



A Political History of the Rural Mijikenda

As told through their elected representatives, 1957-2023



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August 2023



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Limitations

- Excludes Local Government throughout.

- 1 Gusii
- 2 Meru
- 3 Ukambani
- 4 Embu and Mbeere
- 5 Maasai and Samburu
- 6 Somali
- 7 Nakuru and Laikipia
- 8 Nairobi
- 9 Bukusu Luhya
- 10 Southern Kikuyu
- 11 Northern Kikuyu
- 12 Mombasa
- 13 Kilifi and Kwale

Mijikenda Political History

A Short History of the Rural Mijikenda of Kilifi and Kwale

The Mijikenda community of Bantu-speaking Africans lived in the precolonial era along the Kenya coast from the border with Tanzania in the south to north of Lamu. The communities were originally centred on several inland Kayas (hilltop villages (kayas), and became known in the north as the Giriama, Chonyi, Jibana, Kambe, Ribe, Rabai and Kauma and in the south as Digo and Duruma (*Miji*=village, *kenda*=nine). The Giriama were by far the largest subgroup, with the Digo second. Some Mijikenda dialects were mutually intelligible, others were not.

Over the centuries, the Mijikenda traded and intermarried with Arab settlers giving rise to the unique Swahili language and community of the coastal zone.

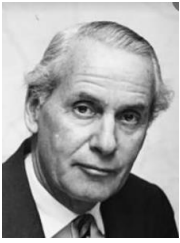
In the colonial period, most Mijikenda (then known as the *Nyika* (“bush people”)) still lived in the designated Nyika Reserve. Mijikenda had no land rights in the 10-mile strip, property of the Sultan and settled by Arabs, Swahili and later British, which was outside the Reserve, but squatted there nonetheless. When Kenya Colony was formed in 1920, the Coastal strip remained legally outside. There were also close links between Mijikenda politics and that of Mombasa, the city in the centre of the coast to which many Mijikenda migrated over the years. I have covered that separately.

In religious terms, the Mijikenda have long been divided into three broad traditions: Islam (especially close to the coast and in Kwale), Christianity and traditional animist religions. There is a strong belief and history of magic and witchcraft.

Economically, the two districts were little developed at independence and apart from the coast beach areas, which have been hugely developed for tourism, this has not changed that much.

Mijikenda Political History

1957: The First Vote for an elected African



Governor
Renison

European

European

Shirley
Victor Cooke

Coast

Asians

Asian

Sayed
Mohamed
Shah

Eastern Muslim

Asians

Asian

Anantprasad
Pandya

Eastern Non-Muslim

Arab

Arab

IND

Mahfood
Mackawi

National

Africans

Giriama

IND

Ronald
Ngala

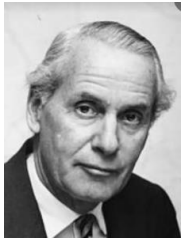


Coast

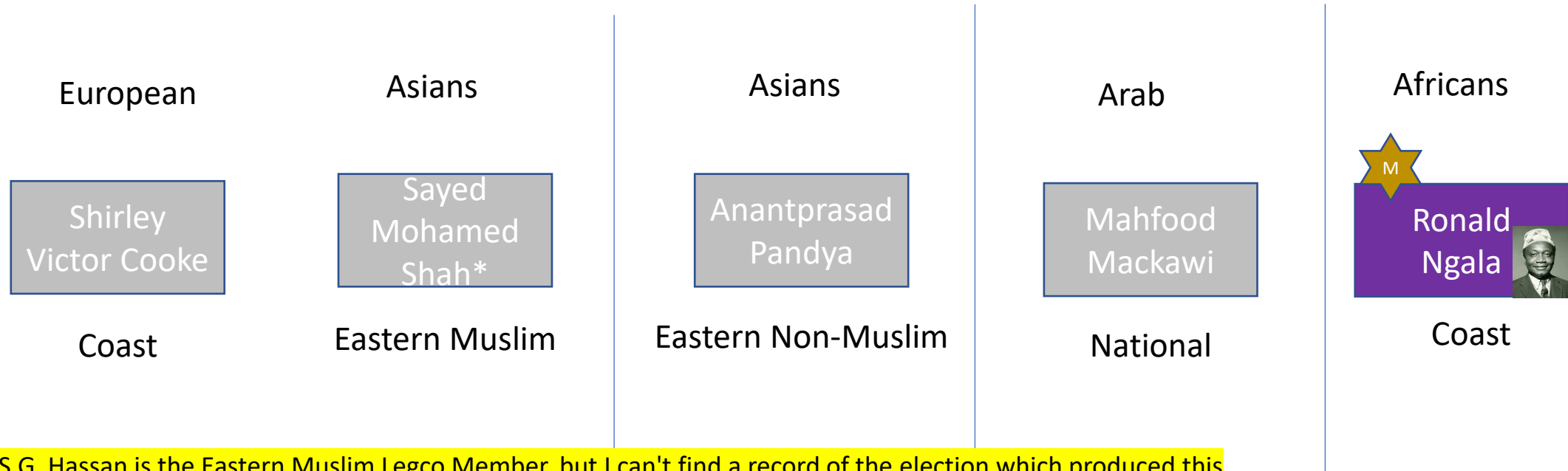
In 1957, the African constituency of “Coast” (including Mombasa) is established and won by rising Mijikenda star Ronald Ngala.

Mijikenda Political History

1958: 6 more African constituencies

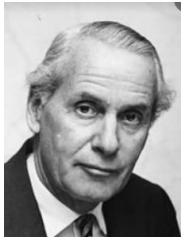


Governor
Renison



* By 1960, S.G. Hassan is the Eastern Muslim Legco Member, but I can't find a record of the election which produced this

In 1958, “Coast” constituency is split, and the new seat of Mombasa formed (won by Francis Khamisi). Ngala remains LegCo member for the rest of the coast and deeply influential in Mombasa. In 1960, Ngala accepts ministerial office in the transitional government. Multiple regional political parties spring up during 1958-60, often with overlapping memberships.

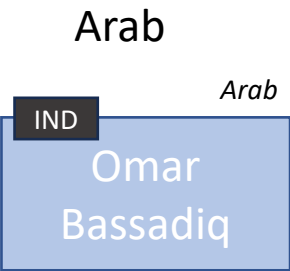


Mijikenda Political History

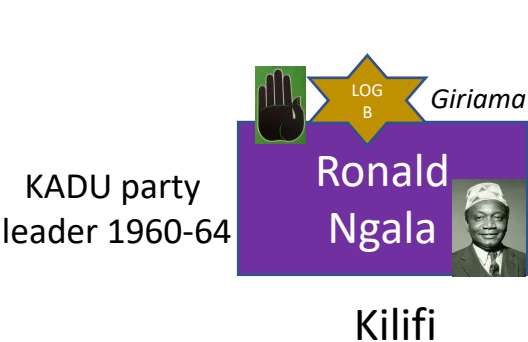
Feb 1961: The Kenyatta Election



Governor Ronald Ngala
Renison (KADU)



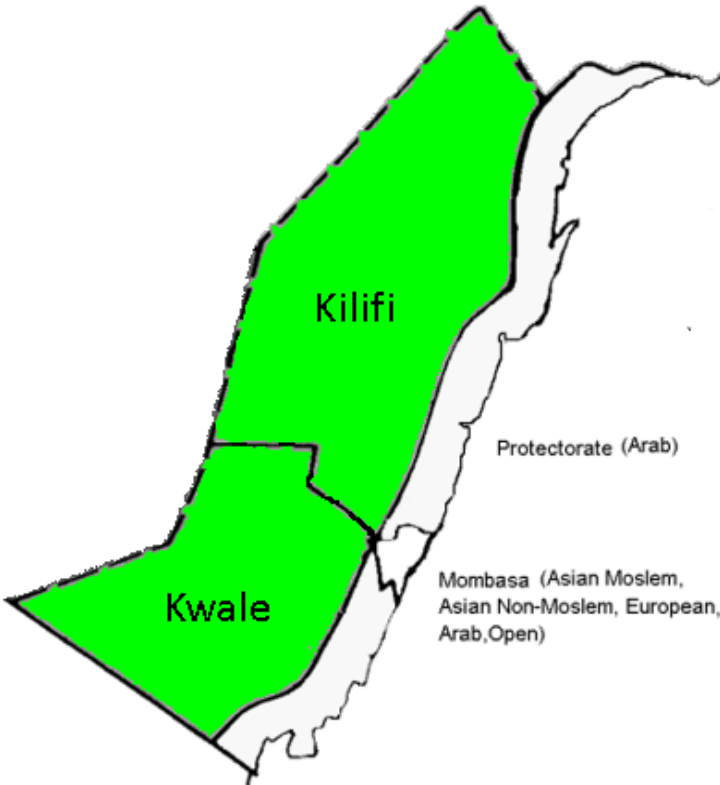
Protectorate



Open



Kwale



With national political parties permitted and the formation of KANU and KADU in 1960, African politics takes on a more structured form. In the 1961 “Kenyatta election”, the racial seats remain but are structured into geographical areas where non-Africans are more numerous. Arabs still represent the non-Mombasa Coastal strip (the “Protectorate”), which KANU and KADU both boycotted in the general election. The Mijikenda reserve (now districts Kilifi and Kwale) is African territory and dominated by Ngala and his new party KADU, of which he is party leader. Newcomer Robert Matano is elected in Kwale and later becomes Parliamentary Secretary. Ngala takes office as Leader of Government Business and Education minister, heading a minority coalition.



Renison Kenyatta Ngala

Mijikenda Political History

Apr 1962-63: Coalition Government

Arab

IND

Omar Bassadiq

KADU party
leader 1960-64




MOS

Ronald Ngala

Kilifi

Open



Robert Matano

Kwale

In the coalition government of May 1962-3, little changes in Kilifi and Kwale as Kenyatta joins Ngala as joint leaders, both taking the title of Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs



Governor Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya
Macdonald (KANU)

Mijikenda Political History

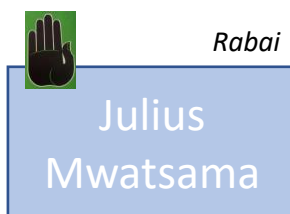
1963: For Self-Government



Ngei (APP) Ngala (KADU)



Malindi



Kilifi North



Kilifi South



Kilifi Senate

Also, President
Coast Regional Assembly

Also, Vice-President
Coast Regional Assembly



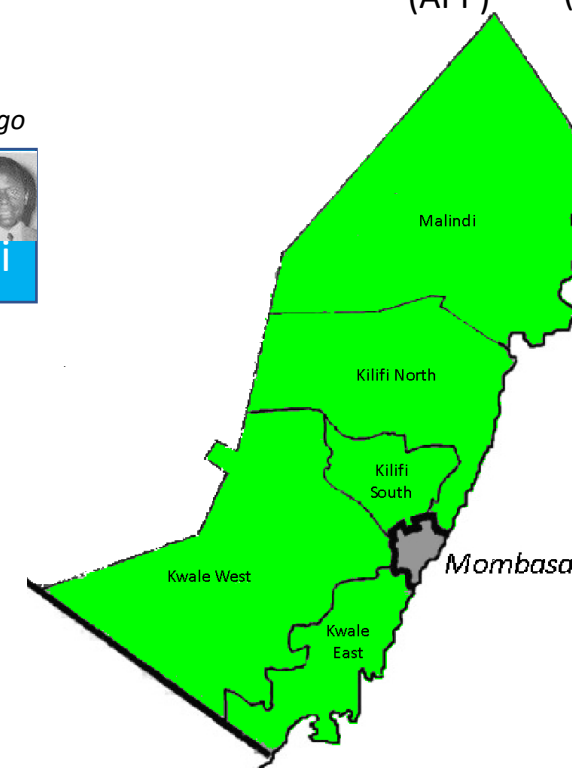
Kwale West



Kwale East



Kwale Senate



In the new common roll but bicameral system, with no reserved seats, Kilifi now has 3 seats in the house and Kwale two, and each district has a Senator. KANU wins nationwide but in the Mijikenda coast, KADU wins every seat. As KADU then goes into opposition, no MPs hold any government role. Ngala and Matano are elected as MPs and also become leaders of the new Coast Regional Assembly (which is soon crippled and later abolished).

Mijikenda Political History

Dec 1964: Republican Constitution



One Party State
(Part 1):
1964-66



Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya
(KANU)



Malindi



Kilifi North



Kwale West



Kwale East



Kwale Senate



Kilifi South



Kilifi Senate

Although the coast leadership holds firm, elsewhere KADU is weakened by defections. In November 1964, an increasingly irrelevant KADU folds to join KANU. Ngala becomes Mombasa KANU Chairman. December, the Republic established with Kenyatta as President. Ngala remains a backbencher, but as a consolation becomes Chair of the Maize Marketing Board. None of his team receive any government office.



Kenyatta, Odinga, Mboya
(KANU)

Mijikenda Political History

1966 KPU



One Party State
(Part 1):
1964-66

Francis Tuva

Malindi

Julius Mwatsama

Kilifi North

Asst
Secretary-
General

Robert Matano

Kwale West

Kassim Mwamzandi

Kwale East

Mombasa
KANU
Chairman

Ronald Ngala

Kilifi South

Henry Malingi

Kilifi Senate

Rocky Mchinga

Kwale Senate

The 1966 KPU rebellion has limited effect among Mijikenda MPs; they remain loyal to Ngala, who is now restored to ministerial office as KANU restructures and becomes more conservative. Matano becomes KANU Assistant Secretary-General to Mboya.

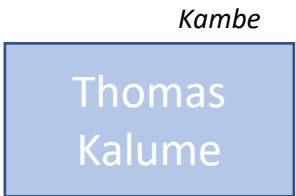


Mijikenda Political History

1969 General Election



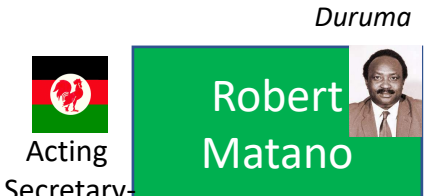
One Party State
(Part 2):
1969-82



Malindi North

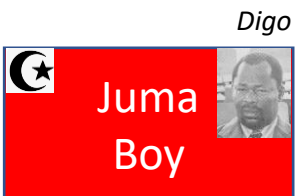


Malindi South

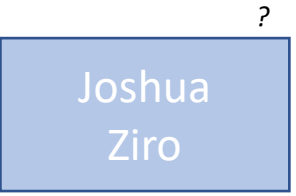


Acting
Secretary-
General

Kwale North



Kwale Central



Kilifi North



Mombasa
KANU
Chairman



Kilifi South



Kwale East

1967 Senate abolished and boundary redistribution adds one seat to each district . After Mboya's death Matano becomes KANU acting Secretary-General (for the next decade). In 1969, the KPU is banned, return of one-party state. In the one party elections, Ngala is re-elected and reappointed as a minister. In Kwale, Dock Workers Union Secretary-General Boy Juma is first elected



Mijikenda Political History

1972-3: Ngala's death



One Party State
(Part 2):
1969-82

Thomas
Kalume

Malindi North

Francis
Tuva

Malindi South

Ngala


Died


Maurice
Mboja

Kilifi South


Joshua
Ziro

Kilifi North


Acting
Secretary-
General


Duruma
Robert
Matano

Kwale North

Digo

Juma
Boy

Kwale Central

Digo

Kassim
Mwamzandi

Kwale East

December 1972, Ngala is killed in a car accident on the Mombasa highway. He is replaced in a by-election by Maurice Mboja (who gave the eulogy at Ngala's funeral). Robert Matano is appointed as the 'Mijikenda minister' to replace him in Jan 1973



Mijikenda Political History

1974 General Election



Giriama

 Joseph Yeri

Malindi North

Giriama

Francis Tuva 

Malindi South

Giriama


Noah Katana Ngala 


Kilifi North


Giriama

Maurice Mboja

Kilifi South




Acting Secretary-General

 *Duruma*

Robert Matano 



Kwale North

Digo

 Juma Boy 

Kwale Central

Digo

 Kassim Mwamzandi 

Kwale East

1974 election, Ngala's son Noah takes over Kilifi North (but remains a backbencher) while Mboja is re-elected in Kilifi South, leaving all four Kilifi seats in Giriama leadership. In Kwale, Matano, Boy and Mwamzandi all return. Little changes politically in the rural Mijikenda around JM Kariuki's murder in 1975 and the aftermath.

Mijikenda Political History

1978 Death of Kenyatta & Moi's Accession



Malindi North



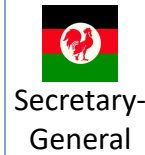
Malindi South



Kilifi North



Kilifi South



Secretary-
General



Kwale North

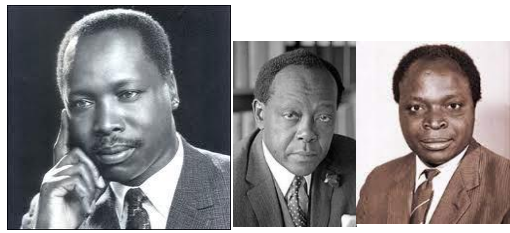


Kwale Central



Kwale East

As Moi comes into office, KANU national elections are finally held and his ally Matano is elected Secretary General in October 1978.



Mijikenda Political History

1979 General Election



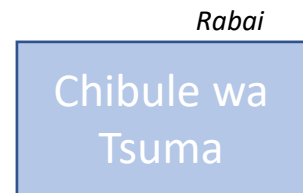
Malindi North



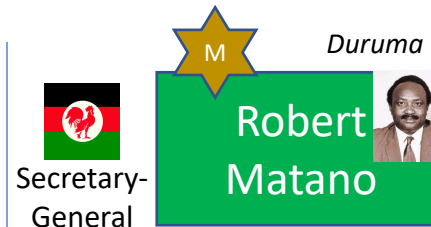
Malindi South



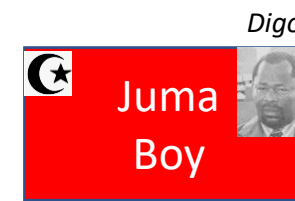
Kilifi North



Kilifi South



Kwale North



Kwale Central



Kwale East

Little changes with Moi's first election except that (relatively) radical surgeon Chibule wa Tsuma is elected in Kilifi South. Matano, Ngala and the other five MPs all return.



Mijikenda Political History

1983: Snap General Election



One Party State
(Part 3): De Jure
1982-91



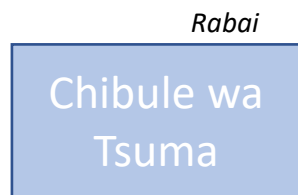
Malindi North



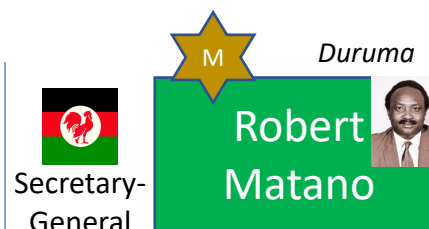
Malindi South



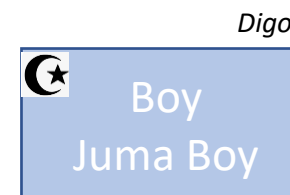
Kilifi North



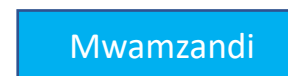
Kilifi South



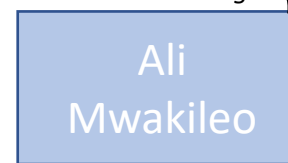
Kwale North



Kwale Central

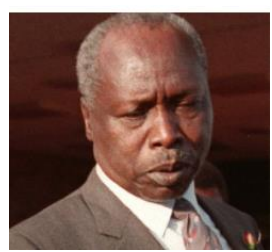


Defeated



Kwale East

Njonjo's fall after the 1982 coup is followed by a snap general election. In Kwale, Juma Boy dies just before the poll and is replaced by his son Boy Juma Boy as MP. Mwamzandi loses but Matano returns and is reappointed. Unlike most of his colleagues, Chibule was Tsuma is neither arrested, detained or defeated and returns to parliament.



Mijikenda Political History

1985: Reshuffle



One Party State
(Part 3): De Jure
1982-91



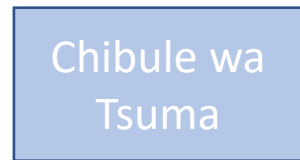
Malindi North



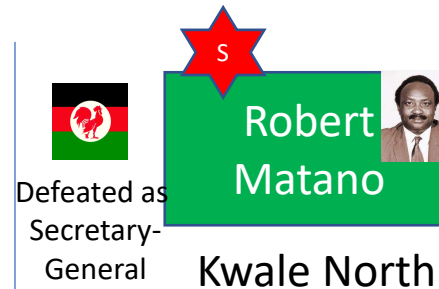
Malindi South



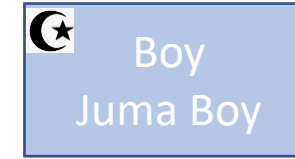
Kilifi North



Kilifi South



Kwale North



Kwale Central



Kwale East

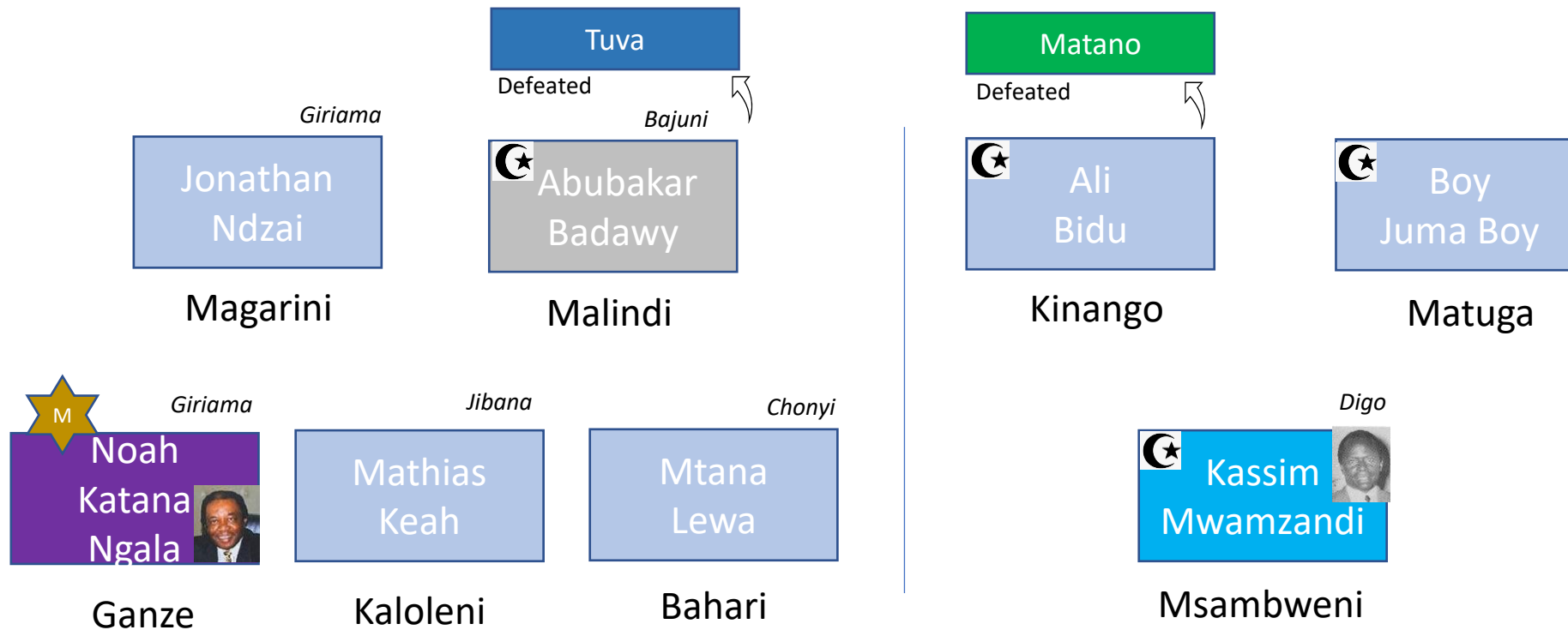
Digo

In August 1985, Katana Ngala is finally raised to ministerial office to replace Matano, who is sacked for unclear reasons. A few weeks before, Matano has also been replaced as KANU Secretary-General by KANU hardliner Burudi Nabwera in orchestrated elections.



Mijikenda Political History

1988 (Public Queue Voting)



Boundary redistribution adds one seat to Kilifi, and all seats renamed. In Kilifi, Ngala is regional kingpin and unopposed. Tuva is finally defeated. A non-Mijikenda wins Malindi. In Kwale, out-of-favour Matano is duly rigged out, Boy Boy is re-elected and Mwamzandi returns. Ngala remains sole Mijikenda minister.



Mijikenda Political History

Late 1992: Multi-Partyism



Jonathan
Ndzai

Magarini



Abubakar
Badawy

Malindi



Ali
Bidu

Kinango



Boy
Juma Boy

Matuga



Noah
Katana
Ngala

Ganze



Mathias
Keah

Kaloleni



Mtana
Lewa

Bahari



Kassim
Mwamzandi

Msambweni




Queue voting abolished 1991. Multi-party democracy returns Dec 1991. As FORD and the DP emerge, the Mijikenda coast remains mostly pro KANU, despite stresses in the local Moslem community. No MPs defect.





Mijikenda Political History


December 1992: Multi-party General Elections





*Giriama*
Jonathan Ndzai
Magarini


*Bajuni*
Abubakar Badawy
Malindi


*Giriama*
Noah Katana Ngala
Ganze

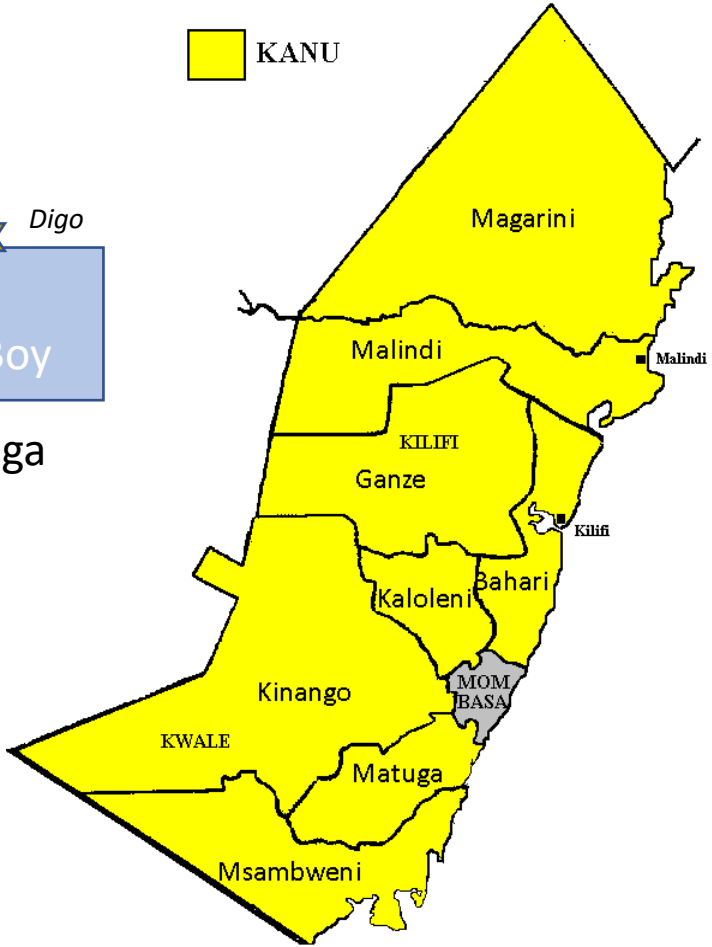
*Jibana*
Mathias Keah
Kaloleni

*Kauma*
John Safari Mumba
Bahari

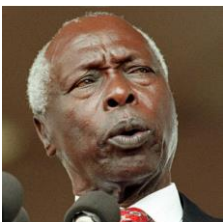
*Duruma*
Gonzi Rai
Kinango

*Digo*
Boy Juma Boy
Matuga

*Digo*
Kassim Mwamzandi
Msambweni

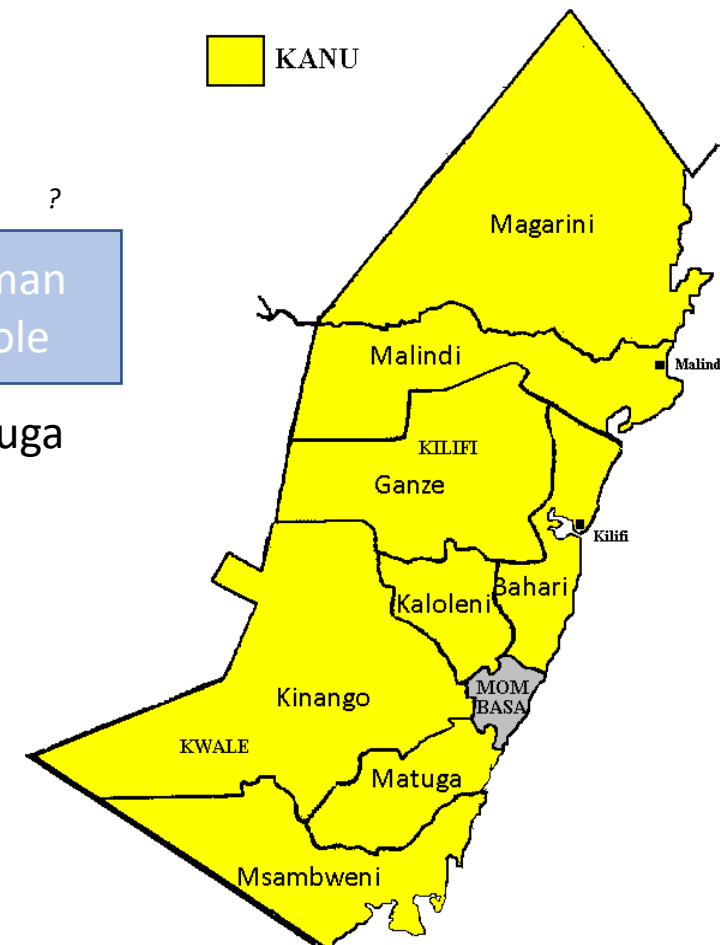
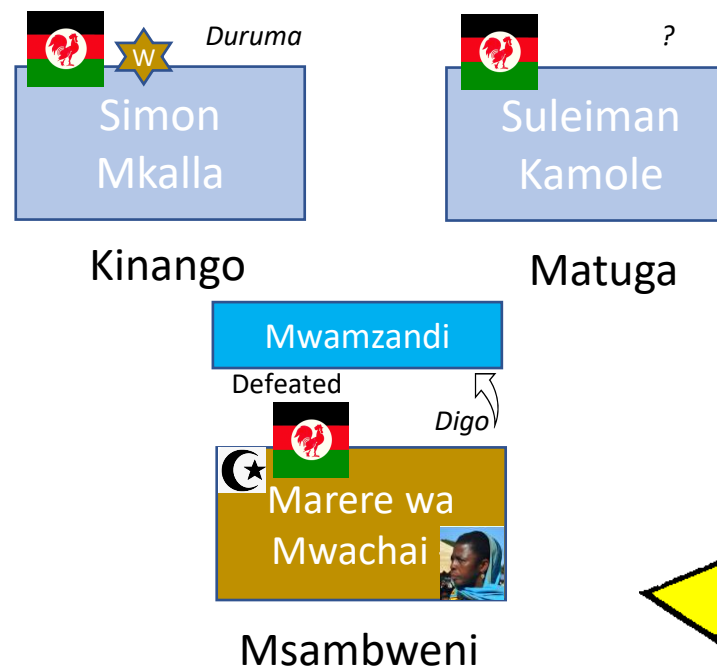
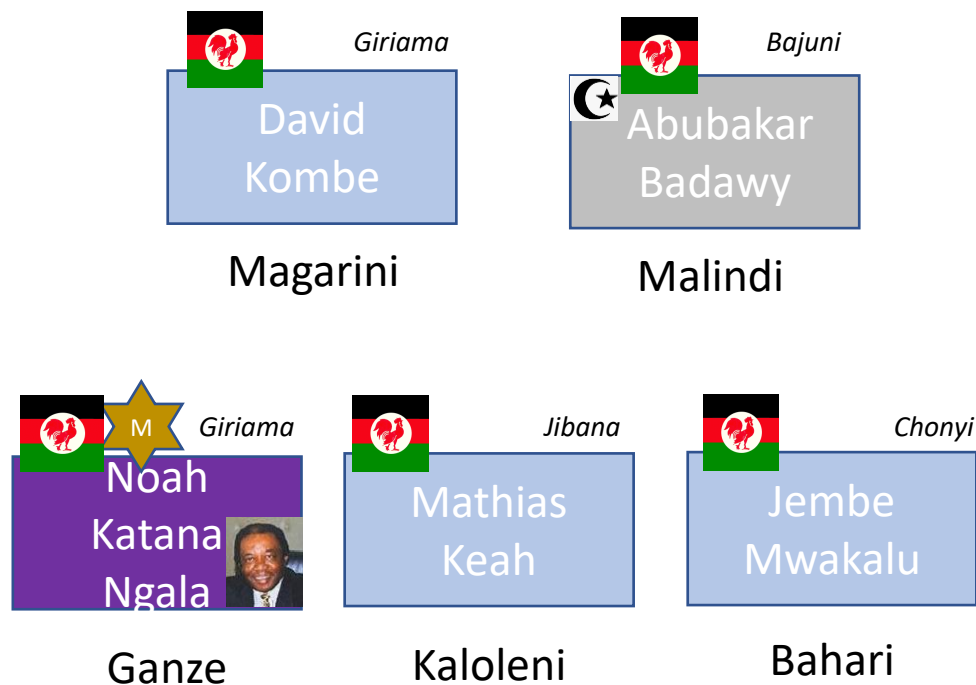


In the 1992 multi-party elections, KANU is triumphant. Moi wins every seat in the presidency by huge margins and KANU wins every seat. All MPs bar two return to the house. The DP performs solidly in Kwale but wins nothing. In the government which follows, Ngala returns as sole Minister. Boy J. Boy becomes Chief Whip.

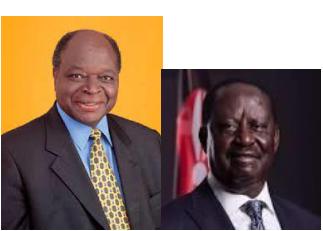


Mijikenda Political History

Dec 1997 General Election



Boundary redistributions don't affect the region. In the runup to the polls, the coast is wracked by political violence instigated by elements within the government. Nonetheless, KANU dominates the region. In the presidency, Moi wins all four seats. In Parliament KANU easily wins every seat again, though notably, two winners (Mwakalu and Wa Mwachai) were opposition candidates in 1992. Kamole by contrast had been linked with the raiders. Wa Mwachai is the first (Moslem) female MP from the region. In the new government, Ngala returns as sole minister again. In 2000, Mkalla becomes KANU Chief Whip.



Mijikenda Political History

Late 2002: LDP Defection



David
Kombe

Magarini



Abubakar
Badawy

Malindi



Simon
Mkalla

Kinango



Suleiman
Kamole

Matuga



Noah
Katana
Ngala

Ganze



Mathias
Keah

Kaloleni



Jembe
Mwakalu

Bahari

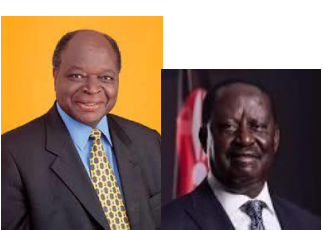


Marere wa
Mwachai

Msambweni

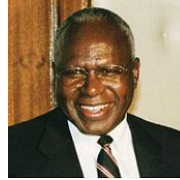


With the rainbow rebellion joining the National Alliance, the political tide nationwide shift sharply against KANU, and even in the Mijikenda KANUs grip is weakened, but all the MPs remain loyal until the end.



Mijikenda Political History

2002: Moi Retires, Kibaki Elected



SHIRIKISHO

Harrison Kombe

Magarini

Giriama

Lucas Maitha

Malindi

Ngala

Defeated

Kahindi Kingi

Ganze

Kambe

Morris Dzoro

Kaloleni

Free Men

Joseph Khamisi

Bahari

FORD-P

Samuel Rai

Kinango

Duruma

Chirau Mwakwere

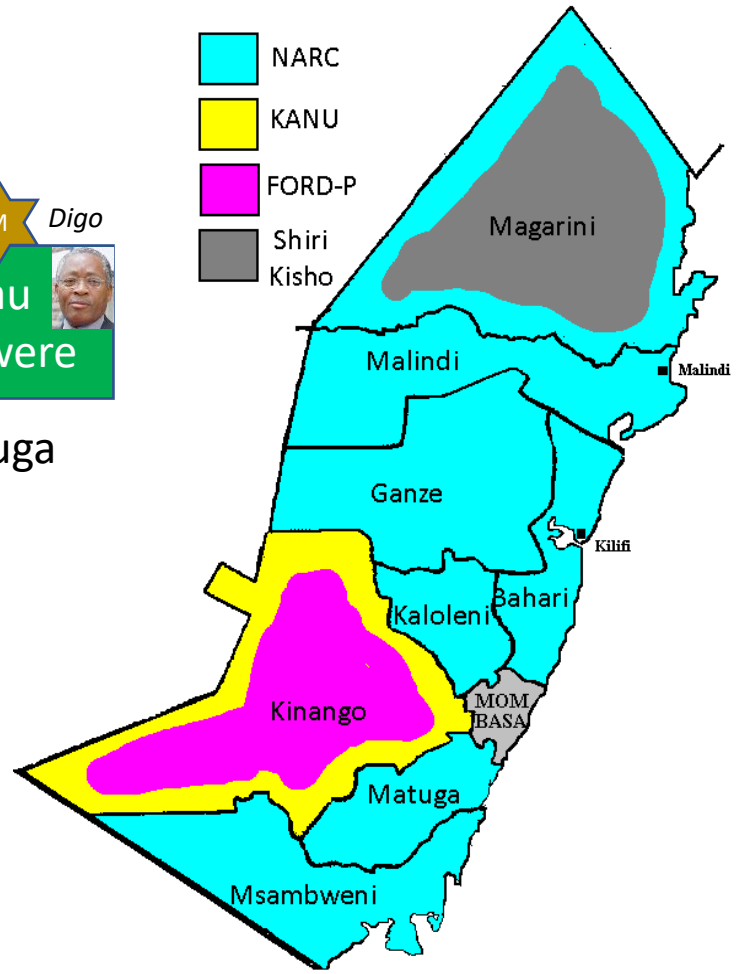
Matuga

wa Mwachai

Defeated

Abdalla Ngozi

Msambweni

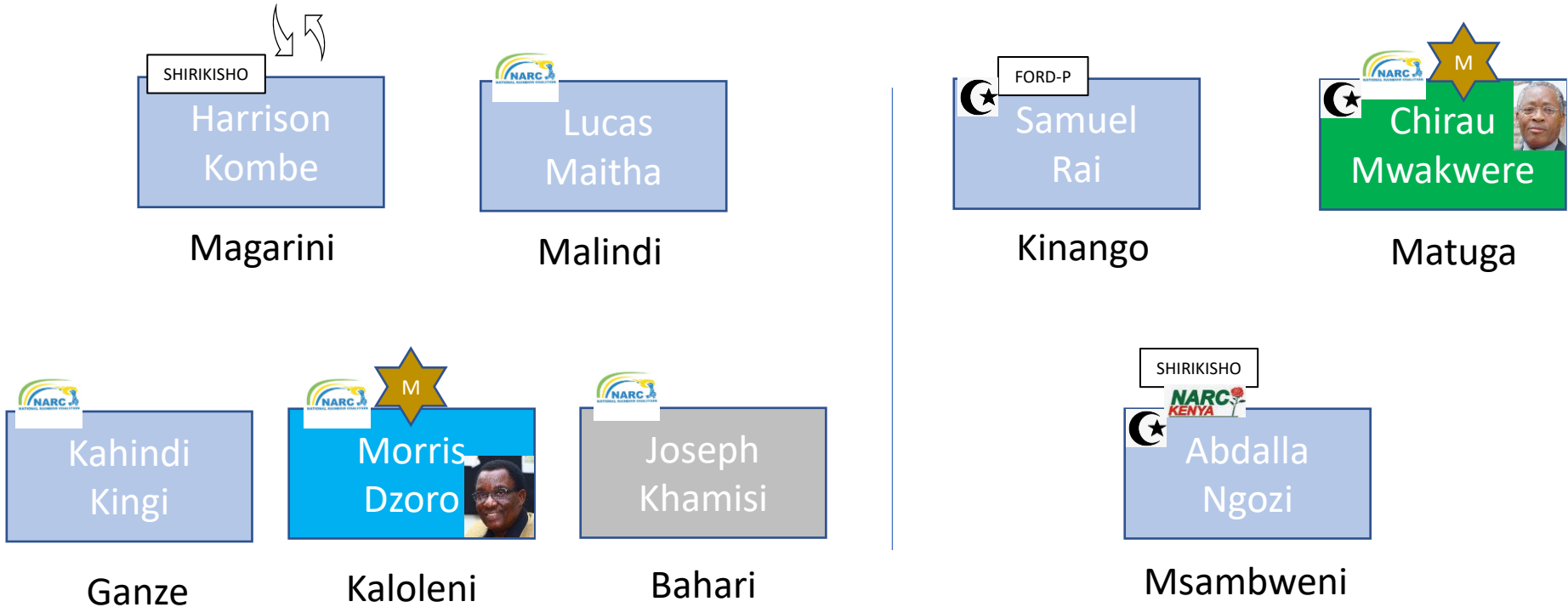


Moi retires and his chosen successor Uhuru Kenyatta is defeated for the presidency by Kibaki. In the Mijikenda, it is a bloodbath for KANU and they lose every seat in both presidency and parliament apart from Kinango (where Kenyatta wins the presidency narrowly). Joseph Khamisi (son of ex-Legco Member Francis, of freed slave descent) is elected in Bahari, while ex-Ambassador Chirau Mwakwere wins for the first time in Matuga and six months later is appointed as the region's sole Minister in the Kibaki government.



Mijikenda Political History

2005-7: Second Coalition Government

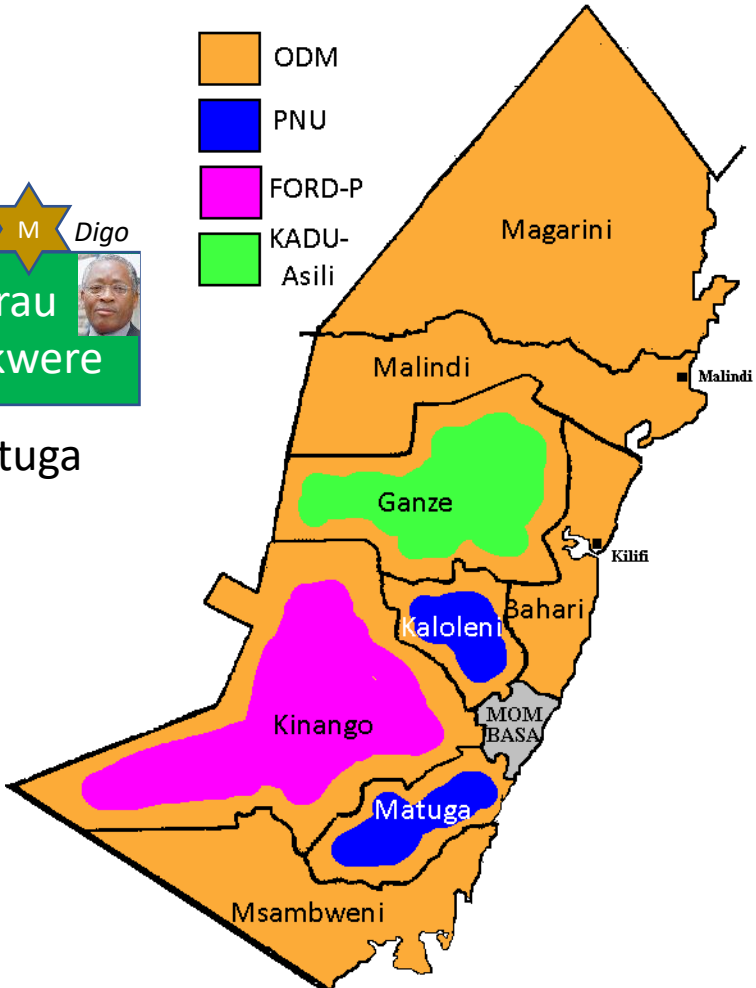
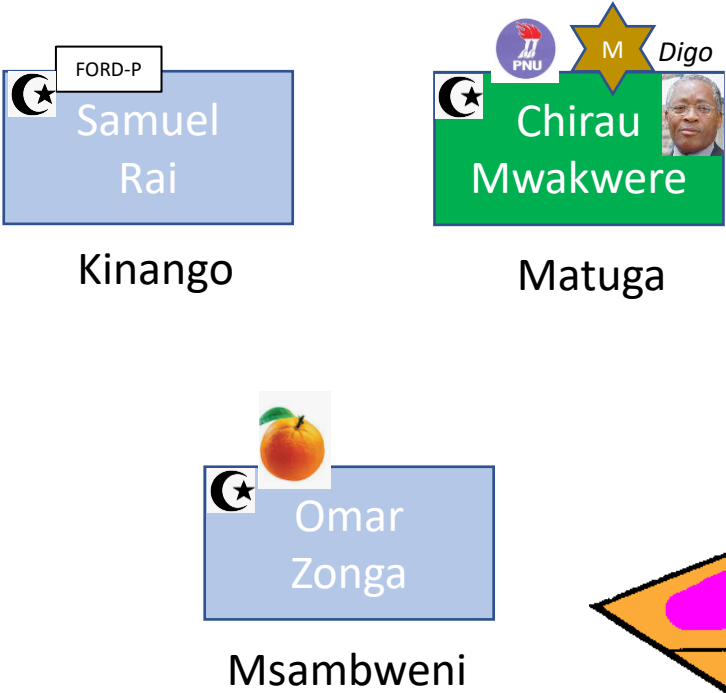
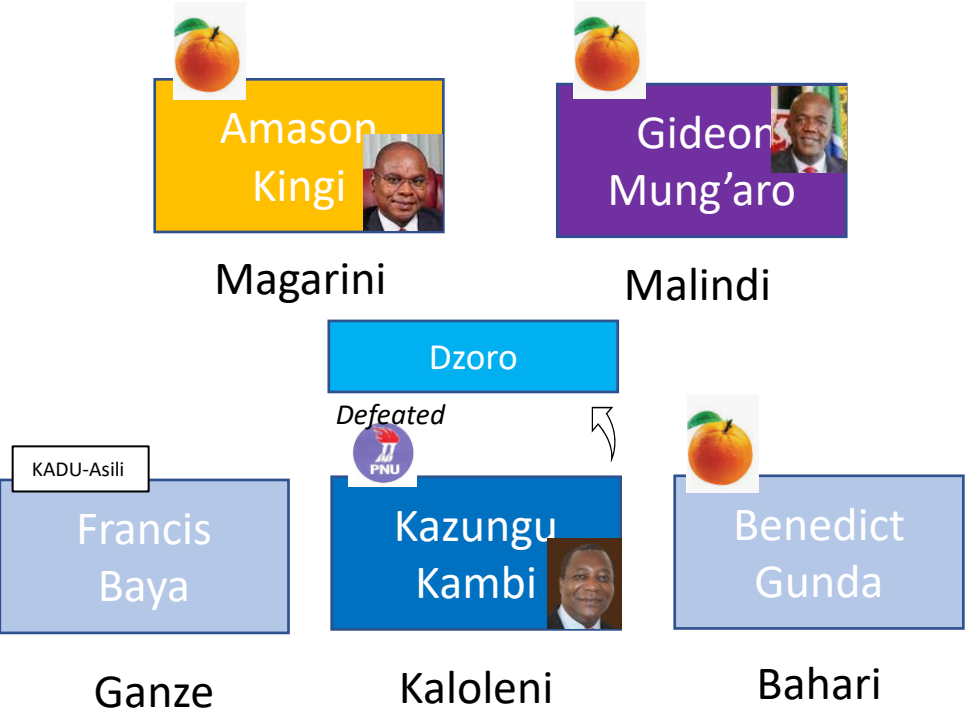


In Feb 2005, before the referendum, Morris Dzoro also becomes a minister. In the November 2005 Banana-Orange referendum, the Mijikenda vote decisively (6-1) no, but most MPs stay in NARC. No new appointments in the December second coalition government, but Mwakwere remains loyal. In 2006, Kombe's election is nullified but he wins the resulting by-election. Ngozi defects to "Kibaki-friendly" NARC-Kenya in 2006 and Shirikisho in 2007



Mijikenda Political History

2007: General Election and Subsequent Chaos



ODM-PNU battle nationwide. In the rural Mijikenda, ODM wins against a scattered, disorganised and unpopular incumbent team. Odinga wins every seat for the presidency 2-1. In parliament, ODM wins 4 to PNU's 2. Mwakwere returns by the skin of his teeth with 29% of the vote in Matuga. Nonetheless, Kibaki is sworn in as President, triggering nationwide violence. Mwakwere remains minister in the short partial government of Jan-April 2008.



Mijikenda Political History

2008: Grand Coalition



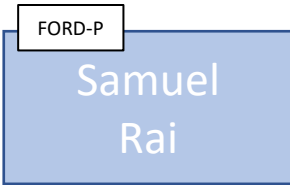
Amason
Kingi

Magarini



Gideon
Mung'aro

Malindi



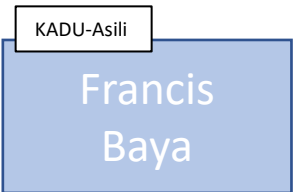
Samuel
Rai

Kinango



Chirau
Mwakwere

Matuga



Francis
Baya

Ganze



Kazungu
Kambi

Kaloleni



Benedict
Gunda

Bahari



Omar
Zonga

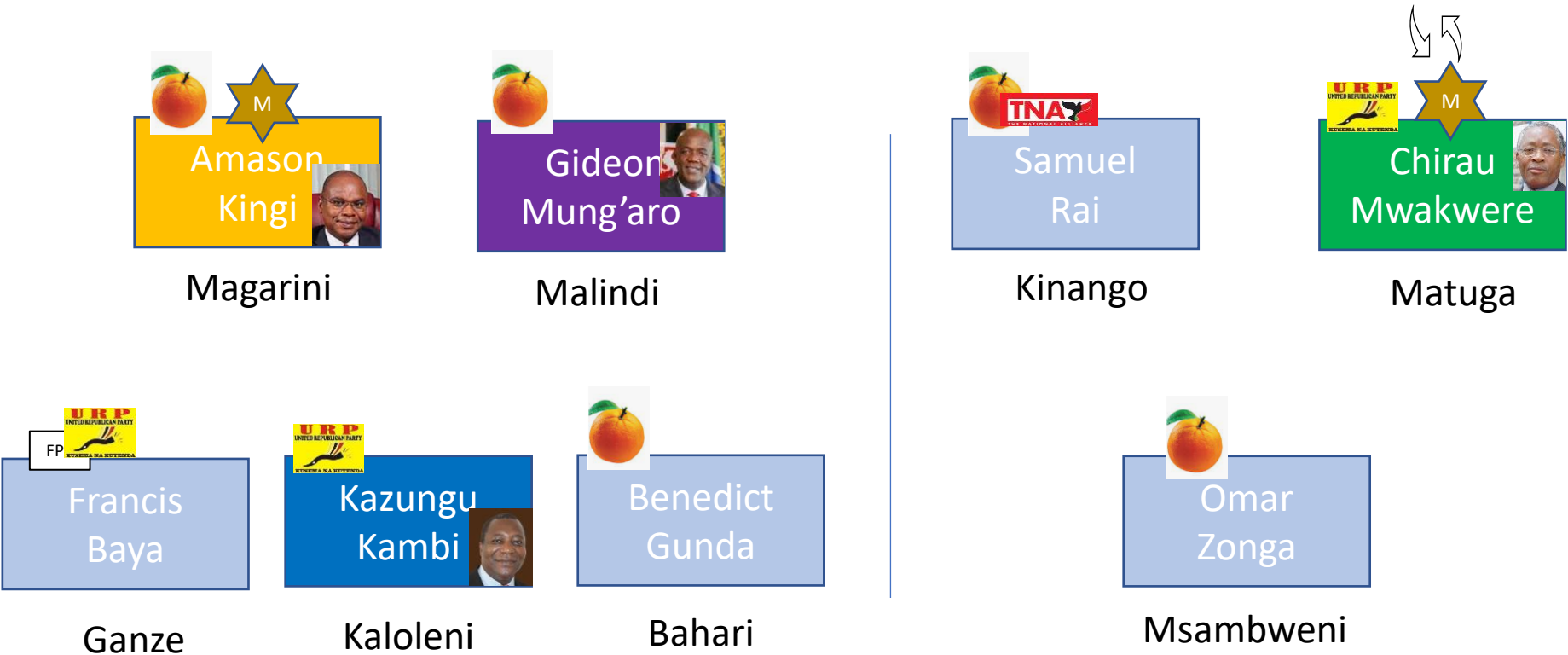
Msambweni

In the grand coalition (PNU-ODM-ODM-K), Kingi becomes ODM's Mijikenda minister, while Mwakwere remains for PNU.



Mijikenda Political History

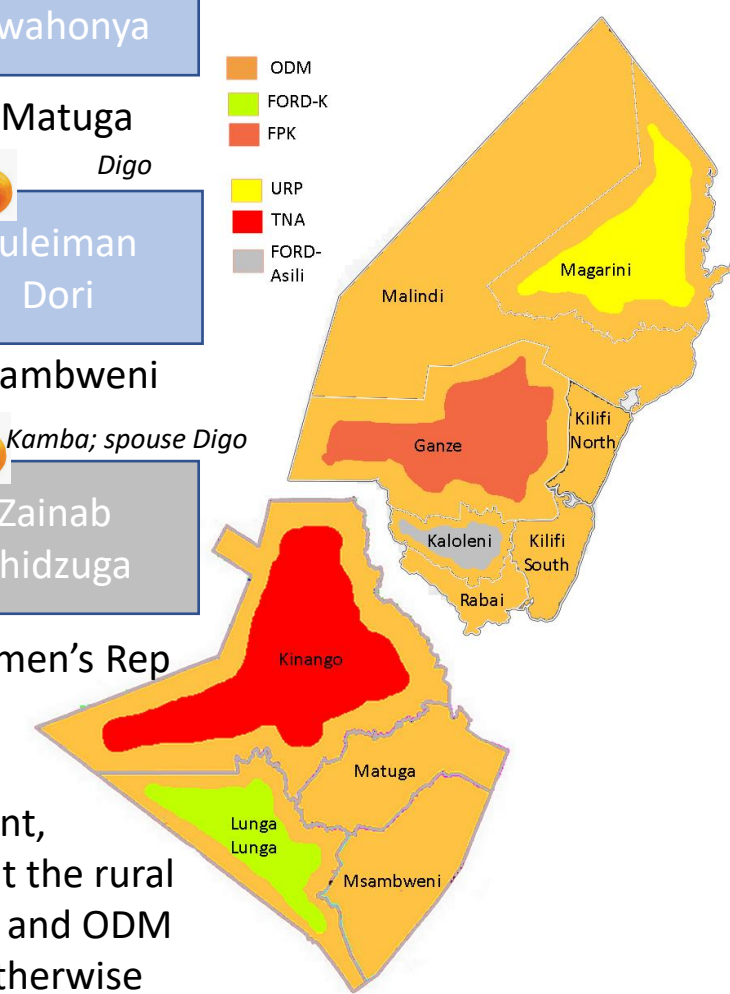
2009-12



With the new constitution gradually coming in effect, the coalition stumbles on, as do the ICC cases against Kenyatta and Ruto. Kenyatta is building his National Alliance (TNA) and Ruto his URP under the umbrella of the Jubilee Alliance. In December 2012, in a stunning piece of political theatre, Uhuru concedes leadership of a new combined alliance to Mudavadi, then abrogates the deal and goes forward with Ruto as his deputy. Meanwhile, Mwakwere's election is nullified in 2010 but he is reelected for PNU and reappointed minister. In 2012, he defects to Ruto's URP, as does Kambi. Rai defects to ODM and then TNA, and Baya to the Federal Party and then URP. The ODM team stay loyal.

<div>URP</div> <div>Giriama</div> <div>Harrison Kombe</div>	<div>Giriama</div> <div>Daniel Kazungu</div>	<div>Giriama</div> <div>Gideon Mung'aro</div>	<div>?</div> <div>Salim Idd</div>	<div>Duruma</div> <div>Samuel Rai</div>	<div>Digo</div> <div>Hassan Mwahonya</div>
<div>Magarini</div> <div>FPK</div> <div>Peter Shehe</div>	<div>Malindi</div> <div>KADU-Asili</div> <div>Gunga Chea</div>	<div>Kilifi North</div> <div>Rabai</div> <div>William Mwamkale</div>	<div>Kilifi South</div>	<div>Kinango</div> <div>Digo</div> <div>Khatib Mwashetani</div>	<div>Matuga</div> <div>Digo</div> <div>Suleiman Dori</div>
<div>Ganze</div> <div>Amason Kingi</div>	<div>Kaloleni</div> <div>Stewart Madzayo</div>	<div>Rabai</div> <div>Aisha Jumwa</div>	<div>Duruma</div> <div>Salim Mvurya</div>	<div>Lunga Lunga</div> <div>Mwakwere</div> <div>Boy Juma Boy</div>	<div>Msambweni</div> <div>Kamba; spouse Digo</div> <div>Zainab Chidzuga</div>
Governor	Senator	Women's Rep	Governor	Senator	Women's Rep

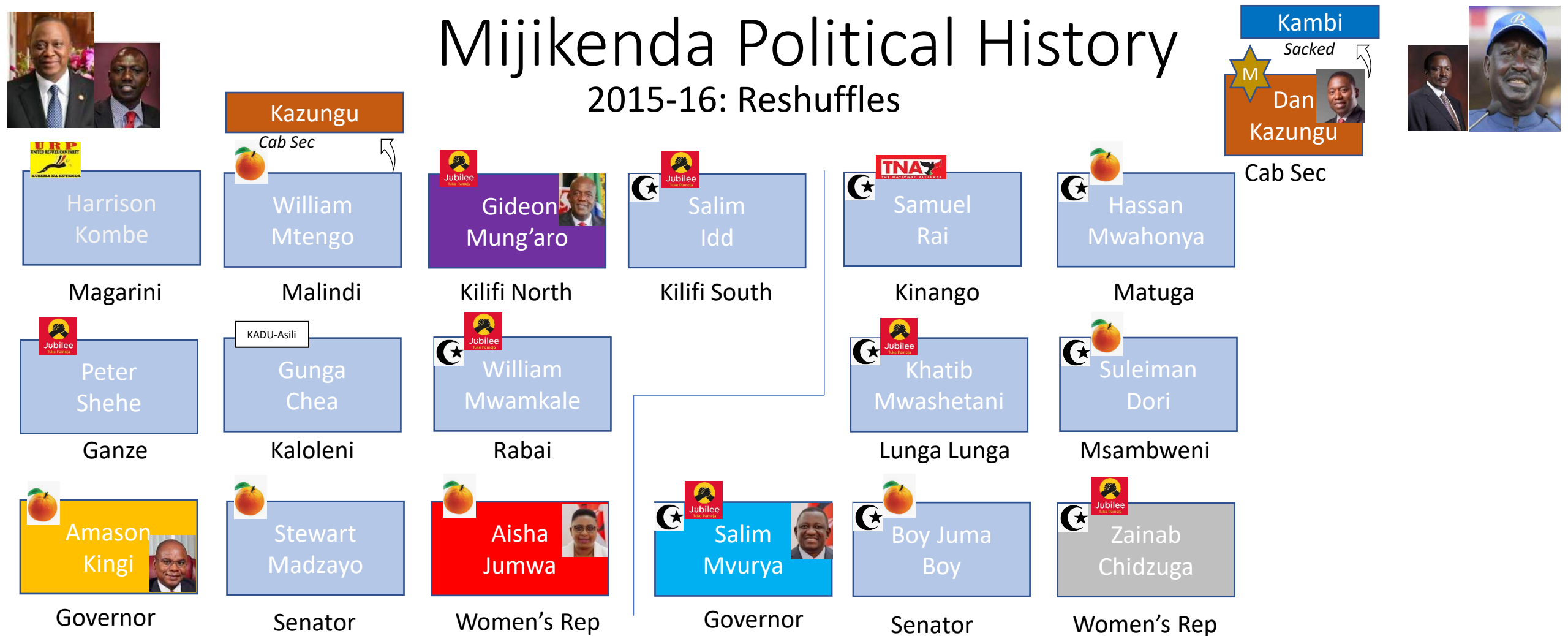
- ODM
- FORD-K
- FPK
- URP
- TNA
- FORD-Asili



New constitution, new boundaries (and two new seats for Kilifi and one for Kwale), bicameral parliament, Governors. Ministers (Cabinet Secretaries) no longer MPs. TNA and URP in alliance win the election, but the rural Mijikenda vote CORD (ODM + Wiper + FORD-K + FPK). Odinga (ODM) wins every seat in the presidency and ODM wins every county post. Rai holds Kinango for TNA and newcomer Kombe wins Magarini for URP, but otherwise all MPs are pro-CORD. In the new government, URP loser Kambi unexpected becomes a Cabinet Secretary.

Mijikenda Political History

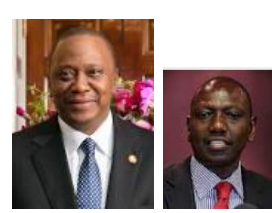
2015-16: Reshuffles




















In 2015, Kambi is suspended then sacked over corruption allegations. He is replaced (curiously) by ODM MP for Malindi Kazungu, who is now in in alliance with Gideon Mung'aro as an anti-Raila team in ODM. ODM however wins back the seat in the resulting 2016 By-election. Mvurya, Mung'aro, Shehe, Idd, Mwamkale, Mwashetani and Chidzuga all unofficially but publicly defect to join Kenyatta and Ruto's new party the Jubilee Alliance during 2016. While lured by material inducements, and far from certain of re-election, cracks appear in ODM's control of the region.

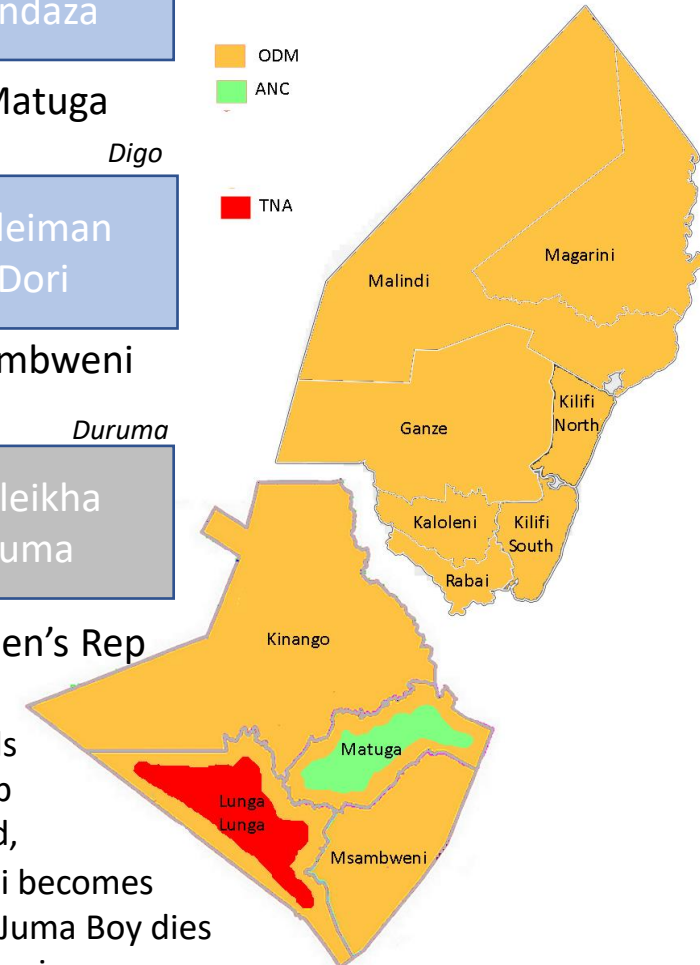
Mijikenda Political History

2017: Gen Elections

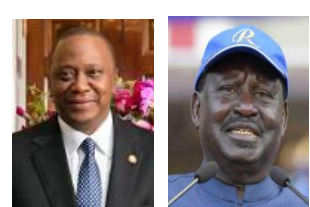


 <i>Giriama</i> Michael Kingi Magarini	 Aisha Jumwa Malindi	 Owen Baya Kilifi North	 Ken Chonga Kiti Kilifi South	 <i>Duruma</i> Benjamin Tayari Kinango	 <i>Digo</i> Kassim Tandaza Matuga
 <i>Giriama</i> Teddy Mwambire Ganze	 Paul Katana Kaloleni	 William Mwamkale Rabai		 <i>Digo</i> Khatib Mwashetani Lunga Lunga	 <i>Digo</i> Suleiman Dori Msambweni
 Mung'aro <i>Giriama</i> Amason Kingi Governor	 <i>Chonyi</i> Stewart Madzayo Senator	 <i>Kauma</i> Gertrude Mwanyanje Women's Rep	 <i>Duruma</i> Salim Mvurya Governor	 <i>Digo</i> Issa Juma Boy Senator	 <i>Duruma</i> Zuleikha Juma Women's Rep

 ODM
 ANC
 TNA

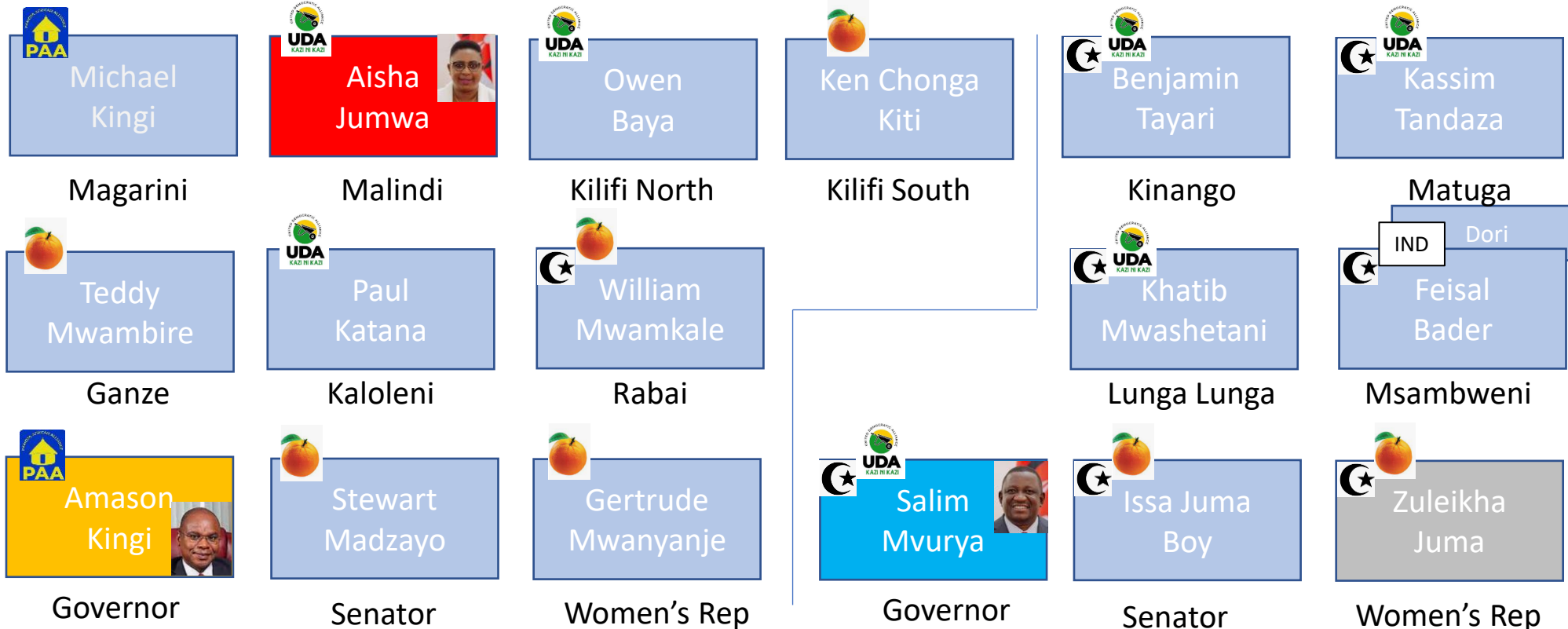


Wiper rejoins ODM in NASA but loses to the Jubilee Alliance. Odinga (ODM) again wins every seat in the presidential polls and ODM still dominates the two counties. On a personal vote, Mvurya backs the trend and wins the Kwale Governorship for Jubilee. In Parliament, ODM again triumphs, and most of the Jubilee defectors apart from Mwashetani are repudiated, with a new ODM team coming in. Jumwa moves from Women Rep to constituency MP, a rare achievement. Michael Kingi becomes ODM MP for Magarini, alongside his brother as Governor. Newcomer Tandaza wins Matuga for NASA-member ANC. Boy Juma Boy dies and is replaced as senator by his brother. In Kenyatta's troubled second term, there are no Cabinet Secretaries from the region.



Mijikenda Political History

2018-22: The Handshake and the Divorce



With Ruto increasingly out of favour and the handshake between Odinga and Kenyatta the driver of political events, the situation becomes tough for the Ruto team everywhere. Nonetheless he retains supporters, and when 2021 he sets up UDA as the vehicle of choice for his presidential bid, several ODM MPs back him (though without officially triggering a by-election) and the Jubilee leadership in the region proves mostly for Ruto (including governor Mvurya). In 2020, Dori dies and the resulting by election is a win for Ruto as ally Bader (ind) beats the ODM candidate. In May 2022, Kingi leaves the pro-Odinga Azimio alliance and brings his new Pamoja African Alliance (a regional party) into Ruto's Kenya Kwanza alliance. Although support ebbs and flows, and Odinga remains the most popular presidential candidates, half the Mijikenda political leadership back Ruto at one point or other.

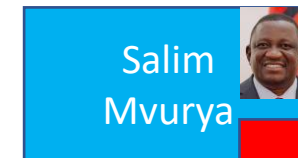


Mijikenda Political History

August 2022: Ruto's Revenge



Amason Kingi
Speaker of Senate



Cab Secs



Aisha Jumwa



Magarini



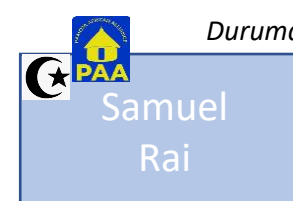
Malindi



Kilifi North



Kilifi South



Kinango



Matuga



Ganze



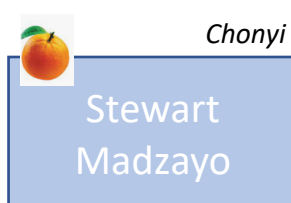
Kaloleni



Rabai



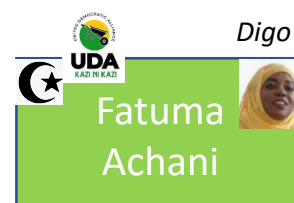
Governor



Senator



Women's Rep



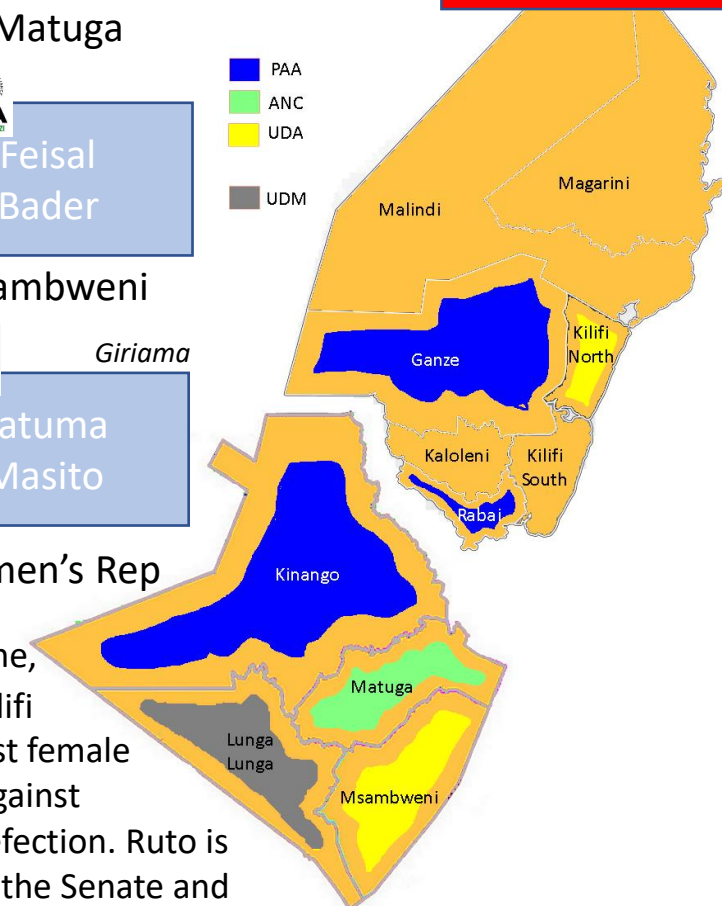
Governor



Senator



Women's Rep



Odinga loses narrowly to Ruto nationwide, but in Kilifi and Kwale he wins every seat in the presidency for the fourth time, 3-1 overall. Ruto has support in the Mijikenda but he is clearly the underdog. Mung'aro (now back in ODM) wins the Kilifi governorship against Jumwa but UDA holds Kwale through Fatuma Achani, previously Mvurya's deputy, the region's first female Governor. Madzayo and Issa Boy return. In the House, the situation is confused as UDA and PAA candidates compete against each other. ODM win 4, PAA 3, UDA 2, and ANC and UDM 1 each, giving Kenya Kwanza 7 of 11 seats after the UDM's defection. Ruto is less popular than his regional allies. In Ruto's new government, Mvurya becomes Mining CS, Kingi becomes Speaker of the Senate and Mvurya is joined by defeated gubernatorial candidate Jumwa as CS.