

# **MUMIAS CONSTITUENCY 2007** **CAMPAIGN MANIFESTO FOR** **PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE**

*TIME FOR AMANCIPATION FROM ABJECT POVERTY, DEPRIVATION AND  
HOPELESSNES*



My determination to emancipate the community of Mumias constituency from abject poverty is motivated by a desire to see a community that leads a dignified life and has a bright future for the generations to come. My humble background accorded me an opportunity to get first hand experience of what it feels to live in deprivation, the kind that has characterized this community since my childhood.

2002 presented an opportunity for leadership change; BUT that is all that changed, everything else at the economic front remained the same without any hope. As a community, we are a disillusioned lot, the enormous resources in our midst not withstanding.

It will be a crucial decision, therefore, when the people of this region/constituency choose a selfless leader, who has the pressing concerns of the community at heart and is ready to lead us into the prosperity that we have for long desired.

***IT'S TIME FOR PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE: IF  
NOT PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE, THEN WHO?***

***IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?  
VOTE FOR PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE.***

***KAMA SI PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE, WACHA  
IKAE!***

## WHO IS PHITALIS WERE MASAKHWE?

Phitalis Were Masakhwe was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1968, Matawa Village, Mumias, Nabongo Location, Division and went to Matawa Primary School in 1977 for his primary education qualifying to join Mumias Muslim secondary and Mombasa Secondary School for the physically Handicapped for his 'O' level certificate. He obtained first Division in his 'O' levels exams in 1987 and was then admitted at Musingu Boys high school in Kakamega, Western province; where he did his Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education; KACE in 1999. He got three principals and a subsidiary and was then admitted to the University of Nairobi where he studied for a B.A degree in Sociology & Philosophy.

In the year 2000, Phitalis won the prestigious Les Asin Centre for Government Scholarship that took him to Marquette University in the USA where he studied Governance and democracy at post graduate diploma level. Phitalis received his secondary and high school studies courtesy of local leadership in Mumias. Former Member of Parliament for Mumias, the late Hon.Dr.Elon W.Wameyo in particular paid for his school fees from form two to form six. Other leaders that helped include but not limited to the late Chief for Nabongo Location Mr. Wycliffe Barasa Chetinde and Former Area Councilor Mzee OmoloWazir Mohamed.

My professional life remains an inspiration to many. Working mostly in the fast-paced NGO sector starting from a humble beginning with the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL, moving on to work with the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) Afghanistan and now Leonard Cheshire International . I HAVE EQUALLY TRAVELLED-over 40 countries AND ACQUIRED VAST INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPOSURE, PREDISPOSITIONS THAT HAVE GREATLY ENRICHED AND SHARPENED MY INSIGHTS, VISION AND PERSPECTIVE TO LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT IN PARTICULAR. I love and enjoy

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what I do and I always do it with an upbeat mood. The resilience of working under pressure and never bowing out is what has brought me this far. I have flexed my muscles; I use my wits and brain to perform to the best of my abilities.

My passion at the moment is to push for the much needed SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL change in Mumias Constituency. I am a catalyst for positive change. I want people of the community of Mumias to realize the INNATE AND LATENT power and enormous resource within this wonderful community and harness these for enhancing their own socio-economic circumstances. My people of Mumias Constituency, we are down, and we have been here for long, we have no option but to find our way out and up!

I PROMISE YOU A NEW DEAL, YOU DESERVE A BETTER DEAL AND NOW!

### LEADERSHIP

*Replacing apathy, hopelessness, disillusionment and despondency with a vision of optimism and prosperity.*

I will stand and earnestly fight for the rights and interests of all the PEOPLE of MUMIAS; especially the downtrodden poor, the disposed and disadvantaged in this community and pursue an ambitious leadership of ideas and ideals aimed at emancipation of our community from circumstances of resource deprivation to prosperity.

For long, members of this community have desired to be involved in decision making and participate in the management of institutions/structures that determine the outcome of our livelihoods. No one is more concerned with and understands better what happens in our community other than ourselves.

*What do others say about Were's leadership character and disposition?*

"This is a time for change. We need a leader who is focused, sincere, compassionate and dedicated to development and service to humanity. Phitalis is young, energetic and prepared to take up any challenges. As a representative in Parliament, the people of Mumias can be sure that their voice will be heard and their

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needs discussed and considered in the corridors of Power. Phitalis does not take a "no" with hand down. I endorse his candidature for the Mumias Parliamentary seat."

Pamela Rasugu, A native of Mumias now residing in the USA.

You have helped raise the voice of people with disabilities internationally as well as in your country and I wish you all success in your political career hoping that in addition to putting forward the disability agenda, you will fight to eradicate poverty and stand up against discrimination, and be a transparent and honest leader of your community.

Tomas Lagerwall

Rehabilitation International (RI) - Secretary General, New York, USA

## **DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF MUMIAS CONSTITUENCY (in the context of our leadership history)**

There has been a raising trend of poverty levels in the district. According to the Welfare and Monitoring Survey of 1994, the population of the poor stood at 204,134 in 1994. Estimates given by the Poverty Assessment Report of 2000 indicated that the number of the poor had risen to 288,434 by that year, implying that nearly 60 percent of the population lived below the poverty level.

## **POVERTY ERADICATION**

*Wealth creation through improved management of the sugarcane sector*

One wonders why, even with the enormous resources at our disposal, indicators of poverty in this constituency and Mumias district as a whole are not any different from those of Eastern North Eastern provinces, ASALs regions. Our basic rights: Food, shelter, clothing, education and health have been compromised and we do not have the sense of the dignity we once had as a community.

We need to, through concerted efforts, reclaim our agriculturally potential land, get involved in the management and ownership of the sugar sector and, more importantly, question the role and relevance of some institutions within the farmer -sugar factory link that have played a role in fleecing farmers. The squalor of all players in the sugar industry that have subjected farmers in this region to untold poverty will be rationalized and halted during my leadership.

It is important that the functioning and management of these institutions must be reformed by empowering and involving farmers in decisions that affect their lives and ultimately that of future generations.

It is very evident that sugarcane farming has not lived up to the expectation of commercial engagement. Farmers have complained of the consistently poor pay and the ever soaring production costs. Thus, the economic sense of sugarcane farming has been worryingly, over the last 15 years, been undermined by such adverse circumstances. It is

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not surprising, then, that after toiling for a whole 2 years, some farmers walk home with a negative pay package. They feel cheated by the company to which they have become captives. High cane transportation costs, delayed payments, spillage/wastages of canes on the way to the factory are jus some of the issues that can indeed be fixed locally yet they continue to exert a great toll on cane farmers in Mumias.

It is interesting that the best jobs available for the natives at the company are menial with cane cutting topping the best offer for our youth including graduates. The company doesn't consider the youth & locals from this constituency for contracts which pay more. There is no doubt that a vibrant, honest, selfless and enlightened leadership, but one which cannot be compromised is sorely needed to ensure MSC is accountable to this community.

We need to appreciate that globalization is herewith us and Kenya has not been exempted from this phenomena, so is our constituency. Sugarcane, ostensibly our most dependable livelihood, is one of the commodities that has, in the past ten years, been and continues to be highly affected by the predictable dynamics of the global market. Where does this leave this community?

All that is needed is sound management, zeal for recovery of our lost dignity and determination that will enable us to optimize the potential inherent in key natural resources, a shift from conservative farming systems and serious consideration of the role and management of sugarcane farming in the our constituency.

This constituency is endowed with great cultural and natural heritage and has what it takes to be a truly great community.

All that is needed is a visionary leadership to endow us with the motivation and inspiration required for a departure from crippling poverty, courtesy of decades of primitive and myopic leadership which has led to underutilization and mismanagement of our natural resources.

### **My vision**

An enlightened, inspired, optimistic and prosperous Mumias constituency.

### **Mission**

Transform Mumias Constituency through enlightened leadership, enhanced environment for wealth creation and opportunities and fair and equitable distribution of the same.

## **EDUCATION**

Creating opportunities for future generations through enhanced access to education and training for all and at all levels

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Although we have enough funds from the government, local authorities, donor community to see every child get an education, affordable education remains a dream for most children in this constituency. With poor management, bribery and nepotism, these funds have not done much for us as they have failed to benefit the poor of the poorest especially the girl child, the disabled and the orphans and other vulnerable children (OVCs). There is serious need to involve the community in the identification, disbursement and evaluation of the impact of these funds.

To ensure equitable access of these funds, an all inclusive and transparent management is indispensable. To further this course, I will establish an independent bursary scheme for needy and bright students/pupils. The scheme will seek resources and solicit for bursaries and scholarships from the government, local authorities, willing donor agencies and private sector. The disbursement of the fund to needy students will be done in a transparent and equitable manner to ensure that the most deserving children benefit while ensuring geographical equity with special consideration for orphans, girl child and persons with disabilities. This will not only cater for primary and secondary levels but will also target deserving bright students pursuing post secondary education.

Lack of proper sanitary facilities in our schools has been a hindrance to school attendance, performance, reduction of drop-out rates and retention of our girls in both secondary and primary schools. Construction of proper sanitary facilities for girls in our schools shall not escape my intents. Most schools' buildings in this constituency are in pathetic state. As a matter of urgency, rehabilitation of dilapidated and construction of new school blocks to cater for the increasing enrollment shall be undertaken with immediate effect and I promise that within the first two years in parliament, I will be through with this task.

Equally, expansion of vocational training opportunities/youth polytechnics for our brothers and sisters for the acquisition of skills and knowledge will be a priority on my agenda for the youth.

## HEALTH

### Health for a productive community

Health indicators in this community are in tandem with and reflective of our economic status. HIV/AIDS continues to spread with the attendant socio-economic consequences ravaging our community. Access to safe, potable water and good sanitation in the informal settlement of Mjini, Limino, Shibale and Lukoye as well as upcoming administrative centers areas like Shianda, Makunga Musanda remains unachieved. This has left residents of these regions exposed to all manner of ill health with our sisters and mothers burdened with the task of fetching water.

There is need to strengthen the fight against HIV/AIDS through education and counseling to promote desirable behavior change as well as execute appropriate interventions to mitigate the effects of the scourge.

It is important that many people who can't afford to pay their medical bills are sensitized and facilitated to join available and quite affordable health schemes. The available health centers have been stretched beyond capacity. There is an urgent need to establish more

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health centers including VCT centers as well as improve services delivery through posting of qualified personnel and drug availability.

## **GIVING THE WOMEN, YOUTH AND THE DISABLED AN OPPORTUNITY**

Harnessing the potential of our community future leadership

Women constitute the majority of the human resource in Mumias constituency as it's in any society yet they continue to play a marginal and peripheral role in the social economic and political affairs of the constituency. My leadership will recognize and respect the inherent rights and dignity of women. Their enormous talents and potential WILL BE Maximized; by ensuring that they are fully involved and included on a 50/50% basis in all planning and decision making organs and structures of the constituency. Women youth and the disabled will equally receive the bulk of the tenders supplied by the devolved funds such as CDF, Roads board money etc. We will facilitate their mobilization and organization into robust self help groups/cooperative societies that can be trained on enterprise development and supported to access loans to improve their livelihoods. I will particularly facilitate the formation of Mumias Jua Kali Cooperative Society to support women and young people who are in the informal sector. Inclusiveness, equity, social justice, fairness, respect for diversity, consultation, meritocracy and gender will be the cardinal values and principles that will guide my leadership.

As a youth I recognize the unique social, economic, cultural and health challenges facing us. Our youth, who hold the future of this community, have been deliberately robbed of an opportunity for self advancement. I promise to put in place initiatives for greater awareness among the youth of the dangers of HIV/AIDS and sexual transmitted diseases and ensure that no young person in this constituency should be wasted or condemned to a life of crime, drugs, illiteracy, unwanted pregnancy, and above all, premature deaths from HIV/AIDS scourge.

Establishment of a village ICT centre/constituency digital hubs, library and a career centre where the youth can access information on national, regional and international opportunities as well as receive career guidance and counseling services to meet the their aspirations.

Further to this, using my networks I make a commitment to establish a volunteer placement program that will undertake the recruitment and placement of qualified unemployed youth in organizations within and outside the country for skill acquisition for career development.

Development of artistic and sporting skills will be given unbiased consideration in my development agenda. My leadership will formulate a long-term strategic plan to develop sports and sporting infrastructure for social recreation and competitive sports, in urban and rural areas. Resources will be allocated to develop school sports facilities in all major sports. I will initiate a scheme to establish sports associations and identify and support the development of talented sports men and women through the school system as well.

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I can assure that with proper and transparent use of the CDF and other devolved Funds and a genuine commitment to the rights and empowerment of the people and especially the marginalized groups mentioned above, we can change our community into a land of opportunity and hope for all.

#### **ENHANCED FOOD SECURITY FOR IMPROVED INCOMES AND NUTRITION STATUS: Through increased access to farm inputs and extension services**

In spite of large tracts of land owned by farmers in this constituency, individual farmer land allocated for household food crop and other farming activities is extremely small, barely enough to for optimal households food requirement. Hunger months have been herewith us for as long as we can remember, to the extent that excruciating hunger pangs have become part and parcel of our lives!

To be achieving a sustainable level of food security, there is need for the farmers to engage in intensive farming as a way of optimizing on minimal land available. This is a farming approach that requires good investment in farm inputs. To facilitate access of the necessary farm inputs by farmers, I will establish and strengthen partnership with relevant research and credit institutions, farm inputs distributing agencies, agriculture extension service providers and other relevant partners. This partnership will ensure that farmers in this region are able to access finances, farming technologies, skills and knowledge for optimal food productivity. Introduction of new food crops such as NERICA rice, Soybean, rearing of dairy goats and cows and promotion of traditional foods will be top on this agenda. I guarantee that my tenure will not just see an end to the inescapable *inzala* menace but a shift and adoption of a viable alternative livelihood to sugarcane farming.

#### **IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND SECURITY**

Constituents and more so the resident from the informal settlements of Mumias town & its environs; Mjini, Limino, Shibale and Lukoye lack power, a good road net work and are extremely insecure for the residents as they serve as hideouts for criminals and drug addicts. Any leadership in place is has an obligation of ensuring that living conditions in these regions are improved for the residents to lead dignified life. Cases of thugry and cattle rustling are rampant in this region.

There is need for security to be beefed, increase in street lighting as well as the maintenance of roads by the local authority and the sugar company. There are enough funds from the government and local authority allocated for these.

Although there are efforts for rural electrification some areas are not covered. Equally the is need for this exercise to, as a matter of priority, target all schools, health centers & rural urban centers. This will serve to improve school performance, provision of health services and micro-economies respectively.

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