

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

KITUI COUNTY ASSEMBLY

SECOND COUNTY ASSEMBLY- FIRST SESSION

OFFICIAL REPORT (THE HANSARD)

Tuesday, 3rd October, 2017

(The County Assembly met at 2.30 p.m. at the Kenya Forestry Research Institute Offices-Kitui Regional Branch)

ARRIVAL OF HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

[Her Excellency the Governor (Hon. Charity Ngilu) escorted by the Speaker of the County Assembly (Hon. George Ndotto) entered the Chamber 2.30 p.m. accompanied by the Mace]

[Her Excellency the Governor (Hon. Ngilu) took the Chair on the left of the Speaker]

(The Mace was placed on the Table)

The Speaker (Hon. Ndotto): Hon. Members, it is now time for us to be led in prayer by the spiritual leaders.

*(Prayers were then said by the following spiritual leaders:
Imam Ibrahim Shaaban, Rev John Muli and Fr. Francis Kauso)*

CONVOCATION/COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

CONVENING OF THE SECOND COUNTY ASSEMBLY SITTING FOR OFFICIAL OPENING AND ADDRESS BY THE GOVERNOR PURSUANT TO THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY STANDING ORDER NO. 17(1).

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

The Speaker (Hon.Ndotto): Your Excellency, the Governor of Kitui County, Hon. Members of the Assembly, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. Good Afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the official opening of the Second County Assembly. First and foremost let us take this opportunity to thank the Almighty God for the gift of life and the opportunity He has bestowed upon us to serve this great county of Kitui.

Hon. Members, A notice of this sitting was given pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order No. 13(1) during the second sitting of the Assembly held on 14th September, 2017. Further, Standing Order No. 17(1) provides that “the governor shall address the opening of each newly elected county assembly.” Accordingly, this sitting is properly convened.

Hon. Members, It is important to note that the provisions of Standing Order No. 20 (3) states that “when delivering an address to the County Assembly, the Governor shall be heard in silence and the address shall not be followed by any comment or question”. Consequently, it is now my singular honour and privilege to invite Her Excellency the Governor of Kitui County, Hon. Charity Kaluki Ngilu to address this opening of the newly elected Second Assembly.

GOVERNOR’S ADDRESS EXPOSITION OF COUNTY POLICY

Her Excellency the Governor (Hon. Ngilu): Hon. Speaker of Kitui County Assembly, George Ndotto; Hon. Members of the County Assembly; The Clerk of the Assembly and all staff attending; I want to thank the Almighty God and thank you all for this special opportunity that I have been given to make my inaugural address to this Assembly as the Governor of Kitui County. It is indeed a great honour and privilege that we have been granted by the people of Kitui, and we should forever be grateful.

Hon Speaker, I want to congratulate you once again on your being re-elected to serve for a second term as the Speaker of the County Assembly of Kitui. Your re-election against very many odds is a clear testimony of the confidence that the Hon. Members of this House have in you.

With your long experience in public service, we would be right to expect that you can take care of the legislative business of this County, and that your steady hands will steer this important institution to even greater heights.

Hon. Speaker, let me reiterate the assurance I gave when you paid a courtesy call to my office two weeks ago. My administration and I will go out of our way to work with you and all the members of the Assembly.

This will include, quite importantly, observing the principle of separation of powers, which is the bedrock of our constitutional order, and the guiding light of all democratic governments.

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

I must also note that your Assembly is lucky to have as its Clerk a very skilled and experienced public servant, and the staff that he leads of mostly youthful, energetic and well educated men and women who have answered the call to serve our County.

Hon. Speaker, I am here today to do basically two things. First is to perform the official duty assigned to the Governor in your Standing Order no. 17 (1), that “the Governor shall address the opening of each newly elected County Assembly.” In doing this I will expound on the County Government policy, as it is always done in the long standing tradition of our legislatures in Kenya.

Secondly Mr. Speaker is to use this opportunity to share with the Honorable Members briefly and broadly, some of the legislative and programme agenda that this Assembly and my Government need to deal with in the short and medium term. Be warned there is quite a lot we need to do to give our people hope!

In addition, I want to share with you my agenda for the next five years for the Kitui people, and to invite you to think with me, reflect with me, walk with me, and work with me towards realizing these goals.

Let me begin with a reflection on a few outstanding doctrines in our Constitution. First, our Constitution affirms the supremacy of the people, by stating right at the beginning that *sovereign power belongs to the people* – the ordinary *mwananchi* whom you and I have been called to serve. This means that this government, these institutions, which we work in are not about us the leaders, but are about the common *mwananchi*, *Musangi*, who have humbly chosen us to represent them.

The fact that the people have chosen to exercise their sovereign power through us, their representatives, does not make us more important than them. Indeed, all the titles that we so proudly carry – Your Excellency, Honourable and such – are their titles not our titles.

Secondly, the Constitution in Chapter Six on Leadership and Integrity affirms that the power and authority assigned to our offices is a public trust that vests in us responsibility to serve the people, rather than the power to rule them. This is something that we must always remember, or which I will always remind you, every time we step out to work together.

Many a time in our dealings with our ‘bosses’ the people, the conduct of our Governments both at national and county levels has bordered on royalty. We operate with such fancy regalia - deep red carpets, high backed chairs, air-conditioned tents, mobile toilets, good food etc.!

This is a betrayal of the Constitution that we all claim to hold dear. It is our responsibility to reverse all this, and to restore public trust in the offices that we hold. The spirit of devolution in our Constitution is about service – accessing services and counter availing power to the people - not entrenching the glory of leaders. We must be as close to the people as possible, so that we can understand and feel what they are going through and what they really need.

Thirdly Mr. Speaker, the Constitution gives this Assembly an onerous responsibility to legislate, to represent our people, and to provide oversight on the work of the County Executive. This effectively makes the Assembly the single most influential institution in our County. You could actually say the most powerful institution in our County.

This power entails responsibility and behooves justice. Many times you and I will be called upon to exercise the power of our offices in the service of the people. We must do this

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

only in the pursuit of justice and greater public good, not in the interest of personal gain or glorification. I must stress that *that which is powerful must be just, so that that which is just may be powerful.*

Hon. Speaker, these three constitutional references provide for me the platform from which I take off in my address to this Assembly today, and also the frame of my Government's engagement with the County Assembly. They represent the values that I will constantly refer to as we serve together.

Hon. Speaker, this Assembly now consists of 54 honorable Members, 40 of them elected from our Wards and 14 specially elected by political parties to represent special interests – ethnic minorities, youth, women and persons living with physical challenges. I am extremely happy that our Muslim community is now powerfully represented in this Assembly, after missing out altogether from the first one.

This Assembly now has a powerful diversity of backgrounds, talents, experience, gender, and youth. To a large extent it represents the face of Kitui County. And it has in its composition what it requires to take Kitui County to the next level.

However Mr. Speaker, to achieve more we must commit ourselves to shun political divisions and partisan biases, and focus more on the challenges and tasks ahead of us. The development challenges facing our people are not aware of our different political affiliations. Hunger and poverty do not respect political parties. Thirst or ill health will not spare you because you affiliate with party A or with party B.

Certainly, in responding to the needs of our people and the development agenda of the Wards you represent, my Government will not bother with which political party you belong to, or whether you belong to any political party at all.

Needless to say, our people expect you to consider and deliberate on the legislative matters and agenda of government in a non-partisan manner. My government will not discriminate, and this Assembly should not discriminate either.

Mr Speaker, I note with concern that only 6 women were elected directly out of our 40 electoral wards, a paltry 15% of the elected Members. While I congratulate these courageous women and the communities that put their faith in them, we must address ourselves to the fact that today, in the 21st century, women are still facing insurmountable challenges in their quest for public office.

These include gender motivated negative attitudes towards women, lack of resources, lack of connections in male dominated political parties, lack of exposure, patriarchal socialization that deprives women and girls of their self-esteem, and quite regrettably, violence against women.

But we also give our voters a pat on the back because Kitui is still one of the Counties that posted among the highest percentages of elected women both in this year's and in the 2013 general elections. Congratulations Kitui. We must continue to support women to fight for their political space.

On my part as your Governor and one of only three women Governors in Kenya, I promise to be one of your beacons in this quest to demonstrate the capability of women in political leadership. I promise that I will apply affirmative action to support women's

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

programmes and enterprises across all your 40 wards. I will strive to ensure that women have more than the prescribed 30% access to business opportunities.

Hon. Members, whether you are a man or woman, youthful or not, your offices come with considerable challenges. Our people have pressing needs that make their lives difficult to say the least. We as leaders are called upon every day to address these pressing needs be it paying fees, hospital or funeral bills. These are burdens on us and unless we transform our people's lives we will continue to bear the brunt.

I am aware that the Salaries and Remuneration Commission has recently reduced salaries and emoluments for all of us, and this is a huge challenge because these offices require substantial financial capability.

I will work with you Honorable Speaker to ensure that this Assembly gets sufficient budget allocations to run its legislative programmes, its support services and enough to address the welfare of Honourable Members and staff. I would particularly like to see the honorable members get capacity building in order for them to carry out their roles effectively. This calls for, among other things, training and exposure both locally and internationally.

Mr. Speaker, I am aware that in 2015 the Commission on Revenue Allocation imposed budget ceilings on recurrent expenditure by both the Assemblies and the Executive. This measure was perhaps necessary at the time in order to check against reckless spending by some of your former colleagues.

While respecting these ceilings and any other financial guidelines set out in law, we will adopt a consultative approach to budget allocations between this Assembly and my Executive, so that we can all be satisfied that we are allocating money where it is needed most.

FIVE PRIORITIES

Hon. Speaker, as you may be aware I campaigned for office on a platform of addressing what I considered to be five key priority areas for our people. Namely:-

- Food and water
- Health care
- Education and youth development
- Women empowerment
- Wealth creation

They are the *platform for action* for my government for the next five years. I am sure that the Honorable Members in this Assembly have similar if not the same priorities.

Mr Speaker, allow me now to elaborate on these priority areas and the policy, legislative and programme interventions that we propose to initiate to address these priorities.

1. FOOD AND WATER

Mr. Speaker, for far too long Kitui County and Ukambani in general, has been the laughing stock of other communities because of the perennial food shortages that we experience. Whenever drought and famine hit our areas, our people suffer not only starvation, but also the

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

indignity of having to beg for food from the Government and aid agencies. A begging community cannot claim respect, and cannot take its place of pride in the nation called Kenya.

It pains all of us to see our women queue all day long at the Chiefs office to receive only a few kilos of maize, sometimes even without pulses. This is not only demeaning but also wastes a lot of time that can be used in other productive activities.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Members, we must now commit ourselves to be the leaders, to be the Government that ends food shortages and hunger in our community once and for all. We must be the Government that finally ends the shame of *mwolyo*. We must be the Government that will reclaim the dignity of our people. I am ready to lead this transformation. I implore you to join me.

Towards this end, I propose to invest in an ambitious agricultural support programme that will support our farmers to produce more food for household consumption and also for sale.

My administration proposes to walk with our farmer along the value chain. We have began a farm mechanization program by ploughing more land using County tractors. A few weeks ago I launched 7 County Government tractors to start helping some of our farmers to plough. In the short term, we need to increase the number of tractors so that farmers in each Ward can at least have two or more tractors at their disposal, to supplement the privately owned tractors that are available seasonally in many parts of Kitui.

At present we have already ploughed over 600 acres in the last 3 weeks. We are targeting over 4000 acres by the time the short rains are upon us. We will soon be supplying over 200,000 households across the County with certified seeds for drought resistant crops namely green grams, cowpeas, sorghum and millet

In the medium term, we will develop a well-researched agricultural subsidy programme, which will include supporting farmers' cooperatives to acquire and manage tractors for ploughing and other farm machinery. We will also work with agricultural research organizations and private entrepreneurs to develop seed multiplication centres across the County, so that eventually availability of quality seed will no longer be a problem.

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the limitations of rain-fed agriculture. Therefore even as we support our farmers with certified seeds and tractors for ploughing, our long-term strategy will be to pursue irrigation very aggressively with relevant National and international organizations.

Related to the scarcity of food is the shortage of water for domestic use and also for livestock. Mr. Speaker it is deplorable that in this day and age women and girls in many parts of our County still walk long distances and wait for very many hours at remote water wells just to get a few jerricans of water. We must bring this suffering to an end. We have the will, the commitment and the resources to do so.

To address this, I propose to invest a reasonable part of our budget to rehabilitate all boreholes, construct small, medium sized, large water pans and dams to collect runoff water. It beats sense that in the next two months or so, we will witness billions of litres of water run off the surface of our land into the Indian Ocean. A few months later we will be trekking, along with our animals, for many kilometres to look for the same water! Incredible how we even survive this year in year out. Let us all come together and address this once and for all by investing more resources in water storage.

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

Similarly Mr. Speaker, we can borrow what our neighbours Makueni County have done to encourage personal responsibility in harvesting rain water by legislating that housing developers to include water harvesting structures in their buildings.

We have already identified 107 boreholes, which have high yield of water but were not operational. We have so far rehabilitated 41 of these with the assistance of Kenya Red Cross and UNICEF. We will complete the remaining within the next 3 months. We will also train at KEWI two (2) young people from within each borehole to acquire basic maintenance skills.

2. THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

Our livestock sector holds a lot of potential for wealth creation for our County. Most of our land particularly to the north, east and south of the County is ideal for raising of beef cattle, goats and sheep. The vibrancy of livestock markets all the way from Mutha, Mutomo through Kisasi, Kabati, Nguni, Ngomeni up to Tseikuru, Sosoma ranches attests to the potential for animal productivity.

We need to invest in services for animal health and breeding, securing and developing pasture land, development of abattoirs, and giving strategic support to livestock traders in our County. This could include facilitating livestock traders to transport their livestock more quickly and efficiently and reduce the loss of value.

3. HEALTH CARE

Among all the 47 Counties Kitui has the highest number of government health facilities. I have heard this distinction at times being attributed to the fact that I once served as Minister for Health in the National Government, but that is neither here nor there.

Mr. Speaker, we have a big challenge in meeting the health needs of our people against a background of low household incomes, poor nutrition status and the challenges of sanitation and hygiene, which come with water shortages. Low household incomes means that a majority of our people rely on public facilities for health care.

We will enhance health education and information through our village health volunteers to ensure that our people can take care of their basic health needs. We will also ensure that our dispensaries have health workers and essential medicine, which we have already commenced to procure.

I plan to put in place a county health insurance scheme for all households. We have already started a conversation with a health economist to do a feasibility study on this, and to give us an actual road map towards putting it in place in the next 1 year or so.

4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

As you may be aware Mr. Speaker, our population now stands at about 1.3 million people, making Kitui the 11th most populous County in the Republic. Sadly, about 62% of this population lives in abject poverty. Nearly 25% of our population are youth aged 18 – 35 years, and the school going age alone (6-13 years, and 14 – 17 years age groups) consists of about 35%

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

of total population, going by 2015 projections. The percentage of youth with employable skills is extremely low, making youth unemployment and destitution one of the biggest challenges in our County.

The level of unemployment in this County is unacceptable, and so are the levels of poverty and hopelessness among our young people. We can reverse this by training our youth to be part and parcel of local production and value addition for our products. Some of the things that we can train our youth for are poultry keeping, making shoes, belts, handbags, school uniforms, value addition for honey, mangos and green grams, interlocking brickmaking including tiles, making building material from rock and ballast in our Yatta Plateau. With just a little capital the County Government can acquire the machinery and technology needed for these jobs. Mr. Speaker I appeal to this Assembly to work with me to actualize this vision.

5. WEALTH CREATION AND ERADICATION OF POVERTY

We must work and think hard on how we can help our people to become more productive, and to create wealth from our God-given resources. To help our people to get out of poverty we must get them to produce. Looking around us we have all the required factors of production, namely land, labour, capital and technology.

We have plenty of land with very good soils and terrain. Mr. Speaker of the County's 3.4 million acres of arable land, we collectively only use about 10%. No wonder therefore we never produce enough food. We must expand this and help our people to access markets, both national and international, to sell their products.

For example, I am planning to start this coming rainy season with giving about 200,000 households each 2kgs of seed green grams. This will cost us just about Ksh 100 million. If each kilogram yields a bare minimum of 90 kgs this will give us a total of 36 million kilos. 36 million kilograms sold at a price of Ksh 100 per kilo gives us a total of Ksh 3.6 billion! Imagine Ksh 3.6 billion in one season in One County, and from investing only Ksh 100 million in seed – isn't this good investment? Good value for money? Mr. Speaker, this is not farfetched, it is so real. Some places like Ngomeni fetch up to Ksh 25 million from *ndengu* alone on one market day during the *ndengu* season – and this I have witnessed. Imagine how many places in this County can produce to this level or even higher. And this is before we have come up with legislation to protect our farmers from brokers (and we all know from where!) who come to exploit our people.

Therefore Mr. Speaker, this cannot be business as usual and it should not. I repeat NOT business as usual. We have to engage with our people and start unlocking that mind-set of poverty and handouts. We must unlock the potential of our people, and also reject those who want to maintain us with handouts. Instead of giving us seeds to grow our wealth they want to give us maize and beans to cook just for the day. In other words you're giving our people the fish instead of the fishing rod.

Beyond this Mr. Speaker, we must refocus our development agenda with the knowledge of what the devolved system of government was all about. Devolution was not just about putting up concrete structures – brick and mortar – but about developing people's capacities. We must start re-thinking some of the things that we do and take for granted. To redress the poverty and youth unemployment that we are experiencing, our County requires some measure of very radical thinking and action. We cannot get out of where we are now by simply doing the **Disclaimer:** *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

same old things that have been done by previous governments and leaders for generations since independence. This, allow me to quote *Albert Einstein* when he said “*Insanity is doing same thing over and over again and expect different results.*”

We need to seriously start looking inwards at the resource we have within our County and how best we can use it to create employment and increase incomes for our people. We have a lot of resources and products that are either untapped or under-utilised.

For example our mangoes and our *ndengu*. In just about three months from now Kitui will be awash with mangoes, but as has happened over the generations, most of it will go to waste – left to fall off trees and rot, or sold out cheaply to middlemen. Mr. Speaker, why can't we get our mangoes processed into juice or dried snacks which would give them a longer shelf life and certainly more value? How about our *ndengu*, which is always plentiful in February? Why is our *ndengu* sold in 90 kilogram bags while those who produce rice have it packed in 2 kilogram packets in order to give them more value? Honey produced in Kitui is sold raw to people who only sieve it into small containers and sell it again at four times the original value.

Why are our supermarkets stocked with eggs imported from Uganda and South Africa, yet we have the highest levels of unemployment and poverty among women and youth, who can very gainfully raise chicken to supply eggs? The same Kitui women make the world famous *kiondos*, which are exported unfinished, yet we have the leather and fabric to do the job. And why haven't our women moved beyond basket making into making carpets, yet nearly every home in our towns nowadays uses a carpet? And the palm fibre that exists abundantly in Tharaka and Malalani? Can we use clay and the traditional skills of pottery to make earthenware on a commercial scale, yet it only requires us to bring in kilns for modeling and firing the clay?

Why do we need to buy soap for use in our homes, offices, hospitals, schools and markets; at a highway supermarket somewhere in Juja or Thika, and benefitting already rich industrialists somewhere, while some unemployed women and youth in my own village can supply me with the same commodity? Why can't our Government provide our people with skills, equipment and capital and help them produce? With all these lost opportunities and lost wealth, how do we expect to get our people out of poverty?

What I am saying Mr Speaker is that we need to seriously invest in increasing the productivity of our people, and supporting them to add value to products and resources that have not been properly exploited in this County. This way we create employment and wealth for our unemployed women and youth.

To move in this direction we must first accept that development is not all about putting up buildings and structures. It is about getting our priorities right.

I want to ask you Honourable members, when the County Government puts in millions of shillings to line kilometres upon kilometres of our highways with very bright street lights, while a school girl in the nearby village cannot do homework in the evening because their home is not connected to electricity, are we getting our priorities right?

Are our priorities right when we spend millions of shillings every month to pay electricity bills for lights that burn on the highways throughout the night, when in the next village a woman walks 10 kilometres just to fetch water? Is lighting a town that is deserted to donkeys and stray dogs at night more important than supplying water to that town?

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

Mr. Speaker, you would be shocked beyond words to know how much this Government pays every month in electricity for these street lights; I am however slightly consoled to know that the County Assembly rejected extravagant spending on these street lights in its report on the budget of 2014 – 2015 financial year.

6. SECURITY

Mr Speaker, let me briefly address the issue of insecurity. You know for a long time our border with Tana River and Garissa Counties have been hotspots for insecurity. There has been an influx of armed herders attacking our people, many times leading to maiming and death of our people. Just last week in Ngomeni we had funerals for 4 people, and so far this year alone over 30 people have been killed. This must be brought to an end.

Mr. Speaker, there is now a campaign underway to forcefully evict our people from parts of Tseikuru, Ngomeni, Nguni and Nuu Wards so that the rangelands in these areas can be turned into grazing fields for camels. We know for a fact that the people behind this campaign are wealthy business people from Wajir and Garissa Counties. They are the ones who have sponsored gunmen to stalk and kill Kitui people while they go about their business farming or looking after livestock.

Mr. Speaker, I demand now that the security agencies of the National Government immediately remove armed herders who are occupying parts of Kitui County by force. The National Police Service has also to arrest and prosecute those who kill our people. It's a shame Mr. Speaker that most of the killers are known, and their hideouts are also known, but they have been left to go scot free. It is a shame on the National Government when it cannot guarantee the basic rights to life for the people it collects taxes from.

OTHER POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker there is a lot more on our programmes, policies and legislation that I would like to talk to this Assembly about. Between you and me Mr. Speaker we need to create another opportunity in the very near future to meet with these Honorable Members and explore these issues in a different kind of setting. I would like us to explore issues relating to the following:

Public participation – creating enabling legislation and budgets for our people to participate in County Government processes as required by the Constitution;

Civic education – creating a comprehensive civic education programme that empowers our people with information on their rights and responsibilities and the workings of the County Government.

Education support – legislating for a bursary programme to support to learners from needy backgrounds, and also infrastructure renewal for public schools

Vocational training – developing a County TVET policy and a programme to modernize our TVET institutions to absorb more youth

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

Minerals and natural resources (limestone, coal, gypsum, sand and charcoal) – creating a minerals investment policy that protects the environment and the human rights of our people; legislation to control sand harvesting and charcoal production

County administration – transforming our County administration from purely administrative roles to management of local development processes

Ward development fund – legislating for a programme that enables us to set aside funds for implementation of small to medium sized projects at the community level

Development of a new County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP)

30 DAYS PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

Mr. Speaker, when I was officially sworn in on 21st August 2017 I promised the people of Kitui certain performance milestones within the first thirty and a hundred days after assuming office. Today we are barely 40 days after assuming office, but am happy and proud to report to this Assembly some of the benchmarks that we have achieved so far:

On 21st August the same day I was sworn in I launched our water trucking programme and flagged off 10 water bowsers. As of today we have delivered clean drinking water to some of the far flung areas of our County. Mr. Speaker this has been done from saving money that had been set aside for my inauguration.

From 28th – 29th August I visited several donor partners including JHPIEGO, USAID and Kenya Red Cross. There has been instant positive response that has also given us some quick wins in the health and agriculture sectors. On 4th September I launched the mobile clinic programme which has been supported with funds JHPIEGO. JHPIEGO have also hired for us 60 nurses who have already been posted to various health facilities. As of today the mobile clinics have attended to well over 30,000 patients all across the County;

We have rehabilitated 7 tractors for ploughing farms in line with our promise to the people that they will be helped to modernize land tilling. These are already out ploughing for farmers as we look forward to providing them with certified seeds and increasing the number of tractors.

We have started rehabilitation of some of the dysfunctional boreholes, targeting to do a total of 107 in the next 3 months. So far we have rehabilitated 41 boreholes and they are now pumping water for livestock and domestic consumption. Mr Speaker you can try to estimate how many hours saved and how much labour expended daily in search of water;

Kenya Red Cross has helped us with refurbishing some of our dispensaries and also with rehabilitation of some boreholes.

BUDGET OVERHAUL

Hon Speaker, you are familiar with the 2017/2018 budget which was passed by the last Assembly in March 2017, and you will agree with me that it largely does not reflect the needs and priorities that I have just outlined. And it could not, because that was a budget for another government, with another vision, in another era.

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*

To this end I will seek guidance from Section 108 of the Public Finance Management Act so as to overhaul the budget to support these priorities. I believe we can formulate a new County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) that would put us on the path to prosperity and empowerment.

In conclusion Mr. Speaker, I want to stress that this is a special opportunity which we as leaders have been given by God Almighty, to lead our people out of poverty. You and I have a special, sacred duty not to disappoint our people. Let us look at this moment as a call to action – for all of us to arise and do the best for our County.

Mr Speaker, with these remarks, I wish now to declare this Second County Assembly officially opened

God bless you, God bless Kitui County.

THANK YOU

The Speaker: Next order.

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: Hon. Members, this house now stands adjourned until tomorrow 4th October 2017 at 9 a.m.

DEPARTURE OF HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

(Hon. Members rose in their places while Her Excellency the Governor left the Chamber)

The County Assembly rose at 3.25 p.m.

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Official Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Hansard Editor, through the Clerk, County Assembly of Kitui.*