


THE COUNCIL



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

MONTHLY

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LAUNCH OF THE COMPENDIUM OF COUNTY INNOVATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES ON COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Council of Governors with the support of the World Bank and UNDP on 28th February, 2022, launched the Compendium of County Innovations and Best Practices on COVID-19 Response at the Kempinski Hotel in Nairobi.

In his opening remarks, Council of Governors Chairman H.E Martin Wambora, commended the collaboration between the Council, the World Bank and UNDP in the birth of the Compendium.

According to H.E Wambora, the last two years have pushed local economies towards re-thinking their strategic interests and prioritizing interventions that build resilience and sustainability in service delivery. County Governments have had to think on their feet, and generate solutions to manage the spread of COVID-19 and the impacts of the virus on populations.

“We have collectively increased isolation beds; installed additional functional PSA Oxygen plants; and procured more oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators. We have also connected more than 3,000 beds to oxygen,” he said highlighting achievements by Counties.

Chairperson of the Devolution Donor Working Group H.E Ole Thonke, lauded the Compendium as an innovative way of showcasing successes in Devolution since its inception.

“And in recognition that we are in a digital world, both private and public sectors must invest in knowledge management so that the success stories of service delivery can be replicated in future.”

On his part, Nyandarua Governor H.E Francis Kimemia stated that he was impressed with what Maarifa Center, our knowledge hub, put together in the booklet.

“As devolution progresses, it is important that we document the steps and the milestones made so that the knowledge garnered along the way can be utilized by the present and future generations. Indeed, this Compendium provides a glance into the County COVID-19 journey”, he noted.

Reading the remarks on behalf of CoG Health Committee Chairperson, H.E Anyang' Nyong'o, Kisumu Deputy Governor H.E Mathews Owili said the compendium will be useful to both levels of government, Development partners, private sector, civil society organizations, researchers and students.

“Since government regimes change with every election, it is undeniable that knowledge should be well retained and seamlessly transferred to those who take over in order to maintain stability and continuity in the event of a transition,” he said.

According to Council of Governors CEO Ms. Mary Mwiti, with the delivery of the compendium, there should be room for enhanced collaboration especially in activities of common interest and further partnering in documentation of best practices in other sectors.

The compendium had a compilation of innovative approaches undertaken by 13 County Governments namely Homabay, Nyeri, Kericho, Machakos, Kitui, Migori, Kajiado, Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Makueni, Kisumu and Lamu, in their efforts to prevent, manage and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.



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HIGH LEVEL LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND COUNTY ATTORNEYS CONSULTATIVE FORUM

The Council of Governors Legal, Constitutional Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Committee; the County Attorneys; the Senate; National Assembly and the County Assemblies Forum held a two-day high-level consultative meeting from the 24th -25th February, 2021 at the Three Steers Hotel in Meru County to reflect on the Devolution agenda that included its achievements and challenges.

Under the theme “defining the devolution agenda, 2022 and beyond”, the forum interrogated the institutional, policy and legislative barriers that hinder effective implementation of devolution with a view of coming up with strategies to address the challenges and strengthen devolution.

In his opening remarks, CoG Chairperson H.E Martin Wambora commended the County Attorneys for their dedication and commitment in ensuring that Counties are shielded against laws, cases and policies that are against Devolution.

“I would like to begin by congratulating the County Attorneys sworn in after the assent of the Office of the County Attorneys Act in 2020. Congratulations! Second, the work that you do in ensuring protection of devolution especially from laws and cases that attempt to or claw back on devolution is very important. Your work does not go unnoticed and the Council remains grateful for your support”, said Wambora.

Speaker of the Senate Rt. Hon. Kenneth Lusaka, who was also the Chief Guest, on his part, assured the Council and the County Attorneys of his commitment as well as that of the Senate in ensuring the success of the Devolved system of Governance.

“We are holding our positions in various capacities in order to ensure the agenda of devolution becomes a success. We must therefore work hard knowing that history will judge us harshly if devolution will not work to the advantage of the people of Kenya,” said Lusaka.

In addition, Lusaka assured Governors that the Sh42 billion conditional grant for the county will be disbursed to the County treasuries to help the Governors complete the unfinished projects before the August general election.

Chairperson of the County Assemblies Forum Hon. Ndegwa Wahome encouraged the County Attorneys to continue with their role of protecting devolution which includes advising respective Governors on legal matters so as to avoid wasting resources on unnecessary litigations.

CoG Chairperson of the legal and constitutional affairs committee H.E Kiraitu Murungi decried the delay in disbursement of finances to the Counties by the National Treasury, adding that Counties are yet to receive their allocation for the months of January and February which reflects as 60 percent of all the challenges that face devolution.

“As Counties, the recurrent delay in disbursement of funds from the National Treasury now contributes to 60 percent of the burden we face every financial year. I am therefore calling upon Counties to be independent by exploiting other sources of revenue for development other than the national government’s 15 percent share”, said Kiraitu.

Kiraitu further called on all presidential candidates to make devolution a center of their campaign talks for it is through devolution that the furthest part of Kenya will be developed and called upon fellow governors to only support presidential

candidates who will assure them of pushing the agenda of the 35 percent of national revenue for the Counties.

Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Justin Muturi, who officiated the closing of the forum, reiterated Article 109 of the Constitution that mandates the National Assembly considers all laws including legislation which concerns County Governments.

“I am calling upon all Members of Parliament, let us all do our part and ensure that in accordance with the principles of Devolved Government in terms of Article 175 of the Constitution, County Governments have reliable sources of revenue to enable them to govern and deliver services effectively”, said Muturi.



MOMBASA COUNTY HOSTS INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CONFERENCE AMIDST ROLLOUT OF THE UHC ACROSS THE 47 COUNTIES

President Uhuru Kenyatta, on 7th February 2022, officially launched the Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC) programme aimed at achieving equitable, accessible, affordable and quality health services for all Kenyans.

Speaking in Port Reitz Hospital grounds – Mombasa County after launching the programme, the President highlighted significant strides made towards advancing the UHC, noting the pivotal role it plays in transforming Kenya's healthcare systems and enabling every citizen enjoy their constitutional right to the highest attainable standards of health.

As one of the Big Four strategic pillars, the UHC will see an overhaul of the health sector with major policy and legislative reforms expected to facilitate the successful implementation of the healthcare plan.

“Under this pillar, we seek to eradicate the poverty of dignity and to transition Kenya into an era where no Kenyan should be forced to choose between medical bills and other essential needs,” stated the President.

These remarks came even as the President presided over the International Health conference, a first of its kind, held at Sarova White Sands hotel in Mombasa County from 7th February to 9th February 2022 to deliberate on harmonization of the curriculum and training of medics in the country. The three-day conference themed ‘Repositioning today's health workforce for the future’ brought together top officials in the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Council of Governors (CoG), Regional Governments from over 99 countries, representatives from the National Hospital Insurance Fund, development partners including the World Health organization (WHO), USAID and DANIDA, private sector and faith-based organizations.

Chairman of the CoG Health Committee H.E Prof Anyang' Nyong'o reiterated County Governments' commitment to realization of the national agenda on healthcare stating that his County was among the pioneer beneficiaries of the UHC programme alongside Nyeri, Machakos and Isiolo counties.

“Health insurance is an integral part of UHC as it will ensure that Kenyans receive quality, promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitation health services without suffering financial hardship,” noted Nyong'o.

He further acknowledged County Governments' success in building the capacity of their health workforce and bridging the equity gap in access to health services across the country while emphasizing on the need for community ownership of the UHC program to ensure sustainability.

The adverse socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and protracted delays in disbursement of funds by the National Treasury amid dwindling donor support have hampered effective service delivery at the Counties.

CoG Chairman H.E Martin Wambora called for holistic interventions and innovative financing mechanisms by both tiers of government to boost domestic resource mobilization for the health sector and enable Counties progressively prioritize resource allocation to key aspects of healthcare.

“Attainment of UHC will not be possible if we continue relying on external borrowing and grants, even though those sources may support us initially, they are not sustainable,” added Wambora while calling for financial autonomy of public county health facilities to allow ring-fencing of funds for reinvestment in these facilities and better service delivery.

The Health Workers Conference also featured exhibitions from local, regional and international corporations, medical institutions, and trainers, providing an opportunity for innovators to showcase emerging trends in the health sector.

Counties should intensify communication and advocacy efforts to boost enrollment of members of the public to NHIF and create public awareness about the ongoing reforms in the health sector. National and County Governments should further collaborate and cooperate to enact requisite legislation to ensure regulation of healthcare providers, assurance of quality care and regulation of health commodities and technologies to control health care costs.

The journey towards attaining UHC and revolutionizing Kenya's healthcare systems may not be devoid of challenges. However, through the collaboration, cooperation, consultation and combined efforts of all actors in the health sector, we will build robust and resilient health systems in the country and deliver on the promise of UHC.



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Council of Governors- Kenya

INVESTMENT INTO THE BLUE ECONOMY SECTOR A KEY CONTRIBUTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN KENYA

The Blue economy sector is fast rising as one of the key contributors to a nation's Gross Domestic Product, nutrition and food security. Following the first ever international Blue economy conference held in November 2018, Kenya prioritized the sustainable utilization of its untapped maritime resources as an enabler of the Vision 2030 economic blueprint. Inland and offshore waters provide immense socio-economic benefits to both communities and Counties, more so those in the Coastal and Lake Region Economic Blocs. In view of the need to put in place support mechanisms to enable County Governments implement resolutions arising from the aforementioned conference and the National Agenda on Blue economy, the Council of Governors established the Blue economy committee.

Speaking during a consultative meeting with County directors of fisheries and Blue economy held on 21st February, 2022, Chairperson, Council of Governors Blue Economy Committee H.E Fahim Twaha, noted that Blue economy is vital to attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals on poverty alleviation, food security, affordable and clean energy and climate action.

"It is imperative that both National and County Governments work together to achieve these goals. It is also my hope that County Governments will be given a platform to fully participate in the upcoming UN Ocean Conference scheduled for June 2022 in Lisbon, in order to learn and share on the role that sub- national governments play in the achievement of a sustainable Blue economy", he said.

The consultative forum sought to deliberate on the roles and opportunities for County and National Governments in the Blue economy agenda and deliberate on the requisite policy and regulatory framework to drive the sector. There is need for extensive collaboration and consultations among stakeholders to ensure development of comprehensive regulatory frameworks.

County Directors decried lack of involvement in formulation of the regulations despite their implementation at the County level, among a myriad of other challenges derailing the sector. Speaking on behalf of the Principal Secretary, State Department for Fisheries, Aquaculture & the Blue Economy, Ms. Susan Atieno reaffirmed National Government's commitment to strengthening governance and management of the Blue Economy sector.

"Cooperation is key in the successful implementation of projects and activities such as the Eco-fish programme and the Aquaculture Business Development initiative, aimed at developing the Blue economy sector", she added. It was further resolved that County Directors of Blue economy nominate members to ensure adequate representation of Counties in regional, national and international fora.

Anchored on the key pillars of economic development, environmental sustainability, and equity, Blue economy encompasses different sectors namely; Fisheries, Maritime Transport, Maritime Tourism, Maritime Mining, Maritime Energy and Maritime Biotechnology. Each of these sectors requires specialized interventions and investments in order to harness their full potential.

Dr. Stephen Mbithi, Blue Economy Committee at the Executive Office of the President called for development of initiatives that are tailored to suit the needs of individual sectors while urging the youth to enroll in courses and training on the Blue economy sector to provide the much needed specialized manpower.

"Sport-fishing, solar, wind, and wave energy technologies, pharmaceuticals, and nutraceuticals are some of the opportunities in the National Blue Economy Agenda that we can maximize on to propel the sector to greater heights," stated Dr. Mbithi.

While Kenya is making steady progress towards reaping the immense economic benefits presented by the blue economy sector, both private and public sector stakeholders should invest more resources and leverage on their combined efforts to create an enabling environment for the blue economy sector to thrive.



COUNTIES AGREE TO IMPLEMENT ECDE SCHEMES OF SERVICE AS SENATE MEETS GOVERNORS

Counties have agreed to implement the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) schemes of service for teachers. This is after the Senate Standing Committee and CoG held a consultative meeting at Windsor hotel on Friday, 11th February 2022 to deliberate on: ECDE policies; resource mobilization for the ECDE sector; training and remuneration structure for ECDE teachers among other pertinent issues in the sector. In attendance was the Chairman, Council of Governors Education Committee H.E. Mutahi Kahiga, Ministry of Education, Ministry of National Treasury and Planning, the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC), Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and honorable Senators from the Senate Standing Committee on Education.

ECDE is an important stage for every child. Indeed, ECDE teachers play an integral role in laying down the foundational knowledge and skills that shape a child's future. H.E Mutahi Kahiga, urged all stakeholders to pay keen attention to the plight of ECDE teachers noting the immense contributions they make to the lives of the younger generation.

"We cannot understand the importance of empowering ECDE educators unless we take a deeper look at the work they do, what they get for doing that work, and the resources they are provided with to do the work," implored Governor Kahiga.

Sen. (Dr.) Milgo Alice Chepkorir, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Education further highlighted that most ECDE teachers have to teach in overcrowded classrooms, utilize the few outdated resources available and take care of the children entrusted to them including those living with disabilities.

The CoG, TSC, and Ministry of Education developed the scheme of service for ECDE teachers back in 2018. So far, Meru, Nairobi, Embu, Machakos, Garissa, Bungoma, Samburu, and Kajiado Counties have fully implemented the scheme of service. Wajir, Busia, Bomet, Turkana, Lamu, Kisii, Mandera, Nakuru, Mombasa, Isiolo, Kiambu, Nyeri, Kwale, Uasin Gishu, Kisumu, and Kilifi Counties are finalizing the onboarding of the ECDE teachers onto the scheme of service while the remaining Counties are at different stages of implementing the same.

The full implementation of the scheme of service in all Counties requires a total annual expenditure of Ksh 12,910,143,487. 80, which represents a 16% increase in the total budget allocated to Counties for education. Currently, ECDE teachers are employed and remunerated under different terms of service with the highest paid ECDE teacher in a public school earning up to sh. 43,800 per month while the lowest-paid teacher gets sh. 7,500 monthly. In other instances, some ECDE teachers receive a stipend instead of a salary yet the Regulation of Wages (General) (Amendment) Order, 2018 dictates that those with Certificate, diploma and graduate qualifications should receive a monthly remuneration ranging between Ksh 14,000.00 and Ksh 42,000.00 across all cadres.

There is need for urgent interventions to address the glaring disparities in monthly wages and ensure harmonized remuneration of all ECDE teachers. County Governments are committed to working with the TSC in this regard while also advocating for increased budgetary allocation in the 2022/2023 FY to facilitate implementation of the scheme of service.

The CoG further emphasized on the need for capitation grants to improve services at County ECDE centers to enable County Governments effectively engage teachers on the terms prescribed on the scheme of service.

This proposed grant will be anchored on 9 key tenets including: Learning Resources; Teacher Guides; Teaching & Learning Aids; Stationery (whiteboards & registers); Environment & Sanitation; Science and Applied Technology; ICT Infrastructure & Maintenance; Morning Meals and Staff & Maintenance.

Chief Administrative Secretary at the Ministry of National Treasury and Planning Hon. Eric Simiyu Wafukho affirmed Treasury's commitment to support Counties improve the state of ECDE in the country.

"I urge all Counties to devise innovative ways of boosting domestic financing for ECDE and use the available funds more efficiently, effectively and equitably," he said.

Despite ECDE being one of the most important levers for accelerating the attainment of Education For All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the sector has often been sidelined owing to the lack of a comprehensive national ECDE policy framework. All local and international stakeholders should collaborate and cooperate to ensure the successful implementation and streamlining of ECDE programmes across the 47 Counties.



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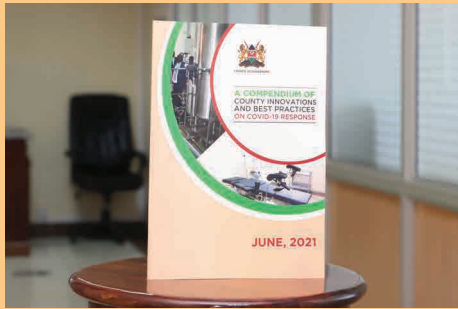


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KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH



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48 GOVERNMENTS,
1 NATION



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