

MURANG'A COUNTY ASSEMBLY THE HANSARD

Thursday, 23rd April 2015

The House met at 2:33 a.m.

(Deputy Speaker Hon. Gachui Mungai in the Chair)

PRAYERS

MOTIONS

SPECIAL AUDIT REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL OPERATIONS OF MURANG'A COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND FORMER DEFUNCT LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2013

Hon. Anderson Muchemi: Thank you Mr. Speaker, the committee seeks your leave to withdraw the motion.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: Granted.

UNBUNDLING OF PROCUREMENT AND ENGAGEMENT OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH KNOWLEDGE IN LABOUR- BASED WORKS IN ROAD CONSTRUCTION WITH AN AIM OF REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG THE YOUTH IN MURANG'A COUNTY

Hon. James Kagoni: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the following motion;-
Aware, that the issue of youth unemployment has been on the increase in our County, cognizant of the fact that the County Government spends a lot of money in procuring services for road construction, further aware that in the sector of road construction and mainly for both the classified and unclassified roads there are categories of work that could be reserved for the youth to be categorized as labour-based works which include activities such as setting out of the road, grabbling, stripping, ditching, slopping, building of scour checks, gabions, check dams, installation of culverts, bush clearing, tree uprooting, road camber formation, spreading of materials among others; this House urges the County Executive to follow the National Government circular on unbundling of procurement and engage the young people with knowledge on labour based works in roads construction with an aim of reducing an employment among the youth in Murang'a County.

Mr. Speaker, I am motivated today by the fact that youth unemployment has been on the increase. One of the greatest minds in this century, who is currently late, Mr. Stephen Covey, once said that there are things that we can move from the circles of concern and move them to the circles of influence. Unemployment has been going up day in day out, sometimes, we wonder what we can do.

There are things that are within our circles of influence on what we can do to try and reduce the rates of unemployment; one of them is on the construction of roads. One of the devolved functions under our Constitution is the maintenance of some classified and unclassified roads. The County Government has been procuring a lot of money and services on this particular area. When you look at the budget of 2013/2014, we used more than Kshs. 400 million in the construction of roads or rather in the roads sector. This particular

year, we have already used more than Kshs. 500 million and we have also procured other services on debts which are beyond one billion, still on the same sector.

Mr. Speaker, rather than just say that there is nothing we can do, I strongly believe that there is something we can do on the issue to do with youth unemployment. One of them is where we would follow the circular that was released by the Treasury on unbundling of procurement where some of these activities do not need to be done by one contractor but they can rather be unbundled like I have mentioned in the motion where issues like ditching can be done by the young people. They can be separated from the main contract itself. Issues to do with ditching, installation of culverts, and such works should be given to the young people.

When you listen, Mr. Speaker, to some of the challenges that the young people have been having, especially when they are looking for these kinds of jobs or contracts to do, sometimes, you realise that they do not have the ability to carry them out. Secondly, you also realise that they are not able to compete with the others, and even when those contracts are categorised in the Ministry of Youth, you realise that they do not have machinery and other equipment that are required to carry on. But there are things they can do if we only agreed to unbundle these kinds of contracts and issue them activities like gabion construction. We can issue an activity like building of scour checks to them, these are activities they can do.

You will be interested to know that a number of them have attended trainings on how to do some of these labour-based works Mr. Speaker. They had either been sent there by the contractors whom they were working for, or on their own as they were aspiring to become bigger contractors. They have the knowhow. So, when you, for instance, think of levelling a playing field, you realise that we do not need to use a machine on that. We can engage a young person or young people or even a group of them depending on how they have registered themselves to do some of this levelling that we are using machines on so that they can see how they can benefit from the few coins from such kind of services.

When you look across the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we are currently constructing the perimeter wall around our Ihura stadium. You realise that there is a lot of work that can be done by young people if we only considered unbundling those kinds of contracts and decided where we can separate the main contracts from these other things that can be done. Eventually, by the time Ihura stadium will be done, drainage system will have been dealt with; there are other few things that will be done. Scour checks will also be required so that there is no soil erosion that will be happening on the areas of the perimeter wall. There are issues to do with culverts that will be required. These are works that can be issued to young people if we only agreed.

The Treasury was able to see this early enough. We even thank the Minister for Finance who was able to see this and decided to issue a circular that will see these kinds of works being unbundled for young people to benefit on the construction works and the services that we are availing to them.

Since we have now found so many young people who are not really interested in being employed but who would, rather, want to be doing something on their own, then these are the kind of minds we can engage and they start small so that we are sure of having contractors in our County who can carry on those kinds of works. We will build them slowly from one level to the other. The ones who will be able to do the culverts and that

kind of thing will be able to have savings and they will be in a position to buy the required equipment.

So, going forward, they can even manage to engage in major works in future that we tender as a County. When you also look at the statistics and you check the kind of numbers that we are talking about, for instance last year alone, we saw more than 10,000 graduates graduating and they are now in the markets looking for jobs. These are the kind of people we are talking about who are young people. There are others who were not able to proceed with their education but they are able to do some of these things. Some of them have even been able to register their own companies. Others are working for other contractors and all that. If we only opened that one as an opportunity, you will realise that we are giving them an opportunity to be able to do this.

It is my thinking and my conviction Mr. Speaker, that if we engage our young people on this, then we are going to reduce the level of unemployment. The index is truly going to go down by a great level. The motion is quite self-explanatory and does not require a lot of explanation. However, secondly we have already decided as a County that we are going to upgrade one primary school in every ward and make it a boarding school. We are going to set aside some funds for that besides what we had set for this financial year that is ending. You also realise that when we are talking of that, these are some of the works that can be done by young people. They are not really that technical and they can manage to carry out.

If such contracts were to be unbundled and given to the young people to do, you could imagine things like toilets in our primary schools and gates that will be constructed because every boarding school will require a good gate for purposes of security. Such kind of contracts would be given to the young people. The drainage systems in those kinds of schools would reduce the index and, subsequently, the poverty index would also go down.

I read and move this motion hoping that the members in the Assembly share my sentiments. If we and the Executive are able to do this, come the financial year of 2015/2016, we will be the County number one. If we go that direction, we will be able to assist our young people by reducing the issue to do with unemployment. It is now pleasure to call Hon. Mary Waithira to second the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mary Waithira: Thank you Mr. Speaker sir, I rise to second this very important motion. I will start by congratulating the mover, no wonder he is the representative of the youth. If you read the content of this motion, it is speaking more of how we can manage to engage our youth by having them mostly engaged in some of the small road works that we have.

Mr. Speaker sir, when I looked at this motion, I saw that it is in line with the Road 2000 Strategy which came with the issue to do with the labour-based. The essence of it was to try and create more employment for our youth. Many are times when we, the Hon. Members, have talked of how we can manage to engage in various activities, more so in projects which we can engage our youth who are outside there and jobless spending some of their time on illicit brews and drug abuse. That is why we were saying that if there is any way that we can be in a position to engage them, it will go about making them busy and the issue to do with the idle time will not be there.

Mr. Speaker sir, some of the very light road work activities are the ones that are named there. If at all we can forget the issue of using the excavators, roll loaders, and the tractors that we are usually having, the money that goes to those equipment will reflect to

the youth we have. There is a lot of cry from our youth outside there. They are really asking, "Why are the works of the roads in Murang'a County being done by machines whereas we are idle and yet, we can do some of the works that being are done by these tractors?"

Mr. Speaker sir, Murang'a County has been one of the Counties where the Road 2000 has been engaged. Being a contractor for many years, I know that Road 2000 has brought the attention of the youth that many of the activities are meant for them and not for machines. The equipment that we usually use outside there for the works, are only meant for watering and compaction. But working on the roads right from the setting out, to maybe going about the activities of the ditches, the slopes, and spreading of the gravel depending on the materials, the youth outside there know that to be their work. So, that is why the mover of the motion came up with this idea.

If this Hon. House agrees to go by this motion, we will have urged the CEC that many of the works that we are doing on our roads be not subjected to the equipment but rather to the youth. We tend to think that there are major road works whereby those big contractors who own the equipment can engage in, but let the light road work activities go to the youth. That is why it is a plea to these Hon. Members to support the motion. It will act as a way of creating employment to the youth. Many of our youth here are not seeing fun to even start their own homes by getting married and taking care of the wives and children because they know that by the end of the day, there is nothing they will put into their pockets. So, if by the end of the day there is nothing, what about by the end of the month?

These youth of ours make themselves comfortable and busy by engaging in all these activities that we are saying are retrogressive. We might miss a future leader tomorrow. But by having all these works done by them, there will be a promise and even motivation that their tomorrow might be bright.

Again when we talk of the KIHBT at Kisii many of the youth are asking, yes we will go to Kisii and get the knowledge that we require but when we come here we just float in the market, there is no work, but the moment the youth will see three quarters of the road works will be carried out by them, they will see the need to go to KIBHT training centre. The moment motivation will be there because there will be jobs tomorrow after the training, we will also be able to make good use of the human resource which will be there.

I remember the committee of transport went there and many of the contractors would lament that the works they have is not up to the manpower that there is in that training centre, meaning they do not have enough students to train. So by having Murang'a and other counties to make sure that many of the road activities are done by the youth, I think it will be better that way.

It is also my support if at all the national government circular on unbundling the procurement process and engaging the youth can be adhered to, then it means many of the youth will be able to visit KIHBT and be able to acquire the knowledge and the skills they require, they will be able to engage in procurement. But you see many of them are not able to engage in the same because in the tender document it talks of paper work to show that there is some kind of training.

It is worrying that when you look at our county even the smallest kind of work we are subjecting them to major contractors whom we can be calling when we have major road works.

We are still engaging them rather than the local contractors because when it comes to the documents that are required, the locals are not up to task as far as the knowledge and training is concerned.

Let we the hon. members of this House support the same and our youths' future might be bright. We will not go for the major contractors outside this county but we will make sure that the money available in the county gets to our youth by making sure local contractors benefits from this. But the way it is, we will still find ourselves going for the major contractors because our local contractors are not up to task as far as the knowledge and the skills are concerned. I stand to second the motion.

(Question Proposed)

Hon. Anderson Muchemi: I thank you Mr. Speaker, I stand to support and I would wish to congratulate hon. James Kagoni. I wish all Governors from Kenya borrow a leaf from the President whereby if you go to Nairobi and Kisumu where he was recently, he is engaging youth in clearing trenches, garbage collection and in that he is creating employment. Even if it is 100 days or 50 days it means those days, the youth will be paid, there is a youth who will have a good life from there.

Also I would like all Governors to see what the Sonko rescue team is doing. We have Sonko rescue team in Nairobi that is engaging youth in so many things and with that he is creating employment for the youth.

When you come to our county, I think it is the only county that we engage contractors so much with their machinery and equipment. If you go to the other counties they have bought their machinery and equipment, I have been saying this and it is true. It is only in Murang'a County where a lot of work has been done but if you go to the people they are not feeling it because the work has been done without priorities

I wish all those roads that have been done now by our Governor during the rehabilitation could be done by the youth because we have opened up the roads, we have gravelled the roads and if the maintenance can be done by the youth, I am sure we can create the employment. I stand to support, thank you.

Hon. Danson Mburu: I stand to support the motion and congratulate the mover. When we think of the number of the youth we have in Murang'a, the number is so large and it is rising every year when they get out of standard eight and form four. If nothing is done it will reach a point where the proportion will be unmanageable and thus it is wise for the plight of the youth to be thought and decided and this is the right time to do it, otherwise when it exceeds it will be a problem for our county.

At the moment Mr. Speaker, we know that so many people have ended in drinking because there is nothing that they are doing at home and when they are idle, they must find something that will keep them busy and they find that it is only going to drink and they turn to be drunkards and when they become drunkards we understand most of them do not marry, they do not do anything and they are blamed every now and then, but I think we are failing ourselves.

That is the reason why I support this motion and say that all this work that is listed here can be offered to youth and then they are offered some funds to do these jobs and I am sure the number of idle youth out there will decrease.

It is not a wonder to find some youth who left university some years back doing nothing at home and very hopeless. They spend a lot of money while studying but when they get out there is no employment. If we put all these recommendations as done by the mover of the motion into action we will have many youth engaged.

We have so many youth groups out there but due to lack of funds they just remain in the groups doing nothing and they regret why they registered because nobody is there to offer them some money to do something.

Therefore, I think this is the right time we tell CEC to sit down and think about the youth in our County so that we may see them doing something and so that we may put hope in them. With this Mr. Speaker I support the motion.

Hon. Samuel Wandia: I rise to support this motion. Apparently all the work that is listed here is what is on the ground. I remember and every member in this House remembers that initially each and every ward was given 200 hours. We went out there and the roads were prepared and already some of the roads have become impassable.

If things are done well, the county executive should have said in every ward we come up with a group of youth who will be maintaining these roads because we are back to square one. The roads are impassable and if we had the youth at the ward level, I am sure the way the roads are in Muthithi, I am sure they would not be that way. Every time I am there to see the CEC transport and see whether he could give me a grader to go and do the same roads which were done in 2013. If we had the youth I would not be running there, I would be comfortable in this House and in my house Mr. Speaker.

Right now we are crying that we get the Ward Development Fund, the other day we proposed we be given Kshs. 15 million and now the mover of this motion has made me think otherwise. Instead of Kshs. 15 million we should ask for Kshs. 20 million so that we can engage the youth they do the roads at ward level and I am assuring this House the roads will no longer be the way they are today.

I urge this House to change their mind and we ask the county government to give the Ward Development Fund Kshs. 20 million instead of Kshs. 15 million so that we can maintain the infrastructure in the right way so that even the other counties may come and borrow a leaf from Murang'a County. With those few words let me rest my case hoping that my colleagues will re-think the issue of Kshs. 20 million, I thank you.

Hon. Cecilia Gitu: I thank you Mr. Speaker sir, I stand to support this motion. Anything that will help the youth to be employed is welcome. Murang'a County has been known for the many youth who have turned to illegal sects like Mungiki, we have been known for illicit brews, we are losing so many of our youth in illicit brews.

In fact, we have lamented that a whole generation is about to be wasted. I think anything that will help them is welcome. I want to congratulate Hon. Kagoni for this brilliant idea to occupy those youth.

I am not allowed to say in Kikuyu, a proverb that states, a herd without young ones is a herd that is dying. That is exactly what it is with the community in Murang'a. If we do not take care of our youth, we won't have a tomorrow. I want to thank the mover of the motion and emphasize the need to engage our youth in this way. If there is anything they can do, and I know it is a lot, it will be of help.

I remember 2013, when we were doing roads, we met groups, right from the wards and the youth were interested in even forming groups to supervise and work on the roads, they

volunteered, it is like they were owning the process. If as Hon. Wa Dishon says, if there was that continuity, that every ward put together a group of youth to maintain the roads, we would not use a lot of money to start doing the projects all over again, and I think there is a lot in that fact. It will also make them own the process.

Sometimes even when they see a section of a road impassable, they do not care because they say all the county government will do is get a contractor to come and do this road when we are idle, they do not feel like helping even where they would just take a jembe and open up a drainage.

It is a way of making the community own the roads, when they know the roads are maintained by the youth, when a road is blocked around my shamba, I will take an initiative to call them to open up and that way we will maintain our roads, since the community owns the process Mr. Speaker sir, I support.

Hon. Rebecca Mwicigi: I stand to support the motion and appreciate the mover for thinking about the youth for which he is one of them. Mr. Speaker today in the Standard newspaper a certain body has done a research and they are saying that we are sitting on a time bomb since 1.5 million youth are jobless, they keep on piling and the numbers becomes bigger. The prayer in the motion should be given without any question, because if we do not do that we will be bringing up our enemies because you cannot enjoy anything when the youth do not have. If these youth are helped to get some income, Mr. Speaker, we shall be walking with our heads high knowing that everybody has their daily bread.

Mr. Speaker, when the Chinese came here, they were told that 75% of the people they engage in road building should be local and 25% to come from China. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that whoever gets the contract for building roads, 75% comes from Murang'a youth and 25% to come from wherever else. That should be a rule and be carried out if the House passes this motion.

This afternoon I asked one of the Hon. members where she was going and she told me that she was going to bury one of the young men and when I asked her what was wrong she told me that the young man succumbed to drinking,

A member said that the people in her place are dying, because they feel hopeless and they go drinking illicit brews. If the prayer is granted, and the youth have something to eat in the evening, he won't waste his life.

Mr. Speaker, I would also go further and urge the representative of the youth in this House to note, that if you travel widely, you go to countries like India, every other house has a cottage industry and instead of many people taking planes to go overseas and come back with knowledge that will not be utilized, the youth should be taken and we should go through the churches, that will take the youth to go learn a few things for a month or two and then they come and teach the others on how to do these cottage industries, because they cannot all fit in the roads. The knowledge will cascade to their children and I am sure unemployment in Murang'a will be a thing of the past.

When we are doing the budget, if those issues are not there, let us include them and ensure the CEC Finance inserts them in the budget because we also have to think on what they are doing on the budget.

Mr. Speaker these are at times the manual labour jobs, we as parents if I find my child on the road today and the day after, building a road, I will not be very happy even if he is getting income, but if I find him doing a road today and tomorrow he will be given a

contract to do murrum, since it does not take a lot of calculations to do this, I will be happier.

They can be given contracts to do that work and engage other contractors to go with them, just like the others are doing including the women and the others. Thank you Mr. Speaker, I support this motion.

Hon. Kago Njoroge: I want to support the motion and congratulate the mover. Mr. Speaker I am worried that whenever a child is born, he/she will grow up to be a youth. If it is possible the stage can be scrapped so that he becomes an adult.

Mr. Speaker, everybody stands wherever he does to talk about the youth, when we are doing campaigns, we are talking about youth, and we promised them so many things. Mr. Speaker, I was whispering to the mover of the motion on Uwezo and Youth Fund which was taken to them and the government knows that we have the funds.

Mr. Speaker, Hon. Kibaki the retired President came up with a programme *Kazi kwa vijana*, which was later translated into *Kazi kwa vijana pesa kwa wazee*, I think it is similar to what Hon. Kagoni is saying, we do not know whether it will end up with money going to the old when it comes to implementation.

It is a good motion, we have many people with knowledge to do roads, some technical, meaning, if they are given the roads, they might do better than the contractors who are doing the jobs because those who will be maintaining Githagara- Kahuro road are the youth members who are from that area. I believe they will own the programme.

Mr. Speaker, It will be shameful for us to just be talking about the youth, we urge the mover of the motion, we think on how to educate them on how to utilize the little amounts that we will be getting. If a youth is employed for 30 days and get Kshs. 400 per day, that will amount to Kshs. 12,000. We need someone to educate them on entrepreneurship, how they can come to Mukuyu or Nairobi and start buying things to start a business, even if it is the indigenous hens.

Mr. Speaker we also have another misconception with our people that we need huge capital. We need someone who will be there to educate these people, if the programme will be run by the county government, the importance of coming up with such a project.

If this is done, *Kazi kwa vijana pesa kwa vijana* will be effective rather than having those youth funds but they do not have good entrepreneurial skills. Mr. Speaker, one day they will not be called youth, the other day I was calling you a youth but looking at you now, you are approaching 45.

Mr. Speaker, people would have wanted to be like you, Councilor Gachui who was doing well as a youth, but how many people are we mentoring? As Hon. Members, it also calls for our responsibility to talk to our youth and encourage them that we were also where they were and there is nothing too big or too small for a man.

As the programme rolls out, because I believe it will, I believe the executive will execute it. It is good for the county government to have people going on the ground to teach entrepreneurship skills so that those people are engaged in other personal businesses when the roads are not under maintenance. This will enable them maintain themselves, their families and parents since they are also getting into the 'medicine age' where the parents always require them to buy medicine for them. Thank you, I support the motion.

Hon. Deputy Speaker: I will now call the mover to respond

Hon. James Kagoni: Mr. Speaker, I have little to say but to thank the members for supporting the motion and agree with their sentiments. I am also advised that roads maintained under labour- based are more durable than those ones that we use machines, no wonder the Hon. from Muthithi was lamenting on what has happened to the roads made in 2013. I am even advised that an example of Ikumbi -Kigumo road which has been there for seven years since it was done. Comparing that with what was done in 2013 and we are already complaining. I thank members for the opportunity.

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

The House stands adjourned until Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.

The House rose at 3:17 p.m.