

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF SAMBURU



THE HANSARD

Tuesday, 10th August, 2021

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

The Deputy Speaker, (Hon. Jonathan Lemoos) in the Chair

PRAYER

STATEMENTS

Chairperson, Committee on Education and Vocational Training, (Hon. Shadrack Lesoipa):
Thank you Hon. Speaker. I have a statement response that was sort by Hon. Member for Lodokejek Ward regarding the distribution of food to Early Childhood Development Centers during term 3, 2021 across the Wards in this County.

“Reference is made to the request by the County Assembly of Samburu to the County Department of Education and Vocational Training to provide a statement with regards to the Department’s distribution of food to early Childhood Development Centers during term three of 2021 across the County.

The Constitution of Kenya provides for the rights of every child including education as enshrined in the Bills of right, Article 53 of Constitution highlights key fundamental rights of the child such as right to a name and nationality from birth; free and compulsory basic education; basic nutrition, shelter, health care and to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices and all forms of violence.

The County Government of Samburu through the Department of Education and Vocational Training supports feeding program through provision of midday meals that includes rice, beans, vegetable oil and salt to all ECD children in public schools. The main aim is to improve enrolment, enhance good health and also retain children in school. The County has a total of 523 public ECD centers with enrolment of 40,426 learners spread within the three sub-counties.

Objectives of the feeding program:

- 1) Addressing specific micronutrient deficiencies as well as improve child nutrition.
- 2) Alleviate short-term hunger and improve cognition.
- 3) Motivate parents to enroll their children in school, improve attendance and promote community participation.
- 4) Enhance school performance.

5) Improve socialization opportunities for children.

The Department wishes to respond as follows:

1) **How much ECD food did the Department procure in the FY in question? (Please provide quarterly distribution lists to ECD centers across the whole County)**

a) The Department procured food items worth Kshs. 67, 908, 800. the food items procured included rice, beans and vegetable oil as shown in the table below.

S/N	ITEMS	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL PRICE
1.	Rice	8772	4950	43,421,400
2.	Beans	3509	6150	21,580,350
3.	Vegetable oil	1097	2650	2,907,050
	TOTAL AMOUNT			67,908,800

Attached on the appendix are: requisition forms, letter of award, acceptance letter, letter of contract, local purchase order (LPO) and S13 forms.

b) Distribution.

Attached are copies of the distribution lists.

2) **Where is the food for term 3 for Lodokejek and Angata Nanyekie Wards?**

All ECD Centers across the County including Angata Nanyekie Ward received the food rations as per the distribution plans provided. However, Lodokejek Ward is yet to receive their allocated ration. Attached in the appendix are the distribution plan.

3) **What is the total amount of Budget allocation for the said program and what is the amount allocated for each school?**

According to the Department's Budget, the total allocation for feeding program was Kshs. 67, 908, 800. The rations for every child per day are calculated as per the World Food Program

guidelines for the number of school days in a term. According to the WFP guidelines the food rations are as shown below:

- i. Cereals (rice): 100 grams per child.
- ii. Pulses (beans): 40 grams per child.
- iii. Vegetable oil: 5 grams per child.
- iv. Iodized Salt: 2 grams per child.

4) Whether the County Government has received any donor fund to support the said program?

The County Government has not received any donor fund to support the said program.

5) Whether the aforementioned program has a policy framework to operationalize its activities and what are the plans to curb the perennial failures?

The Department uses the National early childhood education policy together with the World Food Program guidelines to operationalize its activities on the ECD feeding program. However, the Department in partnership with WFP has secured Kshs. 4.8 million to develop a policy to guide the feeding program as well as policy on vocational training.

6) Why wastages, deliberate delay or foul play distribution of ECD food should not be investigated and prosecuted?

The program has faced various challenges since its inception, this includes long procurement procedures, logistics and transportation issues among others. The Department wishes to state that there are no deliberate intentions to delay or interfere with the school program as this is a core component in ECD.

The Department plans to initiate timely procurement processes to avoid delays in supply and distribution of food items; the situation was worsened by COVID-19 that saw closure of school hence hampering distribution plans.”

Hon. Speaker, that was the response given by the CEC in-charge of the Department and I think all other information are available in terms of memo, decision in awarding tenders, supply and distribution of food, letter of acceptance by the contractor, contract agreement, the inspection and acceptance letter by the committee, the certificate and the ledger purchase order.

The Members can go through the tabulations and the distribution plan that was provided so that we can be able to question further or get satisfied with the information provided.

The Deputy Speaker, (Hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Very well Chairperson. Hon. Members, the Chairperson has taken us through the information tabulated and documented. Before I give the Member a chance to indulge I think I will first give Hon. Leshoomo who sort for the statement to respond or give his pleasure to the information as read by the Hon. Chairperson, thank you.

MCA Lodokejek Ward, (Hon. Leshoomo Jerias): Thank you Hon Speaker. The response by the Department was quite elaborate and more detailed but we still need further clarification on some issues in this report. Mr. Speaker looking at the objectives of the feeding programme listed in this report are; to increase enrolment and to enhance good health among other objectives but Mr. Speaker if food distribution was done properly I think the Department could have achieved these objectives.

Mr. Speaker I did seek for a statement response from the Department because last term food was distributed all over the County but Lodokejek Ward did not receive any food and for this I think the Department is not serious in their work and in achieving their objectives. Mr. Speaker this is not the first time the ECDE Centers miss food, I remember two years ago the Department purchased enough food but we were hit by COVID 19 pandemic. Mr. Speaker I think we need to further inquire on how the Department did the requisition.

Mr. Speaker I think we should not just sit here while our ECDs are crying, I urge this House to look at the distribution of food for the past two years, we have been funding the Department and the ECDs are closed yet the Department has the all cadre of leaders and officers and we have enough evidence that there is no food, Thank you Hon. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker, (Hon. Lemoosa Jonathan): Very well, I think what Hon. Lemoosa wants to know is when will the food be distributed because the office as per the statement acknowledged that the food will be distributed but they did not give a commitment as to when. Hon. Kiragu.

MCA Maralal Ward, (Hon. Kiragu Fred): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have observed that the Chairperson was not confident from his body language as he was presenting the report, he is forced to read a report that he has not really internalized.

Mr. Speaker apart from the Department not achieving the objectives did set the education in this County will also be hindered hence creating a negative attitude towards education in our future generations.

Mr. Speaker, this House has allocated enough funds tuning to KSHs. 67 million to ensure that the ECD kids are fed. The report presented is just on paper Mr. Speaker but not actual, that is why we have complaints. Mr. Speaker this report is to blind us that the Department has implemented yet their mandate yet they did not.

I am a Member of the Committee on Education and witnessed that many of the ECD centers in Poro Ward did not receive food as mentioned in the distribution list presented. This House needs to be serious on this issue if we want to save basic education in this County.

Mr. Speaker, I am of an opinion that this House forms a Committee that will go around the County to every ECD center mentioned here and confirm if the food that was supposed to be delivered to them did reach to the institution and then summon the officer who were serving in those offices at that time in question, Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Specially Elected MCA, (Hon. Lobura Antonella): Thank Hon. Speaker, Hon. Speaker this document is well prepared and documented as we can see but this is not the same situation on the ground. Hon. Speaker most of us are in social media platforms and there was a time I saw in a Facebook platform called Samburu Development forum an allegation that ECD food was sold.

Hon. Speaker I agree with my fellow Hon. Members that a special Committee should be formed to investigate if what is written in this report is true. Thank you Hon. Speaker

Specially Elected MCA, (hon. ZamZam Ismail): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have one concern in this report, they are slightly different because in this one it says that Samburu County has 523 public ECD centers yet when you look at where the food has been distributed it reads 561, 38 ECD centers are extra in the distribution. We are aware that ECD is the foundation of Education. In our County we take it very lightly in the Education of our children. I agree with what my colleagues have said, we are told that food has been distributed yet I can attest that there is some food that have been distributed in Maralal which is the headquarters of this County and does not have a kitchen and a store. This leaves a lot to be desired. An example is Lpartuk which does not have a store or a kitchen. There is a lot of gaps.

We know that ECD programs are very important to our children as pastoralists communities our lifestyle is a bit harsh since we do not make breakfast for our children, this food is supposed to nurture our children. Even though I am not a doctor the brain starts to grow between three and five years; this is why we are told to be given food on time. We need to be serious when we deal with matters on education on our children. I would like to know where the rest of the ECD centers are from since the report indicates that we have 523 public ECD centers. We should form a task force that will go on the ground and ascertain these facts. We have a well-documented report in front in this House.

The Deputy Speaker, (hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Very well hon. ZamZam.

Specially Elected MCA, (hon. Elizabeth Kalapata): Thank you, in the first place I want to oppose the proposal by some Members that a Committee be formed to look at the issues because the Committee... *(Interrupted)*

The Deputy Speaker, (hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Hon. Member, kindly just give me a chance to indulge with you. I will rule over that. Every Member has that. Kindly give your sentiments and leave it to the Speaker to rule over on the sentiments from the Members, thank you.

Specially Elected MCA, (hon. Elizabeth Kalapata): I am sorry but Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Education has enough mandates to go around and look at the matter. The Member who brought the Statement is a Member of the Committee, he will be with the Committee to go round...

The Deputy Speaker, (hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Hon. Kalapata with all due respect keep that aside for the ruling and give your sentiments just like all the other Members. Sorry for the interruption.

Specially Elected MCA, (hon. Elizabeth Kalapata): It is okay Mr. Speaker. It is true that the food issue is not going on as we are expecting since it is affected by the term date, it has worsened in the first place. Transportation was also a problem, I am not defending them, these are the issues that they were giving us. Yesterday I attended the admission on Nachola Day School and the same problem cropped up that the enrollment of the ECDs has gone down. In Nachola Ward specifically Kampala ECD Center, out of 130 pupils who enrolled only 30 are attending, this shows how we are failing in the Education center. We went to school for this food, it helped us to have education.

Without food in school children will not attend school and therefore the enrolment will go down. No student can stay in school for a whole day with no food. Famine has hit had and the pupils do not get enough at home either in the evening or in the morning. They may be coming to school hungry. We should not take this matter lightly, thank you hon. Speaker.

MCA Lodokejek Ward, (hon. Jerias Leshoomo): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues who have contributed in support of this Statement. I want to make a clarification on the food that they say is yet to be distributed; I personally went to the warehouse and found that there is no food in the stores. I do not know where they will get food to distribute. The food that was procured was distributed equally but I am not sure. There is no food in the store. My ward borders some wards and I visited a school in Baawa and Wamba West where no food was distributed. The few ECD centers that received food got a bag of rice and a bag of beans yet the distribution list indicates that the distributed two to three bags.

The department is cheating in their response. There is no food in the stores. I join my colleagues in saying that we should go further and find out the true status of this distribution and bring concrete findings on the distribution, thank you Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker, (hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Very well hon. Jerias. Please Chairman make a comment before I conclude.

MCA Suguta MarMar Ward, (hon. Shadrack Lesoipa): Thank you Mr. Speaker and the Members who had time to make their contribution on the matter at hand. We went through this as a Chair and Committee and realized that there is information that has to be ascertained; it is good that hon. Leshoomo is privy to the information that there is no food to be distributed unless in the next financial year. There is information to be confirmed on the distribution, quality, quantity and the enrolment on the ground; maybe there were some special requests that were made resulting to Lodokejek not getting food, these requests are like funerals, rangers and faith based organizations yet these food was well specified.

My prayer is that the Chair on Education is a very able Member who is able to prosecute his duties as provided by the Standing Orders of this House, I stand tall and ensure that this information is verified within 21 days, thank you.

The Deputy Speaker, (hon. Jonathan Lemoosa): Thank you hon. Member. I think that the Members have ventilated enough on this matter before us. I appreciate the Members for taking this report seriously as it deserves. Our Standing Orders state that we should not anticipate debates. I respect your opinion hon. Chair; maybe the 31 more as established by hon. ZamZam could be faith based. Our Standing Orders commit us to give authentic evidence. The Members have noted that maybe the response is not well detailed or sufficient as noted. I refer the matter further to the Committee on Education and Vocational Training to do more detailed investigation and interrogations on the information as submitted by the department and further make inquiry on the ground as per a few pilot schools or preschools to make sure that detailed information is tabulated by the Committee against the report submitted by the department. This information should be table in this House not later than 21 days depending on the availability of funds. The clerk to the Committee and the Clerk of the County Assembly should work with the Chair of the Education Committee to ensure facilitation is provided and the information given not later than 21 days. That is the direction today as we go forward. If that fails, then I think the Chairman is at liberty to invite other Members from the House or the public if they feel so to determine some facts since that Member who also sits in the Education Committee hon. Jerias seems to have facts not included in the report tabled or submitted. The Education Committee should take the

matter seriously and make their own report against what has been tabled not later than 21 days from this day. It is so directed, thank you. Hon. Chair on Education are we together?

MCA Suguta MarMar Ward, (hon. Shadrack Lesoipa): Most obliged.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Members the time 13 minutes to four o'clock and there being no other business this Assembly now adjourns until Wednesday 11th August 2021 at 9:00 am, thank you.