REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF LAIKIPIA

THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 30th September, 2020

The House met at the Assembly Chambers at 2.30 p.m.

[The Speaker (*Hon. Patrick Waigwa) in the Chair]*

PRAYERS

QUORUM CALL

Speaker: Clerk, confirm whether we have quorum.

(Lack of quorum confirmed)

Speaker: Serjeant at Arms to ring the bell.

(The bell was rang for five minutes)

Speaker: Serjeant at Arms to stop the bell.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

MEETING WITH THE LAIKIPIA WEST REGIONAL COMMISSIONER

Speaker: We have a meeting with the Laikipia West Regional Commissioner. The Members from that area including the Member for Ol Moran, Members from Laikipia West and Sosian are encouraged to attend. The time for the meeting is at ten.

STATEMENT

RESPONSE TO A STATEMENT ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRES AND ECDE CENTRES IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY

Hon. Daniel Mugweru: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a response on Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) and ECDE centres in Laikipia County. Mr. Speaker, Sir, a statement was raised and tabled in the Assembly by Hon. Peter Matunge on 11th August, 2020 requesting for a response regarding Vocational Training Centres and ECDE centres in Laikipia County.

The committee requested for a response from the Department of Education and Social development vide REF: CGL/CA/CM/001/VOL 3/0041. On 8th September, 2020, the committee received a response from the department vide REF: CGL/EDU/CA/1/5/VOL.11 (53).

1. On how much recurrent expenditure has been set aside for VTC and ECDE centres in the 2020/2021 budget.

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Mr. Speaker, I wish to respond as follows; that according to the approved budget for the Department of Education and Social Services for the Financial Year 2020/2021, the following are the allocations for education section (ECDE and VTC). We have the recurrent expenditure which is zero shillings and development expenditure which is Kshs. 49,500,000 for the ECDE. The VTC has a recurrent expenditure of Kshs. 3,600,000 and for development is Kshs. 12, 300,000. This comes to a total of the recurrent expenditure being Kshs. 3,600,000 and development being Kshs. 61,800,000.

This means that no recurrent expenditure budget was allocated for ECDE section while VTC section has a recurrent expenditure of Kshs. 3,600,000.

2. On whether the County Government has been paying its ECDE teachers and VTC trainers/ teachers since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the County Government has a total of 711 caregivers for the ECDE centres and 38 VTC trainers on the county payroll. Since the onset of COVID-19 each of these officers has received their due salary at the end of each month.

3. On whether the county is prepared for the reopening of school's county wide taking into account all the Ministry of Health guidelines and what precautionary measures have been put in place to this effect.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Department of Education is working with the Ministry of Education (National Government) to ensure all ECDEs and VTCs are ready for reopening. A circular (checklist) has been issued by the Ministry of Education for all VTCs to use to prepare for their reopening. So far, all the VTCs have purchased water tanks, soaps, sanitizers and thermo guns. They have established the water points for hand washing purposes.

4. On whether the County Government has adequate facilities and teachers to enable resumption of learning for VTC and ECDE centres across the county.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the county does not have adequate VTC trainers for each of the courses offered in the various centres. The ECDE centres caregivers are paid a stipend by the County Government and the department would like an additional.

5. On the status of the ECDE centres 2019/2020 budget as one of the measures to have adequate infrastructure since the COVID-19 pandemic struck midway between the financial year.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the ECDE infrastructure projects set aside for the Financial Year 2019/2020 were undertaken. Some projects are already complete while others are currently on-going.

6. On what plans the County Government has put in place for the recruitment of qualified, motivated and well trained teachers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the department has requested for Cabinet approval for the employment of 864 ECDE caregivers with at least a caregiver in each ECDE centre to cater for PP1 and PP2. The department has also requested for approval of employment of 42 instructors to supplement the current number of VTC trainers.

Hon. Peter Matunge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to take this chance to thank the Committee on Education and Social Services for taking their time and answering the statement.

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I know that they are honestly responding to the statement depending on what they got from the department. I believe that they have done their part. Since they have answered the statement question per question, let me see which question they have answered to my satisfaction and which one needs more input and information.

Question one is a question of a debate. How do ECDEs operate without recurrent expenditure? Who has failed in this sector? Is it we who approve the budget or the department. It is a challenge for all of us. The department is clearly stating that there is no recurrent expenditure allocated to the department under the ECDE section while the other part has Kshs 3.6 million.

I have seen that there is some money for development expenditure. Recurrent expenditure is also important. This is because for you to run that program, you need some officers to move and do supervision, learning materials are required and coordination is needed in that program. I do not know how the department is executing this program. It is a challenge for all of us. Why is it that we approve a departmental budget without the allocations? This question needs to be elaborated further on how they are doing this program.

Question two is on whether the County Government has been paying the ECDE teachers. It is fine. They have said that they have been paying them. I have not received any complain from the ECDE teachers that they have not been receiving their stipend. I am okay with that question if they have been paid unless other issues are raised.

Question three is on whether the county is prepared for the reopening of the schools county wide taking into account the Ministry of Health guidelines and what precautionary measures have been put into place to this effect. The committee has said that there is a circular (checklist). My question is that what does this circular or checklist include? What does it say?

The committee together with the department had not said how much they have received in this checklist. You do not just go ahead and say that we have received a checklist issued by the Ministry of Education. We wanted to know how they are prepared. If there is a checklist we then want to see that checklist.

They went ahead and explained what is happening in the VTCs but they did not explain what is happening in the ECDEs. What does the checklist contain? What is happening in the ECDEs? They have only said in the VTCs. How much have they complied with in this checklist for both the VTCs and the EDCEs? I am not satisfied with question three. They have just verbally talked about the checklist. They have not explained on how much they have achieved so far in that checklist.

Question four is on whether the County Government has adequate facilities and teachers to enable the resumption of learning to VTC and ECDE centres. Yes, there are adequate VTC trainers for each of the courses offered. On ECDE centres the caregivers are paid. They have not said that we have adequate facilities for both ECDEs and VTCs. They have deliberately not answered that question. This is because what they have answered is that if they have enough teachers for the courses offered in VTCs. What I believe is on if they have adequate facilities.

We have seen what is happening in primary and secondary schools, universities and colleges. The government is doing desks for all the primary and secondary schools. What is the county doing for them to have adequate facilities and equipment for these ECDEs and VTCs

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to reopen? They have not answered this question. What they have given is that if they have enough tutors for the different courses in VTCs.

The question was based on the issue of preparedness with the country reopening after COVID-19. Their answers should have been restricted and focused on how they are preparing taking into account the issues of COVID-19. The whole country is preparing on the same. It is our responsibility to do the same with the ECDEs and VTCs. They have not answered question four.

Question number five is on the status of the ECDE centres, 2019/2020 budget. This question was taking into account that this project in the 2019/2020 budget will help us to have additional facilities for us to be prepared. What they have answered is that they say yes some projects are complete and some are on-going. I do not know because I believe that there is only one classroom per ward. There are a total of 15 classrooms in this county. They should have listed those ones. Example, in Tigithi or certain ECDE centres, there is a class room that is on-going, has been completed or has not been started.

This is so that we are able to know the status. When you tell me verbally how do I then verify the one that is complete, on-going or not started? I believe that the one paragraph that they have given here is not an answer. Which one is in which status level? They have again not answered question five.

Question six talks on what plan the County Government has put in place for recruitment of qualified, motivated and well-trained teachers. The committee together with the department is talking on the issue of the requesting for the Cabinet approval for the employment of 864 ECDE caregivers with at least a caregiver in each ECDE centre to cater for PP1 and PP2. I do not know what they are referring to here. A caregiver is a teacher or who? Let me believe that they are talking of teachers.

When did they do this request for this approval? Did they receive and reply on the same? I believe that other counties have recruited teachers and caregivers. In Laikipia we are talking of seeking approvals. How do I believe that there was this request? We need to have seen some attachments that this was the letter that we did to the Ministry of Education seeking approval on this date. I can then be able to know when it was done.

They have just given a theory here. I cannot take it as an answer. After requesting for approval, what followed? What is the County Government doing? What have other counties done so that they are able to recruit those teachers? The other day when we were moving a motion on ECDEs, we talked of Kisumu recruiting ECDE teachers. We have seen other counties doing the same. In this question, we wanted to understand what is holding this county not to recruit these teachers.

There should have been some explanation. This is that depending on this law and regulation, we need to seek approvals from the Ministry of Education. They should then attach that law. That this is the day that we requested for this approval and this is what we have received. We can have something substantive to discuss on. Mr. Speaker, with all that I have said, I am not satisfied with the statement. Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Member for Umande, do you have any remark to make?

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Hon. Daniel Mugweru: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am surprised because I did not expect that. I do not know. I am not sure that the Hon. Member has said that it is just a theory. I do not know how you are supposed to respond in a practical way. Are we supposed to parade the teachers and the caregivers here? I did not understand that one. I expect that it is purely theoretical. He must go through it. We cannot do it practically in this House. If there is an ECDE class that is on-going we cannot then bring that incomplete ECDE here so as to do it practically.

On the first one the Hon. Member has said that he is not satisfied. I feel that being guided by what he asked for…

Speaker: Allow me a minute to get it clearly. On number one, he said that he is satisfied, number two he is satisfied…

Hon. Peter Matunge: Mr. Speaker, I think from number three to the last one is on what I was giving my reasons as to why I am not satisfied.

Speaker: So it is the first two.

Hon. Peter Matunge: I said it is a challenge for all of us in the first one. If you have not allocated resources then how do you expect them to implement that project?

Speaker: That is okay.

Hon. Peter Matunge: On number two, I have said that they have answered well. I was giving my reasons starting from number 3 to 6. I did not expect a Member to carry a classroom to this Assembly.

Hon. Daniel Mugweru: I am really suffering. I do not understand why I am supposed to sit here. Having said that he is satisfied with number one and two, I will just comment on number 3, 4, 5 and 6. On whether the County Government is prepared for the reopening of school's county wide taking into account all the Ministry of Health guidelines and what precautionary measures have been put in place to this effect.

The question raised is on how prepared we are. We can only respond on how prepared we are. If we are supposed to have 90 desks and you ask us how we are prepared and we only have 10 of them, I will then say that we are prepared with 10 desks. We are remaining with the other 80 desks. This is how far we are prepared by having water tanks, soaps and sanitizers. That was the question. How prepared are you? I am prepared in this way and to this far.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot come here to respond and say that the department is more prepared than it is. I have stated how prepared we are. If more details were needed, the question could be how prepared are you? If you are prepared well and good, if you are not prepared then what are the plans.

I feel that one should stick to what you are asked to respond to. If you ask me how prepared you are, I will say that I am prepared to this level. You can then raise a statement to ask that now you are prepared to this level and I expected you to be prepared to this level, how you are going about the remaining part. Although I am not the department, I am reading what

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the department responded and I am their representative in this House, I feel that they responded appropriately.

I do not want to comment on number four. I concur with him to some extent. I do not want to talk about that. Number five is on the status. The status is very clear. In the Financial Year 2019/2020, some of the projects are already complete while others are currently on-going. I feel that it is well responded to. Most of them are complete and a few are on-going.

The Hon. Members who represent those specific areas, the one who feels that it is not true can only say that it has not started. I am sure that in all the 15 wards the representatives can confirm that it is either complete or on-going. Example, that of Umande Ward is complete. Some of the Members here who represent those specific areas will confirm that theirs are complete. Those that have the on-going ones will truly confirm that they are on-going. The concern should be on if the statement has been responded to truthfully. I feel that one is well responded.

Mr. Speaker, number six is on what plans the County Government has put in place for recruitment of qualified, motivated and well trained teachers. The response is very clear. It is true that the department has confirmed that they do not have enough caregivers. They are waiting for approval to employ more caregivers to ECDEs. The department has also requested for approval of employment of more instructors. The question was on what plans. Those are the plans. They are very clear that we want to increase with 42. We want to raise the number to 864. Those are the plans. He only asked what the plans are.

If the plans are not satisfactory, you can only request and say that I am not satisfied with the plans, could you do this and this? As for now, that question is well answered. As I had said the challenge that we have is with responding to what you were not asked.

I was giving an example sometime back of the lame man. He lived somewhere waiting for the water to be stirred. Jesus was asking him; do you want to be healed. The guy was saying that I have been here for 38 years. You are only asked; do you want to be healed. You start saying that nobody is here to throw me into the sea when the water is stirred. Do you want to be healed? You are then giving more stories. I believe in restricting yourself to what you were asked. Thank you.

CONSIDERED RULING

Speaker: I do not know whether there is any other Member who has a remark on the same before I make my ruling. Number 1 and 2 are well responded to. Number 3 is on whether the county is prepared for the reopening of school's county wide taking into account all the Ministry of Health guidelines and what precautionary measures have been put in place to this effect. It is responded to. The VTCs have purchased water tanks, soaps, sanitizers and thermo guns and established water points for hand washing purposes. They have a circular that gives the checklist from the Ministry of Education.

Number four is not responded to. It talks of facilities but we are talking of trainers. Therefore, number four is not responded to. The committee needs to respond to that. In number 5, the committee needs to provide a list with the status. When we say that some projects are complete and others are incomplete, it does not give us the status as it is. We should be able to

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say that Umande classrooms are complete, yard ECDE is on the slab level and for this other ECDE, tendering is on-going. I think that is the correct status.

In number 6, on what plans the County Government has put in place for the recruitment of qualified, motivated and well trained teachers. I think that the committee has responded that they have requested for a Cabinet approval for the employment of 864 ECDE teachers. The committee needs to go and work on a number of things. That is number 4 and 5 as I have guided. That is something doable in another three weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, 1st October, 2020 at 2.30 p.m.

The House rose at 3.05 p.m.

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