

# THE OPTIVEN POINT

*Experience the Difference*

TOP Issue 7/2020



## GETTING A PROPERTY

Investing in  
Real Estate  
New Normal

## OPTIVEN RUAI OFFICE SOARS

Serving customers at  
their comfort and  
convenience

## FOUNDATION @GRASSROOT

Spreading Hope  
across the country at  
grassroot levels

# WORD FROM THE CEO

## VISION FOR PROPERTY OWNERSHIP PROPELS INTEREST OFFER

The role of any company should be to leave an impact in the society. This is one of the objectives why Optiven exists and in the face of the current COVID 19 pandemic, we have taken into consideration the challenges being faced by a majority of the investors. The challenges have seen a number of investors affected including loss of lives and income, following a low economic situation from the pandemic. As part of the efforts to encourage the uptake and investment in real estate, Optiven



Limited rolled out a special offer that would see customers enjoy making their payments free of interest. The offer which was rolled out in May 2020 applies to all the projects where customers were given an interest waiver for the period of six months. The initiative was aimed at cushioning the investors from the adverse effects of COVID 19. Through the offer, we as Optiven are humbled that the bracket of those investing in our projects has seen a rise. With the current challenges, of course there have also emerged a number of lessons – key of which is the importance of making tangible investments that can outlive if not bolster one in times of adversity. While the COVID 19 pandemic has hit sectors such as tourism and hotels hard, some other sectors have also had to let go of their staff. With a lack of continued income especially for the middle class, some have had to downgrade their lifestyles and either move into cheaper houses or for those without income or savings, go to upcountry homes. There has been a group that caught a distinct vision and decided to invest



in real estate including the accessible portfolio within Optiven. This cadre have had an easier time as some have used their savings to build new homes thus avoiding the danger that lurks of being kicked out owing to lack of rent. For us, this is an indication we're impacting lives and transforming families because investing with Optiven does make a difference for posterity. What is your Vision?

# RUAI OFFICE SERVES MACHAKOS INVESTORS

## Proximity and strategic locale provides ease for investors

The stability of investment risk in the real estate sector continues to make it one of the most vibrant vehicles for investors in terms of return on investment. This, coupled with a tradition appeal and almost guaranteed shield against economic turbulence thus makes real estate the go to investment when one is keen on their returns. Mr. George Wachiuri, Chief Executive at Optiven Group says, 'real estate in Kenya has grown but there is still more room for expansion. The growth is largely from an increase in rural to urban migration in the last two or so decades. As stakeholders in the sector, what we see in turn, is the demand for both residential and commercial properties in urban and peri-urban areas. The interest has been phenomenal with a surge especially in the last five years going upwards'. His views perhaps mirroring the strategy of sourcing projects that address such emerging and existing needs for those interested in commercial properties or for the many seeking out better residences for their families.

For starters, investors can rest easy if the property is genuine as it appreciates in value over time. This lends credibility to an observation by Robert Kiyosaki who said, 'real estate investing, even on a very small scale, remains a tried and tested means of building an individuals' cash flow and wealth'. If this is obvious, why are some investors jittery about investing in real estate? The sector like any other has its challenges top of which is dishonesty among some of the real estate companies leading to fraud. On this, Wachiuri says, 'like any other sector even real estate has its challenges and risks. Understanding how the sector operates, and taking note of the trends and patterns of companies in the sector will help advise investors on where to put their money. At Optiven, we are happy that our customers are our biggest supporters and some have not only referred their friends, but have invested again and again.' He has time and again called on investors to conduct due diligence by carrying out prior market investigations, feasibility studies, and appraise the companies before investing. So how does Optiven help customers to do this?

A visit to Optiven's Ruai office opens up the formula to the modern operandi of this award winning company. At the bypass, you are welcomed to Machakos County with a huge banner that mimics welcome boards of Texas in the United States of America.

Safe for this one, it is in Optiven Country and introduces one the Garden of Joy. On arrival at the Ruai office, it is clear that Optiven prides itself in the brand it has become. Here a vehicle boldly branded is being cleared in readiness for the next customer. The Customer Support staff doing this is well donned in a branded polo shirt and safely masked to ensure his safety and that of those around him. The office is also well branded making it easy to access on



the first floor. Because Optiven is well known, it is easy to find the office by asking anyone round Ruai Shopping

Center to directions. On arrival you are met by Susan Mathu Customer Liaison Officer – a cheery lady, with a wealth of experience and knowledge on Optiven projects. She provides all the key information on the company's portfolio key of which is the Machakos projects – Garden of Joy and Rafiki Gardens. A keen eye will observe that the Ruai office is fully adherent to the Ministry of Health guidelines on Covid 19 with the aim of reducing its spread. A client arrives in the nick of time, and is advised of the need to sanitize too. According to Mathu, 'Optiven as a company has adapted a one customer one vehicle policy during this COVID 19 season. The customers are encouraged to wash their hands and sanitize while staff are aware that no handshakes with customers although we value them. Once in the company branded vehicle, we provide sanitizer for all our customers before leaving Ruai for the project.' Many customers however prefer to drive themselves to the projects to experience the difference that Optiven provides in the sector. This difference is clear from the way the projects appear even before getting to the gates and engaging with the courteous caretakers on site.



**ABOVE:** Banner on Kangundo Road courtesy of Optiven Limited, with focus on Rafiki Gardens project.

Peter Gitonga is the Managing Director at the Optiven Ruai Office, an astute sales man and experienced marketer in his own right. With a confident smile he says, 'we are glad that our Ruai hub is a buzz of activities and we are grateful to be of service to our customers. Despite the season we are in, we are happy that our customers have shown great interest in our projects located in Machakos County. Some have seen our billboard, others are walk ins while others have been referred to us or have interacted with the brand on mainstream media.' According to Gitonga, customers investing in this projects are assured that the project is ready to build upon finishing their interest free payments of the competitively priced projects. All this is all good for the customers bearing in mind the Optiven strategy of providing peace of mind for investment in their projects. The premier value additions that facilitate the ready to build ideal include security, caretakers on site, properly demarcated plots, ready title deeds, access roads on site as well as water, electricity and many other enabling benefits that make investing a joy.

# HAPPENING ACROSS SEPTEMBER AT OPTIVEN



**ABOVE:** Cabro paving at Optiven's AMANI RIDGE | The Place of Peace in Kiambu.



**ABOVE:** Construction of 40,000 litter tank at Optiven's Victory Gardens Kitengela on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020



**ABOVE:** (Left) Workers finalise erection of a state of the art gate at Optiven's Garden of Joy in Machakos. (Right) The completed gate with security

**BELOW:** Installation of electricity to serve residents of Optiven's Thika Royal Palms project is now complete



# REAL ESTATE : News and Information

## **SHEKINA GARDENS GETS UPGRADE | Optiven Goodwill to Customers**

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Optiven Engineers this month been operating from Shekinah Gardens. Among the key deliverables will be the fencing of the entire property with concrete poles and wire mesh to spruce up the project. As part of improving aesthetics on the project, the engineers will erect the poles painted green as a sign of customer's prosperity. In addition, the developments have seen Optiven join hands with Weberworks to do the construction of a 15 meters tall water tower that will hold 40,000 litres of water.

According to the Chief Executive at Optiven Group, George Wachiuri, 'This additional Value Additions will allow customers to experience Value for their properties. This was not a part of the initial promise, but as an additional token of love to our Shekinah Gardens customers.' The residents at Shekina Gardens will also enjoy spruced up roads aimed at making the project the best within a 1 mile location of Kajiado Town and less than 0.5 m from the Highway.

## **OPTIVEN AND KNBS PARTNER ON SURVEY | Data to Advise Sector**

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Kenya is looking to plug data gaps in the real estate market so investors and households can easily access information to track prices of rents and identify investment opportunities. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) data collection continues and once done, will be used to better measure the performance of the real estate sector and help inform decision-making processes for households. Investors currently rely on informal data to identify potential opportunities in the housing market given the lack of access to reliable information for housing developers or tenants, said KNBS.

This index will bridge those gaps, and will run between July and September 2020, while regular data collection will be conducted every quarter thereafter. Among those being targeted in the survey include real estate agents and affiliate companies. Optiven Limited, Kenya's leading and award winning real estate company, with over 20 years experience in the sector, has confirmed its participation with Chief Executive George Wachiuri noting that, 'these statistics will provide accuracy and reliability both are important in informing economic policy decision making, and in the compilation of national accounts statistics

## **REAL ESTATE VIABLE ON ROI | Investors Benefit from Sector**

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Investors with the appetite of illiquidity premium should consider a long-term investment horizon to exploit this strategy. Asset-class real estate has private valuations that respond slowly to economic downturns compared to investments in the public markets. This underscores the fact that, besides illiquidity premium, real estate is also a stable appreciating asset, if professionally executed it can provide downturn protection against market

volatilities. This unique characteristic can help investors balance their portfolios in an efficient and effective way, especially during a crisis period. Both direct investments in real estate, such as property and indirect investments, real-estate backed funds can be a form of a 'forced saving plan' that can benefit investors with recurring revenue.

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# GETTING A PROPERTY, THE NEW NORMAL

## Take the Step to Realize your Dream

One of the key concerns of investors in real estate is, will the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic affect investments in real estate. This comes as commercial tenancies including supermarkets, entertainment joints and leisure packs have been closed under the government of Kenya initiative to curb the spread of COVID 19. While restaurants remain open to some extent, social distancing requirements have affected business making it's operation abnormal in a sense. Coupled with other economic factors including a return to the rural from the urban by a section of the population owing to lack of income from job losses, the situation becomes a tad complicated where customers do not have money to spend on entertainment. The same scenario is mirrored in public spaces such as grocery markets, fast food outlets, fun parks and open air spaces of trade – their place taken by online shopping for those who can afford. Then there is the cost of travel that has seen a spike as the government through its traffic arm moved in to ensure fewer passengers occupy public service vehicles from March 2020. The cost of this directive then moved from the vehicle owner and onto the consumer, with the cost of travelling more than doubling in terms of pricing, time and resource. For example, Eileen – a single mother of two, would rather save money used on travelling to ensure that the electricity is paid now that her children are not in school and she cannot risk having them out of the compound because of the real challenge of COVID. What would have cost a commuter 30 shillings from Westlands to the Central Business District, now costs a whopping 50 shillings which for some, it is a real struggle to find. The real estate sector players in this case endline tenants have also felt the pinch of the pandemic with a majority of landlords not keen to reduce rent and in a best case scenario just waiver the rent altogether. A few have provided relief vide discounts and extension of time to enable payment. The result has seen agents managing such investments closing down altogether as landlords take on their role and in other cases, agents have had to scale down owing to more tenants being unable to service their rent or downgrading as part of survival. This was almost expected with the public keeping away from crowded areas such as shopping centers and others, to meet the social distancing ultimatum. Other property owners in the business of letting have had to request new tenants downgrading to their properties for proof of income. This has been used to leverage the capacity of tenants to pay rent amidst rising requests for rent concessions.



**ABOVE:** A proud investor ground breaks for their new home at Optiven's Victory Gardens in Kitengela. Homes on the project in the background

# OPTIVEN FOUNDATION | **Makes A Difference**

In the aftermath of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Optiven Foundation continued to be of impact in the society. Through its network at the grassroots level, the foundation has continued to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable families at the grassroots level. While there have been a number of queries and requests received, the Optiven Foundation has through its partners and friends of the foundation identified and supported over 100 families at the grassroots level. This September, the Optiven Foundation reached out to vulnerable households in Kapenguria. The support was under it's Spread The Hope campaign that was launched in the aftermath of the COVID 19 eruption in Kenya. While in Kapenguria, located in West Pokot County, the foundation reached out by distributing food stuff including cereals, pulses and vegetable oil among other key donations, to households.



[www.optivenfoundation.org](http://www.optivenfoundation.org)  
[info@optivenfoundation.org](mailto:info@optivenfoundation.org)

+254 20 2484022  
+254 718 776 033



The move to launch and roll out the Spread of Hope campaign in 2020, has seen a number of households at the grassroots level meeting their daily needs through support from the foundation. According to George Wachiuri, Chairman at The Optiven Foundation, 'We have been extending support to households affected by the current Covid-19 pandemic every month. We could not have done it on our own but through the help and coordination between local authorities and stakeholders, this has been possible. We are also glad that through the Spread the Hope initiative, the Optiven Foundation continues to touch and transform lives in various parts of the Country including Kajiado, Uasin Gishu and Nairobi Counties.'

As the Eyes on the Community, the Optiven Foundation's desire is to transform and improve the livelihood of the vulnerable families in our society by offering them support that includes basic food stuff. You too can Partner with us today and participate in sharing Hope with a deserving family. Send your contribution of any amount to Mpesa Paybill: 898 630 | Account Name: Support. Or call us on +254 718 776 033 or [info@optivenfoundation.org](mailto:info@optivenfoundation.org) | [www.optivenfoundation.org](http://www.optivenfoundation.org)

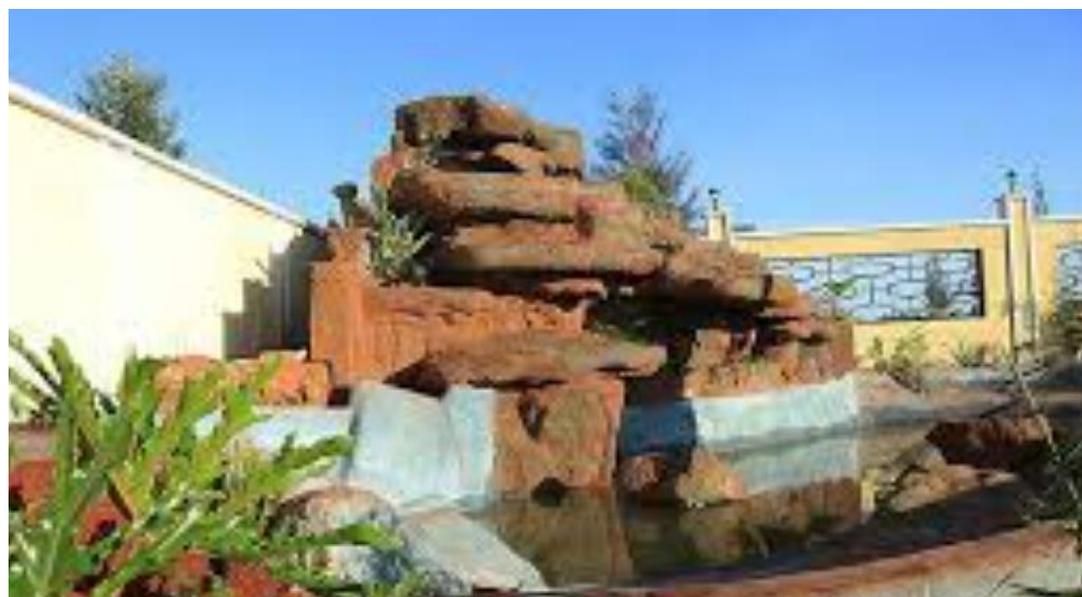
# AMANI RIDGE | The Place of Peace Value Galore

Optiven's premier project in Kiambu County has taken value additions to a new level. The project Amani Ridge | The Place of Peace has this year upstaged the value additions on the project. Customers can now enjoy true luxury and much more when visiting the project. The year 2020 has seen the projects value additions being realised especially with regard to the main amenities.

Following quickly on the steps of a state of the art gate, the project has been a bee hive of activity. The result has seen the installation of a massive water tank that will serve the project. As regards security, the project has been fitted with a stone perimeter wall, mounted with razor wire and a functional solar powered water fountain. Speaking at the kick starting of the cabro paving of the roads, Group Chief Executive, George Wachiuri said, 'we are delighted to be on course with regard to the value additions at our premier project, Amani Ridge the Place of Peace. A majority of our investors have been eager to enjoy the promised value additions and true to our tradition we have been keen to deliver.'



**ABOVE: The state of the art gate at AMANI RIDGE | The Place of Peace with security lights**



**ABOVE: The Fountain of Peace stands majestic at AMANI RIDGE | The Place of Peace, launched July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020**

the fastracking on value additions. While the project has been selling at the launch prices, applicable in the last two years, a new price change is set to be introduced in October 2020.

True to this promise, the project has installed the key value additions among them electricity, water, solar lighting, cabro paving, stone perimeter fencing and greening of the project among others. The award winning project has been fast selling out. A number of investors are on the ground ready to break ground for their new dream homes alongside

# YOU ARE NOW HOME!



**Amani Ridge**  
Kiambu



Why is **AMANI RIDGE | The Place of Peace**, the perfect home for your family?

Welcome to *luxury, serenity and tranquility* all in one place.

This *award-winning* project is nestled just a few kilometers from the Nairobi CBD and within reach of high end schools as well as other amenities.

## WHAT'S MORE?

*Abnormally wide cabro paved roads | Solar street lighting | Stone wall perimeter fence*

For more information call us today on **0702 831083**, email us on **admin@optiven.co.ke**, feedback on our app, visit our offices at Loita Street, ABSA Towers, 14th Floor or visit our website [www.optiven.co.ke](http://www.optiven.co.ke)