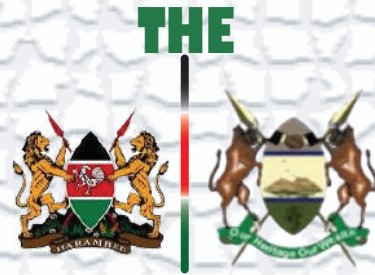


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Office Of The Controller Of Budget In Monitoring And Evaluation Exercise Of Bungoma County

By Erick Ngobilo

The Office of the Controller of Budget (OCoB) is currently undertaking a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mission in Bungoma County. The visit aims to assess the implementation status of various projects and evaluate compliance with statutory financial and operational laws.

Led by Mr. Newton Kilinga, the Head of Monitoring and Evaluation at OCoB, the delegation paid a courtesy call to the Speaker of the County Assembly, Hon. Emmanuel Situma, and the Clerk of the County Assembly, Mr. Charles Wafula. The OCoB team also included Mr. Turanta Ole Koriata (County Budget Controller for Bungoma), Mr. Edwin Kimaro, and Ms. Pheny Kwamboka, both from the Monitoring and Evaluation Department.

During the meeting, Speaker Situma and Clerk Wafula assured the OCoB team of their full cooperation and pledged to provide all

necessary documentation and information to support the exercise.

One of the key areas of interest for the OCoB team is the status of development projects undertaken by the County Assembly, particularly the ongoing construction of the new Assembly Chamber. The delegation was informed that the project is currently 44% complete and is expected to be finalized by March next year.

The OCoB also inquired about the implementation of the policy requiring all staff salaries to be processed through the official payroll system. The Clerk confirmed that while all staff on the Assembly's main payroll are compliant, 90 partisan staff members employed in Ward offices by Members of the County Assembly (MCAs) are still being paid manually. However, he assured the team that plans are in place to onboard them onto the

payroll system in the next financial year. He also noted that all MCAs have personal numbers used to process their salaries through the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Database (IPPD).

On the issue of staff and Members' welfare, the team examined the operations of the County Assembly's Car Loan and Mortgage Funds. The Clerk reported that the funds are running smoothly and revealed plans to merge the employee Car Loan and Mortgage schemes into a single fund. He added that the new regulations for this merger are ready and will be forwarded to the State Law Office for review before implementation.

The OCoB team further informed the Assembly leadership that the legislation operationalizing the Disability Fund and the Youth Fund had lapsed. They urged the County Assembly to conduct a review of all such laws and prioritize re-en-

actment where necessary.

In their response, both the Speaker and Clerk raised concerns about how the allocation of funds to County Assemblies is handled. They criticized the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) for setting ceilings without consulting County Assemblies, leading to unequal and often unfair distribution of funds. The Clerk also emphasized the need for the standardization of Exchequer requests across all counties, particularly for routine and common expenditures.

"It is unacceptable that delegates from different counties attending the same events, like the CASA games, receive varying allowances and days of facilitation. This creates unnecessary pressure on our offices and should be standardized," the Clerk remarked.

The OCoB team is also engaging with the County Executive to assess the implementation of the Intergovernmental Fiscal Framework (IFF) Act, and to ensure that all county legislation aligns with national financial management laws. Key areas under review include compliance with legal banking arrangements concerning accounts held in commercial banks, procurement procedures for medical supplies, and the implementation status of projects funded under the Equalization Fund.

The Monitoring and Evaluation exercise will continue for several days, covering both the County Executive and County Assembly departments.



Officers from the office of the Controller of Budget during a visit to the County Assembly. They paid a courtesy call to the Hon. Speaker and the Clerk and toured the ongoing construction of the new chambers

County Assembly Committees Scrutinize Implementation Of 2022-2023 Resolutions

By Rosemary Wachiye | Marsh Misiko

Bungoma County Assembly committees conducted comprehensive reviews of the Executive department's performance, focusing on the implementation status of House resolutions passed during 2022-2023. The Committee proceedings, conducted under County Assembly Standing Order No. 205(2), revealed progress and ongoing challenges across key County government projects.

The Committee on Tourism, Environment, Water and Natural Resources, chaired by Hon. Edwin Opwora, examined the implementation of waste management recommendations from the 2023 county report. Of particular concern was the committee's previous directive for regular fumigation of the county dumpsite and surrounding neighborhoods.

"While the fumigation program is technically ongoing through our contracted cleaning services provider, irregular exchequer disbursements have disrupted the recommended schedule," reported the CEC, Dr. Andrew Wamalwa.

A major point of contention was the stalled Ksh. 31 million prime-

ter wall project at the central dumpsite. The committee learned that despite completing the gate and weighbridge components, construction has halted due to community opposition regarding the planned incinerator installation.

The committee formally acknowledged the successful completion of access road improvements to the dumpsite while advocating for modernized waste management approaches, including implementing waste segregation systems, establishing recycling programs for plastics and glass, constructing incinerator facilities for non-recyclable materials, and devolving waste management facilities across all Sub-Counties.

The Department reported ongoing implementation of both KOICA I and KOICA II water projects, with public participation for Phase II having concluded two weeks prior. According to departmental representatives, the County Government will fund 61.8% of project costs through climate change initiative funds, with development partners covering the remainder.

County Assembly Committee on

Trade, Energy and Industrialization, chaired by Hon. Kikechi MCA for Mbakolo Ward, interrogated officials from the County Executive Department of Trade, Energy and Industrialization. The session aimed to shed light on the status of several key development and service delivery areas within the County.

The team was led by the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Trade Monica Fedha, who was accompanied by the Chief Officer, Mr. Reuben Wambwa, and other officers. The session focused on the progress of trade loan recovery, the current status of street lighting infrastructure, developments surrounding local markets, the Weights and Measures Bill 2023, and electricity bill payments as of December 31, 2023.

One of the central concerns raised by the committee was the state of trade loans issued by the county government and their current recovery status. In her response, CECM Monica Fedha informed the committee that the department was actively pursuing recovery efforts and remained optimistic that the entire process would be completed by the end of June 2025.

The committee also sought clarity on the existence of a comprehensive policy or framework for the maintenance of the county's street lighting infrastructure. This was a result of growing concerns from residents regarding non-functional streetlights in market centers and residential areas, which pose safety and security threats.

Additionally, the committee inquired about progress on the Markets, Weights and Measures Bill, 2023, that was expected to facilitate regulation and standardization of trade practices in the

country, to ensure fairness, safety, and compliance for traders and consumers.

Electricity bill payments, as of the end of December 2023, were also discussed. The committee emphasized the importance of timely payments to avoid disconnection of essential services and called for accountability and transparency in the management of public utilities.

The Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, Irrigation, and Cooperatives held a session with the County Executive to discuss the report on the implementation status of the farm input support program, with the aim of improving the agricultural sector in Bungoma County.

The Committee observed that the implementation period of Bungoma County's policy framework on agricultural input support for vulnerable farmers lapsed in 2019.

The Committee proposed that the department develop mechanisms to introduce subsidy programs for sustainability. They further recommended the initiation of a country-wide soil mapping to inform the type of fertilizers to be issued to farmers.

The Department was tasked to ensure the timely supply of fertilizer and seeds to boost productivity, as well as to establish maize stores at the ward where farmers can store bags of maize to be sold in the future. The agriculture department committed to following up on all the reports and working towards improving the agricultural sector through implementing the resolutions.

Upon finalizing the sessions, the Committees are expected to present their findings and recommendations to the full County Assembly.



County Executive officials appear before County Assembly Committees for interrogation on the implementation status of House resolutions passed during 2022-2023

County Assembly Holds Public Participation On Budget Estimate For FY 2025/2026

By County Assembly Communications Team



Liaison Committee of the County Assembly of Bungoma conducts public participation on budget estimates for FY 2025/2026 in Paskari Nabwana Hall

in areas that directly affect their daily lives. Their inputs are valuable, and we shall incorporate them in the final document," said Hon Chemion.

The County Executive has proposed a comprehensive fiscal framework for the 2025/2026 financial year with a total allocation of Kshs. 15.88 billion, comprising Kshs. 10.73 billion for recurrent expenditure and Kshs. 5.15 billion for development initiatives. The budget will be financed through multiple revenue streams, including Kshs. 11.69 billion from the National Government Equitable Share, Kshs. 572.82 million from conditional national grants, and Kshs. 1.65 billion from development partners such as UNICEF, DANIDA, KOICA, and the World Bank.

Notably, the County is expected to generate Kshs. 1.29 billion from its source revenue through Appropriations in Aid, demonstrating a positive outlook on the County's capacity for self-financing and fiscal sustainability.

Significant allocations of the Budget estimate for the FY 2025/2026 proposal include Kshs. 105.6 million for the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF), Kshs. 107.4 million for Community Health Promoters, Kshs. 500 million for the KOICA Water Project and Kshs. 153.5 million for climate change adaptation initiatives. While there was a projected drop in local revenue to KES 671 million, the

County Assembly aimed to address the gap through policy reforms.

During the session, Clerk of the County Assembly Mr. Charles Wafula expressed his gratitude to all who participated, emphasizing the importance of balancing public expectations with realistic financial planning. He urged residents who could not attend to download the full budget document from the County Assembly's website <https://www.bungomaassembly.go.ke> and submit written memoranda so voices could be considered in the final deliberations.

"These forums have facilitated meaningful dialogue between residents and their elected leaders, encouraging open discussion on budget allocations and giving priority to critical projects. I wish to state Bungoma County Assembly's commitment to enhancing transparency, fostering accountability, and strengthening public trust in governance through continued citizen engagement," said Mr. Wafula.

He reiterated that as the budgets for FY 2025/2026 moved through the legislative process, the insights and feedback collected during the forum would be crucial in shaping final decisions. The County Assembly continues to champion inclusive development and responsive leadership by ensuring that public participation remains at the core of the budgeting process.



The Bungoma County Assembly remains committed to participatory governance by involving residents in a public forum about the budget estimates for FY 2025/2026. The forum, spearheaded by the Liaison Committee led by the Acting Chairperson Hon. Francis Chemion, was held at Paskari Nabwana Hall in the County Assembly.

For inclusive representation, the session had three participants drawn from each of the 45 wards in Bungoma County, reflecting a countywide effort to incorporate

the voices of ordinary citizens into the budget-making process.

Hon Chemion stated that the public participation sessions were organized to provide a platform for citizens to voice their opinions, raise concerns, and offer suggestions on the proposed budget estimates. The Committee members present also noted that such engagements formed the foundation of transparency and accountability in governance.

"Through the forum, Bungoma residents are empowered to shape the county's priorities, particularly

Bungoma County Assembly Engages Stakeholders On Budget Estimates For Fy 2025/2026

By County Assembly Communications Team



Liaison Committee of the County Assembly engages stakeholders across Bungoma County on the proposed Bungoma County Budget estimates for FY 2025/2026 in Paskari Nbwana Hall

enable better local development.



Stakeholders called for greater inclusion of youth in the County's administration and decision-making processes through the creation of more job opportunities. They further recommended that the county allocate funds to support women's empowerment programs and child protection initiatives in order to curb the high rates of early pregnancies and school dropouts, particularly among young girls.



Stakeholders pointed out that the proposed budget did not allocate funds for water projects. There were suggestions for the county to invest directly in water infrastructure. Additionally, they proposed that the county sponsor workers for in-service training programs to equip them with the necessary skills for technical roles, particularly in the water and agriculture sectors.

The County Assembly Liaison Committee engaged stakeholders across Bungoma County on the proposed Bungoma County Budget estimates for the Financial Year 2025/2026 in the Paskari Nabwana Hall. During the session, chaired by Acting Committee Chairperson Hon. Francis Chemion, stakeholders raised their concerns and went ahead to provide valuable input on several sectors impacting the public, including education, health, tourism, trade, gender equality, and agricultural development.

In the education sector, stakeholders raised concerns about the state of infrastructure in local schools, pointing out that many schools in

the County had incomplete classrooms. They suggested that the County Government should allocate funds in the budget for FY 2025/2026 to address infrastructure deficits and ensure the recruitment of more ECDE teachers to improve educational outcomes.

In the health sector, attention was drawn to the recent elevation of the Bungoma County Referral Hospital from a Level 5 to a Level 6 facility. The upgrade requires a significant increase in medical resources, including new equipment to meet the demands of a Level 6 hospital.

Representatives from Civil Society Organizations noted the need to

increase bed capacity in hospitals to accommodate the growing population. Other suggestions included allocating funds towards the maintenance of medical equipment and facilitating the supply of medical supplies in health facilities.

Stakeholders also raised concerns regarding incomplete flagship projects initiated between 2013 and 2017. They emphasized the importance of identifying and prioritizing the completion of these projects in each ward to ensure the overall development of the county. They recommended increasing the allocation of funds to the wards from 25% to 35% in the budget for FY 2025/2026 to

The Kenya Workers' Rights Association highlighted the need for better planning and budgeting within the education sector to ensure that funds allocated to the sector are used effectively. They raised concerns about the lack of disbursements for the Youth Polytechnic Fund and inadequate equipping and maintenance of fire stations in Webuye and Bungoma, which were identified as critical gaps in addressing emergencies within the County.

Autonomy of County Assemblies Advanced with Senate's Passage of County Public Finance Management Law (Amendment) Bill, 2023

By Rosemary Wachiye



Members of the County Assembly of Bungoma attend a plenary sitting

County Assembly because currently the Clerk has no powers on matters related to finances at the County Executive.

The Fund's establishment under the County Public Finance Laws (Amendment) Bill (Senate Bill No. 39 of 2023) aims to provide the necessary financial independence for all 47 County Assemblies. Once enacted, the law will address the critical gap that has left County Assemblies vulnerable to the Governor's discretion when seeking funds for administrative expenditures. This autonomy will enable County Assemblies to effectively execute their constitutional mandates of representation, legislation, and oversight.

The Bill's enactment will fulfill the commitment made by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr. William Ruto, during his visit to the County Assembly of Bungoma on August 27, 2023, where he pledged to ensure the financial independence of County Assemblies as part of the government's broader support for devolution.

Kenya's 47 County Assemblies are positioned to achieve financial autonomy following the Senate's approval of the County Public Finance Laws (Amendment) Bill (Senate Bill No. 39 of 2023), which was passed on April 15, 2025.

Senator Kathuri Murungi, senator for Meru County, who was the Bill's sponsor, emphasized during his presentation that the lack of financial autonomy has hindered County Assemblies from performing their oversight roles.

He argued that County Assemblies need to be freed from their financial dependence on County Executives, enabling them to make independent decisions regarding their operational programs.

Currently, County Assemblies rely on County Executives for funding, a system plagued by frequent delays. The delay in the disbursement of funds to Counties by the National Treasury poses a challenge to County Assemblies. The situation is exacerbated when County Executives delay in fund transfers to County Assemblies, which compromises their effectiveness.

"We intend to afford the 47 County Assemblies the same financial treatment that the national Government extends to both Houses of Parliament," Senator Murungi stated.

Under existing provisions in the County Governments Act, County Assembly budgets must not fall below 7 percent of a county's total

revenue, or twice the personnel emoluments, whichever is lower.

The proposed legislation seeks to amend Section 109 of the Public Finance Management Act to establish a County Assembly Fund in each 47 County Assemblies. This Fund will create a clear separation between resources allocated for County Assembly operations and those designated for County Executives.

According to the Bill, the Clerk of each County Assembly will serve as the Fund administrator, responsible for ensuring that all earnings and accruals are retained within the Fund and utilized exclusively for their intended purposes. Making the Clerk the administrator of the Fund will further enhance the independence of the

County Assembly Conducts Induction Of Students On Industrial Attachment

By County Assembly Communications Team

On Tuesday, May 13, 2025, students from various learning institutions attached to the County Assembly of Bungoma were inducted by Heads of Departments at the Paskari Nabwana Hall. The students were able to meet, interact, and listen to different presenters on the institution's core mandate. The attached students were also introduced to their departmental heads during an interactive orientation session.

During the session, the heads of departments provided concise overviews of their respective units' core functions and responsibilities, clarifying the institutional structure for the incoming students. This introduction enabled students to identify appropriate points of contact for specific inquiries and assistance needs during their attachment period, facilitating efficiency.

Departmental heads emphasized the importance of maintaining discipline throughout the attachment period by adhering to punctuality standards, demonstrating respect, and following the institution's established rules and regulations. Students were also encouraged to approach their experience with a receptive mindset, remaining open to feedback and guidance from their direct supervisors and other staff members across the organization. They were also urged to maintain a decent dress code and ensure diligence in their work.

The students were advised to maximize their opportunity at the

County Assembly, as it could serve as a gateway to additional professional prospects, including internships and potential entry into the job market. Most attachment students acknowledged that County Assembly staff members were exceptionally friendly and approachable, creating a positive first impression of the workplace environment. They looked forward to an easy learning process, acquisition of the necessary skills, and a comfortable working environment.

Following the introductory presentations, students participated in a facility tour that included the County Assembly Plenary chamber, departmental offices, and the workspaces of elected representatives from various wards. The tour was supplemented with detailed explanations of parliamentary procedures and protocols that students would be expected to observe during the County Assembly Plenary sessions that they might attend.

A representative of the students noted that the County Assembly had proven to be one of the best institutions to work in as it provided a conducive environment for staff and students, who interacted in a friendly manner. They appreciated the accommodating nature of the staff who had availed themselves to support the students. The induction session helped attachment students familiarize themselves with the environment to be able to fit in and also acquire knowledge that they can apply in all aspects of their lives.



Officers from the Human Resource Department and Heads of Departments induct students on attachment at the County Assembly of Bungoma in Paskari Nabwana Hall



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 Bungoma County Assembly

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