COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF NAKURU

THE HANSARD

Third Assembly (Second Session)

Wednesday 20th September, 2023

Assembly Building

The House met at 10:15AM

[The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri) in the Chair]

PRAYERS.

NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

AUDITORS GENERAL REPORT ON THE NAKURU WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES COMPANY LIMITED

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): We have a Notice of Motion from the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts and Investment.

Hon. Robert Ruto: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. On behalf of the Chairperson of Public Accounts and Investment Committee, I wish to table the Report, THAT this House adapts the Report of Committee on Public Accounts and Investment on the Report of the Auditor General on the Financial Statements of Nakuru Water Sanitation Service Company Limited of Nakuru County for the year ended 30thJune, 2021.

NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

AUDITORS GENERAL REPORT ON NAKURU RURAL WATER AND SANITATION COMPANY LIMITED OF NAKURU COUNTY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30THJUNE, 2020.

Hon. Robert Ruto: Also, I wish to table on behalf of the Chairperson that this House adapts the Report of the Committee on County Public Accounts and Investment on the Report of the Auditor General on the Financial Statement of the Nakuru Rural Water and Sanitation Company Limited of Nakuru County for the year ended 30thJune, 2020.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you Hon. Ruto.

MOTION

ICT AND E-GOVERNMENT REPORT

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): There is a Motion by Hon. Hezy Kung'u, Chairperson Committee on ICT AND e-Government.

Hon. Hezy Kung'u: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. I want to move a Motion on a Report of ICT and e-Government Committee. The Report on the visit to Menengai Digital Center held on 26[th]July, 2023.

COMMITTEE MANDATE

The Sectoral Committee on ICT and e-Government is established under the Second Schedule of the Nakuru County Standing Orders and is mandated to deal with all matters relating to Access, Development, Use and Skill in ICT and e-Government. Access to information for PWDs.

OBJECTIVE OF THE VISIT

The objective of the visit was to:

1. Check on the status of service delivery at the Digital Center.

Check on the achievements of the Digital Center, challenges and areas of improvement as far as delivery of services is concerned.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MENENGAI DIGITAL CENTER

Menengai Digital Center is located at Menengai East Ward, Nakuru East Sub County, Nakuru County. The Menengai Social Hall Dias is partitioned to create space for the Menengai Digital Center. It is where Youth between the ages of 22-35years are trained on basic Computer Packages, Data Analysis, Essential Skills, Community Sessions, Comprehensive Curriculum and Mentorship Program. The training is fully-sponsored by the County Government of Nakuru. The objective of this partnership is geared towards addressing unemployment challenges among the Youth through ICT in Nakuru County.

Menengai Digital Center started in 2022 and 250 youth graduated having qualified and were issued with Certificates. However, the In-Charge Mr. David Opingo stated that the ICT Hub is not registered. There is an exchange program between Generation Kenya, Menengai Digital Center and Shabaab Digital Center. Currently the Digital Center has a total of 198 students but do not have a permanent teacher. However, there are five attaches from Kabarak University, Karatina University and Jomo Kenyatta University who are attached to train the Students in the Digital Center.

Menengai Digital Center program operates in three shifts as follows;
- i. 1st shift is at 10.00am - 12.00pm,
- ii. 2nd shift is at 12.00pm - 2.00pm

iii.   3rd shift is at 2.00pm - 4.00pm.

Nakuru County has 7 Digital Centers namely: Shabaab, Kuresoi South, Subukia, Rongai, Menengai East, Kagoto and Naivasha which are spread across the County and are also running similar programs. The objective of the Digital Centers is to provide a platform for youth to train, work online and provide space for Innovations and Research at no cost, thus a way of reducing youth unemployment.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS.

The following are the Findings and Observations that were highlighted by the Committee and the In-Charge Officer Mr. David Opingo of the Menengai Digital Center during the visit;

1. The ICT Hub is located inside Menengai Social HALL at the partitioned dais with one Server Room. However, the ICT Hub is not registered.
2. Menengai Digital Center has 35 computers, out of which 31 are fully functional and online while 4 computers are not functional due to Hardware problems.
3. The Digital Center has one Internet Service provider with a good Software for Transcribing.
4. The Training program is free to youth between 22-35 years courtesy of the County Government of Nakuru.
5. The facility has been able to mentor 250 youth to date.
6. Currently the Digital Center has 5 Attaches who train the students.
7. The Center experiences frequent Internet instability.
8. The ICT Hub was congested due to limited space hence lack of proper operation
9.   Lack of a Board (Membership) to manage the Digital Center and permanent Teachers.
10. There is an Exchange Program between Generation Kenya, the Menengai Digital Center and Shabaab Digital Center.
11. The ICT Hub does not have a projector.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above Observations, the Committee made the following Recommendations;
1. That, the In-charge Mr. David Opingo should work closely with the Director ICT to fast-track repair of the 4 non-functional Computers.
2. That, the County Government of Nakuru should ensure contracting two Internet Service Providers who will be resourceful to curb internet instability.
3. The County Government of Nakuru should consider hiring of two permanent teachers to be attached to Menengai Digital Center and a Board of Management.
4. That, the County Government of Nakuru should consider expanding the Digital Center by constructing a new modern structure.

5. The County Government of Nakuru to consider registering Menengai Digital Center so that qualified students can be issued with Accredited Certificates.
6. The County Government of Nakuru to consider facilitating Menengai Digital Center with a Projector.

I wish to thank Members of this Committee for their commitment during the Committee visit to Menengai Digital Center, held on 26[th]July, 2023. Also, I want to thank the Office of the Speaker and the Clerk for their facilitation during the visit.
I move the Motion and I would like to ask Hon. Kirui to second the Motion.

Hon. Bernard Kirui: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. I do second. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you. The Motion is properly seconded and it is open for debate. The Honorable Member for Maai Mahiu Ward.

Hon. Eliud Chege: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir. First, I would like to thank the Committee on ICT and e-Government for the good work they did. I was among the people who visited that Digital Hub and as the Committee recommended, there are several issues that I would like to touch on and make this House be aware. One, in that Digital Center, there is a team that is called Generation Kenya that is partnering with our County. They are experiencing a lot of problems and I think that as a County, we have a role and a duty to assist and to offer any help to those people who are willing to partner and work with us Mr. Speaker. They had two teachers in a class, and they were very congested. As the Committee has just recommended, the teacher does not even have a Projector, he is trying to train the students using a book which is giving them a very hard time. That recommendation of providing that Digital Center with a Projector is very crucial. They are also experiencing unstable internet which is a big challenge. If you look at the youth who are there, I happened to interview some of them and they have come all the way from Njoro. One of them was claiming that she came on foot all the way from Njoro. That is a clear indication that those students are very much willing to learn and we have a role to facilitate and help them to our level best.

We also observed that they had 31 computers and four were not functioning so we recommended that at least something should be done. We can also do a modern Digital Class because the current learning sitting arrangement is they learn in one round table. If you look at our Country right now, we are running a Digital Country and also our youth are getting jobs outside our Country through digital training and the level of unemployment in our Country is very high. So, if we cannot facilitate those programs in computer then we will be failing as a County.

I would like to thank our Chairperson for that determination and also the Members. I wish that all recommendations that were recommended by this Committee will be considered. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you the Hon. Member for Maai Mahiu. The Hon. Member for Nakuru East.

Hon. Anthony Kanyere: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir for giving me this chance. First and foremost, I would like to commend the good work done by the ICT and e-Government Committee. They have highlighted some issues which are of concern and one of the issues is the registration of the ICT Hub. In the presentation, I heard the Chairperson saying that there are some students who were given certificates, so I wonder if the Center has not been registered is that certificate really authentic, and is it recognised by other Bodies? They do not even have a permanent teacher or Tutor. I think we should have a clear roadmap from the ICT Department. They need to tell us if this issue of ICT Hubs was an afterthought or they have a plan because I understand that even the National Government from what the President said the other day is to establish ICT Centers in each and every Ward. They should use what we have as a parameter or to measure what is going to be done and see the successes that have been achieved. We can see that four of their computers are broken down and the internet provision is not sufficient. The Committee needs to do a lot of work by engaging the CEC from the relevant Department to know the roadmap that they have because having heard what my colleague from Maai Mahiu has said, some came all the way from Njoro on foot so that they can get free service that is being offered.

I also want to urge the Nakuru County Government to establish these ICT Centers in other Sub Counties so that we can give service to other deserving youth especially those coming from Njoro. They might want to come to town and I understand now that life has become difficult especially on transport. We need to domesticate these things at Ward level. The Chairperson ICT has a lot of work. He needs to give the House a road map from that Department. Thank you and that is my take.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you. The Hon. Member for Olkaria.

Hon. Peter Palanga: Thank you Mr. Speaker for allowing me to contribute to this. I must appreciate the...

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): What is the order the Hon. Member for Maai Mahiu?

Hon. Eliud Chege: Mr. Speaker I think when we were labelling these tables in this House we had enough reasons and in case any person is absent in the House no one should assume their seats. I can see Honorable Palang'a is in the Speaker's Panel Seat and also other Honorable Members. They should resume their Seats as in the order of this House, please Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): That is noted. The Hon. Member for Olkaria are you aware that you are seated in the space for the Speaker's Panel?

Hon. Peter Palang'a: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I want to confirm that I am not even aware as to where I am seated but what I am aware of is that I am within the precinct of the Assembly and I had not read where I am seated.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): The Hon. Member for Olkaria, the way you are not able to sit at a place designated for say the Deputy Speaker or Leader of Majority Party is the same way that you are not able to sit at a place that is not designated for let us say Chairperson for Lands or the Honorable Member for Olkaria. We are going to allow you to sit there this Morning but in the Afternoon Session, kindly before you sit, confirm the spaces designated to what category of Members.

Hon. Peter Palang'a: Thank you honorable Speaker, I am most obliged and advised accordingly and learning is a process, no one is well versed with every information so I am well guided. I am happy that Honorable Member who is my Vice Chairperson seated on the other side could see where I am seated. I think that I am equally advised that before I assume my seat in the next session I will have to adhere to that. I had just stood up to make some contribution to this noble Report that has been presented to us by the able Chairperson for ICT and e-Government.

I do not recall any other time that we have received a Report from this Department but again that does not mean that we have not had any Report there before, but just debating on this particular Report, I would like to applaud the Committee and its membership for the job well done. When such a Report is tabled in this House they are meant to give us a platform and even to foster for future developments. Out of this Report, I will not get into the observations as such but I will just get to the recommendations of course emanating from the observations.

It is worth noting that a fully-fledged facility like that does not have any teacher permanently hired by the County Government. Noting that we only have some teachers coming from the Universities around which again we do not know the mode of engagement with these particular teachers if they are not permanently hired. I do not know whether there could be some payment to that effect but then that brings us to the need to have to transit from the colonial era to digital era. I have heard some Members saying that the ancient time of operating is not the way things are. Of course we have moved to the digital era and there is need to have hired teachers. Picking up from where the Honorable Member from Menengai had said where for example, there were some Certificates issued to some students whereas again the Institution had not been registered. We also need to be very cautious enough so that we do not subject our youth to a process where by the end of it, it is not like legally abiding or authentic. You know like now students having undertaken the training up to the point they are issued the Certificates but again the rationale of the authenticity of the Institution is in question. That is a matter that we need to check seriously that going forward we do not subject our students to such Institutions only to find that the Institutions are not registered.

I have also heard that which again is in the public domain, we are moving to digitalising all the Urban Centers within the Country not only just within the County. That gives us a platform on

how and what is it that we need to do to ensure that we domesticate these kinds of facilities to respective arears in our respective Counties.

Recently like a Month or two weeks ago, there was an ICT Center that was launched within my Ward by the Cabinet Secretary Eliud Owalo and I think this should be replicated to many other areas. Of course this gives a platform for our youth to seek for employment online and all that. I want to echo and support that indeed the findings are very good and Mr. Chairperson do not get tired of going out to other facilities and even ensuring we make this as a bench mark to ensure that this Department is adequately funded Mr. Chairperson, because again if you look into the budget previously, it is like some Departments are not really funded at the expense of other Departments. We need to balance as a House to ensure that such Departments equally receive some equitable funding to operationalise these Departments. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you; the Honorable Member for Malewa.

Hon. Francis Kuria: Thank you Hon. Speaker, first is to commend the good job by the Committee. I rise to support this Motion. The word itself, "Menengai Digital Centre", means there is transformation from the previous regime to the new regime. Also, the word still, "digital," means that we are shifting from the previous era to a new era and my support is our youth need to be educated so that they can have the knowledge and technical know-how to handle this. Remember the world where we are is more digitalised and we are using the Networking System. Therefore, as I support the Motion, urge the Chairperson that he needs to push the Department so that they can get more funds so that the facilitation of the equipment in that facility can be on the higher side and that the services that are being offered there can be fully facilitated. Thank you Hon. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you; the Hon. Member for London Ward.

Hon. Bernard Gatuso: Thank you Mr. Speaker for giving me this opportunity so that I can also give my input. Number one is to commend the Committee on ICT and e-Government for the good job that they have been able to do. I think we are moving towards a Global Village where ICT will be widely used. You can be able to do business when you are in this Country with other Countries. Having such Centers will be equip our people and prepare our young generation so that they can transact business with other Partners in the World.

I believe going by what we were able to see the other day where there was recruitment of Military Officers or *Jeshi,* I think majority of the recruits that went for the exercise, they needed 300 individuals so that they can offer services in military but I believe to some extent, with such kind of unemployment status in this Country, I believe technology is the way to go. To some extent, because we have been interacting with different individuals within our communities, I am believer in this industry of technology. We have been able to get quite a good number of people who have been able to earn a living through such a thing.

So Members, especially elected Members, we take this as a challenge and set such facilities in our Wards so that we can ease movement of our young generation from one Ward to the other, Considering the cost of living in terms of movement and transport has gone high, I believe that is one way we can help our people. The other thing is that ICT is a component that is being supported by the Head of State Dr. William Samoe Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya whereby in so many occasions he has been trying to say that we need to have such facilities at Ward level so that we can help our people.

In terms of Education where Honorable Nene can confirm that majority of students are doing online learning and considering that we are working from different parts of this Country where to some extent, people are not able to go to school, colleges considering that their places of employment are far from such facilities. So, having these facilities will equip our people so that they can as much as they get opportunities in terms of working, they can learn from such facilities. To some extent, I believe this is a good Report whereby the Implementation Committee is supposed to take a step and ensure that the Department will implement each and every Report that has been passed in this House instead of being put on the shelves where we are not getting value for the Committee sitting down and passing such kind of a Report. Lastly, is to say that Technology is the way to go, let us embrace it and unanimously as this House support the Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you; the Hon. Member for Flamingo.

Hon. David Muraya: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for giving me this opportunity to contribute on this Motion of ICT and e-Government. First, I would like to commend the Committee led by the Chairperson for this action they have decided take. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I am very happy to see that the ICT Hub is located within Menengai and this is very good because it can serve so many people, students that are within that locality. We have Bondeni, Flamingo and other villages that we have huge population who are vulnerable lives and cannot afford for their Children to go be educated on how to use those computers. So, on observation by the Committee, the ICT hub do not have a Projector which was one of their observation and within the recommendation, I have seen that the Committee has recommended that the Projector must be bought. So, I also look at this point no.4 in the observation that the Training Program is free for the youth aged between 22-35 years, courtesy of the County Government which is highly commendable Mr. Speaker. I would like to also refer to the recommendation that within Menengai Social Hall, we have very big space where we can build that Hub and I am very happy because already this has been brought before us here and what I would like to say is to support this Motion fully so that our children can learn and have get ideas on how to do Internet Business. Thank you Mr. Speaker, I support.

The Speaker (Hon. Joel Karuri): Thank you the Honorable Member of Flamingo. Chairman, as Members were discussing this Report, there are areas that clarity needs to be made and as such, you need to have an urgent meeting that is in the next two weeks between the Committee and the Department and the area MCA to see what areas of cooperation exist, because now it has been said

that they are the partners; we are not sure whether they are the partners who provide the Computers' Hardware, and who pays the Instructors. On another point we have seen that there are no teachers or Instructors. Then they are housed in a Social Hall. So you may need to during that meeting, to bring it out; was it properly thought from the start or maybe it is a project that was boarded along the way. So, have that urgent meeting so that you can have very deliberate point of action even moving to the future. I am going to call it to question.

(Question proposed that this House adopts the Report of the Committee on ICT and e-Government on the site visit to Menengai Digital Centre on 25th July, 2023.)

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

This House stands adjourned until 2.30 this afternoon.

The House rose at 10.55AM