



Submission for the Sector Hearings by the Nakuru County Budget Champions Forum for ECOSOC rights

1.0 Background

The Nakuru County Budget Champions Forum for ECOSOC rights is a county wide network of social accountability cell bringing together community budget champions working in respective communities to champion for better health service delivery. The forum brings together champions from the more than six sub counties in Nakuru. The forum mobilizes their constituents to take part in decision making processes and other social accountability initiatives including County Budget Monitoring, Social Audit, Community report cards and scorecards.

1.1 The basis for ECOSOC rights

Devolution as provided for in Chapter 11 of the Constitution makes four critical promises to Kenyans that include accountable governance, public participation, equality and quality and equitable service delivery. However, the Kenya citizen is still grappling with access to basic services such as water, health and education. These challenges are as a result of a number of factors key among being: Low citizen awareness on constitution and participation in county decision making, Skewed prioritization of projects and misappropriation of public resources. The forum therefore exists to champion for meaningful participation of residents at the local levels in advocating for realization of their Economic and Social Rights including Health, Water and Education.

1.2 Submission on the County Fiscal Strategy Paper 2021/2022 - Health Sector Report

The forum commends the County Government of Nakuru for promoting principles of Public Finance Management through rooting for public participation as required by law. In exercise of this principle, the forum would wish to bring to the attention of the Health Sector leadership;

1. **Allocations for Drugs and Health Commodities:** Whereas, the sector report has cited "Increased demand for drugs and health commodities" as a challenge in the previous FY review, the sector report has not provided information on specific allocations for these commodities and the resource requirement. This information is critical in informing subsequent planning in light of addressing this challenge.
2. **Priority versus allocation for Health Promotion:** The sector report strongly identifies Health Promotion as a key priority for the sector. However, the sector proposes to reduce the allocation for the sub program from Ksh. 1.1 M to Ksh. 800,000/-. This decrease doesn't infer this as priority in the sector priority.
3. **Coordination of Harmonization of roles with the Water Sector:** Whereas the Health sector has identified strategic areas that require investment on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), this would limit available resources for the sector. It is of critical importance that the Health sector liaises with the Water Department to ensure improved access to water and sanitation in underserved areas and high demand areas.

4. **Access to Mental Health Services:** With rising cases of mental health illnesses, focus on mental health service delivery has since designated for specialized facilities despite increased demand for these services at local levels. Whereas, the forum appreciates that mental health services are specialized services, the department should seek for innovative strategies to avail these services at the local levels.
5. **The County Community Health Services Strategy:** The ADP 2021 had mapped out the Community Health Strategy as a strategic priority with commitments to motivation of Community Health Volunteers (Ksh. 91,200) and Legislative Framework as top areas for investment. The sector report however does explain how to actualize this commitment.
6. **Delayed implementation of Projects:** With a number of stalled projects identified in the sector, the proposals for the sector have not specified strategies to fast-track implementation of these projects and providing status reports for other incomplete projects. Some of these projects include; Nessuit Public Toilet in Njoro Sub County, OPD in Molo Sub County Hospital in Molo Sub County, Muguga Dispensary in Nakuru East Sub County.
7. **Youth Friendly Services:** Focus on Youth friendly services has emerged as one of the under budgeted areas. Going by the fact that a majority of the youth friendly centers budgeted in previous facilities have since stalled.
8. **Focus on equipping rather than expansion:** The forum advocates for investments in equipping of health facilities and provision of health commodities rather than establishing and expansion new facilities to ensure that that efficiency is enhanced at the existing facilities.
9. **Compensation and appraisal of Healthcare workers:** The forum continues to advocate better compensation for the county health workforce. Particularly, the forum impresses on the county to consider payments for majority of select health support staff whose salaries and remuneration has been delayed for longer periods leading up to more than six months. There is need to establish a fund to cushion these cadre of workers when there are delays or non-disbursement of DANIDA grants.
10. **Availability of Quarterly Implementation Reports:** Implementation reports for status of ongoing or completed projects has emerged as a challenge during public participation. Sharing of implementation reports in a timely manner enables citizens to meaningfully engage and avert duplication of projects

1.3 Conclusion

With consideration of the stated submissions, the Nakuru Budget Champions Forum for ECOSOC rights believes that majority of the stated objectives for the sector are shall be realized. Additionally, the numerous gaps in the sector revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic both at County and National levels have demonstrated the critical importance of ensuring that the wellbeing of citizens is guaranteed and the Health system is better prepared to address similar crisis in future. With this therefore, the department of Health deserves an increase in allocation to enhance preparedness and upscale health promotion campaigns.

Attached is the list of the members of the Forum.