

Kenya builds its way to 2030 goals

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic that has ravaged the world economy over the last year, the Kenyan government has continued to make positive strides towards infrastructure development.



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The planned expansion of roads, construction of affordable housing in urban centres and improvement of sanitation in the counties are among the key areas Kenya is working on despite such challenging times.

These development projects, once complete, will be vital to the socioeconomic growth of the country and its people. It allows more opportunities for local and international investments while at the same time improving the livelihoods of citizens.

Improvement in sanitation across the country remains one of the major goals for Kenya in achieving our Vision 2030.

Sanitation and water

According to the Kenyan Constitution of 2010, every Kenyan has a right of access to basic sanitation. Kenya is also a signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which requires everyone to have access to sanitation by the year 2030. It is important to note that the current sewerage coverage in Kenya is only 16%, and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation is making a great effort towards ensuring the coverage is increased. In order to reach the goal of access to sanitation for all by 2030, an integrated approach to solving sanitation challenges is needed.

Indeed, there have been some milestones achieved by Kenya and this has not gone unnoticed internationally.

Last year, Kenya through the Water Sector Trust Fund was awarded prestigious 2019 United Nations Public Service Awards. This for Upscaling Basic Sanitation for the Urban Poor (UBSUP) programme under the Delivering Inclusive and Equitable Services to Leave No one Behind category - being the only institution from Africa.

The UBSUP programme offers an affordable solution for accelerating the achievement of SDG 6.

UBSUP's unique features that led to the winning of the award include: its great impact on sanitation services offered in an inclusive and equitable manner without leaving anyone behind; the nation-wide approach of the programme; cost efficiency; and the pro-poor component of offering a post-construction incentive for the projects.

But still, there remains the big challenge of achieving access to sanitation for all by the year 2030 and also complementing the Big 4 Agenda of the Government.

While finances are needed to achieve the "Urban and peri-urban water and sanitation programme" the implementation also needs to be long term sanitation intervention that includes a water component for the hygiene purposes, it is also important that the implementation is cost effective and sustainable in the long term.

With the financing of the UBSUP programme which has been implemented in 19 counties coming to an end at the close of this year, a new affordable and sustainable approach is vital.

The onus is on the Ministry of Water and Sanitation and county governments to look into the new solutions that are cost effective, take a shorter period to implement and are responsive to the needs of clients in terms of needs and capacities.

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