

Children, Youth and Women Sensitive Planning and Budgeting in Kenya: Tharaka Nithi County Brief, 2014/15-2017/18



County Government of Tharaka Nithi

1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BRIEF

This brief provides an analysis on how the County Government of **Tharaka Nithi** budgets for the needs of children, youth and women. The analysis focused on social sector budgets and actual expenditures for the period 2014/15-2017/18. The brief specifically focuses on health, education, child protection, youth, women, nutrition, water and sanitation. The analysis is based on budget data and information collected through interviews with relevant county stakeholders. The key highlights from the analysis are summarized below:

- a) **Slightly over 90 per cent of the Tharaka Nithi Gross County Product (GCP)¹, which is ranked 35th (0.8% contribution to National GDP) of all the 47 counties in Kenya, comes from agriculture (57%) and services (37%).** This represents a partially diversified economy, and the county should continue putting in place measures to mitigate weather shocks, which affect the agriculture sector while at the same time promoting manufacturing through agro-processing and creating an enabling environment for private sector to thrive. There is also need to enhance farmers' capacities in modern agricultural methods and support through extension services.
- b) **The county own source revenue increased from Ksh 120 million in 2014/15 to Ksh 130 million in 2017/18.** As a share of total revenue, the county's own source revenue declined from 4.1 per cent in 2014/15 to 3.2 per cent in 2017/18. Overall, the equitable share transfer increased from Ksh 2.5 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 3.7 billion in 2017/18. To improve the share of its own source revenue, the county needs to enhance capacity for own source revenue forecasting and analysis. In addition, the county should put in place mechanisms to mitigate losses associated with cash handling, and poor internal controls and audit mechanisms.
- c) **The county spending on health expanded from about Ksh 0.7 billion to Ksh 1.2 billion in the review period, resulting into improvement in maternal and child health outcomes partly because of increased investment in the sector.** The number of women with access to skilled delivery increased from 46.4 per cent in 2014 to 60.8 per cent in 2018. However, this is below the national average of 64.9 per cent in 2018, indicative of the need to improve access to health services in the county. The share of fully immunized children in the county increased from 55.3 per cent in 2014 to 73.9 per cent in 2018. While this is an improvement, the indicators are below the national average and, therefore, there is need for the county to continue investing in the sector while ensuring efficient and effective use of the allocated resources.
- d) **The resources allocated to Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) decreased from Ksh 0.4 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.3 billion in 2017/18.** However, gross ECDE enrolment rate increased from 73.3 per cent in 2014 to 89.6 per cent in 2018. Looking forward, the challenge for the county is to ensure sufficient and equitable distribution and effective utilization of available resources. This may be done through prioritizing ECDE and vocational training in its education spending, rather than using departmental share to give education bursaries to other levels whose share of budgetary allocation is growing at national level.
- e) **The county recorded improvement in water and sanitation budget execution complimentary to the increase in allocation from Ksh 0.2 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.4 billion in 2017/18.** The budget execution rate improved from a low of 16 per cent in 2014/15 to 89 per cent in 2017/18. This partly explains why the population with access

to improved water and sanitation improved. The county should continue investing more resources to the sector to improve other WASH-related indicators.

- f) **The county's allocation to child protection, youth and women was Ksh 0.014 billion in 2017/18 and only Ksh 0.001 billion was spent during the period, resulting to a 9 per cent absorption rate.** Looking forward, the county needs to increase allocation to child protection given the levels of child neglect, abandonment and child labour.
- g) **The county only committed Ksh 20 million in one fiscal year (2014/15) to interventions that directly contribute to boosting child nutrition, at a time when nearly a third (33%) of the children are stunted, which is above the national average of 26 per cent.** The county should ensure direct nutrition interventions across several sectors such agriculture, education and health are budgeted for, with visible budget lines. Moreover, nutrition should be well articulated in the County Integrated Development Plans.
- h) **The budget execution rate for most social sector budgets, especially health, water and sanitation and ECDE has significantly improved. For instance, budget execution rates for water and sanitation improved from 16 per cent in 2014/15 to 89 per cent in 2017/18.** However, most of the sector performance indicators still stagnated or recorded marginal improvement. The county should investigate the allocative and technical efficiency use of resources by the departments.
- i) **Due to limited disaggregation of data in expenditure reports, it was not possible to establish how much of the county government budget was spent on crucial social services such as child protection, youth development, disability and gender mainstreaming.** By having standalone budget lines on these interventions, the county is better placed to effectively deliver the above-mentioned services, especially to women and girls. On child protection, for example, the county recorded an increase in the number of reported cases of child neglect and abandonment from less than 20 cases in 2014 to 767 cases in 2018, yet there is no specific budget line for this. The same also applies to gender-based violence which has increased in recent years.

1. COUNTY OVERVIEW

Tharaka Nithi occupies a land area of approximately 2,662 km² and is divided into 4 sub-counties and 15 wards. The county's population was 393,177 in 2019, which is 0.83 per cent of the national population. The total county population constituted of 193,764 males, 199,406 females and 7 intersex persons.

In 2015/16, the overall poverty rate of the county was 24 per cent with 1.8 per cent living in extreme poverty, which is better than the overall national rates of 36.1 per cent and 8.6 per cent, respectively. Among children, about one in every three children were affected by monetary poverty. 18.8 per cent of youth and 24.6 per cent of women were also affected by monetary poverty. Additionally, 52.4 per cent of children were living in multidimensional poverty, while youth

Table 1: Tharaka Nithi county administrative, poverty and demographic profile

Administrative Profile							Latest Available
Area (km ²)							2,662
Number of sub-counties							4
Number of wards							15
Overall poverty (%)							24%
Extreme poverty (%)							1.8%
Population (2019)							393,177
Group	Children	National Children	Youths	National Youths	Wo/men	National Wo/men	
Monetary Poor							
Male (%)	29.1	42.1	19.9	29.1	26.0	30.5	
Female (%)	23.3	41.0	17.5	28.8	24.3	34.1	
Total (%)	26.2	41.6	18.8	28.9	24.6	32.4	
Population	173,337	20,742,290	111,084	13,443,268	78,123	7,847,350	
Multidimensionally Poor							
Male (%)	54.2	49.3	59.7	44.7	68.4	51.0	
Female (%)	50.6	47.1	56.5	49.4	66.2	60.8	
Total (%)	52.4	48.2	58.2	47.1	66.7	56.1	
Population	173,337	20,742,290	111,084	13,443,268	78,123	7,847,350	

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (Various)

and women recorded 58.2 per cent and 66.7 per cent, multidimensional poverty rate, respectively. Levels of monetary poverty remained lower than national averages for children, youth and women. The level of multidimensional poverty among women, youth and children was above the national average. The overall high rates of multidimensional poverty, especially among women, means that planning and budgeting processes should better consider human capital sectors so that the county can maximize on the productive and innovative potential of its future workforce and initiate a fast and sustainable growth trajectory (Table 1).

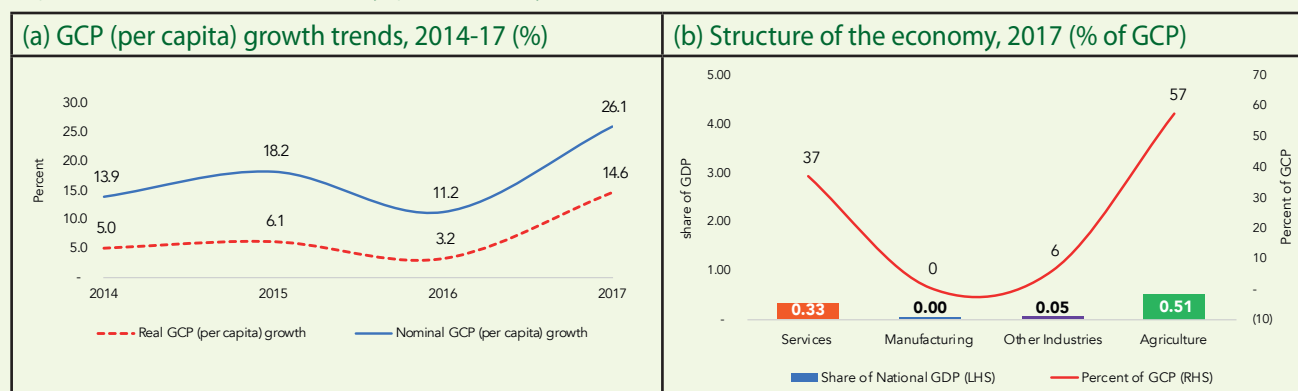
2. STATE OF COUNTY ECONOMY

2.1 Gross County Product Growth

Tharaka Nithi County accounted for 0.9 per cent of the national GDP in 2017. Its Gross County Product (GCP) per capita growth rate was 5 per cent in 2014 and increased to 6.1 per cent in 2015 then declined to 3.2 per cent in 2016 before increasing to 14.6 per cent in 2017 (Figure 1a). The growth in 2017 was attributed to increased demand for agricultural outputs in the county, compounded by a fall in supply due to the electioneering period.

The economy remained reliant on agriculture, which accounted for 57 per cent of the GCP and 0.5 per cent of national GDP in 2017 (Figure 1b). Services contributed 37 per cent to the GCP while the manufacturing sector contributes a negligible share. This trend calls for diversification of the economy to manufacturing, services and other industries/sectors given that other industries contributed a minimal 0.05 per cent to the county economy. To increase agricultural productivity and the participation of women and youth within the sector, the county should put in place mechanisms to reduce the cost of farming, enhance the marketing of agricultural produce and promote agricultural value chains. This can be done through developing appropriate infrastructure and enhancing farmers' capacities in modern agricultural methods. Extension services, agribusiness and research needs to be promoted. The county should also seek to attract more investments in manufacturing, and services for a balanced economy. This can be done through collaboration with different sub-sectors, especially the private sector.

Figure 1: Tharaka-Nithi County gross county product and economic structure, 2014-17



Source: KNBS (2019) statistics

2.2 Overall Budget Performance

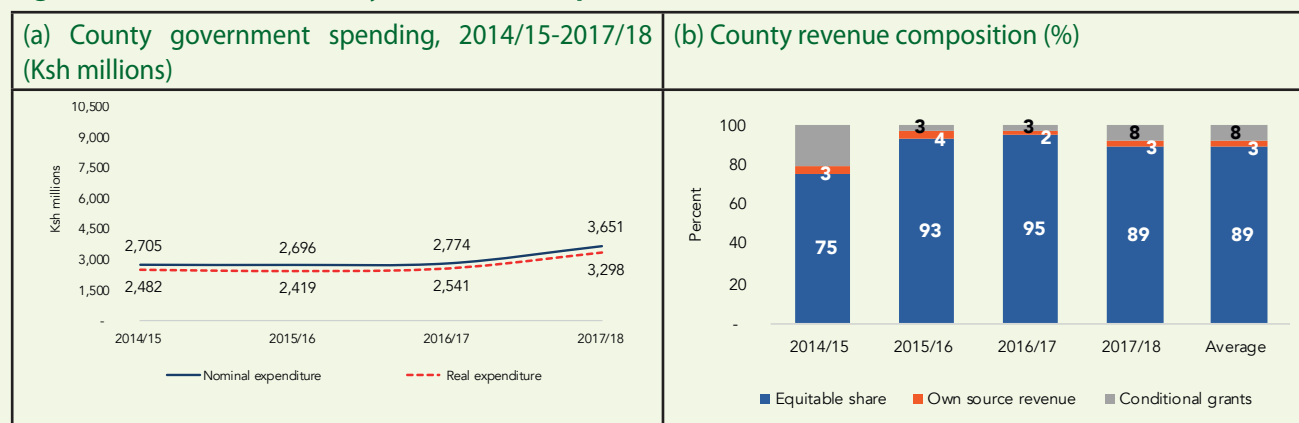
The county government annual spending in real terms grew from Ksh 2.7 billion to Ksh 3.65 billion between 2014/15 and 2017/18 (Figure 2a). The spending was heavily dependent on national government transfers accounting for, on average, 88 per cent between 2014/15 and 2017/18. In nominal terms, own source revenue increased from Ksh 0.12 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.14 billion in 2015/16 and declined to Ksh 0.08 billion in 2016/17, with an improvement of Ksh 0.13 billion in 2017/18. The equitable share transfer increased from Ksh 2.5 billion to Ksh 3.7 billion during the period. Own source revenue as a share of total revenue increased from 3.5 per cent in 2014/15 to 4.1 per cent in 2017/18 before declining to 3.1 per cent in 2017/18. The burden of the drop in county government spending predominantly affects spending in the social sectors, which are recurrent in nature. The contribution of own source revenue and conditional grants was, on average, 12 per cent (Figure 2b). There is, therefore, need for enhanced fiscal efforts to accelerate revenue mobilization from both local revenue and conditional grants.

The share of actual development budget decreased from 34 per cent in 2014/15 to 29 per cent in 2015/16 and further declined to 20 per cent in 2016/17 before improving to 30 per cent in 2017/18. The recurrent expenditure, constituting of personnel emoluments and operation and maintenance costs, accounted for about 72 per cent of county government spending throughout the period. Wages alone accounted for about 53 per cent of all county government spending (Figure 3a). This reflects low compliance to the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act 2012 provision that curbs development

spending at a minimum of 30 per cent of total budget, and the Regulations 2015 which require that not more than 35 per cent of the county's total revenue should go to payment of wages and salaries.

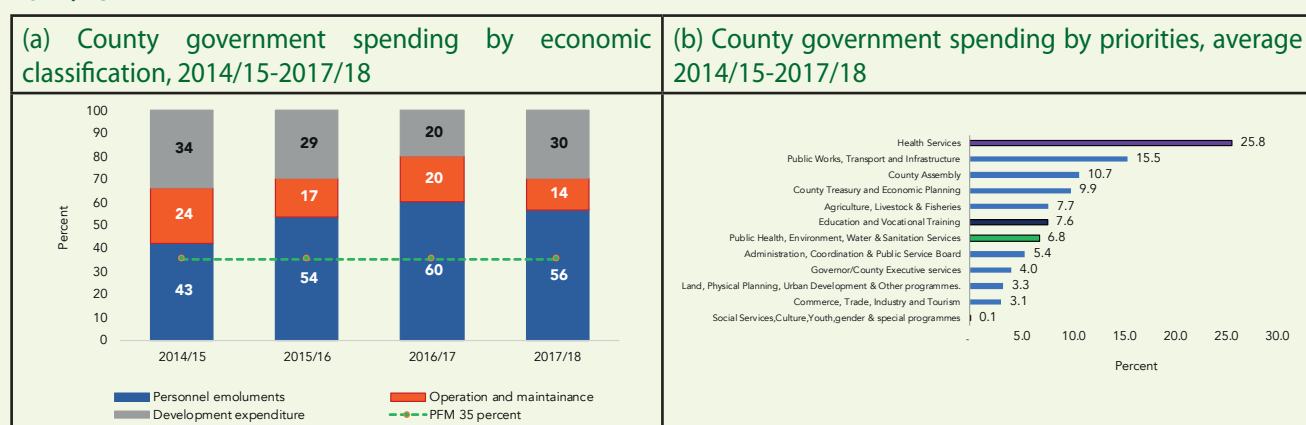
The county spent over 48 per cent of the total expenditure during the period under review on health, education, agriculture, nutrition, social protection, youth, gender, water and sanitation (Figure 3b). These sectors are regarded as more sensitive to the needs of children, youth and women. The effect of this expenditure on the various programmes and activities varies across sectors.

Figure 2: Tharaka Nithi County revenue and expenditure trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

Figure 3: Tharaka Nithi County spending priorities by economic and administrative classification, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

3. ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL SECTOR SPENDING

3.1 Health

3.1.1 Health Sector Priorities

During the period under review, the county outlined key priorities that targeted children, youth, women and persons with disability. The county prioritized to: reduce incidence of malaria by 50 per cent by 2017; increase full immunization coverage among children from 77 per cent to 90 per cent by 2017; reduce TB incidences by 50 per cent by 2017; provide 100 per cent timely treatment of TB/Leprosy; improve maternal healthcare by equipping 40 maternity wards in all public dispensaries; provide free maternity services; provide comprehensive health care services by 2017; expand and upgrade health facilities; improve the supply of drugs management; de-worm 30,000 children in schools by 2017; administer vitamin A to 10,000 of up to 5 years by 2017; and increase staff number by 40 per cent.

The number of women with access to skilled delivery increased from 46.4 per cent in 2014 to 60.8 in 2018. However, this is below the national average of 64.9 per cent in 2018, indicative of the need to improve access to health services in the county. The share of fully immunized children in the county increased from 55.3 per cent in 2014 to 73.9 per cent in 2018. Infant mortality and under-5 mortality rate is estimated at 80 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2016, slightly higher than the national average of 79 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Table 2: Tharaka Nithi County selected health sector performance indicators

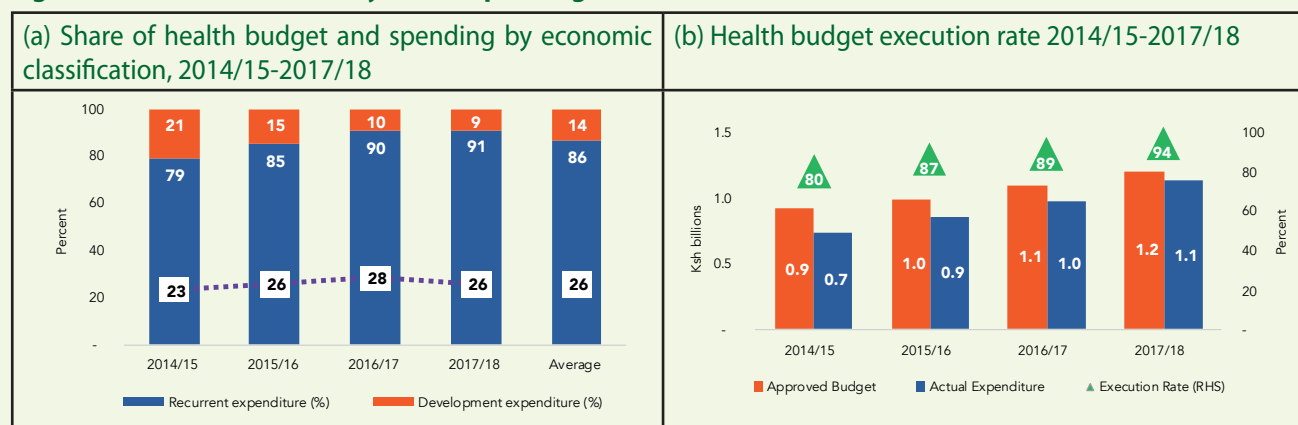
Selected Health Indicators	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	County	National	County	National	County	National	County	National	County	National
U5MR (death per 1,000 live births) 2016 Estimate	-	-	-	-	59.0	79.0	-	-	-	-
MMR (death per 100,000 live births) 2016 Estimate	-	-	-	-	191.0	495.0	-	-	-	-
Skilled birth attendant coverage (%) (source: DHIS2)	46.4	53.5	44.0	56.9	44.6	59.3	42.8	53.0	60.8	64.9
Proportion of pregnant women who attended at least one ANC visit during pregnancy (%) (Source: DHIS2)	63.8	76.4	64.2	75.4	62.2	76.9	73.4	73.7	83.0	81.9
Proportion of pregnant women who attended at least four ANC visit during pregnancy (%) (Source: DHIS2)	46.1	35.9	42.8	39.7	39.8	39.8	43.1	32.6	65.5	48.7
Proportion of children under one year who are fully immunized (%) (Source: DHIS2)	55.3	70.2	60.5	75.7	57.0	72.4	54.9	65.9	73.9	77.0
DPT/Hep+HiB3 dropout rate (%) (Source: DHIS2)	8.7	6.8	9.0	7.2	6.3	6.6	11.8	10.1	5.8	4.0
Still Birth Rate (Source : DHIS2)	14.6	29.3	11.4	22.6	41.5	21.5	35.0	22.6	17.6	20.4

Source: Ministry of Health (2018), Demographic Health Information System (DHIS)

3.1.2 Health budget and expenditure

The share of health budget as a proportion of total county budget allocation increased from 23 per cent in 2014/15 to 28 per cent in 2016/17 before declining to 26 per cent in 2017/18. Health actual expenditure expanded from about Ksh 0.7 billion to Ksh 1.2 billion in the review period. Spending on health comprised of, on average, 86 per cent recurrent expenditure and 14 per cent development expenditure (Figure 4a). The absorption rates increased from 80 per cent in 2014/15 to 94 per cent in 2017/18. This is attributable to failure by the exchequer to release the full amount approved in the health budget.

Figure 4: Tharaka Nithi County health spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

3.1.3 Health sector medium term expectations

The county aims to: set up an information management system that will integrate health services; connect health facilities to the electric grid; increase access to essential health commodities; increase access to basic and some specialized health care services to 100 per cent; increase coverage of functional community health units by 46 per cent; increase the coverage of schools implementing school health policy; reduce the incidences of priority communicable diseases (AFP, TB, Malaria, HIV, Neonatal tetanus, and Measles) targeted for eradication; reduce new cases of non-communicable diseases by 30 per cent; attain 97 per cent full immunization coverage; achieve 79 per cent contraceptive prevalence rate; attain 80 per cent proportion of pregnant women attending four (4) ANC visits; increase health care providers per 10,000 population; increase client satisfaction index; develop a county health bill; achieve 65 per cent of proportion of women receiving skilled delivery services; and attain 90 per cent of women of reproductive age screened for cervical cancers by 2022/23.

3.2 Education and Vocational Training

3.2.1 Education sector priorities

County governments are responsible for Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE), and youth polytechnics which are part of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as per Schedule IV of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. During the review period 2014-2018, the county education sector focused on: construction of 144 permanent classrooms; training of 600 head teachers on leadership and administration; introduction of school feeding programme to 87 primary schools; improvement of retention and transition in secondary schools by 80 per cent through bursaries; hiring of 400 teachers; employment of 800 fully trained ECDE teachers; development of an ECDE curriculum; providing access to post-primary education; providing free primary education; enrolling students in technical training, deploying trainers and other staffs, equipping and introducing ICT; expanding five (5) existing polytechnics and construction of four (4) new polytechnics; and providing one laptop for every class one pupil.

Gross ECDE enrolment rate increased from 73.3 per cent in 2014 to 89.6 per cent in 2018 while net enrolment rate (NER) decreased from 68.9 per cent to 60.2 per cent during the same period. This was generally lower than national averages of 94.4 per cent and 63.5 per cent, indicating that fewer children joined ECDE than before with the implementation of devolution. More boys are enrolled in ECDE than girls in Tharaka Nithi county.

Gross primary and secondary enrolment rates were 121.8 per cent and 72.4 per cent in 2018, respectively. Net enrolment rate (NER) increased from 70 per cent to 90 per cent for primary school and decreased from 61 per cent to 33 per cent for secondary school during the same period. There is inequality in access to primary education between male and female school-going children in favour of girls as shown in Table 3. In 2018, there were 18 accredited vocational centres in the county, enrolling 3,400 learners.

Table 3: Tharaka Nithi county selected education sector performance indicators

Pre-primary School	2014-County	2014-National	2018-County	2018-National
Gross enrolment ratio (%)	73.3	73.6	89.4	94.4
Net enrolment ratio (%)	68.9	71.8	60.2	63.5
Male (%)	71.4	73.4	66.1	62.5
Female (%)	66.4	70.2	52.4	65.0
School size (Public) (Pupils) (Average)	40.0	75.0	44.0	85.0
Gender parity index (value)	0.9	1.0	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio (No.) (Public)	26.0	31.0	21.0	31.0
Proportion of enrolment in private schools (%)	19.6	31.5	24.0	33.0
Primary School	2014-County	2014-National	2018-County	2018-National
Gross enrolment ratio (%)	85.0	104.0	121.8	107.2
Net enrolment ratio (%)	70.0	88.0	90.0	82.4
Male (%)	72.0	86.0	91.0	81.7
Female (%)	68.0	90.0	89.1	83.0
School size (Public) Average No. of pupils	197.0	338.0	209.0	375.0
Gender parity index (Value)	1.0	1.0	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio (No.)	30.0	42.0	26.0	40.0
Proportion of enrolment in private schools (%)	9.0	16.0	10.0	16.0
Secondary School	2014-County	2014-National	2018-County	2018-National
Gross enrolment ratio (%)	80.0	58.7	72.4	66.2
Net enrolment ratio (%)	61.0	47.4	33.0	37.5
Male (%)	86.3	49.6	29.2	35.4
Female (%)	35.7	45.2	36.6	39.8
School size (Public)	-	-	327.6	392.0
Gender parity index (value)	1.0	0.9	-	-
Pupil-teacher ratio (No.) (TSC)	18.0	30.0	29.0	32.0
Pupil-teacher ratio (No.) (TSC and BOM)	20.1	20.2	20.0	20.0
Proportion of enrolment in private schools (%)	30.8	30.7	3.3	5.8

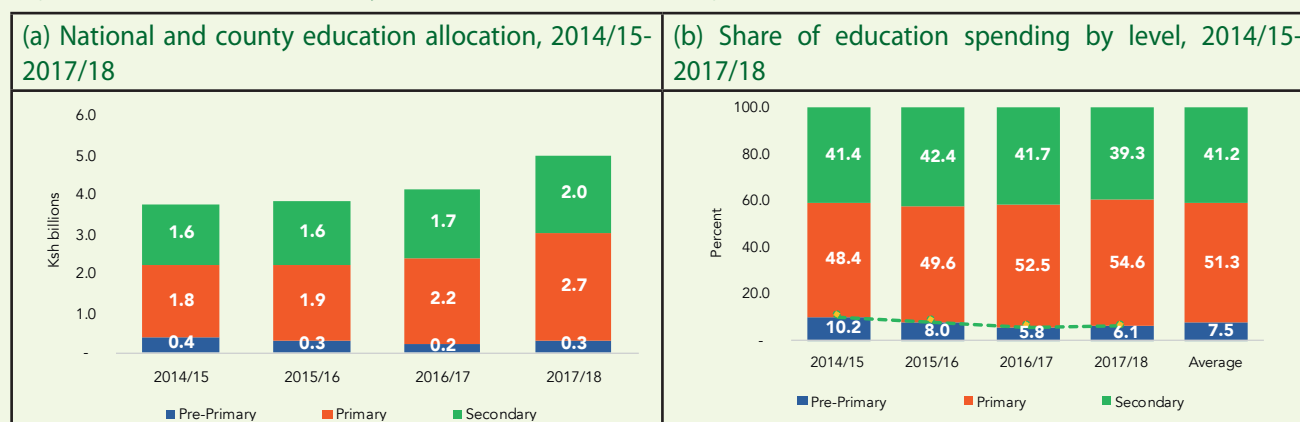
Source: Ministry of Education (Various), Education statistical booklets, 2014-2018

3.2.2 Basic education budget and expenditure

The ECDE allocation in the county decreased from Ksh 400 million in 2014/15 to Ksh 200 million in 2016/17 before increasing to Ksh 300 million in 2017/18. This accounted for, on average, 7.5 per cent of the allocation to basic education by the county.

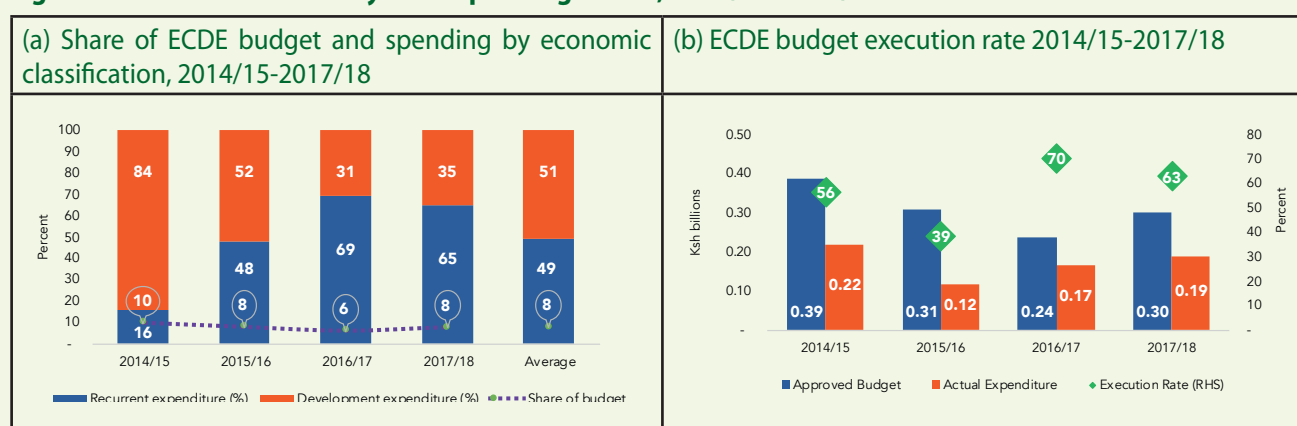
Allocation to primary education increased from Ksh 1.8 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 2.7 billion in 2017/18 while allocation to secondary education increased from Ksh 1.6 billion in 2014/15 and 2015/16 to Ksh 2 billion in 2017/18.

Figure 5: Tharaka Nithi County overall education spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: National Treasury (Various), IFMIS

Figure 6: Tharaka Nithi County ECDE spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

The share of ECDE budget in the total county budget allocation decreased from 10 per cent in 2014/15 to 6 per cent in 2016/17 before increasing to 8 per cent in 2017/18. It comprised of, on average, 49 per cent recurrent allocation and 51 per cent development allocation (Figure 6a). Expenditure on ECDE decreased from Ksh 0.22 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.12 billion in 2015/16 before increasing to Ksh 0.39 billion in 2017/18. The absorption rate fluctuated during the review period between a maximum of 70 per cent in 2016/17 and a minimum of 39 per cent in 2015/16.

3.2.3 Education sector medium term expectations

The county government in the period 2018 to 2022 aims to: enroll 5000 youths in polytechnics; graduate 1,500 youths from polytechnics; train 300 on home crafts; achieve 90 per cent NER in ECDE; enroll 432 schools into the school feeding programme for ECDE; achieve 95 per cent transition rate in ECDE; achieve 1:25 teacher: student ratio in ECDE; and achieve 1:3 book: student ratio.

Table 4: Tharaka Nithi county selected WASH sector performance indicators

Indicators	2014-County	2014-National	2018-County	2018-National
County population within service areas of WSPs (%)	25	*	30	*
Water coverage by utilities (%)	62	53	88	*
Non-revenue water (NRW) (%)	41	42	38	*
Sanitation coverage within utility area (%)	73	69	-	*
Sewerage coverage (%)	-	*	-	*
Access to improved water (%)	59	*	59	*
Access to improved sanitation (%)	96	*	96	59
No toilet facility – Potential open defecation county-wide (%)	12	*	0	8

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014), KDHS 2014; County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018

3.3 Water and Sanitation

3.3.1 Water and sanitation priorities

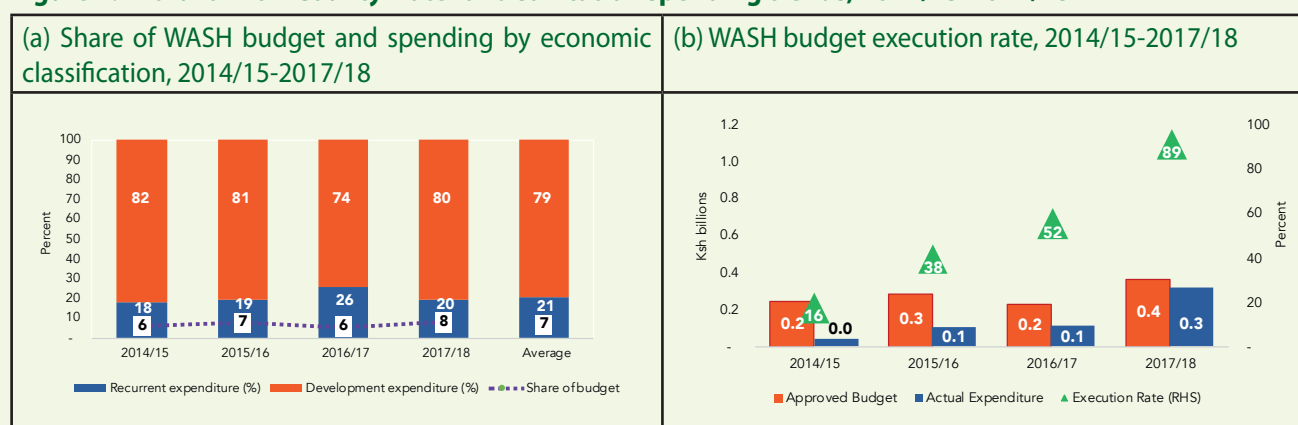
The County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) outlined key priorities for both the water and sanitation sub-sectors. The county thus prioritized to: improve water treatment works; protect catchment areas; assure water quality; enhance water harvesting and storage; reduce water pollution; promote ventilated pit latrines; promote hand washing in schools; and increase sewerage coverage.

Access to improved water and sanitation were estimated at 59 per cent and 96 per cent, respectively. The population within the service area of water utility (company) increased from 25 per cent to 30 per cent between 2014 and 2018. The proportion of population covered or served by the utility improved from 62 per cent in 2014 to 88 per cent in 2018. The sector experiences the problem of non-revenue water at about 38 per cent as at 2018, an improvement from 41 per cent in 2014. High non-revenue water denies the water utility revenue to enhance water service delivery and in meeting operations and maintenance costs.

3.3.2 Water and sanitation budget and expenditure

The total budget allocation to the sector as a share of the total county budget allocation during the review period was, on average, 7 per cent. Total spending on the sector increased from Ksh 0.04 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.32 billion in 2017/18. Spending consisted of, on average, 21 per cent recurrent and 79 per cent development. The approved budget allocation to the county increased from Ksh 0.24 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.29 billion in 2015/16 and declined to Ksh 0.23 billion in 2016/17 but improved to Ksh 0.36 billion 2017/18. However, the absorption rate improved from 16 per cent in 2014/15 to 89 per cent in 2017/18. This can be attributed to failure by the exchequer to release the entire approved budget amount on time, and capacity constraints.

Figure 7: Tharaka Nithi County water and sanitation spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

3.3.3 Water and sanitation medium term expectations

In the plan period of 2018-2022, the county aims to: achieve 80 per cent of the urban population accessing safe/improved sanitation facilities; and to increase households with piped water from 60 per cent to 80 per cent.

3.4 Child Protection, Youth, Gender and Culture

3.4.1 County priorities

The County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) highlighted key priorities for the sector. The county prioritized to: provide the women enterprise revolving loan fund in every constituency targeting to benefit 100 women groups; train 20 self-help groups and provide grants to 200 of them; create employment opportunities to 200 disabled persons; provide monthly stipends to old women in the county; provide stipends to care givers of people with severe disabilities; provide sunscreen to persons with albinism; increase women participation in development; implement the 30 per cent gender rule; develop talent and enterprise for 3,000 youth; promote sports activities among youth; establish youth development fund, Uwezo fund; create employment opportunities for the youth; promote youth-related activities and initiatives; enforce the Children's Act; hire more children officers; and campaign against gender violence.

Table 5: Tharaka Nithi County selected child protection performance indicators (No. of reported cases)

Indicators	2014-County	2014-National	2018-County	2018-National
Child Neglect and Abandonment	3	767	-	73245
Child Sexual Abuse	5	636	-	172
Child Trafficking, Abduction and Kidnapping	-	32	-	1022
Child Labour	-	168	-	378
Child Emotional Abuse	-	58	13	853
Child Physical Abuse	2	583	-	2031
Female Genital Mutilation	-	9	-	40

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014), KDHS 2014; County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018

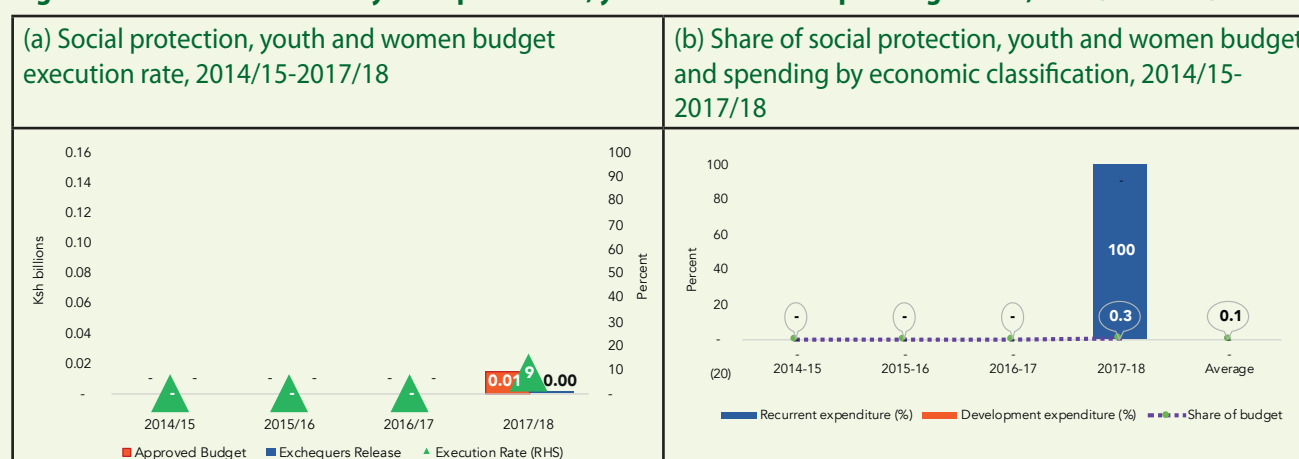
Specifically, on child protection, the county recorded a high number of reported cases of child emotional abuse in 2018 recording 13 cases. The county had no records for most of the social indicators in 2018. In 2014, five (5) cases of child sexual abuse were reported, 3 cases of child neglect and abandonment and 2 cases of child physical abuse.

The county had no records of cases of FGM. The non-reporting of female genital mutilation (FGM) to government institutions can be attributed to either the intensive campaigns and initiatives to protect the girl child, or fear by the population to report such cases, and culture that approves such practices.

3.4.2 Budget and expenditure for child protection, youth and women

The county had not been financing the sector prior to 2017/18. The county allocated Ksh 0.014 billion in 2017/18 and only Ksh 0.001 billion was spent during the period, resulting to a 9 per cent absorption rate. This low absorption rate can be ascribed to capacity constraints (Figure 8(a)). The Ksh 0.014 billion represented 0.3 per cent of the overall county budget. The share of recurrent expenditure accounted for 100 per cent of the total allocation in 2017/18 (Figure 8(b)). There was no clear budgetary allocation for social protection between the period 2014/15 and 2016/17.

Figure 8: Tharaka Nithi County child protection, youth and women spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: Office of the Controller of Budget (Various) reports, 2014-2018

3.4.3 Child protection, youth and women medium term expectations

Between the plan period 2018 and 2022, the county aims to: ensure that 2,000 youth access sports funds; sponsor 3,000 youth for county sports events; support women, youth and people with disability to access capital; involve women, youth and PWDs in honey processing and marketing; train 50,000 youth on greenhouse farming; involve youth in milk collection, animal feeds processing, and agroforestry; increase the number of cultural centres in the county; increase the number of children accessing care and protection services; and legalize and operationalize the county equalization fund.

3.5 Nutrition

3.5.1 Nutrition priorities

The CIDP outlined key areas of focus in the nutrition sector. The county sought to: provide nutritional supplements; employ 120 nutritionists in the county; and to train mothers on good nutritional habits for the benefit of the under five children.

Table 6: Selected nutrition performance indicators

Indicators	2014-County	2014-National
Stunted children (%)	32.9	26.0
Wasted children (%)	-	4.0
Underweight children (%)	-	11.0
Vitamin A supplements coverage	18.9	24.0
Proportion of children aged 6 to 59 months- Received Vitamin A supplement	74.3	71.4
Proportion of children consuming adequately iodized salt.	98.7	99.1
Proportion of households consuming adequately iodized salt.	99.4	99.2
" Household salt iodization (50 – 80 mg/Kg KIO3) (% samples) "	44.0	57.0
Number of Women (BMI)	22.9	23.2
Overweight or obesity among women aged 15 to 49 years.	24.5	28.9

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014), KDHS 2014

For children, county nutrition indicators were generally higher than national averages according to the 2014 data.

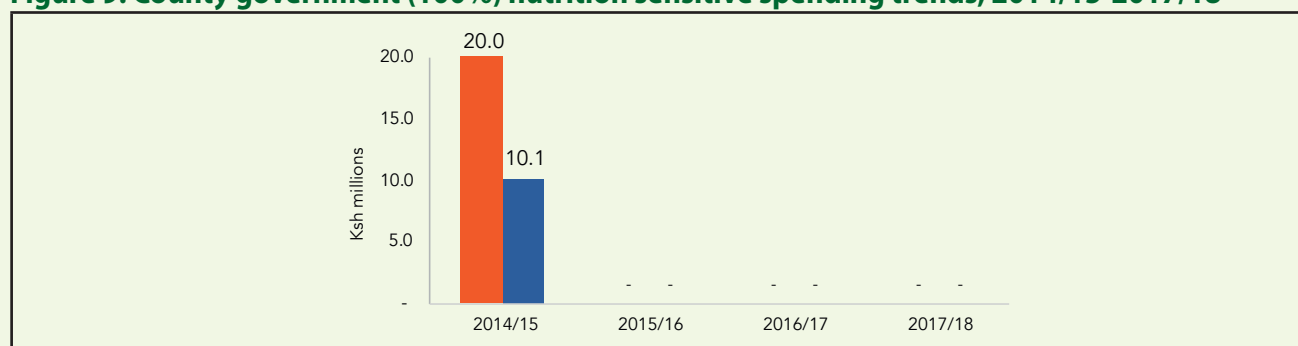
Stunting was 33 per cent of the population while wasting and underweight children was not reported (Table 6). Furthermore, while the proportion of households consuming adequately iodized salt in the county was the same as the national figure, the proportion remained 1 per cent below the target proportion of 100 per cent. Vitamin A supplementation among children aged 6 to 59 months was 74 per cent compared to the target proportion of 80 per cent and 5 per cent below the national coverage of 24 per cent in 2014.

The proportion of overweight or obese women in the county was 25 per cent, 4 per cent lower than the national average of 28.9 per cent. The average Body Mass Index (BMI) of women in the county was 23.

3.5.2 Nutrition budget and expenditure

The county spending on nutrition (direct nutrition interventions) in nominal terms was Ksh 20 million in 2014/15. There was no direct spending on nutrition between 2015/16 and 2017/18. This could be attributed to lack of proper nutrition plans in the county.

Figure 9: County government (100%) nutrition sensitive spending trends, 2014/15-2017/18



Source: National Treasury (Various), IFMIS 2014-2018

3.5.3 Nutrition medium term expectations

In the period 2018-2022, the county plans to: reduce stunting rate from 22 per cent to 18 per cent; and to reduce the prevalence of underweight cases from 9.1 per cent to 5 per cent. To realize the objective, the county will be required to increase the share of nutrition sensitive spending, which was inconsistent in the review period.

3.6 Other Initiatives for Special Interest Groups

Box 1: Key highlights on children, youth, women and PWDs' initiatives

a) AGPO

Access to Government Procurement Opportunities was considered for PWDs, youth and women

b) Children

The county initiated a 100 per cent enrolment and transition in learning, constructed 200 ECDE centres, employed 453 ECDE teachers, procured learning materials for the centres, established free medical services for children under the age of five, established a gender and children desk in all police stations, provided scholarships to needy students, and rolled out immunization programmes.

c) Youth

The county established a centre for excellence, initiated the construction of four (4) polytechnics, employed 35 vocational training centres (VTCs) instructors, disbursed bursaries, developed four stadia, conducted sports tournaments, constructed business sheds, and established a youth empowerment fund.

d) Women

The county provided loans and grants for women and increased the participation of women in public affairs.

e) PWDs

The county initiated a requirement for buildings to meet the needs of PWDs, considered PWDs in the county recruitment process, consideration them for AGPO, distributed assistive devices to PWDs, and assessed and recommended tax exemption privilege for PWDs. .

4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

A summary of implications for policy and responsible actors is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Recommendations and responsible actors

Sector	Finding	Recommendation	Responsibility
Gross County Product	Slightly over 90% of the Tharaka Nithi Gross County Product (GCP), which is ranked 35th (0.8% contribution to national GDP) of all the 47 counties in Kenya, comes from agriculture (57%) and services (37%).	Promote manufacturing through agro-processing, and creating an enabling environment for private sector to thrive. There is also need to enhance farmers' capacities in modern agricultural methods and support through extension services.	County Treasury and Planning/ County Executive/Department of Agriculture
Revenue	The county own source revenue increased from Ksh 120 million in 2014/15 to Ksh 130 million in 2017/18.	Innovate strategies to grow own source revenue. Automate all revenue streams to prevent leakages. Enhance capacity for own source revenue forecasting and analysis. Put mechanisms to mitigate losses associated with cash handling and poor internal controls..	County Treasury and Planning/ Directorate of Revenue
Expenditures	The budget execution rate for most social sector budgets, especially health, water and sanitation and ECDE has significantly improved. For instance, budget execution rates for water and sanitation has improved from 16 per cent in 2014/15 to 89 per cent in 2017/18.	The county should investigate the allocative and technical efficiency use of resources by the departments.	All sectors/County Treasury and Planning/ County Executive
Health	The county has recorded improvement in maternal and child health outcomes partly because of increased investment in the sector.	Need for county to continue investing in the sector while ensuring efficient and effective use of the allocated resources.	County Treasury and Planning / County Department of Health
Education	The resources allocated to Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) decreased from Ksh 0.4 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.3 billion in 2017/18.	Ensure sufficient and equitable distribution and effective utilization of available resources. This may be done through prioritizing ECDE and Vocational Training in its education spending rather than using departmental share to give education bursaries to other levels whose share of budgetary allocation is growing at national level.	County Treasury and Planning/ County Department of Education

WASH	The county recorded and improvement in water and sanitation budget execution complimentary to the increase in allocation from Ksh 0.2 billion in 2014/15 to Ksh 0.4 billion in 2017/18.	The county should continue investing more resources to the sector to improve other WASH related indicators.	County Treasury and Planning /County Department of Water and Sanitation/NIWASCO.
Child Protection, Youth and Children	The county's allocation to child protection, youth and women was Ksh 0.014 billion in 2017/18 and only Ksh 0.001 billion was spent during the period resulting to a 9 per cent absorption rate.	Looking forward, the county needs to increase allocation to child protection given the levels of child neglect, abandonment and child labour.	County Treasury and Planning / County Department of culture and social services
Nutrition	The county only committed Ksh 20 million in one fiscal year (2014/15) to interventions that directly contribute to boosting child nutrition, at a time when nearly a third (33%) of children are stunted, which is above the national average of 26%.	The county should ensure that direct nutrition interventions across several sectors such agriculture, education and health are budgeted for, with visible budget lines. Moreover, nutrition should be well articulated in the County Integrated Development Plans.	County Treasury and Planning/ County Department of Health and all other sectors, namely education, agriculture, social protection and WASH.
Budget Execution	The budget execution rate for most social sector budgets, especially health, water and sanitation, was low. For instance, budget execution rates for water and sanitation was estimated at 44 per cent in 2015/16 and 56 per cent in 2017/18.	To improve budget utilization rates, there is need for the National Treasury to adhere to disbursement schedules by releasing resources on time. On its part, the county should strengthen procurement systems and improve cash flow forecasting and develop capacity to enhance budget utilization.	County Treasury and Planning, All County departments; National Treasury
Disaggregated Data	Due to limited disaggregation of data in expenditure reports, it was not possible to establish how much of the county government budget was spent on crucial social services such as child protection, youth development, disability and gender mainstreaming.	Have standalone budget lines on child protection, youth and women, to effectively deliver the above-mentioned services, especially to women and girls.	County Planning, Statistics and M&E Unit, and Social/Gender Departments

(Endnotes)

- ¹ *Gross county product* is conceptually equivalent to the county share of GDP. Gross domestic product is a measure of newly created value through production by resident economic agents (in this case individuals, households, businesses, establishments, and enterprises resident in Kenya).
- ² *Monetary poor* people are considered at risk of monetary poverty when their equalized disposable income (after social transfers) is below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 per cent of the national median value.
- ³ *Multidimensional poverty* captures different deprivations experienced by poor people in their daily lives, such as lack of access to basic education, health or WASH services, inadequate nutritional intake, experiencing physical or emotional violence or abuse, among others.
- ⁴ Base year 2013.
- ⁵ *Non-revenue water (NRW)* is water that has been produced and is "lost" before it reaches the customer. Losses can be real losses (through leaks, sometimes also referred to as physical losses) or apparent losses (for example through theft or metering inaccuracies).
- ⁶ *Body Mass Index (BMI)* is a value derived from the mass (weight) and height of a person. It is expressed in units of Kg/M². Broadly, a person is categorized as underweight if BMI is below 18.5 Kg/M²; normal weight: between 18.5 Kg/M² and 25 Kg/M²; and overweight: 25 Kg/M² to 30 Kg/M² and obese: over 30 Kg/M².

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For more information, contact

Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis
Bishops Road, Bishops Garden Towers
P.O. Box 56445-00200, Nairobi
Tel: 2719933/4 ; Cell: 0736712724, 0724256078
Email: admin@kippra.or.ke
Website: <http://www.kippra.org>
Twitter: @kipprakenya

