



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM RUTO,
C.G.H.; PHD., PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE KENYA DEFENCE FORCES, DURING
THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT CONSTITUENCIES DEVELOPMENT
FUND**

MAY 3RD, 2024

SAFARI PARK HOTEL, NAIROBI

1. I am delighted to join you today to celebrate two decades of the National Government Constituencies Development Fund, an initiative that has been timely, inspired and transformative in our nation's development journey. Initially known as the Constituencies Development Fund, this fund was borne out of a strategic reflection on developmental needs and has evolved to address our citizens' needs effectively.
2. It's crucial to recall that the NG-CDF originated in response to historical development disparities and a significant gap between projects conceptualized, designed and implemented by government entities and the experiences, needs and expectations of grassroots citizens.
3. The mission was clear: To rectify decades of neglect that had marginalised vast segments of our nation, particularly in remote, arid and semi-arid regions by fostering grassroots involvement in development initiatives.
4. It is not an exaggeration to state that the advent of the NG-CDF finally delivered the framework which addressed the hopes and yearnings of the people of Kenya for inclusive development, social justice, equity and prosperity which had eluded various policies and interventions, starting with the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism, and development programmes and decentralisation strategies like the District Focus for Rural Development of 1983.
5. The Constituencies Development Fund Act of 2003 marked a significant turning point in our approach to development. Drawing lessons from past initiatives, its pioneers recognised that true development begins from the bottom up, with communities owning and driving development projects based on the understanding of their needs.



6. Subsequent enhancements, as reflected in various amendments, have fortified the NG-CDF Act as a vital tool for national development. It empowers local communities to partake in resource allocation and project prioritisation, thereby democratising the development process.
7. By allocating funds directly to constituencies, the NG-CDF also confers citizens at the grassroots with resources and autonomy to meet their unique development needs with minimal bureaucracy, delays, waste and inefficiencies.
8. To put this in context, the NG-CDF national board cannot spend more than 5% of allocated funds on their administrative functions and must disburse at least 95% to the constituencies where 94% of allocated funds are channelled directly into local development projects, which are overseen by Project Management Committees. Only 6% is devoted to administrative and recurrent expenditures.
9. This efficient allocation model has significantly improved the visibility and impact of NG-CDF projects nationwide. It also provides useful guidance on the resolve with which we must confront the monster of unnecessary expenditure in order to direct maximum resources to development.
10. Today, NG-CDF stands as a testament to the power of a people-driven development agenda and the government's commitment to inclusive and democratic development. It has also become a reliable source of support for essential sectors such as education, healthcare and security.



11. Through NG-CDF, 3,087 new schools have been established countrywide -1,369 primary and 1,718 secondary schools. By building accommodation facilities, the NG-CDF has also facilitated access to basic education for 882,026 learners and enhanced transition rates to secondary school. It has also reduced the distance covered by learners and lowered the school construction financing burden on parents.
12. Additionally, the NG-CDF provides about KSh15 billion every year towards the Bursary Scheme benefiting an average of 1.2 million deserving learners from poor backgrounds.
13. Further, the NG-CDF has entered into a collaborative framework with the Ministry of Education to support the establishment of teacher training institutes. So far, 155 TTIs have benefited from this collaboration.
14. In a similar partnership with the Kenya Medical Training College, the NG-CDF has established 61 KMTC campuses across Kenya and provided resources to improve infrastructure in 14 existing campuses, as a result of which the total capacity has increased by 13,551 students.
15. In the health sector, the NG-CDF, through a partnership with the National Health Insurance Fund, has been financing health insurance premiums for 27,870 vulnerable households annually, leading to significantly enhanced access to quality healthcare for disadvantaged Kenyans in line with our universal healthcare aspirations under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.



16. Regarding security, the NG-CDF has provided funds for the construction and repair of national government administrative premises, including offices, police stations and posts, and staff housing. The fund has also financed high-mast security lighting in low-income and informal settlements, leading to significantly reduced incidents of crime in these areas.
17. I am delighted to confirm that the digital superhighway strategic pillar of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda has received a direct boost from the NG-CDF, which has contributed to the establishment of at least 116 constituency innovation hubs. Additionally, the fund will support the establishment of 1,450 digital hubs, one in every ward countrywide.
18. I do not take this support for granted. The readiness of NG-CDF to support pro-people development projects is a continuing demonstration of its radical vision for the empowerment of communities in order to drive inclusive growth and give every Kenyan an opportunity to thrive and contribute to our nation's prosperity, regardless of their circumstances or background.
19. This is a good opportunity to express my profound appreciation to our National Assembly for decisively rallying to the cause of climate action through the NG-CDF (Amendment) Act, 2023, which amended the law to increase the ceiling of permissible allocations by constituencies towards climate action from 2% to 5%. We are confronting the ruthless impacts of climate change in the form of severe and devastating flooding in numerous parts of the country, which has followed swiftly after one of the longest and most severe droughts in recent history.



20. By promoting the employment of local contractors, suppliers and labour, as well as the utilisation of local materials, the NG-CDF enhances inclusion and stimulates local economic activity, leading to employment and wealth creation. Project management by committees chosen from the local community leads to continuous social monitoring of project implementation and high-level ownership, which enhances their sustainability.
21. The principles and aspirations which have animated our quest for inclusive development and the democratisation of our economy have survived many years of determined struggle and remain alive today, foremost in Article 10(2) as well as Chapter Eleven of the Constitution. The constituency development fund framework was a successful pilot project. By responding to feedback and incorporating continuous learning, the NG-CDF has evolved into a popular and effective mechanism for impactful local development and service delivery.
22. The presence of the pioneers of the NG-CDF, led by Honourable Senator Muriuki Karue, is highly appropriate because it gives us a chance to appreciate, thank and celebrate them for their visionary leadership, bold and innovative approaches to development and exemplary service. It also reminds me of the wonderful work we were able to do through NG-CDF in my time as a member of the National Assembly. Many will remember that my constituency was awarded several times for the best use of funds. This is where the seeds of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda were sown.
23. As we celebrate this milestone, we must also recognise the challenges we have faced, including legal hurdles that required legislative responses to align the fund with constitutional mandates. Our journey continues with a commitment to refine and adapt our strategies, ensuring that NG-CDF remains a beacon of sustainable and equitable development.



24. In closing, I extend my deepest appreciation to all who have contributed to the success of NG-CDF, particularly the visionary leaders, dedicated committee members, and the resilient communities we serve. Let us continue to work together, with unwavering commitment and unity, to build a brighter future for all Kenyans.
25. In the era of the Kenya National Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, the NG-CDF finds itself in its natural strategic habitat. As long as we stay the course and put in the work, and as long as we protect the funds entrusted to us with unwavering vigilance, the Kenya of our dreams is within reach.

Thank you.
God bless you.
God bless Kenya.

