services.

Fellow Isiolo People,

With respect to realization of UHC, as government, we have also made great strides in the strengthening of our human resources for health. To address the shortage of doctors, nurses and other medical practitioners, we have invested in this vital space effectively increasing the total number of human resources for health from 439 in 2018 to 690 in 2023; a 57% increase in mission critical human resources.

I am happy to report that, due to these efforts our great county boasts of a better ratio of Nurses per 10,000 population at 11.8 compared to 8.3 national average. Similarly, these efforts have improved the ratio of our doctors' population increasing it from 1.1 to 1.3/10,000 population. To further bolster this, my government will in the financial year 2024/2025 budget for additional recruitment.

Fellow Isiolo People,

The availability of healthcare commodities in public health facilities is one of key priority areas to the attainment of UHC. In this regard, my government has significantly contributed to this primary issue by providing essential drugs and medical supplies to health facilities across our vast county. To strengthen this, my administration will work closely with the KEMSA to put in place contingencies that will in the future prevent any shortage.

Further, my government will seek to improve access to specialized diagnostic and treatment services at tertiary level facilities by bolstering the procurement and installation of state-of-the-art theater equipment, sterilization equipment, x-ray and other modern imaging equipment.

Fellow Isiolo People,

On addressing maternal mortality and under five mortality rates, I am happy to report that as a result of UHC, our county reduced maternal mortality ratio from 790/100,000 to 451/100,000 live births. Nonetheless, it is sad to note that our under-five mortality rate increased from 56/1,000 to 56.6/1,000 live births, this mainly attributed to poor health seeking behaviors by caregivers.

Going forward therefore, as your governor, I commit to work closely with different sector players to further strengthen both our community health services and preventive and promotive health services. This in my view will assist us in entrenching an excellent health seeking culture among caregivers contributing to optimal access to child healthcare and decrease in malnutrition.

Fellow Isiolo People,

As I sum up, I wish to register my sincere wishes to all our children sitting for National Examinations; KPSEA for Grade 6 CBC learners, KCPE and KCSE. As your governor I do believe in your abilities to achieve your dreams and I know you will make our county proud.

I must also thank all county staff for demonstrating exceptional commitment while performing their respective duties. It is their outstanding dedication that daily contributes to the overall success of my administration subsequently contributing to my ranking as the second-best governor in Kenya.

Thank You.

HAPPY MASHUJAA DAY

