

THE COUNCIL



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

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COG CALLS ON NATIONAL TREASURY TO RELEASE KSHS148BN IN PENDING REMMITANCES AMID BITING DROUGHT

The Council of Governors (CoG) has called upon the National Treasury to expedite the release of monies owed to Counties for the FY 2021/22 amounting up to Kshs. 148.39 Billion.

In a full Council meeting held on 5th April 2022, the Council Vice - Chairman H.E James Ongwae noted that the delays in disbursement of funds to Counties had detrimental impacts on service delivery and hindered the effective implementation of response measures for the prolonged drought situation witnessed in various parts of the Country.

“As the Council of Governors, we have resolved to engage the Central Bank of Kenya, Commission on Revenue Allocation, Controller of Budget and the National Treasury to provide for an overdraft facility to cushion the Counties from the delay in disbursement of funds,” said H.E. James Ongwae.

Drought, which was declared a national disaster by the President in September last year, poses a serious threat to the country’s food security and has devastating effects on families and livelihoods, with over 360,000 people in the emergency phase.

H.E Moses Lenolkul raised alarm over the dire situation in Baringo and other ASAL Counties and called for urgent interventions to save the millions of Kenyans at risk of death due to starvation.

His sentiments were echoed by the Kakamega Governor H.E Wycliffe Oparanya, who urged the Treasury to treat the drought situation as an emergency and ensure adequate funds are allocated for drought mitigation measures in the affected Counties.

This came even as the Senate recently passed the County Governments Additional Allocation Bill, 2021, which guides how conditional allocations from the National Government and development partners will flow to the Counties. The Bill, if passed by the National assembly, will facilitate the successful implementation of development projects in the Counties as well as crucial health and food security programmes.

While addressing the media after the full Council meeting, H.E James Ongwae further called upon all Presidential aspirants to not only commit to defending devolution but also join the Council of Governors in championing for timely disbursement of funds to Counties ahead of the August 2022 General elections.

“We call upon the National Treasury to expedite the release of funds otherwise we shall seek legal redress to resolve this matter. Currently, the total equitable share of revenue stands at Kshs 370 billion and only Kshs 222.6 billion has been disbursed to the Counties with only two months to the close of the 2021/2022 financial year,” said H.E Wambora.

Similarly, in preparation for the transition of power in the Counties and assumption to office of governors, the Council has undertaken training and sensitization of County officials in different cadres on transition management and prepared an induction manual to guide the new administration including Governors, Deputy Governors and County Executive Committee Members (CECMs). The Assumption to the office of the Governor Act 2019, which provides for the processes to be undertaken and the establishment of an ad hoc committee, is expected to ensure a smooth transition of leadership.

Further, the Council has developed 11-point lobbying and advocacy tool on devolution which will be instrumental in guiding stakeholders to strategically pitch issues to presidential candidates and advance the devolution agenda.

In concluding his remarks, H.E James Ongwae called upon all Kenyans and devolution stakeholders to register and participate in the 9th Africa Cities Summit to be held from 17th – 21st May 2022 at ASK Grounds in Mamboleo, Kisumu County. The summit themed “The role of intermediary cities of Africa in the implementation of the agenda 2030 of the United Nations and the African Union Agenda 2063” will attract the international and national participants.



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WAMBORA-LED COG DELEGATION DISCUSSES COUNTY GOVERNMENTS FUNDING IN IBEC FORUM WITH DP RUTO

The Council of Governors led by the Chairman, H.E Martin Wambora, on Tuesday 5th April, 2022, attended the 16th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Budget and Economic Council (IBEC) to deliberate on budgetary allocations for both National and County Governments for the next Financial Year, among other pertinent issues at the Deputy President's Karen Office.

The meeting, chaired by Deputy President H.E. Dr. William Ruto, provided an opportunity for County Governments to discuss how to increase own source revenue generation and settle pending bills. Since the onset of devolution, County Governments have been reeling under the weight of pending bills, which at times have been a cause of conflict with the National Treasury.

In his opening remarks, Deputy President Dr. William Ruto urged Counties to remain committed and prioritize settling their pending bills, directing Treasury to work with the Office of the Attorney General to determine the fate of the ineligible pending bills amounting to Kshs 107 billion.

"The Auditor General's report on the audit of pending bills determined that Kshs 45.5 billion is payable out of the Kshs 153 billion that was reported," said H.E Ruto.

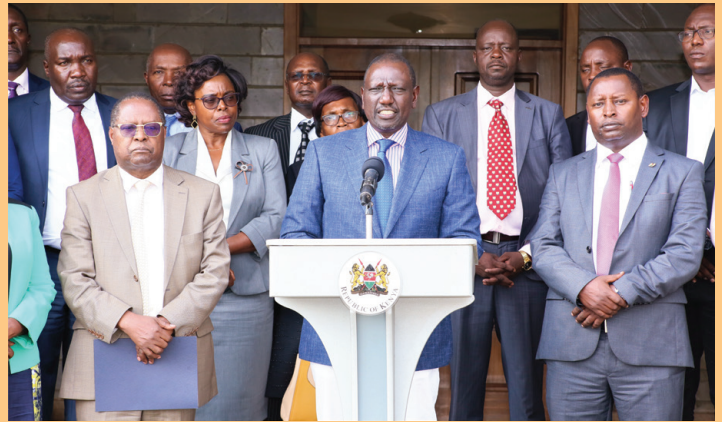
According to the CoG Chair H.E Martin Wambora, County Governments have demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring that eligible pending bills are cleared in order to alleviate the suffering and financial hardships being experienced by suppliers. However, Counties are cash strapped due to the current delayed release of Kshs 148.4 billion by the National Treasury.

Out of the outstanding amount, Kshs 8.26 billion is owed to 11 Counties for January and Kshs 16.2 billion to 23 Counties for February. The 47 Counties are owed Kshs 29.6 billion and Kshs 33.3 billion for the months of March and April respectively.

In addition, Governor Wambora called upon the National Assembly to fast track the passage of the County Governments Additional Allocation Bill 2021 to enable Counties access Kshs 39 billion in conditional allocations for the current financial year.

Controller of Budget Dr. Margaret Nyakong'o on her part decried low absorption of funds by some Counties attributing it to the delayed disbursement of funds.

On matters regarding valuation of all County assets and liabilities, IBEC directed Counties to work together with the Ministry of Devolution, Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, and the Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee to conclude its valuation and submit individual reports before the general elections.



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COG, MINISTRY OF HEALTH UNVEIL GERMAN-FUNDED 4-YEAR PROJECT TO SPUR UNIVERSAL EYE CARE IN COUNTIES

The Council of Governors, the Ministry of Health and Christian Blind Mission (CBM) launched the Vision Impact Project on 21st April 2022 at the Safari Park Hotel.

The four-year project, co-funded by the Germany Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and CBM, is to be implemented in Vihiga, Bomet, Kiambu, Kajiado, Embu, Meru and Kwale Counties.

The Project aims at accelerating Universal Eye Health Coverage through comprehensive, inclusive, integrated and people-centred eye health services in Kenya. Through the project, CBM donated modern eye equipment and outreach vehicles to reach the communities in far-flung areas in the seven beneficiary Counties.

In Kenya, it is estimated that about 7.5 million people are in need of eye health services ranging from age-related cataracts, diabetic complications in the eyes, refractive errors, trachoma, allergic eye diseases and difficulties in reading among others. Out of this number, only 1.6 million Kenyans are able to access eye health services from both public and private facilities.

In recognition of the need to address these disparities and improve systems of delivery of eye care in Kenya, the CBM working with the Ministry of Health and the COG developed the Vision Impact Project.

Speaking during the event, Council of Governors Chairman H.E Martin Wambora said that the project brings the country closer to the attainment of UHC through collaboration among partners of similar interest.

“The launch of this project marks the consolidation of a true partnership between County Governments, CBM International and the various national government ministries and agencies. The timing is right. This is another opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the achievement of UHC.”

In addition, the project will support the provision of high-end equipment for assessment, including screening for eye diseases (even in schools), detailed evaluation, treatment, surgery and even rehabilitation for those with irreversible conditions, to optimize economic productivity.

County Governments are committed to fulfilling requirements provided by the Constitution of Kenya that guarantee all Kenyans, including those with disabilities, the right to affordable and accessible quality healthcare. This includes Eye Care Treatment and management services.

In view of the above, County Governments are investing in technological innovations in the health sector through partnerships such as the Peek technology that is currently in use for the diagnosis of eye problems in schools.

County Governments will leverage the gains of public-private partnerships toward Universal Eye Health Coverage in Kenya and work collectively and collaboratively with other stakeholders to confront the barriers that hinder the full implementation of the National Eye Health Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025.

Through the Council of Governors Maarifa Centre, the lessons learned in the seven beneficiary Counties shall be replicated in the remaining counties to ensure access to eye care services for all.



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COG STAFF REVERSE ROLES IN INTERDEPARTMENTAL SWITCH DESIGNED TO FOSTER TEAMWORK

For an institution to truly thrive, all employees need to work in collaboration and cooperation with each other recognizing that each individual contributes towards the achievement of a common goal – the vision and mission of the organization.

In view of the need to foster cohesiveness and cooperation among the Council of Governors secretariat, a knowledge-sharing initiative dubbed the 'Departmental Switch' was undertaken on Thursday, 14th April 2022. The activity sought to enable members of staff to learn, understand and appreciate the connectivity, functions and importance of each department.

Whereas individual employees may have extensive knowledge and skills in their area of expertise, what happens when they become a fish out of water for a day? How do they manoeuvre around new uncharted territories they may have presumed were a walk in the park? Through the 'Departmental Switch', members of staff were able to step outside their comfort zones and experience working in different departments. One member of staff was retained in each unit to help the new team members familiarize themselves with the daily operations of the department.

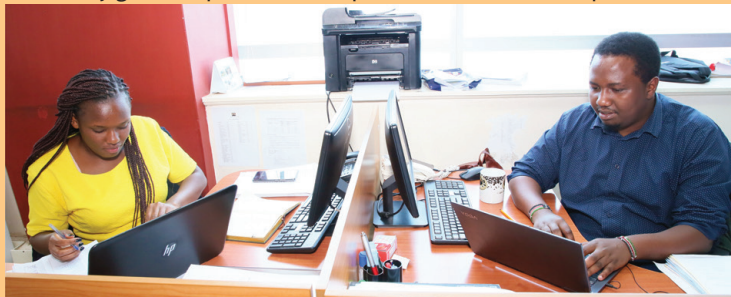
"Procurement is no Joke. They have heaps of workload to be finalised by us," said Ms. Mary Mwitwa, CEO, Council of Governors, who was the acting Head of Procurement for the day.

Similarly, Mr James Kamau, who assumed the office of the CEO in this activity, got a glimpse of the day-to-day activities of a CEO. Keeping in mind the immense responsibilities that come with the office and the vital role the CEO plays in providing overall guidance and strategic direction in an institution, this is no easy task. However, Mr Kamau was up to the challenge.

As members of staff went about their duties in the new departments, they shared real-time experiences highlighting the successes and challenges encountered in their interactions and execution of tasks. Adorned with his chef hat and apron, Mr James Wachira, the head of the ICT unit, joined Ms. Evelyn Bii in the Kitchen department. He made his rounds meticulously while taking down orders and happily served all members of staff. Though there were a few hiccups along the way, most members of staff applauded Mr Wachira for proudly embracing and executing his role.

The experiences acquired through the departmental switch activity play a key role in enabling employees better understand and appreciate what happens in other departments as well as gain a holistic view of the organization.

Further, it will enable the employees to unlock their gifts and talents since they get to experience the operations of another department.



FARE THEE WELL MZEE KIBAKI



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KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH



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48 GOVERNMENTS, 1 NATION



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