

WHAT IS OKOA MOMBASA?



And what do we stand for?

Okoa Mombasa is a coalition of workers' unions, businesses, professional associations, civil society organisations and others who have come together out of concern for the livelihoods and wellbeing of the residents of Mombasa.

Above all, we are committed to ensuring local participation in decisions that affect the use of local resources – such as Mombasa's Port, its waterfront park and other County resources. Acting together, we are convinced that we can achieve higher living standards, decent jobs, and social, gender and economic equality.

What we're fighting for

Public participation and accountability

A common denominator that binds our initiatives is the chronic lack of community participation in decisions that have adverse impacts. Okoa Mombasa believes in active citizenship, and promotes the public's right to participate in all facets of social, political and economic life. We also work to ensure that participation is meaningful, allowing people to determine how their communities are developed. Transparent and accountable institutions are the basis of a stable democracy, and we strive for their establishment.

Freedom from oppressive poverty

We fight for fundamental social and economic rights, because freedom is meaningful only if citizens are liberated from oppressive poverty, insecure living conditions, and the predatory market. These negative factors limit people's opportunities, which in turn limits their ability to control their futures.

Equal opportunity and empowerment

Kenyans living in Mombasa and the Coast region are disadvantaged by an entrenched system that channels our natural wealth and opportunities elsewhere based on geography, ethnicity, social status, and other factors. Okoa Mombasa stands for the eradication of these obstacles to equality. Devolution must retain its core objective of redistribution of power and wealth, and ensure equitable sharing of national and local resources throughout Kenya.

Solidarity in the struggle for a better Kenya

Okoa Mombasa believes in the principle of broad diversity: We are made up individuals and collectives, labour groups and businesspeople, human rights activists and artists, and much more. We may not agree on everything, but we are vehemently united on the most important issue: that the management of local resources works best with local participation. Bridging gaps and finding common ground is central to our mission.

CORE PRINCIPLES



Participation



Freedom



Equality

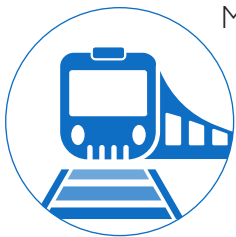


Solidarity



Current initiatives

Standard Gauge Railway



Mombasa's economy is built on the Port, and has been for generations. Unfortunately, recent government directives – all implemented from Nairobi, without local public input – have undercut the vast economic ecosystem that has evolved around this natural resource.

The biggest contributor to the decline has been the directive to load all Port cargo on the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR). The directive has shifted clearing and forwarding operations to Inland Container Depots in Nairobi and Naivasha, bypassing hundreds of Mombasa businesses that depend on the Port. The result has been roughly 3,000 lost jobs and the loss of KES 33.3 billion in revenues – 16% of Mombasa County's economic output. Another 8,000 jobs are threatened.

What we're doing

We are fighting to overturn the illegal SGR cargo order; organizing community forums, participating in protests, going to court, amplifying the voices of its members and pressuring Kenya's politicians to act. We're also pushing for the government to release contracts related to SGR's financing by China.

Container Terminal 2 (CT2)



CT2 is the most modern section of Mombasa's Port and one of the top shipping facilities in Africa – a great asset for Kenya. But the government is attempting to privatise CT2 by amending the law to permit a hitherto defunct Kenya National Shipping Line, owned 47% by Mediterranean Shipping Company, to manage and

operate the terminal. Privatisation will likely lead to the loss of up to 4,500 jobs at the Port.

What we're doing

Okoa Mombasa is fighting to stop the privatisation in court, and has filed an Access to Information request for information relating to the proposed deal. We also want Coast residents to meaningfully participate in any future decisions affecting the Port.

Mombasa's Waterfront Park

Place names are an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of a people. But



Mombasa's recently refurbished waterfront park is an outlier. It was named "Mama Ngina Park," after the wife of Kenya's first President. That name has no connection to Mombasa, Coast or the region's people. We believe the park should be re-named to signal a reclamation of the historical and cultural heritage of the people of Mombasa and the Coast region. And we want the new name to be chosen through a local, participatory public process.

What we're doing

We've petitioned the Mombasa County Assembly to hold a public participation forum with a view to changing the park's name.

JOIN US!

Are you concerned by the economic downturn in Mombasa? Do you believe that decisions about local resources require local participation? Then we want you to join us. We want to hear what issues matter to you.

We can't promise a particular outcome or decision, but we can promise you the most important first step: a voice.

Learn more at okoamombasa.org, or e-mail us at okoamombasa@gmail.com

OUR CORE MEMBERS

- Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI)
- Kenya Transporters Association
- Dock Workers Kenya
- Kenya Long Distance Trucks Union
- Haki Yetu Organisation
- Fast Action Summit
- Human Rights Watch