

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Inaugural Devolution Study Group Sheds Light on Service Delivery and Revenue Division

The inaugural session of the Devolution Study Group, took place on August 24th, 2023, in Nairobi County in which SOCATT(K) participated. This event marked the commencement of a dialogue series under the theme "Impact Of Division Of Revenue On Service Delivery."

This significant gathering brought together a consortium of experts

and governance professionals, all dedicated to delving into the intricacies surrounding the determination and practical implementation of the annual revenue division formulae since 2013. The discussions aimed to shed light on both the historical developments and current concerns affecting the actual performance of service delivery in counties.

The study group was organised by the Kenya Devolution Program which is a 4-year program being implemented by a Non-Profit Consortium led by Act Change Transform (Act!) and funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the British High Commission in Nairobi.

Technology and Innovation-Digital Platform

Bungoma County Assembly, A Model Legislature

Members of the Public at a public forum



BY Erick Ngobilo

The County Assembly of Bungoma has set its sight on being a model County Assembly in the country and beyond.

The Clerk of the County Assembly Mr. Charles Wafula says the role of County Assemblies and the image portrayed by media and the public of the Members of County Assemblies across the country can only be improved through better legislation, oversight, representation and the quality of services offered to the public.

The Assembly has set out on a path of rolling out many initiatives and interventions that focus on effective and efficient service delivery to the public. Part of the initiatives rolled out involve leveraging on ICT to maximize productivity and save time.

"We began by revamping our website and uploading most of the critical information sought out by Members of the public.

Documents such as Committee Reports, the Hansard, Order Papers among others are now available at the click of the button. We have also increased our online presence through use of digital and new media," said Mr. Wafula.

In a bid to foster transparency and increase access to information in line with

the law, most of the County Assembly information that is not classified as confidential is available online.

Additional ICT initiatives include the roll out of the intranet system. Most of the operations at the County assembly are now paperless. The Intranet has modules that encompass all operations undertaken at the County Assembly. Procurement and financial operations at the County Assembly are fully electronic while some of the operations currently being undertaken manually shall soon be digitized including records management.

The County Assembly is implementing a number of activities envisaged in the Strategic Plan (20xx – 20xx). These includes implementation of the Service Charter, roll out of the Staff Performance Management, and roll out of the intranet system among other key initiatives.

A few months ago, the County Assembly was feted for being among four County Assemblies out of the 47 across the Republic for instituting mechanisms for resolution of public complaints and implementation of Service Charters.

The Commission on Administrative Justice (Ombudsman) presented the award to the County Assembly leadership at a major

event held at KICC, Nairobi. The President of Kenya H.E. William Ruto was to handover the Award in person but the Cabinet Secretary in Charge of Public Service Hon. Moses Kuria represented him.

The County Assembly has a robust mechanism for resolution of public complaints. There is established, County Assembly Ombudsman committee that deals with resolution of complaints both internally and externally. The Committee has timeliness within which to dispense off all matters brought before it.

The County Assembly equally has mechanisms for implementation of the County Assembly Service Charter. All services offered at the County Assembly are stipulated on Service Charter which are prominently displayed at strategic positions within the new Office Block for members of the public to see. The timelines within which the services are to be offered are strictly adhered to. Fees to be paid if any is clearly stipulated but most services are free of charge.

In 2022, in a bid to ensure efficiency in operations and overall organizational productivity, the County Assembly rolled out the staff performance management whose purpose is to ensure that work done



by all staff is documented, measured and rewarded.

Performance Management has made it easier for accountability amongst staff. Every staff has a daily workbook in which tasks undertaken are recorded. Staff members set their objectives and targets with their supervisors at the start of the financial year and work towards achieving them. The same is reviewed periodically to ensure challenges standing in the way of implementation are addressed.

It is through Staff Performance Management that the County Assembly has plans of rolling out a rewards and sanctions mechanism. This will form a basis for rewarding best performers and sanctioning those who fail to meet set targets. The performance contracting outcomes will be a basis for staff promotions as outlined in the Careers and Progression Manual.

As part of the Staff Performance Management, there are various areas that the County Assembly has to incorporate and report on. These include mainstreaming on HIV and AIDS, Disability Mainstreaming, National Cohesion, Corruption Prevention, Environmental Conservation, Use of ICT, Public Participation, Drug Abuse Prevention among others.

Parts of the initiatives embraced by the County Assembly include voluntary testing of staff for HIV/AIDS to make members aware of their status and regular sensitization to create awareness and support for those affected.

The County Assembly has a policy on Disability Mainstreaming. All facilities at the County Assembly from access to buildings, toilets, offices and even the main Debating Chamber are all disability friendly.

The County Assembly has complied with requirement on National Cohesion and Integration. The employees at the County Assembly reflect the face of the County and the Country by extension.

Under Prevention of Corruption, there is a robust mechanism for reporting corruption, whistle blowing and corruption prevention. Key registers and boxes for reporting corruption, whistle blowing and conflict of interest are strategically positioned within the premises. The County Assembly has a functional Corruption Prevention Committee headed by the Clerk of County Assembly and Integrity Officers. Sensitization workshops for staff and members are regularly conducted by both the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and the County Assembly leadership to ensure awareness is created.

The County Assembly has a robust Guiding and Counselling Committee that handles private matters touching on both staff and members. Regular training on work life balance and preparation for retirement are also held. Every year, a bonding and team building exercise bringing together Hon. Members and staff is held.

The Clerk Mr. Charles Wafula says all the efforts are geared towards ensuring quality service is offered to the public and

all stakeholders. He points out that work is clearly set out for all Hon. Members and staff and the County Assembly has set its eyes on getting ISO certification.

"It's not impossible. We want to be the first County Assembly in the entire Republic to be ISO Certified. We want others to benchmark from us. This is in line with our vision of "being a Model County Assembly that is proactive in service delivery," he says.

The Speaker of the County Assembly Hon. Emmanuel Situma says, the Board, the Leadership, the Management, Hon. Members and staff are all working together to ensure full implementation of the Strategic plan. He adds that the cooperation and cordial relationship amongst all actors has made implementation of most work seamless.

"We have an ultra-modern office block. We are in the process of putting up a new Debating Chamber. We are determined to put up infrastructure that will stand the test of time for generations to come. We want to create an enabling environment for exemplary service delivery," he says.

As the clock continues ticking, the County Assembly is gradually moving towards its goals. The strategies and policies laid out keep on being implemented as results unfold..

(The Writer is a Public Communications Officer at the County Assembly of Bungoma)

