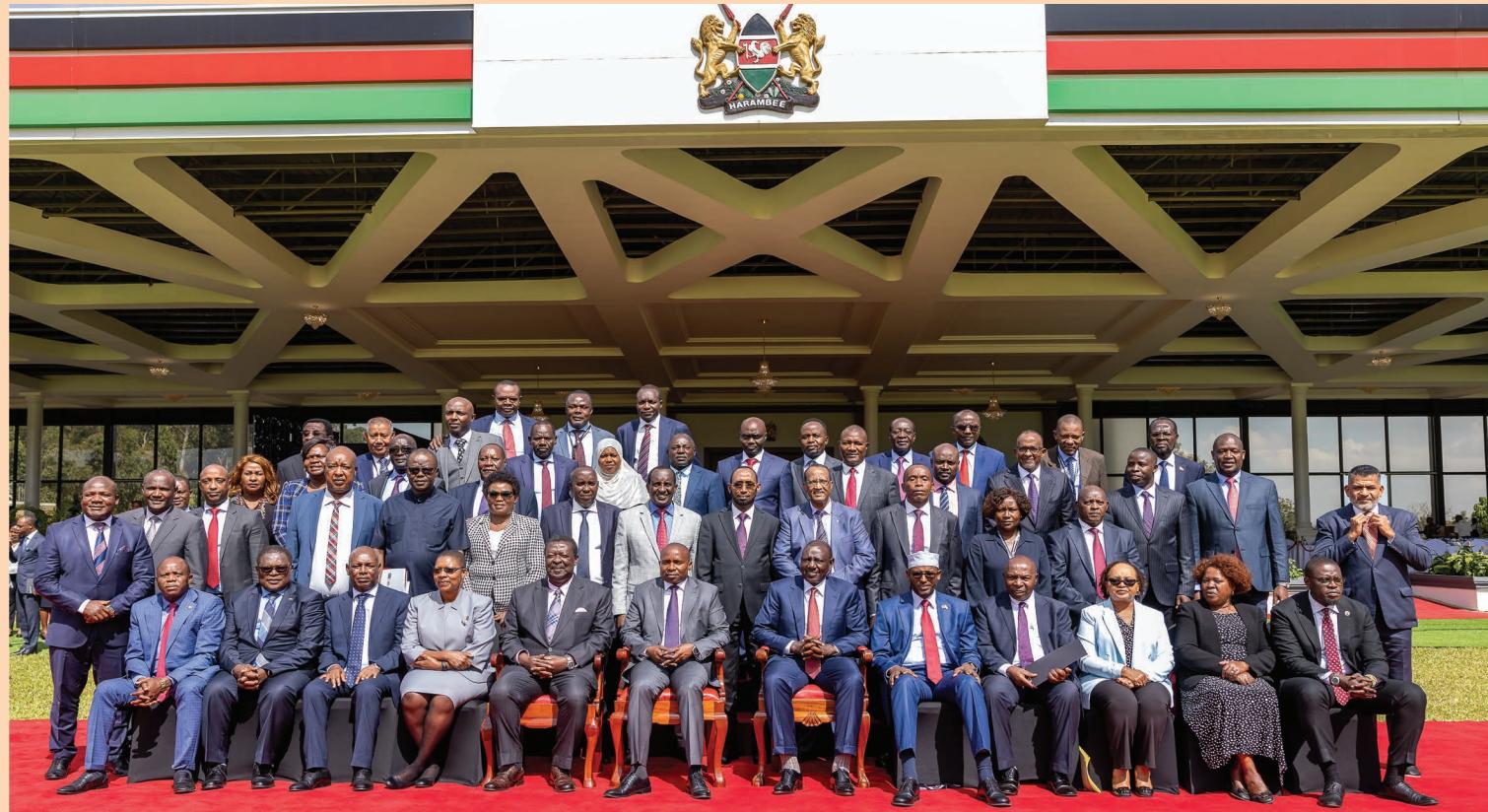


THE COUNCIL MONTHLY



H.E President William Ruto (Centre) and excellency Governors during the 11th Ordinary session of the National and County Governments coordinating summit at State House

WIN FOR COUNTIES AS PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO ORDERS THE TRANSFER OF RESOURCES FOR DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS



County Governments are set to receive all the budgets and resources of the devolved functions still held by the National Government starting July 2025.

Speaking during the 11th Ordinary session of the National and County Governments coordinating summit held on 16th December 2024 at State House, President William Ruto directed that all the unbundled functions and the attendant resources be transferred to County Governments to enable them effectively execute their mandate.

This move follows the finalization of the unbundling, delineation and transfer of the said functions in line with the directive of the previous Summit.

President William Ruto speaking during the 11th Ordinary session of the National and County Governments coordinating summit

"We are alive to the financial constraints facing both levels of government and the delays in disbursing funds to County Governments. My administration is working hard to ensure Counties receive exchequer releases on time," noted President William Ruto adding that the National Treasury shall disburse all the pending equitable share allocation for the month of November 2024 to the 47 County Governments.

Governors led by the Council of Governors (CoG) Chair H.E Ahmed Abdullahi welcomed this move noting that it would go a long way in addressing the teething challenges facing Counties - particularly pending bills, enhancing service delivery and facilitating the implementation of development projects.

NEWS INSIDE

1

WIN FOR COUNTIES AS PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO ORDERS THE TRANSFER OF RESOURCES FOR DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS

2

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND COUNTIES URGED TO ENHANCE COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE DEVOLUTION

3

LAUNCH OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 1,236 EQUALIZATION FUND PROJECTS IN 34 COUNTIES

4

STAKEHOLDERS MARK MILESTONES IN KENYA'S HEALTH SECTOR IN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE UHC

5

UGATUZI CORNER

6

KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH

"We are called to serve the Kenyan people. I therefore urge both levels of government to continue working together to realize our shared vision for this country," added the Wajir Governor while making his maiden speech as the Vice Chairperson of the Summit.

President William Ruto further lauded the consultative and collaborative efforts between both levels of government urging all ministries, departments, and agencies to hasten the dispute resolution processes by taking advantage of alternative resolution mechanisms to unlock intergovernmental disagreements.

On matters health, the challenges facing the roll out of the new Social Health Authority (SHA) were highlighted, with the President calling upon all stakeholders to come together to ensure quality health service delivery during the transition and the successful roll out of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Further it was agreed that: all the drugs

We are alive to the financial constraints facing both levels of government and the delays in disbursing funds to County Governments. My administration is working hard to ensure Counties receive exchequer releases on time

President William Ruto

procured through KEMSA by the County
ments shall be branded 'NOT FOR SALE'; all
stipend owed to the Community Health Promoters
paid before 25th December 2024; and a collaborative
work shall be developed jointly by the Ministry of Health and Council of
Governors (CoG) on the National Equipment Service Programme (NESP).

The summit deliberated on key issues affecting various sectors including: Implementation of intergovernmental programmes and projects such as the Economic stimulus markets project, Affordable Housing and County Aggregation and Industrial Parks; Impact of the reduction of the Equitable Share on the implementation of the SRC salary adjustment for county officers, Housing Levy, Social Health Insurance Fund and payment of the Annual salary increment to County Government Officers.



CoG Chair H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi speaking during the 11th Ordinary session of the National and County Governments coordinating summit

Key resolutions agreed upon are as follows: the pending valuation of the defunct local authorities' assets and those related to devolved functions shall be fast tracked and concluded by the Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee to facilitate transfer to County Governments by June 30th 2025; the two levels of government shall facilitate the establishment and operationalization of the respective consultative Intergovernmental Sector Forums to facilitate seamless intergovernmental relations; the Ministry of Agriculture and the Council of Governors shall carry out further consultations to facilitate adequate and timely distribution of the subsidized fertilizers to farmers; and for effective implementation and operationalization of the County Aggregation and Industrial Parks (CAIPs), the two levels of government shall develop enabling policy and legal frameworks.

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND COUNTIES URGED TO ENHANCE COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE DEVOLUTION

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki on Friday 13th December 2024 presided over his inaugural Intergovernmental Budget and Economic Council (IBEC) meeting, marking a significant step in fostering collaboration between the National Government and County Governments. The 25th Ordinary Session of IBEC was held at his official residence in Karen, Nairobi bringing together Cabinet Secretaries, Governors, and other key stakeholders.

"Guided by the spirit of collaboration and coordination and the need to minimize bureaucracy in service delivery, I call upon all devolution stakeholders to work in harmony to ensure efficient service delivery to the citizens of the Republic of Kenya," Kindiki said.

The Chair of the Council of Governors (CoG), H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi, highlighted that the IBEC served as a vital platform for consultation and

cooperation between the National and County Governments on key matters such as budgeting, economic planning, financial management, and integrated development.

"I call upon all members of the IBEC to approach today's discussions with openness and a focus on practical solutions. I would also like to encourage His Excellency the Deputy President, this being your inaugural IBEC meeting, to set the pace and provide the necessary stewardship to proclaim this as a platform for dialogue that enables us to address the pressing issues affecting our nation. Together, let us chart a path that ensures fiscal prudence, equitable resource allocation, and sustainable economic growth for the benefit of all Kenyans," said H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi.



Deputy President H.E. Kithure Kindiki (Centre) alongside CoG Chair H.E Ahmed Abdullahi (second right) during the the 25th Ordinary session of IBEC



H.E. Kawira Mwangaza (right) H.E. Benjamin Cheboi (Centre) and H.E. Gideon Mungaro (Left) during the 25th Ordinary Session of IBEC



During the meeting, it was agreed that commitment by both levels of government to promote effective coordination, cooperation, and consultation is paramount in safeguarding devolution and ensuring efficient service delivery.

The National Treasury was urged to fast-track amendments to the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) of 2012 to facilitate easier access to conditional grants for counties. Counties were also encouraged to strengthen administrative processes, adopt innovative revenue collection strategies, and measures to minimize financial leakages.

“Together, let us chart a path that ensures fiscal prudence, equitable resource allocation, and sustainable economic growth for the benefit of all Kenyans”

H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi

implement

The IBEC meeting set the stage for transformative reforms, including fast-tracking asset transfers, streamlining revenue systems, and addressing financial bottlenecks. These measures are expected to bolster service delivery and foster a harmonious working relationship between the two levels of government.



CoG Whip H.E. Stephen Sang (Right) and CoG CEO Mary Mwiti (Left) during the 25th Ordinary Session of IBEC

LAUNCH OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 1,236 EQUALIZATION FUND PROJECTS IN 34 COUNTIES

The Council of Governors (CoG) led by the Chair, H.E Ahmed Abdullahi joined the Prime CS H.E Musalia Mudavadi and other dignitaries for the launch of the implementation of 1,236 equalization fund projects and the launch of the Equalization Fund 2024 - 28 strategic plan at the KICC grounds, Nairobi on 4th December 2024.

The Equalization Fund, established under Article 204 of the Constitution, is envisaged to advance equity and inclusion by ensuring the quality of services in marginalized areas is brought to the level generally enjoyed by the rest of the nation. This launch is a testament to the commitment of County Governments in addressing the disparities that have historically denied some regions the full benefits of national development and ensuring that no citizen is left behind, regardless of where they live.

The 34 beneficiary Counties identified the aforementioned projects through a rigorous engagement with the public. Most of the projects identified are those that seek to address challenges in the provision of basic services such as water, roads, health facilities and electricity.

Making his remarks the CoG Chair noted that these projects will not only improve access to critical infrastructure and services but also restore the dignity of communities that have for long been left behind.

“While today marks a significant milestone, it is important to address the challenges that have hampered the operationalization of this fund. This includes delay in implementation which has impacted the fund's ability to deliver on



CoG Chair H.E. FCPA Ahmed Abdullahi (Right) and Prime CS H.E Hon Musalia Mudavadi (Left) during the launch of the implementation of 1,236 equalization fund projects

its intended purpose within the original timeline of 20 years,” added H.E Ahmed Abdullahi further urging Parliament to consider suspending the effect of the sunset clause governing the Equalization Fund.

The County Chiefs also called upon the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA) to expedite the review and publishing of the third policy of marginalization, ensuring that it is comprehensive and takes into consideration the structural and historical issues.

“Historically marginalized counties, predominantly located in the ASAL regions, have endured limited access to basic services. We should focus more on uplifting communities whose marginalization is rooted in decades of neglect. By doing so, we will preserve the fund's integrity and ensure its impact is sustainable,” noted H.E Nathif Jama, Chair CoG ASALs and Disaster Risk Management Committee.

The National Treasury CS Hon. John Mbadi on his part committed to ensure that disbursement of allocations to the Equalization Fund will be timely, current and predictable to enable the fund realize its intended objectives.

The Council of Governors calls upon all stakeholders to work together towards building a more equitable and inclusive nation where no citizen is left behind.



Excellency Governors during the launch of the implementation of 1,236 equalization fund projects



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STAKEHOLDERS MARK MILESTONES IN KENYA'S HEALTH SECTOR IN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE UHC



CoG CEO Mary Mwiti speaking during the 22nd Health Sector Intergovernmental Consultative Forum (HSIGCF)

The Council of Governors (CoG) led by the CEO Mary Mwiti joined stakeholders in the health sector at the Kenya School of Government, Nairobi on 10th December 2024, for the 22nd Health Sector Intergovernmental Consultative Forum (HSIGCF) themed “Accelerating Health Sector Reforms Towards Attaining Universal Health Coverage. This forum offered a platform to foster structured dialogue on matters health and build consensus and commitment between the two levels of government.

The meeting brought together senior National and County Government officials, including Health CS Dr. Deborah Barasa; PS, State Department of Devolution Teressia Mbaike; Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee (IGRTC) Chair Dr. Githinji Kiragu; Ms. Mary Muthoni, from the State Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health; CEO, Digital Health Agency Mr. Antony Lenaiyara; County Executive Committee Members for health(CECMs); Members of the County Assembly Forum; development partners; the private sector, civil society organizations, professional associations, and Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGAs).

Addressing the Human Resources for Health (HRH) agenda, CoG CEO Mary Mwiti emphasized the importance of a robust, well-distributed, competent, and motivated health workforce for building a resilient health system.

“Critical areas for improvement include increasing investments, data-driven decision making in managing HRH and digitization of the health sector,” she added.

Ms. Khatra Ali, Director of the CoG Health Committee further noted the need to improve service delivery and quality of care, tackle climate change issues in health, and enhance collaborations between implementing partners and counties in running health programs.



PS, State Department of Devolution Teressia Mbaike speaking during the 22nd Health Sector Intergovernmental Consultative Forum (HSIGCF)

The 22nd HSIGCF advanced discussions on UHC reforms, showcasing significant progress in implementing reforms across health system building blocks. On health financing, sustainable healthcare financing remains a concern, with counties allocating over 30% of their budgets to health. The operationalization of the Facility Improvement Financing (FIF) framework was noted as a milestone and 43 counties have enacted FIF laws.

Additionally, the bottlenecks affecting the rollout of social health insurance under the Taifa Care framework were highlighted with stakeholders committing to jointly address the challenges. These include: access credentials for the provider portal for public facilities; modalities for covering indigents and special groups; capitation, and delayed service activation under the SHIF benefits package.

Further, strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC) was emphasized, particularly through the establishment of Primary Health Care Networks (PCNs), with a current deficit of 119 networks. On digitalization, the Ministry of Health presented a roadmap for connecting health facilities to the power grid and the internet while activating the Health Information Exchange.

The implementation of FIF Act by Counties provides an opportunity to expand the fiscal space for health financing, ultimately resulting in a steady supply of health commodities, an empowered workforce and enhanced quality of care

CoG CEO Mary Mwiti

KEMSA's of progress in urged to enhance technologies (HPTs) to

improved order refill rates serving as evidence supply chain management. Counties were the procurement of health products and technologies (HPTs) to support ongoing health reforms at PHC facilities.

On partnerships and coordination, It was resolved that the Ministry of Health (MOH) will spearhead a review of the Health Sector Partnerships and Coordination Framework to streamline stakeholder engagement, consolidate health funds for efficiency, and improve intergovernmental relations. These measures aim to ensure the successful implementation of health reforms and sustainable progress toward attaining Universal Health Coverage.



PS, State Department of Public Health Mary Muthoni speaking during the 22nd Health Sector Intergovernmental Consultative Forum (HSIGCF)



BUILD ON LESSONS LEARNT TO ENHANCE KENYA'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR

CS Agriculture and Livestock Development, Hon. Dr. Andrew Karanja (centre) CoG Vice Chair H.E. Dr. Mutahi Kahiga (4th left), and Chair, CoG Agriculture and Livestock Committee H.E. Kenneth Lusaka (4th right), World Bank representatives, alongside 47 CECMs for Agriculture and Finance during the Joint National and County Governments consultative meeting for World Bank-funded Agriculture Projects in Mombasa.

Key stakeholders from the National Government, County Governments, and the World Bank held a consultative meeting to assess the performance of agriculture projects funded by the Bank, with a key focus on three major projects: the National Value Chain Development Project (NAVCDP), the Food Systems Resilience Project (FSRP), and the Emergency Locust Response Project (ELRP).

Speaking during the event, Governor Lusaka emphasized the importance of joint efforts in achieving agricultural transformation.

"The success of these projects demonstrates the power of collaboration between the National and County Governments, supported by our development partners, in building sustainable food systems, resilience and improving the livelihoods of our people," he said.

Bungoma and Samburu counties stood out for their exemplary performance, receiving Gold Awards for the NAVCDP and ELRP projects, respectively. Additional recognition was given to Garissa, Kwale, Embu, Tharaka Nithi, and Narok counties for their contributions.

STRENGTHENING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE IMPLEMENTATION: A LOOK AT PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NETWORKS OF THE LAKE REGION AND WESTERN COUNTIES

In 2023, the Primary Health Care (PHC) Act was enacted thereby establishing Primary Health Care Networks (PCNs) whose main goal is to facilitate delivery and access to primary health care services from the community, as well as coordinate health facilities to improve the overall County health service delivery.

On 11th November and 14th November, 2024, PHC Coordinators from the Lake Region Economic Bloc and Western Region convened in Bungoma to share their experiences in PHC implementation. During this forum, several best practices and innovations were identified.

First is the use of digital tools to operationalize PCNs. Bungoma County has established a PHC Vital Sign Profile (VSP) dashboard that measures four main PHC indicators- financing, capacity, performance and equity. The dashboard can exhibit healthcare trends in the County, among others: nurses/doctors to population ratio; service coverage; and maternal mortality. Similarly, Kericho County is utilizing digital solutions that link PCNs to health facilities enabling down-up and department-department referrals. In addition, Vihiga County's application of geo-mapping of PHC services is increasing efficiency and supporting informed decision-making and the County has established a Health Facilities dashboard.



CoG Director Health Khatra Abdi speaking to PHC Coordinators, Community Health Assistants and CHPs from the LREB and Western Region



Community Health promoter during a home visit to one of the patients

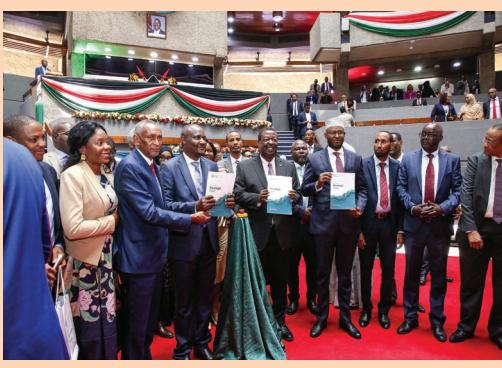
Secondly, Counties have developed innovative practices to further enable access to services. Kisumu County has established mini-hubs that are connected to the main hub known as Ward Practice Groups (WPGs). A WPG Committee is led by a facility in-charge and composed of the Community Health Assistant (CHA), a laboratory technician, a clinical officer, a public health officer and relevant partners.

The field visits to the households and to the health facilities revealed several challenges that need to be addressed to ensure full implementation of PHC. To illustrate, in Kimilili Sub- County, it emerged that there were only four (4) CHAs manning thirty-one (31) Community Health Units (CHUs). This means that some CHAs are managing more than five (5) CHUs whereas in an ideal situation, one CHA should only handle at most two (2) CHUs.

To promote PHC sustainability for quality, affordable and accessible health-care, Counties will need to invest in: good governance and innovative financing models; peer to peer learning; partnerships and collaboration.



KEY EVENTS OF THE MONTH



48 Governments 1 Nation