

Investorsclub

Property expo set for Nairobi next month

By Gitahi Ngunyi

This year's Property and Home Living Expo, will open its doors from September 4th to 7th at the Sarit Centre Exhibition, Nairobi.

To be held under the theme, *Building Networks to Foster County Real Estate Growth and Home Development*, the expo is also expected to attract county governments and county property investors showcasing investment opportunities.

The event's organiser, Abdi Juma,

says property investors are pushing for incentives to spur county living and investment. "Developers are confident that the government will come up with policies that will unlock the full potential of the real estate sector in the counties," he says.

The English Point Marina opposite Fort Jesus, Mombasa and Acacia Holiday Homes in the Tsavo are two of the unique properties in East Africa, which will be showcased to the public at the exhibition, says Juma. "This will be the perfect venue to showcase such developments as the high net niche audiences will be visit-



ing the expo," adds Ben Woodhams, Managing Director, Knight Frank.

Other developers include Migaa's Mitini Scapes located in Kiambu, Llango in Malindi, Kikwetu development by Home Afrika based in Athi River, Longonot City, the Sh5 billion Mount Kenya Homes Holiday Homes, Nanyuki Mall in Nanyuki and Kisumu's Sh1.6 billion Translakes estate.

The expo is being held at a time when the counties are the new centres of attraction for homebuyers as well as office space hunters, with approximately 70 per cent of land in the country belongs to the government.

Ask Joyce

WITH JOYCE BARASA



How much house can I afford?

Q. Dear Joyce, thank you for your insightful column. At what point do you pay stamp duty, how much is it and to who do you pay when buying land? Christopher

A. Dear Christopher. Stamp Duty is paid after valuation of the property but before registration of the transfer. The amount is determined by the location of the property. A property in a municipal location attracts four per cent of the total value of that property and a property outside a municipality attracts two per cent of its total value. The stamp duty payable is subject to the Government Valuer's determination. It is paid to the Collector of Stamp Duty by bankers' cheque.

Q. I am very green in real estate and someone says you only purchase a house if it costs no more than 2.5 times your annual income. Does it apply in our market? Enos

A. It depends on how you are buying the house. If it's through a loan, the bank usually will not lend you an amount where the monthly repayments exceed one third of your monthly net income. For example if you earn Sh100,000 the monthly repayments cannot be more than Sh30,000. It is also a requirement of the employment regulations. In making an assessment on how much to lend the bank will take into account; your income, the remaining working life and the rate of interest that will apply.

Q. I moved into a house in Donholm and after a few months, the adjacent plot was developed so close that you cannot open windows fully. My house is now very dark and stuffy, with windows next to each other. We can see through to each other's houses. Is this sort of thing legal and can tenants complain anywhere? Muoki

A. The City Building Code provides that a building or a structure should be at least eight feet away from the boundary. It seems that this did happen. As a tenant you can only complain to the landlord.

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Innovation



To quench the arid area, in Laikipia, water collected from the football stadium flows through gutters into a central tank, with the whole complex expected to collect about 3.2m litres of water a year

Green design keeps kids in school, sports

By Kimathi Mutegi

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Kenya's climate is as varied as her people. However, just 9.48 per cent of the land is arable according to statistics, which means that a huge chunk of the 580,367 square kilometers is dry land. Minimal rainfall forces pastoral populations to keep on shifting in search of drinking water and pasture.

However, through ingenious but cheap technology, an architectural firm, Pitch Africa, has shown that all you need is to manage your environment and any place will be hospitable. In collaboration with Zeitz Foundation, the firm came up with a complex of practical buildings whose other primary function is harvesting water during the two brief rainy seasons in Laikipia. The water is stored in mega underground tanks. "We joined hands and after identifying the needs of the residents, came together for a common goal to give them a better environment, education and also avenues for talented players to grow in the sport," said Liz Rihoy, Director of Zeitz Foundation. She spoke during the official opening of the Samuel Eto'o Laikipia Unity Football Academy, School and Environmental Education Centre. The academy at Endana Secondary School is a boarding facility to accommodate 120 girls and 100 boys.



"Filling classrooms here is a problem because the boys are expected to be out there looking after cattle while the girls will be married off early to get the family more cows," said Sarah Korere, a nominated MP from Laikipia. The MP's most terrifying moments in her school days was losing half the classmates each term, especially girls. "It is a tough environment; parents consider day-to-day survival more than promises of education." Pitch Africa saw the problem and went on to engineer a solution. The roofs of all the structures collect maximum water when the rains fall, which is channelled down gutters via a filtration system for storage in underground tanks. The whole complex is about functionality combined with sustainability, says the lead architect, Aggrey Maganga. The girl's dorm for example is circular with three rooms for capacity of 40 girls each. The mid-



dle part has a small garden that the students can farm within the security and confine of their facility. "We have tried to keep construction costs as low as possible by going for the absolute basics," he says. "We have done away with a ceiling, restricted tiling to the bathrooms. There are no wiring systems in the dorm since the girls use solar lanterns at night and daylight during the day." At the centre also sits a 100,000 litre water tank and while this stores clean rain water, the waste is recycled into

farming of the gardens. There is also a boys' dormitory, with pit latrines equipped with a technology that dries the waste for use as fertiliser. Using the 'chimney effect', the latrines have an opening at the back covered with iron sheets that will heat the inside of the pit encouraging continuous circulation of air. "This not only dries up the human waste very fast but also improves ventilation," says Maganga. The centerpiece of the complex is the stadium and a five a-side football pitch. Under the 1,500 capacity stadium are six classrooms whose design involves cooling through air circulation vents as well as thermo-ventilation cover. However, the gist is the million-litre water tank under the pitch. "Water collected on the pitch as well as the stadium flows through gutters into the tank," explains Maganga. "The whole complex should collect about 3.2 million litres annually."