

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF SAMBURU



THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 7th April, 2021

The Assembly met at the County Assembly chambers at 2:30 p.m.

Temporary Speaker, (Hon. Jerias Leshomo) in the Chair

PRAYER

MOTION

MCA Waso Ward, (Hon. Paul Wonyang): Hon. Speaker, I beg to give the following Motion, **THAT**, the thanks of the County Assembly be recorded for the exposition of the Public Policy contained in the address of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). I call upon Hon. Dube to second.

(Hon. Dube bows to second the Motion)

Temporary Speaker, (Hon. Jerias Leshoomo): I now propose the question, **THAT**, the thanks of the County Assembly the recording by the dignitary be debated by the House. As many as of the same opinion say I.

(The Temporary Speaker consults with the clerk)

Okay Hon. Mememrbs, I think it is time for the Hon. Members to debate the address so that the thanks and deliberations can be recorded in the Assembly Chamber. And I give Hon. Wonyang, the mover of the motion to give overview of the statement. Hon. Wonyang.

MCA Waso Ward, (Hon. Paul Wonyang): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if you look at the speech that was given by Chief of Field Operations for UNICEF Kenya on behalf of Head of UNICEF Kenya, Mr. Speaker you realize that they give gave us a lot of information as pertains to social indicators that pertains to our county.

Mr. Speaker, UNICEF is one of agency of UN that understands matters to do with children. If I just point a few, you realize that first of all UNICEF did appreciate what we have tried or we are trying to do as County Assembly in regards to making the lives of children better. Mr. Speaker, you realize in our CIDP and according to Constitution 2010, matters of early childhood education are devolved. And Mr. Speaker, I think we have done numerous and various classrooms, we have been providing with food and teachers to those children. And Mr. Speaker, we are approving every financial year, we give a substantial amount of money towards ECD. And that for sure that has been acknowledged by the UNICEF Representative that it has resulted in enrollment of children into this ECD centres from, if just quote, they are saying the enrolment has increased from about 16. Generally, the enrollment has increased.

In this report also, it has been noted that we still have a lot of work to do because we have a big percentage of these children again are facing malnutrition. So I think is up to us again as an Assembly to make sure we increase the amount of money that goes into the school feeding program.

Mr. Speaker, I wish also to say that it is noted that almost two-third of the people in Samburu County defecate in the open. This is an area that should concern us as an Assembly because you can imagine so many things happen because of not using the latrines or improve sanitation facilities. It means that all the waters that we drink, the chances of them being polluted are very high. And Mr. Speaker, even the food we eat in our markets the chances are they are contaminated with bacteria and germs.

Mr. Speaker, it is to that observation that I request also our Members for us as we pass the budgets here, we should also be keen to look at how much money are we allocating sanitation. Because we put a lot of money into drilling of boreholes but we forget the sanitation aspect of it. A case to imagine is all our towns, up to now we do not have the sanitation facilities. That is in Archers, Kisima, Suguta Marmar and I think even Maralal town and Baragoi, we don't have sanitation facilities where people can relieve themselves as they go on doing their businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the other issue that has been pointed by the UNICEF representative is the number of children who die under the age of five; just to quote what he said: "per every 1,000 children born, one or two children under the age of five die". This is so alarming and calls for our action because we cannot be losing such a number of children.

Mr. Speaker, in as much as it has been noted that we have recruited a substantial number of health workers the number is still low because we are supposed to have 250 health workers per 100,000 people. Our health workers are 84 hence this means we have a shortage of 170 health workers; Mr. Speaker this means that the Budgets that we will be seeing here especially this FY should have the Department proposing recruitment of more health workers. If that happens then I think we as the Members of the County Assembly should be in fore front to make sure that we support that kind of proposals.

Mr. Speaker we should also be worried about the issues of HIV/AIDS. The rate of mother-children transmission as reported by the UNICEF representative is at 15% in 2019 basically this is an issue because maternal and child care are among the devolved health functions and having a 15% is alarming. Mr. Speaker and you bear me witness that up to now we have not seen any proposal presented to this House on how the County is helping mothers and children to be safe from HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Speaker, we have been building polytechnics in this County and we are saying that enrollment from secondary level is an issue that I think should be reflected on how we allocate bursaries and expansion of infrastructures that entails transition from secondary to polytechnic.

Mr. Speaker because of time I wish to focus on the prayers that is before us. What the UNICEF representative begged the House:

First, we develop policies and pass legislation on water sector to accelerate and end open defecation and improve on access to clean water which includes development, enactment and implementation of The Samburu County Water Bill.

Second, he prayed that we follow on the commitment given to His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta to eradicate FGM in Samburu by 2022.

Mr. Speaker the UNICEF representative we further and prayed that we implement the National Action Plan to prevent violence against children including violence against children National Survey 2019 and Spot it stop it campaign which is a national campaign launched by UNICEF and the Ministry of Labour and social protection which raises awareness of the difference forms of violence against children and tells people how to recognize it and report violence.

Mr. Speaker, he also prayed that we enact the Social Protection Bill and develop child care services policies. I remember at one time when we were debating about relief food we reached a point where we said that it is a high time that the County Assembly in collaboration with the Executive develops a policy that will enable us to rollout cash transfers because we saw that food relief was becoming expensive to implement.

Mr. Speaker, he also prayed that we strengthen the management and coordination of integrated early childhood development services.

Mr. Speaker, he prayed that we increase the allocation on dedicated funds to nutrition by creating a specific budget lines and oversight for full implementation of County Nutrition Action Plan, we would like to see this raised to 5% of the County Budget overtime.

Mr. Speaker, he also asked that we commit and utilize the fund for water and sanitation because, from their observation only 3% of the County Budget was allocated to this sector from 2017 to 2018. He went further to say that only under a third of that money was spent; the message here Mr. Speaker is that we are under spending in as much as the Assembly is allocating money but the absorption of the allocated money is an issue.

Mr. Speaker, he requested the House to support the enactment of both the County Health Services Act and the Facility Improvement Fund and implement an Adolescent focus program for health. Mr. Speaker as he concluded, you realized he said that; “to achieve all these there was need for sufficient and sustained public financing, efficient and timely utilization of the County Budget”. He is basically saying that in as much as we allocate funds for each Department to implement their respective programs. It should also be our concern to make sure that the money is utilized. I want to end there so that other Members can ventilate on the report, thank you Mr. Speaker.

Specially Elected MCA, (Hon. Antonella Lobura): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I do support the report. Mr. Speaker we know that UNICEF is an implementing partner that has been helpful to both Departments on Education and Health respectively.

Mr. Speaker, UNICEF has been purchasing food for the Early Childhood Development children so as to prevent lack of nutrition which causes retardation.

You can also see their labels. These foods are budgeted by these partners. These partners help in providing for these foods and it helps the children not to go home hungry which leads to malnourishment and retards. UNICEF and other partners are very supportive on nutrition. I have both medical and community programs experience and I know that these partners are very supportive in providing food. The National Government and County Government are doing very

little in support. It is hard to find these foods for the health departments being included in the budget. We need the County Assembly to emphasize on putting more money towards food and nutrition to the Health Department incase these partners pull out in the future. UNICEF has helped children and mothers in antenatal clinics until delivery, they support the Government to ensure that there is free delivery of new born and even the mortality rate under five years has really gone down.

There were very high cases on open defecation, these partners helped reduce this by training more health workers and sensitize the community on the risks of open defecation to the community, thank you Mr. Speaker.

Specially Elected MCA, (hon. Stephanie Lanyasunya): Thank you Mr. Speaker for this opportunity. I thank the Speaker and the County Assembly for arranging the important meeting of the officials from UNICEF. The meeting brought out a clear picture of where we are as a County on matters of health among children, mothers and the whole community. The socio economic factors were really brought out which caters for a healthy nation. There is no healthy nation without children since it begins from childhood. There were scenarios that came to me as a shock which I was not aware; issues like open defecation where we are required to plant trees in our County because all these is going to cater for a healthy clean and healthy environment. Open defecation is everywhere even in the County Headquarters.

I have always wondered where people coming from rural areas relieve themselves since morning yet we do not even have public toilets. It was better when we had trees around but it is worse. These are serious issues that are supposed to be addressed by the policies that are made in this County. It is serious that in the 21st century people are still looking for the smallest shrub to hide and defecate. The alarming death of children in our County is mainly brought to us by the lack of trees, dirty environment and dirty water. This issue should be addressed.

The issue of stunted children in Samburu that is brought about poor management and a bad environment. The County Government should take this issue very seriously. I have always thought that the culture of the nomads was the reason for stunted growth but it is not which is very worrying. I would like to emphasize on the official's plea that the Assembly has an

enormous mandate and that if we make it our priority and implement then all our problems will be solved.

Temporary Speaker, (hon. Jerias Leshoomo): I now put the question if there is no other contribution from the Members.

(Question put and passed)

Hon. Members the time being 28 minutes to four o'clock and there being no other business this Assembly now adjourns until Thursday 8th April 2021 at 2:30pm.