

Tuesday, 28th April, 2020 COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF SIAYA DEBATES

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

SIAYA COUNTY ASSEMBLY

THE HANSARD

Second County Assembly – Fourth Session

Tuesday 28th March, 2020

The House met at the County Assembly Chamber, at 2.30 p.m.

[The Deputy Speaker (Hon. Oduor) in the Chair]

PRAYER

MOTION

PROGRESS REPORT ON COVID - 19 SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Yes, Hon. Otiato!

Hon. Otiato: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I believe each Member has a copy of the report. The committees having met for the past four weeks, and undertaken various activities and plans towards the achievement of their objectives as per their mandates; present to this House the FIRST PROGRESS REPORT of the main activities undertaken, and the rest of the activities planned in the succeeding months.

Upon the completion of the elections and part of the committees' work plans, the committees undertook an in –depth review of the exiting measures put in place by the County and National Governments and the issues arising from the COVID – 19 pandemic. After the reviews, the committees niched out the following key thematic areas that would form the terms of reference and scope of their work.

1. Health Issues – Including community health, testing, quarantine, isolation centers, ICU facilities and other medical equipment, health personnel and drug supplies within the County
2. Economic and Finance Issues – Including macro – economic effects, impact on business within the County, impact on Trade and measures to cushion business and traders within the County, particularly with regard to licensing rates, fees and charges
3. Prevention Measures – Including intervention strategies and measures that can be put in place to enhance the prevention of the spread of COVID – 19

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4. Resource Mobilization / Funding– Including measures and actions geared towards mobilizing both human and financial resources and support towards combating COVID – 19 and its related effects
5. Collaborations– Including measures that can be put in place to ensure synergies and linkages among various players in the governmental and non-government organizations, in supporting the containment of COVID – 19 and its attendant impacts
6. Social Issues – Including protection of the vulnerable persons and groups, protection of women and girls at risk of abuse, persons with disability, children, the aged, affected persons and households within the County
7. Access to Food, Water and other basic Commodities – Including measures to be undertaken by the County Government to ensure that vulnerable households have sustainable access to food, water and other essential commodities during this period of COVID – 19
8. Distribution of Commodities and Supplies– Including safe modes of distribution and measures that can be put in place to ensure equitable distribution of commodities and supplies among targeted groups and persons, geared towards combating COVID – 19 and its associated impacts

In addition, as part of their terms of reference, the committee agreed to incorporate the possibility of undertaking virtual meetings as was earlier directed by a communication from the Chair and as a strategy to help combat the spread of COVID – 19.

In addition, recognizing that the committee's main objective is to complement the actions of the County Executive and National Government, the Umbrella special committee vide a letter dated Reference CAS/20/45 dated 22nd April 2020, has requested the County Emergency Response Committee to provide it with documents and information, with the view to amalgamate activities and improve on the work plans. The key information requested included;

1. Program of Activities of the County Emergency Response Committee
2. Work plan of the County Emergency Response Committee, clearly indicating responsible persons for various activities
3. Budget for the activities and measures to be undertaken by the County Emergency Response Committee to combat the spread of COVID – 19
4. Activities and Measures undertaken so far by the County Emergency Response Committee and their cost implications
5. Key policies and legislative measures that may require the approval and enactment by the County Assembly to facilitate, measures and activities of the County Emergency response committee

The committees are of the opinion that with this documents and information, they will be able to improve their work plans and properly align their activities with the Executive and the National Government to ensure complementarity. In line with Article 196 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, which obligated the County Assembly to ensure the involvement of members of the public in its activities an plans the Special Committee vide a newspaper advert which appeared

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on page 27 of the Daily Nation dated 24th April, 2020, has invited the members of the public, including organized groups such as the Business Communities, Civil Society Organizations, Religious groups, Persons with Disability, Women Organizations, Youth groups, affected persons and households, among others, to submit any presentation related to the COVID -19 pandemic and its impact on their daily lives, for consideration.

These submissions shall be clustered in the identified themes above and considered by the various committees and reported to the House for onward communication to the relevant agencies for action. So far the committee has acknowledged great interest of members of the Public and other non-governmental organizations who have committed to submit the memoranda and even appealed to appear before the committee to present their views. This demonstrates the keen interest that public has in favor of the work of the committees.

The committees have also planned for interviews in various vernacular radio stations where they shall appear and give talks to members of the public on measures to be undertaken to combat the virus. So far, the leadership of the Assembly has made radios messages on issues about the COVID – 19 pandemic.

These messages are tailored to talk to people in various sectors in Siaya County about prevention measures of COVID – 19. In addition, the committees are working together with the Department of Health to design various issues that can be talked about in the radio interviews and technical persons who can accompany the members to radios studios to discuss the issues.

In a bid to ensure standardization of these meetings and proper documentation that meet the test of accountability. The Umbrella Special Committee has developed reporting templates for meetings of the committee. The template enables the secretaries of the committees to capture the resolutions of the meetings and the spirit of the discussions.

The tools include the attendance registers that will be proof of attendance of the meetings. The meetings to be captured will include the virtual meetings which should be treated as physical meetings. (Attached is a sample template of the minutes for Ugenya Sub County committees). The committees will be expected to table progress reports regularly for noting by the House, discussion where necessary, and communication to the relevant bodies.

The Umbrella Special Committee in conjunction with the Committee on Health Services is currently engaging non-governmental organizations who have traditionally partnered with the County Assembly in supporting various activities, majorly with the Committee of Health.

The Committee has reached out to AMREF Kenya and PATH and the discussions are still ongoing. The resolutions of which will be communicated to the House in the next progress report.

In conclusion, the committees as established have since made significant progress towards combating COVID – 19 and putting in place structures for their operations. Individual members in the committees have also made personal contributions to their people by providing masks, gloves, hand washing tanks and sanitizers which is very commendable.

In the coming weeks, the committees are planning to undertake meetings with various County Government Departments as highlighted in the work plans, receive and consider views of

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members of the public. These views will be clearly contained in the next report progress report which should be expected in the next two weeks. It should also be noted that the committee is concerned with the status of revenue collection in the County and the economic pinch on the business community and traders within the County.

To this regard, the committee is considering ways of engaging with the Trade and Finance department to assess measures that can be put in place to cushion traders and businesses within the County.

The committee is also concerned about the status of health workers and their level of preparedness to handle the reported case of COVID 19 within the County. The committee shall put special emphasis on the health sector with the view to devising immediate and long term measures to capacitate the health sector of the County to handle the situation.

Furthermore, considering that the committees have already worked for 20 days, as stipulated in the Ministry of Devolution Circular Reference MSPS.2/1A VOL.XLVIII/ (119) dated 2nd August, 2013, yet the task assigned to them has not been completed given that the country is yet to be declared COVID – 19 free. It is important therefore, for the life of these committees to be extended until such a time that the Country will be declared COVID – 19 free.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee having considered these issues recommends that;

1. The House approves the reporting tools of the committees
2. The committees having undertaken activities and meetings for 20 days and in line with the Ministry of Devolution Circular Reference MSPS.2/1A VOL.XLVIII/ (119) dated 2nd August, 2013 the committees recommend that the House approved the continuity of the committees since the task of combating COVID – 19 has not been completed.

I call upon Hon. who is our secretary to second.

Hon. Member: Seconded.

(Question proposed)

(Question put and agreed to)

MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, let's be upstanding for adjournment.

(Hon. Members, on their feet)

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, there being no other Business, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday at 9.30a.m. in the Chambers.

The House rose at 4.02 p.m.