



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KISUMU

Welcome to the Lakeside County of Kisumu - Kenya

Our Vision

A prosperous and dynamic county that is a harbor of excellence.

Our Mission

To transform the livelihood of the people of Kisumu county on a foundation of integrity through accountable, efficient and effective leadership that invokes participation and pursuit of quality services, for a prosperous county that is a harbor of excellence.

Kisumu County, one of the new devolved counties of Kenya, has inherited the former Kisumu administrative districts of the former Nyanza Province in western Kenya. Its headquarters is

Kisumu City. It has a population of 968,909 with a land area of 2,085.9 km². Kisumu borders Siaya County to the West, Vihiga County to the North, Nandi County to the North East and Kericho County to the East. Its neighbour to the South is Nyamira County and Homa Bay County is to the South West.

The county has a shoreline on Lake Victoria, occupying northern, western and a part of the southern shores of the Winam Gulf.

Kisumu City will be the first city county in Kenya to come up with a new blue print for modernizing its housing, roads, water, sewerage, power and other socio-commercial and emergency amenities when the final master plan is completed November 2013.



Climate

The climate of the whole county is modified by the presence of the lake. The county has an annual relief rainfall that ranges between 1200 mm and 1300 mm in different sectors. The rain mainly falls in two seasons. Kisumu is known for its thunderstorms, which are the major type of precipitation and normally occur in mid-afternoon during the rainy season. Kisumu is warm throughout the year with a mean annual temperature of 23. oC. The temperature ranges between 20 oC and 35 oC but seldom falls below 19 oC. The humidity is relatively high throughout the year.



People

Kisumu County is relatively densely populated compared with the rest of Kenya. The 2009 census showed that the county had a population of 968,909. With an area of 2,085.9 km², Kisumu County has a population density of 460 per square kilometres, comparable to that of the entire South Korea. The vast majority of the people belong to the Luo ethnic community, the third largest tribe in Kenya and one of the largest in East Africa. There are also small numbers of minorities from the other ethnic communities of Kenya, predominantly the Luhya. Indians came with the railway construction, and now form a substantial Indian community in Kisumu city. The dominant language is Dholuo, but Kiswahili and English are also spoken by a majority of the population for non-domestic purposes.

The people of Kisumu eat a lot of fish prepared in a variety of ways. This high consumption has sometimes been touted as one of the causes of the generally high IQ levels in the region, and the eating of fish has become popular all over Kenya as a result. This is usually accompanied by kuon, a dish made of maize flour which can also be mixed with other grains, mostly millet, sorghum and/or cassava.



Government

The first and current governor of Kisumu County is Jackton Ranguma. He is deputised by Ruth Odinga, sister to the former Prime Minister Raila Odinga. The legislature of the county has 35 representatives.

For administrative purposes, the county is divided into seven sub-counties, each following the borders of the constituency which bears a similar name. The sub-counties are further divided into thirty five wards, which also forward representatives to the County Assembly in Kisumu City.

Sub-counties in Kisumu

Kisumu East, Kisumu West, Kisumu Central, Seme, Nyando, Muhoroni, Nyakach

Economic Activities

Fishing

Kisumu County sits on the shores of Lake Victoria, providing it with the potential to be a major centre of fishing. However, the use of old technologies hampers the full development of the industry. Also, the recent water hyacinth menace on the lake has reduced fish catches significantly. The new county government has pledged to fight the hyacinth problem.



Agriculture

Rice is grown under irrigation in the Kano Plains. Most of the water for irrigation comes from River Nyando, whose annual floods displace huge numbers of people but also deposit a lot of fertile silt all across the plain. The northern and eastern fringes of the Kano Plains also play host to some of Kenya's most productive sugarcane fields. Towns like Kibos, Miwani and Chemelil are centres of sugarcane production. Kisumu County also produces maize, beans, sweet potatoes, poultry and fresh vegetables.



Industry

Kisumu city and the surrounding areas have several light industries. These include textiles, molasses, fish processing plants and agricultural produce processors. Kisumu has three sugar factories -Chemelil, Muhoroni and Kibos. There are plans for a fourth mill. Several backyard industries also thrive in the county, including tailoring, making of handicrafts and boat-building.



Services

Kisumu city is the major commercial centre in Western Kenya. Service industries like wholesale & retail trade, bicycle repair, car repair, entertainment centres and low scale IT services abound within and outside the city. Several banks have their regional offices in the city, servicing the entire western Kenya region.



Transport

Road Transport

Kisumu county has several paved roads, the major one being the Nairobi-Bondo road, which has a branch at Kisian heading to Busia. Important roads are paved with asphalt. County roads are mostly murrum but provide all weather movement all year. Public transport services are provided by matatus and buses either operating singly or as parts of franchises and companies. Bicycle and motorcycle boda-bodas also exist in significant quantities for short distance travel.



Air Transport

Kisumu International Airport has been upgraded and now has the potential to be an airport for the entire region. Schedule flights land from Nairobi, Mombasa and several cities in neighboring countries.



Water Transport

Water transport on the lake is provided mostly by private operators in wooden boats with outboard engines, although a ferry service exists. The services connect towns on the shores and also help in crossing the lake. They also link the county with the other three lakeside counties and the countries of Tanzania and Uganda. The port of Kisumu is very inactive at the moment but has the potential to become a regional centre of lake transport and a gateway for Kenya into the rest of the African Great Lakes region.



Railway Transport

The city of Kisumu was founded as a terminal for the railway, and therefore has an important railway station. The narrow gauge railway moves both passengers and cargo, linking Kisumu with other cities and towns along the line. The new national government has pledged to build a new modern metro network for the city.



Communications

Mobile phone penetration is high, and the coverage by the major service providers (Safaricom, Airtel, Orange and Yu[disambiguation needed]) is basically reliable. The post offices in the county still function. Courier services also exist, providing quick ways of sending parcels and letters outside the county.



Tourism

Kisumu County is fast developing into a major tourist destination in the Western Tourism Circuit of Kenya. Replete with great scenery and diversity concentrated within a relatively small area, Kisumu County's tourism sector is expected to experience a major boom.

Features like the shoreline of Lake Victoria, Kit Mikayi and other rocks of similar stature, Ndere Island National Park (which hosts an amazing variety of wildlife within a confined area), the god Mesa viewpoint in Nyabondo (from which one has a panoramic view of the Nyando Plains and Lake Victoria in the distance, and the inselbergs around the Kisian area provide a great attraction for tourists.

The Kisumu Museum and the Impala Park provide further tourist attractions. Kisumu is touted to have one of the best sunsets in the world, and arguably the best in Kenya, with the sun sinking into the horizon over the lake turning the water into many hues, a spectacle that continues to drive up tourist numbers into the county.

The Kisumu International Airport now has the potential to deliver international tourists directly into the county, and it is expected that this will be a major boon for the industry in the county. Tourist infrastructure, like hotels and lodges, are now springing up in many places.

Education

Kisumu County has several colleges and universities, including a campus of Kenya's largest university, University of Nairobi. Other universities include Maseno University (best known for its IT department),

Great Lakes University and several teacher and nursing colleges. Primary and secondary education is provided by 706 primary schools and 173 public secondary schools, including one of the oldest secondary schools in Kenya; Maseno School, which is also one of the best performers in the whole country.

A substantial number of private institutions also exist within the county. The enrollment in primary school and secondary school stood at 240, 538 and 38, 815 as of 2009. The teacher to pupil ratio was 1:51 for primary and 1:30 for secondary. Kisumu Polytechnic provides several technical courses for young adults and also professionals, including some diploma courses. Five youth polytechnics also exist in various parts of the county.

Health

Health in Kisumu County is provided by several institutions that are either private or government funded. There is one provincial hospital, three district hospitals, Five sub-district hospitals, 53 dispensaries and six health centres in the county. The naming system is set to be changed due to the fact that the system of government has changed.

The county government shall now have jurisdiction over the provision of health in the county. The Infant Mortality Rates for Kisumu County is medium, at 95/1000. The under-five mortality rates for the county are 149/1000.

The location of Kisumu County puts it in major breeding ground for mosquitos, and malaria has been a perennial problem since time immemorial. Another health problem that majorly affects the county is the relatively high rates of HIV infection. But the rate has stabilized recently. Prominent health facilities in the county are Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (popularly known as Russia since it was built by the Soviets), the Kisumu District Hospital and the Aga Khan Hospital Kisumu. All facilities are located in Kisumu City. There are two CDC centres in Kisumu, one in Kisian and the other in Kombewa. They engage in research in several diseases, including a possible cure for HIV.

For more information.
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