

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
**MURANG'A COUNTY ASSEMBLY**  
**THE HANSARD**

Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018

The House met at 2:40p.m.

*[Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi) in the Chair]*

**PRAYERS**

*(Hon. Joel Murigi entered the Chambers without bowing at the Bar)*

*(Hon. Peter Mweri rose on a point of order)*

**Hon. Peter Mweri:** Hon. Speaker is it in order for Hon. Karigi from Kariara not to respect the House by bowing?

**Temporary Speaker (Hon. John Ruoho):** Hon. Member from Kariara Can you do the necessary.

*(Hon. Joel Murigi Bowed)*

**Temporary Speaker (Hon. John Ruoho):** Thank you we can proceed.

**MOTION**

**FEEDING PROGRAM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION  
(ECDE) CENTERS**

**Hon. Waithira Ndung'u:** Thank you Mr. Speaker sir, I beg to move the following motion;-

Aware that, pre-primary education in Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) and childcare facilities is a devolved function of the County Government as stipulated in part II of the Fourth schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, cognizant of the fact that the County Government of Murang'a has already established a school feeding program to all the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) Centres in the County, recognizing the fact that, the main objective of the program was to promote and improve child health and meet the nutritional needs of all the pupils in public ECDE centres in the County with a target population estimated to be 30,000 ECDE centres, through the provision of a simple nutritional balanced meal to the ECD children throughout the County, realizing that the program has increased the enrolment level of ECDE centres in the County, this House urges the County Executive Committee member in charge of Education and Technical Training to:

1. To consider enhancing the variety of offered meals to make it more palatable;
2. To formulate a policy on ensuring sustainability of the program and implementation in all the ECDE centres in the County.

Mr. Speaker sir, as a committee we first congratulate the County Government for coming up with the noble idea of initiating the feeding program in our ECDE centers. The committee felt that to have not just food for our ECDE children but food of acceptable quality. In line with this, the motion seeks to compel the implementers to enhance the variety of food offered in our ECDE centres and at the same time make food attractive and hence more palatable.

We realize that in Kenya Early Childhood Development Education is recognized as a crucial program that lays foundation for child's holistic and integrated education that meets

the cognitive, social, moral, spiritual, emotional, physical and developmental needs. It is also important and still benefits to invest in young children since the first six years of life is termed as extremely important because the environmental experiences acquired during this period influences one life.

We should appreciate the fact that certain areas in Murang'a, especially the lower parts poverty level is very high, so the programme comes to assist in a way or another. It is not surprising to find out in certain households there are children who go without food for days. Therefore the feeding programme goes a long way in making sure none of our children starve.

Mr. Speaker, our concern as a committee is that in order to sustain this programme it will require an adequate allocation of funds in the subsequent years. It is worth noticing that when the program was initiated by the County Government, it did not have an allocated budget and was started in a hurry, thus has experienced many teething problems. Therefore, a clear outline on the criteria for allocating funds to the various schools and time frames for the allocation should be done. This will only be achieved in formulating a policy to be approved by the assembly to enable sustainability of the program and effective implementation in all the ECDE centres in the County.

Mr. Speaker, the committee found out it wise to formulate a motion seeking to compel the Executive to improve the program on two grounds; that is improving the quality of food offered to ECDE children across the County and formulating of a policy to guide in the implementation of the program to ensure it is successful.

Hon. Members, I beg, you agree with me, that motion is noble and I urge you to support this motion. I now call upon my able Vice-Chairperson Hon. Ngundo to second the motion.

Thank you Mr. Speaker sir.

**Hon. Ibrahim Ngundo:** Thank you Mr. Speaker sir, I stand to second the motion. I wish to urge the County Executive to consider enhancing the variety of offered meals to make it more palatable in all our ECDE centres in the County. It is worth noting that a well fed child will understand what the teacher teaches in class and will enhance performance well academically as compared to a starving child.

Mr. Speaker sir, as my able Chairperson has stated, the Executive should formulate a policy to ensure the sustainability and consistency of the program in all the ECDE centres in the County without fail. Through proper implementation of the program our County and the Country at large will benefit in the enrolment and retention of children in the ECDE centres and see them go through all the ECDE level up to primary school, class one.

Finally, Children will grow up to be productive and contribute effectively to their future families, community, County and the Nation at large.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker sir. I beg to Second.

*(Question proposed)*

**Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangeci):** The Floor is open for Members to contribute. Yes Hon. Lilian Kabaya.

**Hon. Lilian Kabaya:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. I stand to support this motion. As you know milk is very important in children as they are growing up especially in the formative years. It is a rich source of Vitamin D and Calcium and we feel that this milk feeding program is going to contribute greatly to the nutritional benefit to the future of our children. Mr. Speaker we also feel that any measures that we can take to keep our children in school are welcome in this County because at the end of the day, we are trying to make sure that each and every child in the County gets a good education.

Mr. Speaker, we would also like to support the formulation of a policy on ensuring the sustainability of the program because without a clear policy on how this food is to be given and the milk and in what quantities and to which schools it becomes very hard to track down and to ensure accountability for the money that we give for this feeding program. It will make the work of the Education committee very easy when it comes to following up on the measures that have been taken by the Executive and how the money has been utilized and whether it has been utilized according to the proper means.

Thank you Mr. Speaker, I support the motion.

**Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangeci):** Honorable member for Mugumo-ini

**Hon. Peter Githuka:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, I rise to support, reason being the Mover of the Motion before she become an Honorable member she was a teacher, so she has that experience of what a child needs so as to come up with a good education, to be attached to school all the times without going outside the school or running away. So we are going to create a conducive environment for the children to be in school all the time, knowing very well that if we do that the standard of education is going to rise up in our County.

Thank you Mr. Speaker

**Hon. Cathryn Mwangi:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, I stand to support the Motion however I would urge the executive before they come up with a variety of meals they intend to give to children to come up with a strategy and a plan to make sure that the money which is set aside for Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) program goes to that specific program.

Before there have been issues that some children have not been getting meals offered by the County Government. They should come up with a strategy and a policy to make sure if it is school one, student ABCD were able to get item ABCD so that we can be able to oversight as the House and as a the committee on Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E- Government. Committee on implementation should also ensure that they get the meals they are supposed to take. Thank you.

**Temporary Speaker (Ruoho Wangechi):** Honorable member for Township Ward.

**Hon. Jacinta Ng'ang'a:** Thank you Temporary Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. Before I give my views on the Motion, I would want to congratulate the ministry for Education for the ECDE program because other than the feeding program, the ECDE program is running in a way that is assisting the parents and even the children in other manners like wiping their nose and also helping them to go to the short calls in schools I commend them for such. During our time we never had such opportunities. We usually say that if you do not do this when you are young, you will do it when you are a grown up. You do not want to go to such things.

The other issue is on the feeding program, you will note that it has resulted to increased enrollment of children in the ECDE centers. Children are desiring to go to school and those at home are also longing to attain the age of going to school. There is a difference even with the parents depending on the feeding schedule.

When I was in school I had an opportunity to take Nyayo Milk for two years; when I was in class six and seven, my mum used to wake up and make some chapati so that I can carry them to school. I was actually longing for that time to. It is the same thing we are seeing with children they want to go school to get milk.

My request on the feeding program I would urge the executive and the people concerned to enhance consistency. We went to those schools during the parents' meetings in campaign season and we could see that it was not consistent. I would wish consistency to be enhanced on this program. We would want to have it as one of the programs pronounced during campaign time. Thank you, I support.

**Temporary Speaker (Ruoho Wangechi):** Hon. Sospeter Nyoko.

**Hon. Sospeter Nyoko:** Thank you Temporary Speaker, I rise to support the Motion: knowing very clearly that a well fed child will absorb education in the very best way. We also need to look into the idea of the stoves they are going to use; it must be effective and efficient in terms of smoke emission. That one also needs to be looked into and the labor issue as well. Everybody passed through the ECDE schools, we were all eager to see if there is some *uji* (porridge). This time round the parents are already relieved the burden of feeding their children and I give that as a credit. The parents are given another chance to work harder to bring another child. Thank you I support the Motion.

**Temporary Speaker (Ruoho Wangechi):** Hon. Wangari Kigo

**Hon. Wangari Kigo:** Thank you Temporary Speaker, I rise to support the Motion. I would wish to congratulate the Chairperson Education together with the members for this noble thing they have done to these children.

I would like to task our able Chairperson to check on the relaxation matters of these children even as they consider feeding them. When children are full, they also want to relax in the afternoon, some schools do not have mattresses or anywhere the children can relax, so I would like the Chair you check on this even as we support this motion. I rise to support it because it will even motivate our kids. As most honourable members are saying, when we were in school, the days when we were given milk, we would rise up very early excited and ready to learn. This will be a motivator to our children and I believe even our parents will be able to motivate our children to go to school. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Francis Githuka:** I rise to support the Motion; there are two issues that I would like the committee to check on, number one, despite that we are getting food and you know when you are hungry, a child cannot be well understood. If you look at most of these nursery schools, they do not have kitchens for preparing the porridge and food, if you go to some of them, they prepare it inside the class and this is interfering with the normal learning of the children because when a child is thinking about porridge or food for more than five hours, and then gets the food, he will concentrate with the food, so the committee should come up with a guideline where the executive will take the initiative for constructing the places for cooking the porridge.

In those nursery schools that do not cook inside the class, there are structures outside; there are very bad structures that you cannot admire, so that one has to be looked at.

Number two, if you look at most of the primary school structures, they are well made and if you look at most of the nursery schools structures, they are under very poor conditions, even if you are giving food to children, they are prone to other dangers inside the same class, because that is where you will get that some of them do not have the windows, the floors are not cemented and the same small kids, they carry water to pour on the floor because they are not cemented, we have to look onto the other factors, but I stand to support the motion. Thank you Mr Speaker sir.

**Hon. Kihurunjo Mwangi:** I want to congratulate my colleague in that committee and also the County Government of Murang'a due to this intervention programme for the feeding programme and I want before I proceed to correct my friend here Hon. Kibe Githuka about the issue of constructions. I think it is not under our mandate; that one is under the department of infrastructure and roads. Ours is to deal with the intervention programmes for the ECDE and this is a point noted.

Mr Speaker sir, I have done an analysis from my ward and I want to say that this programme is helping the people of Gitugi where I have around 19 ECDEs in that ward, it is a good programme and they appreciate it, as a member of that committee, I support the

motion for the feeding programme for it to continue but with a few things that are supposed to be looked at.

One, I hope the issue about the policy will be addressed, it is very important to have a policy with the guidelines of how we are going to make sure that this programme we will sustain it because as per now, it is not operating.

This early morning, I called one of the head teachers and he has informed me that for the whole of 2018, they have only received the money for three weeks to sustain the programme. As per now, they are operating with debts from the locals and that is something that we need to look at as we look at the operation of this programme.

It is a very serious case and we can urge the County Government under the department of Education, when they are coming up with these projects to continue, let us look at that issue of the funds to make sure it goes on well.

I can also request and that is a thing that we have said that this money, for the sustainability of this project, let it be in termly basis Mr. Speaker, I came to understand that the money is being disbursed in a very funny way without a cash flow, if it can be on termly basis, the schools can be able to organize how they will utilize the money and tell those who deliver the food in that matter. It is a humble request as I support this programme; let us have these things put in place.

Mr Speaker, if you look at that programme, each child is allocated Kshs25 per meal, that means per day according to the report that we got from the executive, if you look at the way that thing is being distributed, Kshs25, the way it is distributed per head, you will see that there are things that we are supposed to look at, because we talk about Kshs12 for food, five for fuel, five for labour and three for administration. So we need at least these things, there are so many other things that we can be able to look at when we come to such kind of thing.

I wonder why the issue of the quality of food is only thrice, other things, that is the report that we got and I am talking on behalf of my people of Gitugi where I represent, where I have done the fiscal analysis, where I have even gone to the schools, I have interacted with them. So we need to look at this Kshs25, what can be added to get good quality food for our children. My only point and big concern is, do we have the certainty that that debt will be paid for those schools where there is an outcry? As a Member, I end at that point and support this feeding program under the intervention program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi):** Yes Hon. Ichagaki one.

**Hon. Charles Mwangi:** Thank you Mr. Speaker for your eye has caught me. I stand to support the Motion. First, I would like to say congratulations to *mheshimiwa* (honourable) Kibe because when talking about the program, he has also talked about building something that is like a kitchen. Well, I also take advantage that Hon. Kihurunjo has made a point of correcting him that the policy is not under the feeding program. However, I also wonder whether the policy on cash flow is under the program. I was probably thinking that it is supposed to be under the budget side.

Mr. Speaker, when we are talking about the feeding program to the kids, not only are we trying to first eradicate but also decreasing the poverty level. We are also taking the advantage of the reproduction system. We talk about a couple not even working and the poverty line is below Kshs100 per feeding. You will then find somebody getting a kid and getting free feeding at the school. We are, therefore, making sure that the population of Kenya is growing at a high rate, which is also admirable.

Mr. Speaker, how can we modernise that feeding program to the kids and how are we going to cater for those people in the schools? They can get the money but can also sabotage by doing corruption deals using the money which has already been given to the schools. I suggest that we need to have a Committee that will be following up on the programs. The

Implementation Committee is the one that is supposed to be checking in and out of what is happening in those schools to make sure that everything is being done in the right way and again, everything done by the Parliament is secured when it comes to the public. I rest my case.

**The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi):** Thank you Hon. Member, Ruth?

**Hon. Ruth Wambui:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, I am a nominated Member of County Assembly (MCA). I stand to support the Motion on the feeding program in the Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) centres. One, people outside there are, sincerely, needy and children cannot learn if they are hungry. As the proverb goes, "A hungry man is not a free man."

Secondly, I congratulate the Chairperson and the Committee on Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E-government because they have a passion. I would like to tell them to have this task in their heart and also implement on the same. They oversight for us because we understand that most of the time, there are places whereby children get the feeding but other schools are not catered for.

I have trust and confidence in the Chairperson for Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E-government Committee because she has the passion and she can even be making some visits. We had allocated little money for her but she promised the Budget and Appropriation Committee that she will be going school by school, just like Dr. Matiang'i. I hope she will do that.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge the Committee on Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E-government that, for us to eliminate hunger, everyone has to be involved. These children will be fed and we understand that there will be an increase of children in the ECDE schools. However, one of the challenges we will have is on the teachers. I task the Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E-government Committee to make sure that they do a follow up on teachers because we understand that 100 children have the attention of only one teacher. I therefore urge the Committee to push and make sure that we have equal teachers to the task.

If we do not give the best foundation to our ECDE children, it means that Murang'a County will always be leading from the back when it comes to education. They also need to put to task our Executive because it will be very bad for us to pass this Motion--- By the end of the day and after passing this Motion, implementation is done. It will be so much in order if they follow up on the Executive and make sure that after their oversight, this is what is happening on the ground. As Mother Teresa said, if you cannot feed 100, feed one. Let us feed the children of Murang'a. I stand to support.

**The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi):** Hon. Pelagiah, you had caught my eye earlier.

**Hon. Pelagiah Muthoni:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, I am the MCA for Kakuzi/Mitumbiri Ward. I first congratulate the Education and Child Welfare, Research, Information Technology and E-government Committee for such a Motion that they have brought to the House.

In our *mashinani* (grassroots), the people are very poor and these families are not able to feed their children well. Most of the children could be malnourished. Therefore, when we have such a program in schools, we are going to encourage many children to attend classes and they will be looking forward to the school days because they know that they are going to get something.

They cannot be able to learn well when they are hungry. As we always say, the beginning of something is better than the end. If we encourage and feed these children, they

are going to like the schools, learn and their future will be bright. I therefore stand to support the Motion because it is very important for our country and also for our County. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi):** I will ask the Mover to respond.

**Hon. Waithera Ndung'u:** Thank you Mr. Speaker, I am going to respond to all the sentiments which the Hon. Members have talked about. I feel touched when I know that all of you are from Murang'a and you know from which poverty we have come from because none of you is pretending not to have come from that poverty. Some kids could not even afford something and could put a stone in a container so that they could be seen to have something when the teachers were checking. Thank you so much.

I will first respond to Hon. Kabaya who talked about formulating of policy; that is why we came with this idea of bringing the Motion to the House so that we can be able to know the starting point, to have a policy which we can question.

Next is Honourable from Mugumo-ini, I am a teacher who has taught in most of schools in Nairobi. I know what hunger means, I know most of the kinds were not able to feed themselves and any time we could paralyze feeding program there was no learning in the afternoon. I would not like any to suffer in Murang'a where I was born in a lot of poverty.

Then I go to Hon. Cathryn. Thank you about the variety of foods you are talking about because we have to look at the quality. That is why I am requesting our MCA's, you have the right and you have the mandate, go to those classes, go when they are having their meals they take their meals from 12.10 p.m. Go and eat with them you feel the touch, if there is nothing; the committee is committed to deal with it.

We had the meeting with executive last week in Mombasa for a whole week. The Director, the CEC and they were positive. And I told them we have to implement and I told them if they do not implement we will not give any other project but we will put that money in education projects.

To Hon. Jecinta, thank you for knowing milk ---she is not there- milk has taken up of the food, when you have nothing, the child becomes attentive. From 2016 the population in our schools was 26, by January it is 40 in our schools in 650 ECDE centres in Murang'a. So what do we say? The food is making children to go to school. Children are even moving from private schools to go to public schools.

I now move to Hon. Kibe who argued with Deputy Speaker. When I was moving the Motion I said childcare facility is devolved, that was correct of you because the classrooms are supposed to be under us then the facilities there. I know the classrooms are not there and as we talked there with executive we told them what we need; they need to equip the classes.

As Hon. Wangari is talking about, our time we had nowhere to sleep but nowadays kids have somewhere to sleep. And as we were talking with director Catherine, she promised they had started in the budget they are making some few mattresses for each school. We told them our kids cannot sit on the desks.

I know all of you are digital, some of you are grandmas; you know the nursery schools our kids are going. We told them to try and put those kids as our own grandchildren where they will sit on good seats. She told us they have ordered some seats but you are the people who will tell us which is which. Visit those classes say the need this---- so unfortunate some may not have classes but we want child friendly classrooms.

Next is about the payments. It is something wanting and that is why we want a policy to be knowing who is supposed to pay, who is supposed to be receiving the money so that food on the ground can be felt. The executive may be releasing the money but are we doing the follow up as the MCA's. It is your right go there.

Today I was told there is milk at Gatanga may be even the Hon. from Kariara was to go, there those who are from Kigumo can you go to Kigumo headquarters tomorrow you see the packets of milk being distributed. If we do the follow up as I promise Hon. Wambui I may be called Matiang'i two, that one does not matter but let us fight for young kid who has no mouth. I will be going in wards just because of that kid not votes.

The Clerk promised we can be given a vehicle here if we want to go and move around the schools to see what is happening. The committee is up to the task, we will work with you. Let us know what is happening, call me we will go to those schools. Take photos and bring them and I will take them up and ask what is happening because our work is to see what is happening. We are eyes of those young ones who cannot see and parents who cannot talk. Thank you for supporting I beg you to support the Motion. Thank you.

*(Question put and agreed to)*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Temporary Speaker (Hon. Ruoho Wangechi):** There being no other business in the Order Paper, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday March 29, 2018 at 2.00 p.m.

*The House rose at 3:00 p.m.*