

MR. JAMES MUHATI, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING, THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING, REMARKS DURING THE 2022 NATIONAL AND COUNTY LEVEL SHORT RAINS TREE PLANTING EXERCISE IN VIHIGA, WEDNESDAY, 21ST DECEMBER 2021

- It is my pleasure to join you here in Vihiga County today for this noble National and County Tree Planting exercise being implemented National wide under the leadership of His Excellency the President, Hon. William Samoei Ruto.
- I must admit that this is the First County I am visiting after my first appointment by His Excellency the President as a Principal Secretary, in charge of a very crucial docket, the State Department for Economic Planning in the National Treasury and Economic Planning.
- This attests to the fact that there are better things coming your way in future. I am aware that Vihiga County is very progressive in implementing the County Integrated Development Plans(CIDPs) and

has substantial outstanding projects which are economically sustainable and changing lives at community level.

- I must commend the County leadership for the recently commissioned and affordable Human Waste Plant for manufacturing Fertilizer. This will not only create employment to the youths in the region but will also boost agricultural production and enhance Food Security in the Country.
- It is in the same strength that we have come to this County today to plant trees which will highly contribute to the immense improvements in the climatic conditions in the area. This will result to voluminous increase in rainfall which will curb the negative effects of enviromental degradation.
- Since the presidential directive of attaining 10 percent tree cover by the year 2022, the State Department for Economic Planning has been conducting tree planting exercises in various Counties since 2018 to comply with this directive.

- During the years 2021 and 2020, a total of 13,000 tree seedlings(exotic and indegenous)were planted in Narok and Kajiado Counties respectively.
- Further, a total of 131,131 tree seedlings had been planted in Makueni County in 2018 and 2019.
- Therefore, cumulatively the State Department for Economic Planning has planted 144,131 tree seedlings in the three Counties within a span of four years. This has been achieved through partnerships with our diverse stakeholders.
- During this short rain season, all MDAs are scheduled to plant trees across the entire country. This includes the Presidency where His Excellency the President, Hon. William Samoei Ruto is launching the tree planting drive in Ngong Hills, Forest Block, Kajiado County. His Deputy, Hon. Rigathi Gachagua is assigned to spearhead this exercise in South Marmanet in Laikipia County. I was assigned to plant trees in Vihiga County. Other PSs, and CSs have also been assigned different Counties for the same exercise.

- In this Short Rains Season, the Government has planned to achieve the planting of **560,000** Seedlings which will cover an area of **310.4 (Ha)** Countrywide. In Vihiga County, we are assigned to plant **8,400** Seedlings which will cover an area of **8.4 (Ha)**.
- It is therefore important to note here that we must work together to protect Mother Earth which needs healing. Too many trees have been cut down, which must be replaced. Human encroachment into the forests is further increasing by day. The climate change is a serious challenge affecting our country and the entire globe. The effects of the unpredicted droughts, natural disasters and floods are in most cases very severe and devastating.
- The Government has taken the lead to motivate the nation to plant and conserve trees through participation to attain a sustainable green economy and national development.
- I urge you all to continue and embrace planting trees and enlighten others about the importance of forests and woodland resources, to enhance

biodiversity, and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The planting of trees even in our own homesteads can be an asset to the entire community and to the nation at large.

- I take this opportunity to appreciate all guests who have joined hands with us today to plant the tree seedlings. I humbly request you to take good care of the tree seedlings which will be planted today. This will make us and future generations celebrate the exercise..
- I thank you all for participating in this tree planting exercise and urge you to continue with that spirit of environmental conservation.
- I WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY CHISTMAS SEASON AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR 2023.