



Collaborate, Coordinate and Engage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 6TH October, 2023

Contact: Philip Tomno

Title: Chairperson, BACSOF.

Phone: +254115760697

Email: bacsof030@gmail.com

COMMUNIQUÉ BY THE BARINGO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS FORUM ON IMPROPER USE OF COUNTY RESOURCES

Introduction:

Baringo Civil Society Organizations Forum (BACSOF) is a network of civil society organizations working in Baringo County to promote sustainable development through social accountability. BACSOF exists to provide a coordinated platform for civil society organizations to inform value-based governance and development in Baringo County.

Our attention is drawn to the County Annual Budget Implementation and Review Report for the financial year 2022/23 by the Office of Controller of Budget where a whopping **Ksh. 46, 965,552** was spent by 12 officers from the county executive and the county assembly of Baringo on foreign travel. More disturbing is that **One officer spent Ksh. 8. 4 M** on travel for intergovernmental leadership training in Singapore. **See figure 1 below for more details**



Table 3.4: Summary of highest expenditure on foreign travel

Arm of County Government	Number of officers Travelled	Date of travel	Destination	Details	Amount (Kshs.)
County Assembly	1	30th Jan- 7th Feb 2023	Singapore	Intergovernmental leadership training	8,489,928.00
County Assembly	1	10-10th June 2022	Turkey	Transformative Leadership	7,264,383.00
County Assembly	1	8th-15th Jan 2023	Singapore	Training on governance and structural planning	7,166,600.00
County Assembly	1	27th May- 3rd June 2022	Arusha	Servant Leadership	6,322,360.00
County Assembly	1	15-26th Feb 2023	Arusha	Leadership and board training	4,602,800.00
County Assembly	1	12-19th Jan 2023	Arusha	Training on building strategic responsiveness	3,867,592.00
County Assembly	1	26th Feb-11th March 2022	Dubai	Ushanga Initiative	1,890,740.00
County Assembly	1	19-28th May 2022	Dubai	Governance and Leadership	1,886,260.00
County Executive	1	04.05.23	Germany	Facilitation cost for Germany	1,464,372.40
County Executive	1	10.03.23	Israel	Facilitation cost to Israel	1,431,164.00

Arm of County Government	Number of officers Travelled	Date of travel	Destination	Details	Amount (Kshs.)
County Assembly	1	23-27th Jan 2023	Dubai	Sustainable Economic Annual Conference	1,416,328.00
County Executive	1	29.05.23	Korea	Facilitation cost to Korea.	1,163,025.00

Source: Baringo County Treasury

Figure 1: Snippets of the Office of the Controller of Budget Report available on: <https://cob.go.ke/reports/consolidated-county-budget-implementation-review-reports/#>

Review of the Audit General Reports¹ show that this practice has been recurring and is

¹ <https://www.oagkenya.go.ke/2019-2020-county-government-audit-reports/>

an ongoing concern, as demonstrated in table 1 below.

Table 1: Analysis of the audit queries related to domestic and foreign travel expenditure for the FYs 2020/21 and 2021/22

Financial Year	Amount queried (Ksh.)	Issue raised
County Executive		
2020/21	14,343,133	The expenditure was not supported by approval by the Accounting Officer
County Assembly		
2020/21	2,007,000	Paid to officers in Kabarnet while attending committee sitting and signing captain orders at the county assembly cafeteria
Total	16,350,133	
County Executive		
2021/22	381,660,675	Irregular expenditure –missing imprest warrants and surrender documents
2021/22	10,241,813	Evidence of travel by way of invitation letters, copies of air tickets, copies of the boarding passes, copy of the passport indicating the points of entry and exit of the travel destinations, activity programs and back to office reports.
County Assembly		
2021/22	11,404,000	Spent on payment of car grants for Members of County Assembly yet it was earmarked for domestic travel;
2021/22	31,632,976	Lack Justification of the training to be done outside the county and needs assessment Lack of written approval by the accounting officer Payment vouchers were not availed for audit
Total (Ksh.)	434,939,464	

Key gaps in depicted by the queries include:

1. Weak Budget Control Mechanism



2. Lack of integrity among the County government Officials
3. Lack of Prudence in utilization of public resource

Opportunity Cost

Baringo County is a water scarce County. According the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022² only 39% of the households in Baringo have access to basic drinking water. The situation is dire in Tiaty (and part of Baringo South and Baringo North), where less 15% of the households have access to clean and safe water. In 2021/22 Office of the Auditor general queried up to Ksh. 485 M for various violations ranging from lack of justifications for foreign travel, lack of approval by the accounting officers, lack of surrender documents, lack of back to office reports and missing payment vouchers. Based on the Water Projects Cost Reverence³ it takes about Ksh. 7 M to drill borehole and supply water to at least 100 Households. Therefore, if Ksh. 495 M was spent on drilling and equipping of boreholes in Tiaty, 70 boreholes would have been drilled thus connecting about 7000 HH households to improved sources of water.

Better still, in 2017 the County Department of Health Services estimated the annual medical commodity requirement at Ksh. 430 M i.e. the amount needed to supply medical drugs and commodities in Baringo County annually. Therefore, the queried amount of Ksh. 495M would supply drugs to our dispensaries, health centres and referral hospitals and ensure availability of drugs and non-pharmaceuticals for at least 9 months. Current budget allocations are hardly over 200 M occasioning perennial shortage of drugs; *'Hakuna dawa'*.

BACSOF hence demand as follows:

1. That Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission swings into action to investigate possible abuse of office and fraud in the budget lines mentioned.
2. That the Senate Public Accounts Committee demands for responses to the audit queries and recommend appropriate action
3. That the County Assembly and County Executive provides a public justification on the expenditure, name the individuals involved and enumerate the actions taken to address the audit queries as well as measures put in place to prevent the malpractice from recurring in future

² <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/GF57/GF57Baringo.pdf>

³ <https://cedgg.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Water-Projects-Cost-Reference-in-Baringo-County.pdf>

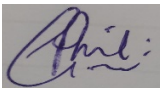


If no immediate action is taken, BACSOF shall seek redress through public protests, public interest litigation and recall process against Baringo County Assembly for **failure to provide effective oversight and abetting in corruption and abuse of office.**

In conclusion, the BACSOF urges the public oversight institutions to step up their mandate. On our part we shall scale up vigilance through budget analysis, monitoring and engagement. We shall also continue to sensitize members of the public to effectively the civilian oversight role.

Signed by: Philip Tomno

Title: Chairperson, BACSOF.

Signature:.....**Date:** 6th October, 2023.

This statement has been endorsed by the following members of the BACSOF Steering Committee:

No.	Name	Thematic Group	Contact
1.	Isaac Chelal	Budget and Overall Priorities	0726110839
2.	Isaiah Biwot	Human Rights and Human Rights Defenders	0726110839
3.	Carol Jebet	Gender and Social Protection	0724430150
4.	Josphat Mosbey	Health	0727458360
5.	Philip Sigilai	Water, Environment and Natural Resources	0721443527
6.	Amos Chemuna	Agriculture, Climate Change and Resilience	0704202359
7.	Evans Barsongol	Youth and Vocational Training	0720041439
8.	David Kiplagat	Budget Champions Chairperson	0798081893
9.	Lucilla Kandie	Budget Champions Vice Chairperson	0707969201
10.	Michael Tamam	PWDs only Budget Cell Leader	0726110839
11.	Janet Nandwa	Women Only Budget Cell Leader	0727504426
12.	Godfrey Kipsoi	BACSOF Secretary	0725509757



13.	Evans Kibet	BACSOF Liaison Officer	0711221294
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