

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



13 JUN 2023

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF MURANG'A

THIRD ASSEMBLY - SECOND SESSION

THE SECTORAL COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, GENDER, CULTURE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

REPORT ON  
FIREFIGHTING SERVICES IN THE COUNTY

CA - HBRC  
Test in the DP  
All  
13/6/2023

Clerks Chambers  
Murang'a County Assembly  
MURANG'A

June, 2023

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## 1.0 PREFACE

### 1.1 Committee Mandate

Hon. Speaker, Committees of this Assembly are a creation of Section 14(1a) of the County Government Act 2012, which empowers the Assembly to make Standing Orders (SO) for the orderly conduct of the Assembly proceedings, including the operations and proceedings of its Committees.

The Sectoral Committee on Youth, Culture, Gender and Social Services is established pursuant to Standing Order 204 and its functions stated thereof.

The Committee pursuant to the second schedule of the Standing Orders is mandated to deal and consider all matters related to youth, persons with disabilities, orphans, Vulnerable Persons, cultural activities, public entertainment and public amenities including sports and cultural activities and facilities, control of drugs and phonography, cinemas, video shows, firefighting services and gender, culture and social welfare, national heritage, sports.

### 1.2 YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee comprises of the following members:

- |                                     |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Hon. Grace Sharleen Wambui Maina | Chairperson.  |
| 2. Hon. Kenneth Kamau               | V-Chairperson |
| 3. Hon. Anthony Chege Marubu        | Member        |
| 4. Hon. Hannah Wairimu Kamau        | Member        |
| 5. Hon. Boniface Ng'ang'a Mbau      | Member        |
| 6. Hon. Naomi Nyambura Maina        | Member        |
| 7. Hon. Gatheo Wa Njeri             | Member        |
| 8. Hon. Julian Njiri                | Member        |
| 9. Hon. Caroline Wairimu Njoroge    | Member        |
| 10. Hon. Moses Muchiri Maina        | Member        |
| 11. Hon. Edwin Mwangi Wairagu       | Member        |
| 12. Hon. John Mwangi Kamau          | Member        |
| 13. Hon. Mark Wainaina Gicheru      | Member        |
| 14. Hon. Elizabeth Wambui           | Member        |
| 15. Hon. Moses Macharia Mirara      | Member        |
| 16. Hon. Jeremiah Gichobe Mbatia    | Member        |

### 1.3 Acknowledgements

The Committee wishes to sincerely thank the Offices of the Speaker and the Clerk to the County Assembly for the support extended to it in the execution of its mandate.

The Chairperson of the Committee takes this opportunity to thank all the members for their profound contribution through dedication of time and efforts towards the realization of the mandates of the Committee.

Finally, it is now my pleasant duty and privilege and on behalf of Youth, Culture, Gender and Social Services committee, pursuant to Standing order No. 193 (6) to present to this Assembly the Report on firefighting services in the County.

Thank you.

Signed.....

(Hon. Sharleen Wambui Maina, Chairperson)

Youth, Culture, Gender and Social Services Committee.

Dated this..... day of..... 2023.



## 2.0 BACKGROUND.

Firefighting services is a devolved function of the county governments in line with the 2010 Constitution. Firefighting is the most visible function that is carried out under Disaster Risk Management.

The Firefighting Unit was established in 2013 to deal with fire emergencies that occur in buildings, public amenities like schools and other county infrastructure.

The Functions of the Firefighting Unit Include:

1. Response and suppression of all forms of fire outbreaks occurring in the county including county infrastructure and public institutions.
2. Establishment and operationalization of County Fire Station(s)
3. Conduct of fire Inspections within Murang'a County and in equal measure, issue Fire Compliance Certificates.
4. In collaboration with other key ministries, approve building plans like high rise buildings, petrol stations and other disaster prone developments before and after construction to ensure that developments comply with fire safety and occupational safety standards and to realize sustainable development.
5. Conduct of fire drills.
6. Coordination of fire safety activities such as training of rapid response volunteers, fire safety education and drills.
7. Coordination of search and rescue operations.
8. Preparation of unit budget for the sector in consultation with the director for disaster management.
9. Preparation of unit resource inventory and needs for the unit including personnel and equipment.
10. Preparation of unit reports.
11. Assisting in pre and post disaster damage and loss /needs assessments.
12. Coordinating all fire related activities to ensure operational efficiency in fire management.
13. Review and advice on existing policies and regulations affecting fire service.

The section has seen tremendous growth over time but this has not come without a myriad of challenges.

This report endeavors to highlight the current state of firefighting services, the challenges being experience and give recommendations that will improve the operations of the department to ensure that loss of property & life, injuries and destruction of livelihoods by fire is controlled.

### 3.0 COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS.

The committee on March 28,2023, as per their workplan discussed on firefighting services in the county. Members noted that there are three fire stations in different parts of the County including Murang'a town which serves as the headquarters, Kenol substation in Maragua Sub County and Kangare substation in Kigumo Sub County. Further there is a Substation in Kangema which is not operational due to lack of firefighting equipment's and personnel.

Members were informed that there were only two firefighting vehicles, one motorbike and three quadbikes. Members noted that there were thirty eight personnel serving under the fire department in which only three were permanent and pensionable.

The committee resolved to request for comprehensive information from the County Secretary as follows;

1. How many Fire stations and substations are in the County and their location
2. The number of firefighting equipment i.e. water hydrants
3. How dissemination of Firefighting information is conducted
4. What binding legal framework including policy and regulations the department have to regulate disaster management activities
5. Whether the county has Emergency line
6. Staffing- Current Schemes of service for firefighting and disaster management. That state clearly the respective cadres in fire service, their job description, job scales and performance framework.
7. Firefighting uniforms and personal protective equipment (PPEs)
8. What partnership the County Government has with other stakeholders like National government and private organization.

On May 15, 2023, The Committee received a response from the County Secretary. The report highlighted on the fire unit structure, their achievements, challenges and legal framework. The report included a proposed scheme of service from the national government and the unit urged the County Public Service Board to adopt it.

It was noted that Murang'a County was privileged to host the fourth African fire mission academy that took place from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018 as per the report.

After deliberations, members made the following findings and recommendations.

#### 4.0 COMMITTEE FINDINGS

Through the response from the County Secretary, the committee made the following findings;

1. That Fire services and disaster management unit has been in existence in Murangá county since its inception in 2013. That it was successfully conceived in 2013 by training the first group of officers and acquiring a hired fire engine from G4S.
2. That the department have a capacity of 38 personnel (3 deployed on PNP and 35 on casual basis).
3. That the department scope of work is to respond to numerous emergencies which includes fires, road traffic accidents, pit rescue, bore hole recoveries, human animal conflicts, hazardous trees, fuel spillage, land-slides, drowning and building collapses.
4. Members noted that the department has made the following achievements;
  - a) **Fire stations:** That the department has **three (3)** operational fire stations namely; the HQ station in Murangá town (Kiharu Sub County), Kenol town station (since June 2016), (Maragua Sub County) and Kangari town station (since October 2016) (Kigumo Sub County)

The department plans to expand through construction of new fire stations to Kangema, Kahuro and Mathioya in that order.

That in Kangema there is a vehicle ready for deployment and a building allocated, pending renovation and recruitment of staff to serve in the station.

- b) **Fire Engines:** that the department has the following fire engines: Toyota Hilux Rapid Intervention Vehicle donated by Polish Centre for international aid in August 2015; two fire trucks (GKB 442M and GKB 121M), a land rover Rapid Intervention Vehicle GKB 438M and All-Terrain Vehicles (GKB 445M and GKB 446M) acquired in May 2016; and a fire truck GKB 420W acquired from the National government ministry of urban and housing development in December 2021.

- c) **Fire hydrants;** that the department has installed 10 fire hydrants in strategic points within the county for water supply.

That there need for more hydrant points to refill the fire engines in order to minimize response time.

- d) **Public sensitization and capacity building:** that the department conducts regular sensitization as it marshals for fire safety compliance which involves premises fire risk assessment, safety awareness, trainings and awarding of the fire clearance certificate since 2015.

That the department also conducts training for volunteers, learning institutions and emergency drills in Murangá town to increase awareness and to raise revenue for the county in cooperation with the fees and charges in the finance Act

- i) **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);** that the department has worn out response gears which are inadequate. There is an air compressor for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that requires a three-phase power supply. The section urgently requires daily wear and ceremonial uniforms, firefighting PPEs, HazMat and water rescue PPEs.
- j) **Development Partners:** that Since August 2015, the section signed an MoU with Polish Centre for International Aid (PCPM) a Polish NGO that has helped build their capacity in terms of training and equipment, to date.

That Since November 2015, the section has partnered with Africa Fire Mission and in 2019, Chief Fire Officers Association was formed to unify all the 47 county fire brigades. The county has also benefitted from national government initiatives i.e. the tree fire trucks were acquired through the Metropolitan initiative by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

**5. members noted that the department was experiencing the following Challenges;**

1. **Establishment:** That the existing staff have not been confirmed in their engagement in fire structure and relevant cadres. Confirmation would help to ensure more effective administration, remuneration, specialization of work among other key features which are key to a fully-fledged institution. That there is delay in absorbing the trained staff which has led to a risk of them being poached by other counties, government and private institutions for their attained skills, age and passion. There's a need to have a fully established fire services and disaster management department.
2. **Legal framework;** that the department does not have any approved legal working frame. It is imperative that the forwarded legal documents be approved and implemented.
3. **Facilitation:** that there has been insufficient budget allocation to cater for the four phases of disaster management i.e., Prevention and Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery/Reconstruction. There is therefore the need to have an adequate budget to cater for the unit's core mandate of saving lives and property
4. **Transport:** that currently, one of the trucks GKB121M (foam tender) has been grounded for months due to mechanical problems. The three All-Terrain Vehicles have been grounded for three years.

That there is need to have qualified personnel or specific company to service and maintain the fire engines within the shortest time possible alongside the acquisition of specialized items that need replacement.

That there is need to allocate fueling cards to our emergency vehicles since some emergencies occur at a time when the officers responsible for fueling are unavailable.

That there is need to station one functional ambulance that should accompany the fire engines during emergency response since we have been losing lives as we wait for an ambulance to be released from a health facility.



5. **Construction of fire stations:** that none of the fire stations is completely constructed especially the parking bays. Kenol station has a single hostel for both genders, no water connection and poor sanitation and no fire hydrant and an incomplete parking bay. Kangari fire station requires renovation of the floor, roof, parking bay and a perimeter wall. The head quarter station is newly renovated, but requires water harvesting tanks, an elevated tank and a perimeter wall. The Kangema station is not yet functional since the dedicated building requires rehabilitation and personnel to man, partitioning and a standard fire engine parking bay to be habitable.

## 5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS


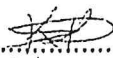







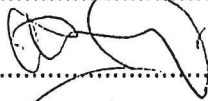
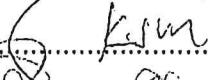
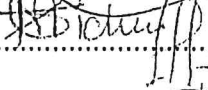


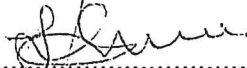
The committee recommends as follows;

1. That the County Secretary should resubmit the firefighting bill formulated in 2014 for consideration by the committee.
2. That the County Secretary should forward the policies and regulations that it has formulated in 2023 for discussion and approval by the house.
3. That the Firefighting unit constructs 5 new fire stations to ensure that every sub county has a substation.
4. That the Firefighting unit operationalize the Kangema Sub station that is already constructed and has a fire engine.
5. That the Firefighting unit renovates all the existing fire stations and equip them fully.
6. That the Firefighting unit includes procurement of 5 fire trucks, 5 hydrants, an ambulance and a water bowser in the Budget for FY 2023/2024.
7. That the department should ensure that it has a constant and reliable company for servicing and maintenance of the fire engines
8. That the Firefighting unit conducts more community-oriented sensitization, capacity building and volunteers training to increase awareness
9. That the Firefighting unit ensures that staff have adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for operations.
10. That the Firefighting unit fast-tracks the activation of the emergence line short code, 1504, by the Communication Authority of Kenya.
11. That the County Secretary enables and accredits the TVETS in the county to have the capacity to train on firefighting and disaster management.
12. That the Public Service Board with the advice of County Secretary should adopt a firefighting service scheme to enable proper remuneration of new staff and confirmation of the existing staff.

APPENDIX 1

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The following Committees' Members adopted the report:

- 1. Hon. Grace Sharleen Wambui Maina ..... 
- 2. Hon. Kenneth Kamau ..... 
- 3. Hon. Anthony Chege Marubu ..... 
- 4. Hon. Hannah Wairimu Kamau ..... 
- 5. Hon. Boniface Ng'ang'a Mbau ..... 
- 6. Hon. Naomi Nyambura Maina ..... 
- 7. Hon. Gathe Wa Njeri ..... 
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- 11. Hon. Edwin Mwangi Wairagu ..... 
- 12. Hon. John Mwangi Kamau ..... 
- 13. Hon. Mark Wainaina Gicheru ..... 
- 14. Hon. Elizabeth Wambui ..... 
- 15. Hon. Moses Macharia Mirara ..... 
- 16. Hon. Jeremiah Gichobe Mbatia ..... 