



THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT
THE SENATE
OFFICIAL REPORT



Fourth Session

Wednesday, 12th November, 2025 at 9.30 a.m.

PARLIAMENT OF KENYA

THE SENATE

THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 12th November, 2025

*The House met at the Senate Chamber,
Parliament Buildings at 9.32 a.m.*

[The Speaker (Hon. Kingi) in the Chair]

PRAYER

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM AT COMMENCEMENT OF SITTING

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Clerk, do we have quorum?

(The Clerk-at-the-Table consulted with the Speaker)

Serjeant-at-Arms, kindly ring the Quorum Bell for 10 minutes.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

Serjeant-at-Arms, kindly, ring the Quorum Bell for a further 10 minutes.

(The Quorum Bell was rung)

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we now have quorum, so we will start the day's business.

Clerk, you may proceed to call the first Order.

QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

QUESTIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we will start with Question No.090 by Sen. Miraj Abdullahi, directed to the Cabinet Secretary in charge of Gender, Culture and Children's Services.

Clerk, can you usher in the hon. Cabinet Secretary, please?

*[The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services
(Hon. Hanna Cheptumo) was ushered into the Chamber]*

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, welcome to the Senate once again.

You are before this House for purposes of responding to Question No.090. I will now allow Sen. Miraj Abdullahi to proceed and ask the Question.

Question No.090

FUNDING OF DIRECTORATE OF CHILDREN SERVICES

Sen. Miraj: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Allow me to read my Question No.90, and welcome, honourable CS.

(a) What actions has the Ministry taken to address the chronic underfunding of the Directorate of Children Services, and could the Cabinet Secretary disclose the budget estimate for the directorate in the Financial Year 2025/2026 as well as the projected budgetary allocation for the directorate in the medium-term?

(b) What measures has the Ministry put in place to ensure timely and full utilization of funds allocated for children's welfare and protection through the Directorate of Children's Services and the Victims Protection Fund?

(c) Could the Cabinet Secretary also provide a breakdown of the number of Children Officers deployed to each of the 47 counties, and specify the steps being taken to address the issue of officers being assigned to serve multiple counties simultaneously?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo): Thank you very much.

Good morning, Mr. Speaker and hon. Members. Let me take this opportunity to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be before this honourable House to respond to the questions that have been put before me. I beg to reply

(a) The Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services acknowledges the longstanding challenge of underfunding facing the State Department for Children Services, formerly the Directorate of Children Services, which has historically limited the State Department for Children Services' ability to discharge its mandate of promoting and safeguarding the rights and welfare of children across Kenya.

In light of this, the Ministry, through the newly established State Department for Children Services, has adopted a multi-pronged approach to advocate for increased budgetary allocations, ensuring that child protection financing is mainstreamed into national broader planning and resource mobilization frameworks.

(b)The key actions taken are as outlined: High-level budget advocacy and engagement. In May, 2025, the Ministry held consultations with the Departmental Committee on Social Protection of the National Assembly to make a case for increased

investment in children services. A formal request was submitted seeking an additional Kshs10 billion above what was earmarked for the Financial Year 2025/2026 and the justification is emphasised as below.

The urgent need to scale up children protection service delivery in response to rising cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The financial requirements for recruitment and deployment of additional children officers. The operationalisation of new sub-county offices and mobile outreach services and strengthening data management through the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS).

The second action is integration of children services priorities in national planning frameworks. The Ministry has ensured that the strategic priorities of the State Department for Children Services are well-integrated within the medium-term expenditure framework and are aligned to key national development blueprints, including Kenya Vision 2030 and its social pillar, the Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV) 2023-2027, the bottom-up transformation agenda, particularly its focus on social protection, inclusion and human capital development.

These alignments aim at making children protection a national priority, thereby increasing the feasibility and competitiveness of the funding proposals of the State Department for Children Services during the national budget process.

(c) Administrative restructuring for greater budget feasibility: Following the recent restructuring, the State Department for Children Services was separated from the State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs.

This has significantly enhanced the feasibility of the State Department for Children Services, thereby revealing the deep need for greater budgetary allocation within the national fiscal framework to enable more targeted planning and resource allocation for child protection functions.

The second action is the Budget Estimates for 2025/2026. As per the Ministry's recent submission to the National Treasury in May 2025, the total budget estimate for the newly established State Department for Children Services for the Financial Year 2025/2026 is Kshs12.318 billion. This is broken down as follows-

The recurrent expenditure is Kshs12,074,000,000 and the development expenditure is Kshs244 million. See the detailed line items under the recurrent vote. I am sure that you already have that. So, on the economic classification, compensation to employees is Kshs1,167,867,643. Use of goods and services is Kshs610,885,301. Current transfer to Government agencies is Kshs10,249,698,000. Non-financial assets is Kshs45,625,350, making a total of Kshs12,074,076,294.

Then we have cash transfers to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), which is Kshs9,130,736,000. The State Department is currently supporting 445 children and 516 households as per the October, 2025 payroll. That is the money we receive, which we then send directly to these families.

So, the total recurrent budget exclusive of Personnel Emoluments (PE); we have rehabilitation schools - the budget is Kshs127,448,388. Then children's remand homes, Kshs98,383,588; National Council for Children Services is Kshs81,117,000; and, Sub-county children services is Kshs44,192,375.

Then we have children services: The headquarters is Kshs34,355,784. Headquarters emergency relief and refugee assistance is Kshs330 million. Alternative family care services is Kshs3,882,225. Child Welfare Society of Kenya is Kshs600,045,000. Counter-trafficking in persons is Kshs2,016,475 and presidential bursary is Kshs100 million.

The National Assistance Trust Fund victims of counter-trafficking; we have Kshs13,500,000. Kenya National Children Assembly is Kshs6.3 million. Kenya Child Helpline 116, which is a helpline that is open to all children, is Kshs8 million. Children services at regional offices, Kshs5,603,263. Cash transfers, which I already mentioned earlier is Kshs9,130,736,000.

Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund is Kshs180 million. Headquarters Administrative Services is Kshs106,445,113. AIDS Control Unit, Kshs3,225,93; Information Communication Technology, Kshs10,786,813; Personnel Administration Services is Kshs3,225,938; Finance and Procurement Services, Kshs7,207,688; and, Central Planning and Project Monitoring Unit, Kshs6,627,337, making a total of Kshs10,909,434,589.

We now go to the development projects. I will be able to mention the project and the approved budget for the year 2025/2026. Renovation of Meru Children's Remand Home is Kshs1.96 million; construction of a Kitchen and Dormitory at Dagoretti Children's Rehabilitation School, Kshs15 million; fencing of Vocational Rehabilitation Centres and Remand Homes, Kshs25 million.

Renovation of Likoni Children's Rehabilitation School, 10 million; renovation of Nakuru Children's Remand Home, Kshs11 million; fencing of Getathuru National Reception and Classification Centre, Kshs4.42 million; renovation of Nyeri Children's Remand Home, Kshs10.54 million; renovation of Manga Children's Remand Home, Kshs3.68 million; Othaya Children's Rescue Centre, Kshs6,720,000; renovation of Murang'a Children's Remand Home, Kshs7.88 million; and, Kericho Children's Rehabilitation School and Remand Home, Kshs6.44 million. Fencing at the Othaya Children's Rehabilitation School in Nyeri is Kshs6,630,000; fencing of Kakamega Children's Remand Home, Kshs4.71 million; Kakamega Children's Rehabilitation School, Kshs9.6 million.

Renovation of Mount Elgon Sub-County Children's Office, Kshs1.59 million; construction of Ijara Sub-County Children's Home, Kshs2.6 million; renovation of Murang'a Social Development Office, Kshs10.23 million; replacement of Asbestos Roofing and Renovation of Statutory Children's Home, Kshs100 million.

Then, the Medium-Term Budget Projection for 2026/2027– 2028/2029. The Ministry is working closely with the Ministry of National Treasury and Economic Planning to ensure a progressive increase in child protection funding over the medium term.

The projected budget requirement for the State Department for Children Services is given in the table. That is a budget requirement for children services in three other financial years. Financial Year 2026/2027 projected budget allocation is Kshs12,056,000,000; 2027/2028 is Kshs13.73 billion; and, 2028/2029 is Kshs15.10

billion. That is progressive. It increases as the years go by. That is between 2026 and 2029.

I will now proceed to answer part (b) of the Question.

(b) The Ministry has implemented several operational and financial control measures. These are aligned with the best practices in the Public Finance Management Act of 2012, Public Procurement and Disposal Act of 2005 and its regulations of 2020 and aim to eliminate delays and inefficiencies.

The Ministry has undertaken the following-

(1) Timely approval of work plan, procurement plan, cash flow plan in the Financial Year 2025/2026.

(2) Timely request of Exchequer from the National Treasury.

(3) Timely approval of the planned departmental activities by the accounting officer and the AIE holders. Delays in approvals are tracked and reported to the Principal Secretary for action.

(4) Timely requisition of payments by sections and departments.

(5) The Ministry has consulted the State Department for Public Works Engineers and quantity surveyors for support to SDCs in preparing accurate and timely bill of quantities for its capital projects.

(6) The Accounting officer has delegated authority to incur expenditure to Heads of Departments (AIEs). AIE holders are empowered to approve payments within their limits, thus reducing bottlenecks.

The Victim Protection Fund in Kenya aims to assist and support victims of crime and abuse of power. Established by the Victims Protection Act of 2014, the Fund provides resources for victims including legal and social services and financial assistance for expenses related to their well-being.

The Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Justice coordinate the function. The Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services also have responsibility over children victims who are the most vulnerable and should be accorded priority treatment according to the Children's Act, Cap 141.

(c) As of June, 2025, the number of children officers deployed nationwide to all 290 constituencies and the eight regions, 47 counties and 353 operational sub-county offices was 714.

This is shown in the table. This is the list of all the counties. So, in Baringo, the number of officers that are there are 20---

The Speaker (Hon Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you do not have to read it because that document had been circulated. Just paraphrase it and conclude.

The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo): I am guided, Mr. Speaker, Sir. So, the total number of officers in the 47 counties, looking at the grand total, is 714 and shows the variance.

You will find some other counties have more and others have less because of the geographical distribution. That is something that I will address in the next few minutes as I give the analogy.

So, the Ministry acknowledges the critical role that children officers play in safeguarding the rights and welfare of Kenya's children.

In recognition of the urgent need to safeguard and strengthen the child protection workforce, the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services through the State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizens Affairs, with support from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) commissioned a National Workforce Mapping Report officially, which was launched in April, 2025.

This comprehensive exercise initiated in 2023 analysed the staffing status, deployment patterns, caseload and operational gaps across the country and the key findings from the report are summarized below -

(1) High child protection burden: From 2019, violence against children survey, it was revealed that over 50 per cent of children in Kenya experienced violence before the age of 18, underscoring the magnitude of demand for child protection services.

(2) Severe staffing deficit: From the list that I gave earlier, which I read, currently we have 714 officers who are serving an estimated 18 million children nationwide. This translates to only 2.7 officers per 100,000 children, a ratio that falls significantly below both national needs and regional benchmarks.

(3) Operational and logistical challenges: The effectiveness of the officers on the ground is further hindered by inadequate induction and continuous training and unmanageable caseloads per officer, logistical limitations such as lack of transport and equipment and uneven deployment with some officers assigned to cover multiple counties, compromising service delivery.

(4) County level deployment status: From the county-by-county breakdown of the deployment of children officers above, it is noted that the average number of officers per county is 15. Officers are present in 353 out of 407 sub-counties. Some sub-counties with high child populations are fewer than five officers. In at least 12 counties, children's officers are responsible for more than one sub-county, leading to overstretch and burnout. Several sparsely populated counties are managed by a single officer, and in remote or sparsely populated counties, for instance, Mandera, Turkana, Samburu, and Lamu, some officers are covering multiple sub-counties due to workforce shortages. However, there are ongoing and planned interventions.

To address these workforce disparities, the Ministry has initiated a series of immediate and long-term reforms as outlined below-

Short-term to medium-term interventions

(1) Recruitment proposal for the year 2025/2026: A proposal to recruit 500 additional children's officers has been submitted to the Public Service Commission with the aim of reducing the burden on existing officers and eliminating multi-county, sub-county coverage by single officers.

(2) Targeted and equitable deployment guided by the Ministry's strategic plan and operational data: Staff rationalization will be prioritized in underserved counties and ensure station-based postings rather than regional assignments.

(3) Structured induction and training: We shall conduct comprehensive induction for recently recruited officers and continuous professional development for other officers to enhance the quality of child protection interventions at the grassroots.

(4) Digital workload management via Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS): The Ministry is scaling up the child protection information

management system to enable centralized workload tracking, remote case supervision, real-time workload balancing and evidence-based deployment decisions.

Let us go to long-term and structural reforms;

(1) Strengthening the social service workforce: The Ministry is taking steps to professionalize and stabilize the social service workforce including-

(i) Liaison with other stakeholders to professionalize the social workforce to regulate and accredit social service practitioners. Currently, the Private Members Bill that was in the National Assembly titled “The Institute of Social Work Professionals Bill (National Assembly Bills No. 17 of 2023),” was to establish a council. The Bill was passed by the National Assembly on 9th October, 2025.

(ii) Proposal to formally integrate child protection volunteers into the workforce through stipends, structured training and supervision and restructure to reflect the structure of community health promoters who are very effective on the ground.

(iii) Gradual shift from reactive casework to preventive and community-based services

(2) Workforce planning using Multivariable Index of Demand for Social Services (MIDSS): The Ministry has developed and operationalized a multivariable index of demand for social services. This tool ensures equitable staff allocation by considering geographic remoteness, socio-economic indicators, incidence of child rights violations and existing caseloads per sub-county.

(3) Eight-year expansion plan: To meet Kenya's long-term child protection needs the Ministry has adopted a phase staffing plan covering all 407 sub-counties-

(a) Year 1 to 3-

(i) fill existing 691 vacancies in the approved staff establishment;

(ii) recruit essential administrative and support staff;

(iii) operationalize 283 sub-county child protection offices.

(b) Year 4 to 8-

(i) scale up to full coverage in 407 sub-counties

(ii) recruit an estimated 7,126 children’s officers and 1,432 support staff.

The projected expansions will require an ambitious cost, but will reap vast benefits that need our consideration. These are given in the table below-

SN	Parameter	Estimate
1	Total Annual Cost	Kshs5.39 billion
2	Share of National Budget	0.15 percent
3	Increase in Workforce Size	648 percent
4	Increase in Case-Handling Capacity	428 percent (up to 1 million cases per year)
5	Reduction in GDP Loss from Violence against children (VAC)	From 4.89 percent to 2.33 percent

I submit.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Miraj, you may ask a supplementary question, if you have any.

Sen. Miraj: Mr. Speaker, Sir, allow me to be the last person to ask.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Okay. Sen. Chute, please proceed.

Sen. Chute: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Welcome to the Senate, once more, Madam.

As you are aware, Marsabit and Turkana counties are the largest counties in this Republic. I am surprised to see in your response that you have only nine officers in Marsabit County, 11 in Turkana County and 28 in Kajiado County. Have you ever visited those counties? When are you going to visit? What is the justification of having the biggest county, which also has places that are very difficult to reach having only nine officers, yet Kajiado County has 28 officers?

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Kinyua, please, proceed.

Sen. Kinyua: Thank you Mr. Speaker, Sir. *Karibu, Waziri*. You have indicated that you had a formal request of an increment of Kshs10 billion for the purpose of increasing the number of your officers, as well as scale up children protection. However, having requested that, what I am seeing is that you have a budget of Kshs11 billion, then the projected budget for the years to come is Kshs13 billion and Kshs15 billion. Does it mean then that the question that Sen. Chute is asking about more officers are not going to be recruited because the amount that you have asked for were not given, and in your projection, you have not even shown anywhere that you have captured the Kshs10 billion that you have indicated?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is even shocking me is that in the budget, I am seeing Kshs100 million is provided for presidential bursary *vis-a-vis* the development, which I am seeing it is only given Kshs244 million. I sit the Senate Committee on Education. This is the same thing I see even there are counties. They are using money to give bursaries that are not supposed to be given as bursaries. So, if it is a presidential bursary, is it not supposed to be anchored in the State House budget?

I thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): The Senator for Meru County, Sen. Kathuri, please, proceed.

Sen. Kathuri: Thank you Mr. Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity to ask a supplementary question. Before I do that, I would like to thank you because there is a time the Ministry approved my travel to the United Kingdom (UK) to attend a meeting trying to seek funds to connect children in the institutions back to families. I thank you for that.

Are you aware that Meru is leading in teen pregnancies? My statistics show that we have almost 4,000 children who have left school this year because of teen pregnancies. Last week during the Grade 6 and Grade 9 examinations, 17 girls did the exams in Nyambene Hospital in Maua, while in the maternity ward.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, those were the statistics for only one week. That shows that every week we have almost 20 children in the maternity wards in Meru. So, Madam Cabinet Secretary, what are you doing as a Ministry in charge of children to ensure that we reduce or stop completely those teen pregnancies? If I check this list, the officers in Meru are only 12. Meru has 9 constituencies and 15 sub-counties. It, therefore, means there are some counties with no children officers.

If we come to your proposal, short to medium-term interventions, you are saying you have a proposal to recruit 500 additional children officers in this Financial Year. Has that been okayed or do you have that budget to recruit 500 additional children's officers, or is this just a proposal that you have given the Public Service Commission (PSC)?

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Essy Okenyuri.

Sen. Okenyuri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. My observation is that previous attempt to rehabilitate or integrate street families into homes has failed because we do not have a report on the same. My question to the Cabinet Secretary is; what measures does your Ministry have to get street children out of those streets so that they are integrated back to the society? This is because, allegations are that we have cartels who are using those children as beggars and to make money.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would wish the Cabinet Secretary to shed more light on that because my observation as stated is that that has failed previously. We do not have data from your Ministry indicating street children who have been reintegrated or rehabilitated.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Eddy?

Sen. Oketch Gicheru: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I am glad to see the Cabinet Secretary here. She got back to work and she has been doing a lot that she could do within the time that she came in.

My question is; what are the targeted programmes you have for kids who are faced with high-level conflicts? When conflicts come in some areas, like where I come from in Kuria, and right now, there is a serious conflict in Kuria East, a place called Ntimaru, Gwitembe, where mothers have not been able to farm for the last two years.

They cannot farm, cannot get food and yet, they have children. That conflict is going on between the Kipsigis and the people in Narok and the Kuria side in Gwitembe. The children there cannot go to school, meaning there is delayed schooling. There are a lot more problems when it comes to feeding. What is the targeted programme for this kind of people that you have, especially Migori?

The rider to that is that there are people who have been affected by floods and vagaries of nature, where children are affected and cannot go to school. This is happening in places like Kabuto in Nyatike Constituency, where I come from in Migori. Is there a budget for them that can help the people of Kuria and Nyatike to get support for their children to go to school and to feed?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mwenda Gataya.

Sen. Gataya Mo Fire: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity. I wish to get clarification from the Cabinet Secretary. Most men who are survivors of GBV are usually ridiculed and because of our masculinity, many cases go unreported. They go silent and are never attended to. What is the Ministry doing to make sure that the men who are subjected to GBV are also taken care of?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Gataya, that has no bearing to the question that has been asked.

Sen. Gataya Mo Fire: It is a societal issue, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): We are discussing children and matters related to children. That is the primary question. I rule that your question is not a supplementary

question. If you have another one, you may proceed to ask. If you do not, kindly take your seat.

Sen. Gataya Mo Fire: Thank you for your guidance.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mbugua.

Sen. Mbugua: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. There were reports from some Government quarters that your Ministry intended to abolish children homes for the homecare-based model. I would like you to tell this House what the current status is and how many cases of child abuse have been reported in those children homes.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Wakili Hilary.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I appreciate the hon. Cabinet Secretary for the responses that she has provided to this House. My supplementary question is with regard to the cash transfers to orphans and vulnerable children amounting to Kshs9.1 billion, which from the report given, it supports 445,516 households. Does the Cabinet Secretary have statistics on how this has been distributed across the country or across the 47 counties, together with statistics on the distribution, if any, of children officers deployed to the 47 counties?

I ask this because in Bomet County, which is one of the five counties where we have many vulnerable children as per the statistics of 2024/2025, they only have 17 children officers compared to Kajiado, Nairobi and Homa Bay, which fall into the same category.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo): Thank you for the supplementary questions. I will begin with the question by Sen. Chute, which was the first.

You asked the question about Marsabit and Turkana, which have nine officers, 11 and Kajiado, 25 respectively. We have visited these counties and when I say 'we,' it is the Ministry. We note that there is a big gap and we are redistributing them after the training. We have officers undergoing training and we shall distribute them according to the needs assessment.

You will agree with me that from the answers I gave earlier, there is a very big gap of officers. We have a shortage of officers and once we have officers, we shall distribute according to the population of the children and geographically because every child deserves to be taken care of.

I would also like to state that it is important that the State Department of Children Services has now been given that position because earlier on, it was just a directorate and it was not receiving necessary funds and visibility. However, now we have a whole state department and we are looking at the needs assessment as per the counties and the population of the children.

Let me address the issue of teenage pregnancies. The Senator for Meru County has raised concern that Meru is among the counties leading in teenage pregnancies, with 4,000 girls having left school. We have an adolescent programme under the niche, supported by the Government of Kenya, the World Bank and other partners. We still need

more funds because this is a societal problem that must be addressed collectively. We applaud the House and all Kenyans for taking care of our children.

The challenges of teenage pregnancies can be addressed at an early age when children are well-educated and informed about biological processes. Therefore, it should not be left solely to the State Department for Children's Services, but to all Kenyans. Let us all reach out to our children, especially during holidays. Let us take care of them and ensure they do not fall into teenage pregnancy. As the State Department for Children's Services, we will do our part, especially when we receive budget support. However, we call upon all Kenyans to teach our children about what is happening, as some of them are innocent.

Regarding the rehabilitation and integration of street families, these children are not only Kenyans, some are foreigners. Through East African integration, we are reaching out to other member states to ensure these children are reintegrated into their family homes. A census has been conducted and the report is almost ready. Preliminary findings indicate that many of these families are not Kenyan. We have both Kenyan and foreign families. All these individuals must be informed of their origins and reintegrated into their communities.

Sen. Murgor asked about the issue of abolishing children's homes. This is an ongoing programme. The Government's policy is to reintegrate children into society, as they grow better in families. We even asked what happened to children during the COVID-19 pandemic and we were told that most of them were in their homes. The truth is, some of these children belong in their homes. Therefore, part of the findings and statistics from the census will help determine who can be reintegrated, so that children grow up in families with a father and mother or at least a relative. Even if they have lost their parents, they will be reintegrated into society, where elders can guide them. This will help prevent teenage pregnancies and other challenges, as guidance will be available at that level.

Regarding the budget requests, we submitted a request for Kshs5 billion, which was not allocated by the National Treasury. Therefore, the budget for recruitment in the current financial year is not available. However, the staff establishment has been forwarded to the Public Service Commission (PSC) for approval. I will repeat that this is because, initially, it was just a directorate. Now that it is a full State Department, we are able to negotiate for budget allocation to address the needs of children.

Targeted programmes for children in conflict with the law are being addressed through emergency budgets amounting to Kshs330 million. We are tackling Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sensitising communities and providing psychosocial support for affected families and children.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is one of the issues affecting children as they grow up. A Presidential Task Force was established to understand the causes of GBV and femicide. The task force has completed its report, which will be released soon and will inform our decision-making and programme implementation.

We currently have 44,000 children in institutions. We have a strategy through the National Care Reform. In the Financial Year 2022/2032, we intend to transition all the children to their families. This will not be done quickly, as we cannot send children to

places that have not been properly assessed. We must ensure their safety. We will carry out the transition progressively while monitoring how the children adjust, to avoid backlash from reintegrating them into families where they may face violence or mistreatment from people who have not lived with children for a long time.

I have attempted to answer some of the questions. If there are any I have not addressed, I will be willing to come back.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

(Sen. Okenyuri spoke off record)

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Okenyuri, you are out of order. Kindly hold your horses.

Thank you so much, Hon. Cabinet Secretary. The Hon. Cabinet Secretary has said that she is willing to engage further.

Sen. Miraj, you are the last to ask your two supplementary questions. You may proceed.

Sen. Miraj: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Madam Cabinet Secretary, there is a data release by the National AIDS Control Council on the ripple effect, indicating that at least 660 girls were defiled and are pregnant, summing up to 240,000 girls in the year 2024. I do not know what measures are in place. I was listening to your responses to get a sense of what the Ministry is doing to curb this situation, given that there is a young girl from Meru County, 26 years old, who is already a grandmother. This shows that it is a vicious cycle our children are going through.

Secondly, I am asking about the operationalisation of the Victim's Fund, given that a report indicates the money released to that Fund by the Exchequer usually goes back to the account because there is no policy. No single child victim has received any funding from this Fund. What measures are you taking, as a Ministry, to ensure that this Fund is fully operationalised, given that the board withdraws *per diems* from the Fund, yet the core function of the Fund is not working?

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, as you respond to the questions by Sen. Miraj, kindly address the question asked by Sen. Essy Okenyuri.

You may proceed.

The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo): Thank you, Senator. The issue of teenage pregnancies is indeed very alarming and worrying. We must admit that. As raised by the Senator for Meru County, Meru County is leading in teenage pregnancies. The Ministry has an adolescent plan supported through World Bank funding. We are currently awaiting disbursement of funds to implement it. That is a problem we are seeing in Meru, but there are so many unreported cases of these adolescents.

You can imagine a child who is a mother. So, a child and a child. Child mother and a child, the child. Therefore, we are looking at these issues seriously. I have given this answer, but we are engaging very rigorously to ensure that we even approach it using what we call whole-Government-approach.

We are dealing with the Ministry of Education, religious organisations, the Ministry of Interior and National Administration through the National Government Administration Officers (NGAO) to speak with the children, educate them and address this particular issue, so that we do not wait until we have statistics. For instance, now during the holidays, the children should be sensitised on this because, again, when we come to festivities and this kind of parties in the evening, children are free.

I use this opportunity to call upon all parents and guardians, please help us to keep the children safe. Please, do not send children to places that you do not know where they are because come the New Year, we will probably be having double the number. So, I am sending a clarion call to all parents to, please, take care of our children. Tell the girls what it means to be out in the dark with a boy when they are not sure what is going to happen next. It is the simple things that we have to tell them. Tell them in the morning, tell them in the evening, tell them in church, tell them in school, tell them everywhere. We all have a duty.

The second question was---

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): There was a question on street families that was asked by Sen. Essie.

The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo): Thank you. On street families, you are aware that we have the Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund, which has conducted a study on street families. The report will be launched by December, 2025 and will help us to get interventions on what is to be undertaken. This is because nobody belongs to the street. These are families who are living in the streets and they are not street children. These are children living in the street. Nobody belongs to the street.

Therefore, when we get this report, which is supposed to be launched by December 2025, it will first of all inform us how many children or how many families are in Nairobi, how many families are in Nakuru and how many families are in whichever town. We will be able to follow up and say where they came from and whether their leaders are from that particular ground. What made those children or those families to leave where they belonged and come to the street? Was it because of violence? Was it because of poverty?

We also have issues where we are told that some of the children who are begging in the street are being encouraged by the money that people give them. So, we will also educate the masses and say, instead of giving money to the children on the streets, you can give them to a particular fund so that it can be used to reintegrate them back to their families. However, this can only be done and be informed after we get the census report of the number of families who are living in the streets and the location.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Senators, we have spent one hour on this Question. That should be adequate. We will now move to the next.

Hon. Cabinet Secretary, thank you so much for coming before the Senate and thank you for your responses.

(The Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services (Hon. Hanna Cheptumo) was ushered out of the Chamber)

We will now move to Question No.114 by Sen. Karen Nyamu.

[The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service and Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku) was ushered into the Chamber]

Welcome, Hon. Cabinet Secretary to the Senate. You are before the Senate for purposes of responding to Question No.114 by Sen. Karen Nyamu.

Hon. Senator, you may now proceed to ask your Question.

Question No.114

COMMERCIALISATION OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

Sen. Nyamu: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I will go ahead and ask the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes the Question. *Karibu Waziri* to the Senate.

(1) Could the Cabinet Secretary provide details on the government's plan to commercialise the National Youth Service (NYS)?

(2) How will the initiative promote sustainable employment and long-term skills development for the youth, particularly in marginalised and underserved areas?

(3) What measures has the Government put in place to guarantee transparency and accountability in the commercialisation process and will the Cabinet Secretary clarify how the findings of investigations into previous instances of financial impropriety at NYS have informed the current safeguards?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now proceed to respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Sir. Senators, good morning.

Hon. Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank you and Hon. Members for the request and the response to the questions from Hon. Senator Karen Nyamu regarding Government's plan to commercialise the NYS. Allow me to respond as follows –

The first question, maybe I will repeat the question: Could the Cabinet Secretary provide the details on Government plan to commercialise the NYS?

Hon. Speaker, the National Youth Service Act 2018, Section 5(1) establishes the NYS as a uniformed and disciplined service and a corporate body.

The National Youth Service Act 2018, Section 7(1)(d) mandates the service to undertake such enterprise and commercial activities for the furtherance of its mandate, which is to train and empower youth through paramilitary, vocational, and personal

development programmes while also engaging in commercial and national services activities.

Hon. Speaker, the Government's NYS Commercialisation Agenda was informed by-

- (i) presidential directives and policy guidance;
- (ii) the bottom-up economic transformation agenda, the fourth term medium-term plan, and also Kenya Vision 2030;
- (iii) the need to address youth unemployment and vulnerability through structured training and enterprise engagement; and
- (iv) the need to commercialise service resources, including personnel, machinery, equipment, land and projects to increase the level of youth generation.

Commercial and enterprise development of the NYS is aimed at transforming the existing production unit into competitive business ventures contributing to service sustainability.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the moment, the National Treasury finances or we get money from the exchequer every single month. As you know, the budget of our nation is quite tight as it is at the moment. Therefore, services which are offered by the NYS can be commercialised for the purpose of having sustainability and increasing the intake of NYS every single year.

At the moment, we have about 18,000 recruits, who graduated from paramilitary training this year. It is the effort of the Government to increase the number from 18,000 to 40,000, come January next year. For that to happen, a lot of resources are required. It is the effort of the Government, through the presidential directive, for the Government to think not just out of the box, but probably without the box so that we raise resources to mop up all our young men and women in different constituencies and counties across the country in order for them to gain skills and also have paramilitary training.

The service is in the process of establishing the NYS Enterprises and Services Company to act as a commercial arm of NYS commercialisation agenda. The process of approval of the regulations and registration of the company is ongoing. At the moment, the registration of the company is at the Attorney-General's office. The company will implement business plans on mechanisation, construction, agriculture, agro-processing, textile and garment production, hospitality as well as security services.

The Government is implementing the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) and a lot of construction is going on across different counties in the Republic of Kenya. In all the works going on at the moment, NYS can take advantage of the AHP and earn some money, which can go a long way in ensuring that we have many young Kenyans getting proper training not only in paramilitary training, but also in vocational and technical colleges that we have across the country.

The programme will also take keen interest and work hard in partnership with public and private stakeholders to ensure access to markets, technology transfer and innovation. The commercialisation matrix will be developed to track performance, investments and outcomes across all NYS enterprises.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, allow me to go to the second question, which is: How will the initiative promote sustainable development and long-term skills development for the youth, particularly in marginalised and underserved areas?

For the few months I have been a Cabinet Secretary, I have had an opportunity to travel to different corners of this country. There are many counties which are marginalised. The NYS is taking this opportunity, through this initiative, to enhance employment, revenue generation and sustainability of the service. There are business plans which have been developed and are also taking care of different portfolios to ensure all these enterprises cover multiple sectors that directly contribute to youth empowerment and national development.

The Kenyan youth are asking us, every single day; where are the jobs? Any opportunity that the Government of Kenya can have to initiate jobs creation is what we are doing through the commercialisation process. In the AHP, which is ongoing, NYS trainees will take advantage of that. When it comes to repair of vehicles, NYS trainees will also take advantage of that. That will go a long way in ensuring jobs creation.

Through this enterprise, NYS aims to generate sustainable employment for thousands of youth particularly from marginalised and underserved regions. Through this enterprise, NYS aims to provide hands-on technical experience, entrepreneurship training, internship opportunities and accredited certifications aligned to the industry needs.

Through this enterprise, NYS also aims to support local industrialisation and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) growth through linkages between training, production and market access. It also aims to reinforce long-term skills development and self-reliance through a structured approach, combining formal job training as well as enterprise incubation.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, now allow me to go to the third question which is: What measures has the Government put in place to guarantee transparency and accountability in the commercialisation process, and could the Cabinet Secretary clarify how the findings of investigations into previous instances of financial impropriety at NYS have informed the current safeguards?

Let me start by saying that a few weeks in the office, a report was raised by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) that there were ongoing investigations at NYS. The EACC informed my office that there were three employees of NYS, who could have been committing a crime.

I took action immediately as the Cabinet Secretary in charge to ensure that the three officer step aside until investigations are done and their names cleared. Those three officers are not in office at the moment awaiting investigations to be completed by the EACC. We will ensure that we follow the law as stipulated in different pieces of legislation. The NYS is overseen by the NYS Council, which reports to the Principal Secretary (PS) for Public Service and Human Capital Development. However, as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in charge of the Ministry, I have direct mandate to oversee what is happening in the NYS.

In line with the Government commitment to strengthen the governance and accountability mechanisms during the commercialisation of NYS, the National Treasury

has developed the NYS Enterprise and Services Limited Regulations under the Companies Act, General Regulations. These regulations are designed to provide the legal framework for the establishment of a state-owned enterprise that will manage and oversee NYS commercial venture in a structured and transparent manner.

The framework anticipates that the company will introduce stronger financial management systems, clear separation between training and commercial functions and enhanced accountability in enterprise operations.

The NYS Enterprise and Services Company will be managed by an independent body with representation from the ministries of National Treasury and Economic Planning; Public Service and Human Capital Development and the NYS.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the NYS Enterprise and Services Company will also be oversighted by oversight bodies including the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA), Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and the Directorate of Criminal Investigation (DCI).

When the matters were raised by EACC, I also instructed the PPRA to go to NYS and conduct an audit. They have submitted their report to my office which we are working on. Therefore, we are very keen not only to ensure the enterprise, which is soon to be registered by the Registrar of Companies, is managed in a proper way with no issues of impropriety, and also, ensure the NYS as is today, is in great health.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the bodies also include Parliamentary Committees such as the Public Investment Committee (PIC), the Committee on Social Protection and the Committee on Coordination and National Integration which also provides Parliamentary oversight.

The lessons learned from the previous investigation have informed the development of stronger internal controls, which at the moment are helping us run the NYS in a proper way through transparency in procurement and reporting systems. The service has also strengthened internal audit and compliance functions, risk management structures, and enhanced cooperation with anti-corruption agencies to ensure preventive oversight.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and the Hon. Members of the Senate.

I submit.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Karen Nyamu, you may proceed to ask your supplementary question.

Sen. Nyamu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Thank you, Cabinet Secretary, for your response. I have a supplementary question for you. When we talk about marginalised and underserved areas with regards to the youth, does the Ministry take into account the serious urban marginalisation experienced by youth in our Nairobi informal settlements or slums which represent a significant population of the youth of the country?

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mwinyihaji Faki, proceed.

Sen. Faki: Asante Bw. Spika na pia Waziri kwa maelezo uliyotoa.

Nimesikia Waziri akisema kwamba NYS itakuwa chombo cha biashara. Tayari, kampuni inaandikishwa kwa ofisi ya Msajili wa Makampuni. Ikumbukwe kwamba, hii haitakuwa mara ya kwanza kwa jeshi la vijana kufanya biashara. Miaka ya 80 na 90, walikuwa wanafanya biashara ya usafirishaji. Kulikuwa na basi za NYS na baada ya muda, basi hizo zilisimama na Serikali ikapata hasara kubwa.

Kwa hivyo, sio mara ya kwanza ama jambo jipya, kufanyika. Je, Wizara imejifunza kutokana na makosa yaliyotokea?

Pili; kuna mashirika kadhaa ya Serikali ambayo yako njiani kuuzwa kwa mikono binafsi. Vipi kwa upande mmoja, Serikali inauza mashirika ambayo hayapati faida na hata yale yanayopata faida kama vile Kenya Pipeline? Kwa nini Wizara inachukua Shirika na kulipeleka katika biashara ambayo inaweza fanywa na watu binafsi?

Asante, Bw. Spika.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Kathuri, proceed.

Sen. Kathuri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. My supplementary question is based on different programmes that we have for the youth, spread across, in almost eight Ministries in this country. There is the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports itself. There is the Ministry of Public Service and Human Development; the Ministry of Trade and Investments; the Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development and many other programmes in other ministries.

My good friend, Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Development, *Mheshimiwa* Ruku; now that you are in the public service and even though you are not the one who gives the directive, it is the Head of State. However, at the Cabinet level, is it possible to consolidate all youth programmes into one-stop-shop, such as a ministry, since the youth are unable to know where to go for programmes? This will enable our youth in this country to go directly to one ministry and get all the services.

Do you think it is the right time to consolidate all the youth programmes and put them under one docket so that our youth do not get haphazard programmes which are run by all the Ministries?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mwaruma, proceed.

Sen. Mwaruma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity to ask *Mheshimiwa* Ruku a question.

Bwana Cabinet Secretary, as a Government, how much do we use in terms of budget to train the youths under NYS, so that if we say we are commercialising, then there is adequate justification that we will save that money and maybe finance the Kenyan budget?

Apart from the presidential edict, is there any other justification really to commercialise the NYS? It did not come out very clearly why you are commercialising the NYS because we feel some of the regions, especially the underserved, would not be served very well under that programme.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Veronica, please proceed.

Sen. Veronica Maina: Thank you, Hon. Speaker, and welcome to the Senate, Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Ruku. We are happy to have you. You were one of us before you

ascended to that office. Now, Hon. Cabinet Secretary, if a youth came to the Senate today, the first question they would ask you is, what opportunities do you have right now for the youth in the country? That is one of the questions they would ask. They would want an answer that serves them.

Also, is there a possibility that your ministry can decide that all the procurement being done within the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Sports and the Arts can actually go to the youth and favour them as a vulnerable group, as opposed to the rest of the people?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Beatrice Akinyi, please proceed.

Sen. Ogola: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. The NYS seems to have had cases of corruption-related issues in the past. Some of them have been mind-boggling. From the statement made by the Cabinet Secretary, there are also cases being investigated now. My question to the Cabinet Secretary is, as I welcome him to the Senate too; who are these people being investigated currently? What is their designation and for how long do you expect them to be out as the investigation goes on?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Consolata Nabwire, please proceed.

Sen. Wakwabubi Consolata: Thank you, Hon. Speaker, for this opportunity. I also take this opportunity to welcome Cabinet Secretary Ruku and the team to the Senate. You have presented your responses, and one that caught my eye was the NYS having a roadmap to mount a diverse portfolio of enterprises for different sectors. My concern is, does NYS have any sustainable model to uphold these different sectors? This is because, seemingly, all the enterprises that you are proposing are already in place, but we lack that sustainability model. Maybe you can also shed light on the position of the people living with disabilities regarding the infrastructure at the NYS.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mundigi Alexander, please proceed.

Sen. Munyi Mundigi: Asante Bw. Spika. Yangu ni kumshukuru Waziri Ruku kwa sababu ametoka kwa chama changu cha Democratic Party, kwa kupata kile kiti cha uwaziri.

Swali langu kwa Waziri ni, tumeona ukitembea na ukitaka kubadilisha hii Wizara. Unafanya kazi nzuri. Naomba kama kuna uwezo wowote, kwa sababu--- Wakati tunaenda nchi za nje, kama Qatar na Turkey, tunapata ulinzi mkali sana wa vijana. Kuna uwezekano, ukibadilisha ili uweze kusaidia vijana wetu, kwa sababu ya *security*, utapata wakati mwingine watu wengine wana *private security*. Kama kuna uwezekano, hao vijana wakimaliza, wanaweza kupinga yale mambo. Sisi tunatafuta watu nje, ili vijana hao waweze kufanya ile kazi, ili wapate ajira.

Tumeona wengi wakienda kufanya kazi huko nje, wengine hawana kazi na wanaumia. Sijui kama kuna njia unaweza kubadilisha ili vijana hao wawe wakienda kwa wizara na kwa *private companies*, ili waweze kupata kazi, waifanye vizuri na wasaidike? Asante.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Hillary Sigei, please proceed.

Sen. Wakili Sigei: Thank you, Hon. Speaker and Cabinet Secretary, welcome to the Senate. My supplementary question is in regard to the proposal to commercialise the NYS. In your response, you have alluded to the provision in law, Section 7, to be specific, that mandates NYS to undertake commercial activities. What is the difference between the one you are seeking to register, which you have said registration process is

ongoing and regulations are being prepared, with the one that the law has already established? Is there a need for duplication of agencies?

Two, the last part of your question is that the law will now mandate the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) to oversight NYS. Do you say that the current institution, as is, is not a subject of oversight by the EACC?

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Mbugua, please proceed.

Sen. Mbugua: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Cabinet Secretary, one of the biggest resources NYS has is the vast land, which is spread across the country. In the spirit of the whole-Government-approach, we also have the Government land leasing programme. Now, how will this commercialisation of land go, bearing in mind that there is the Government land leasing programme and we still have the PPP model? What form will it take and how will you ensure that it benefits the people where the land is located?

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Sen. Essy Okenyuri.

Sen. Okenyuri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, congratulations, Cabinet Secretary Ruku, on that position. Secondly, I would wish to know how much funding the agency seeks to raise from commercialisation and whether there are enough measures put in place to guard this money, so that it does not go into people's pockets as witnessed in the past NYS scandals.

Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Kingi): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, you may now respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Thank you, Hon. Speaker and thank you Members, for the many questions.

First of all, let me make it clear that the NYS is not going to change from the way we know it at the moment. NYS is registering a company which is owned by NYS 99 per cent and one per cent to the National Treasury. Therefore, this new company will have its own CEO or Managing Director, managers and senior managers. It will have other employees as well.

We have an organisational structure that has been submitted through all Government levels, including the Public Service Commission (PSC) for ratification. Therefore, we are neither changing the leadership structure of the NYS nor the training. The only thing we are doing is taking advantage of the training that goes through the NYS.

NYS trains youth in different professions. In government, mechanical, agriculture and construction. Once we do this training, the young Kenyans who graduate from the NYS end up not getting jobs within our market. Others are lucky enough to get jobs within the market. Others are lucky to get jobs in the military, in the Kenyan police and other places within the Kenyan market.

For many who are not lucky enough to get opportunities or jobs, these are the ones now the new company, which we are registering, that will take advantage of their skills in construction. For those who are trained in construction. Those who are trained in agriculture will be agricultural activities in the new company to take advantage of their skills. For instance, every cycle, every year, we witness drought.

[The Speaker (Hon. Kingi) left the Chair]

[The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri) in the Chair]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the moment, I am the CS in charge of Special Programmes. We are facing drought in Marsabit, Mandera, Turkana and Wajir and are likely to see livestock die in that corner of our country.

The NYS, as one of the Senators has said, has vast land where we can grow livestock fodder. We could sell it and make money which we can use right to train more and more young people. I wanted to clarify that before going to the questions.

The first question is from Sen. Karen Nyamu on the marginalisation. Article 10 of our Constitution talks about the National Values and Principles of Governance. The Government has to ensure it follows the letter and intent of that Article which is protection of marginalised communities.

Marginalised communities are not only found in rural areas. I had an opportunity, as CS in charge of Special Programmes, to take relief to Nairobi areas such Kibra, Mukuru Kwa Njenga and Mathare, where there is always fire outbreak. Many young people and families within Nairobi are marginalised in a serious way.

When it comes to implementation of the services which will be offered by the new enterprise, we will consider, for instance, rehabilitation of the slum areas in different ways because we have many fire outbreaks in these slum areas.

At the moment, under the Nairobi River rehabilitation, we have the NYS doing some work there. We are unable to take advantage of this work properly because all the money raised from rehabilitation, at the moment, would definitely go to the Consolidated Fund. The NYS cannot take advantage of that money to enhance more training for the young people.

We want to move from the 18,000 to 20,000 we are training at the moment, to 40,000 by next year. By the year 2027, we want to have reached 100,000 young people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir as a Government we will take care of all the marginalised communities, both in the urban and rural areas because that is what our Constitution in Article 10 dictates.

Secondly, is on the NYS as an independent body from training as well as how we take care of sustainability. I explained, in my opening remarks, that the NYS will remain a body corporate, the way it is at the moment. We will have a limited company which will have its own management totally different from the management of the NYS as we know it.

The limited company will not be managed by the Commandant General who is the CEO or the senior most person in NYS at the moment but by a CEO hired from the market in the most competitive way possible.

The third question is from the Senator for Tharaka Nithi County on consolidation of youth activities. The concern is that the Government has many different arms taking care of youth activities. Yes, it is true, we have Youth Fund, NYS and all these youth activities within the Government.

The Government is in the process of coming up with a policy directive to ensure that all the youth activities are consolidated and synergised, so that we harness the potential of the Kenyan youth in the best possible way, instead of having many fragmented efforts from one direction to the other.

At the moment, it is also important for me to mention that so far, Government is doing all what it can to align these activities to achieve different needs of young people. This is because young people of the Republic of Kenya have many different non-homogeneous needs. For instance, we have young people who have not managed to transition to high school.

The Kenyan Government is taking care of young people who have not been able to transition to high school through different programmes. Examples include vocational training in our constituencies and wards as well as other youth initiatives such as Kazi Mtaani. This is to ensure they have meaningful activities and employment in our communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir there are also many young people who are going to work outside the country. The Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and Special Programmes are working very well together, through the Youth Fund, to ensure that the tickets are paid and facilitation done for them to be able to work in other countries.

The other question is how much the Ministry uses to train young people in NYS per year. It is quite a huge budget, around Kshs10 billion per year. Through this initiative of NYS Enterprise Limited, we will be able to raise Kshs4 billion every year once the commercialisation is done.

This will cut the budget from Exchequer by almost Kshs4 billion every year; a huge dip if we are going to implement this in the most appropriate way. As a CS, I am committed to ensure it is going to be implemented with military precision so that we take advantage of the market when these services are offered.

If you remember in the previous administration, many young people trained from NYS were employed by the Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS). They offered services for which NYS have not been paid a huge amount of money to date. We are making a follow-up with the National Treasury to ensure they get that money. It is something that the previous administration tried to do, but it was not properly structured, as we would have wanted, through a limited company.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, to give an example, for us to understand well, the University of Nairobi has a private limited company known as the University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services Limited (UNES), which offers consulting services and which, once it is paid, furthers the interest of the university. It is the same thing, that this limited company will do commercial services, get paid, and the money is utilised to further the interest and the mandate of the NYS, which is an extremely critical mandate for our Republic.

The fifth question, from Sen. Veronica Maina, was on the opportunities we have at the moment for the young people. The young Kenyan youth would have asked me, as a Cabinet Secretary: What are the opportunities for the young people?

Hon. Speaker, Sir, at the moment, the Government of Kenya, through the leadership of His Excellency the President, has ensured we have a number of programmes, which we are implementing. One of them is the Affordable Housing, where many young people have already been actively employed. Close to 400,000 young people have been employed and the number is increasing every day.

We could negotiate with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, once this company is registered, so that we take 30 per cent of the groundwork for these affordable programmes, then get more young people actively employed through the NYS Enterprise Limited. That money could be used properly to further the interests of the NYS.

The second one is on whether the NYS has been involved in the construction of roads and buildings. For instance, at the moment, the NYS is the one that is constructing Huduma Center offices in Runyenjes Town. That is work that has been given to the NYS by the Ministry of Public Service and Human Capital Development, because Huduma Kenya is also under the same Ministry.

It would be more meaningful to the NYS if the money it is making went to a limited company and not to a consolidated account. So, the construction of roads has been happening, and the construction of buildings has been happening. We will take advantage of that as a limited company and that is where the youth will be getting job opportunities.

In addition, there are employment opportunities through the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and Special Programmes and through the State Department for Diaspora Affairs. Many young people are getting opportunities outside the country. We have over 400,000 young people at the moment, who, from the time this administration came into place, have got jobs in different countries. This is an effort that is continuing, and it is known as Kazi Majuu. It is progressing on very well.

There are about 30 per cent procurement opportunities for the youth, in all our ministries, state departments and parastatals. 30 per cent of the procurement opportunities go to the youth, those who have registered their companies and those who have the necessary documents.

This is one of the things that as a Government, we will continue to ensure is happening. We will enforce it because young people are in entrepreneurship and the Government is supporting them through the initiative of 30 per cent of procurement opportunities in Government. This is a huge thing because the Government is the biggest business partner an entrepreneur can be able to have.

On a question of corruption in the NYS, the dark days of corruption of 2014 and 2015 are gone. From then and up to now, there have not been major cases of corruption in the NYS but there are slight investigations indicating that there is a likelihood of corruption activities at the NYS. We are taking firm steps to ensure we are getting rid of it. We did that in May-June this year, when the EACC indicated that there were individuals, employees within NYS, who were getting involved in corruption activities.

The investigations are still going on. We had three people involved, from the Gilgil Camp. One was the head of the accounts department, the other was the head of procurement, and the other was the Deputy Commandant General in headquarters. So, all

the three individuals proceeded to compulsory leave until the investigations are completed by the EACC.

We have not had any major scandal as far as the NYS from those dark days of 2014 and 2015. We are continuing to put firm measures to ensure that we do not go back to those dark days.

The sustainability model, I think one of the Senators, my brother, the Senator from Lamu County, asked about many years ago when there were NYS buses.

Sen. Ogola: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Senator, you know the Cabinet Secretary cannot be out of order. What clarification are you trying to seek before he finishes his response?

Sen. Ogola: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my question was very direct. Who are they and what is their designation? He has spelt out their designation. We want to know who they are. These are public officers serving the public, paid by the public. Who are they other than their designation?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. Cabinet Secretary, what the Senator is asking is the names and the designations of those NYS officers.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you for that question and clarification. With your indulgence, they have not been declared guilty. They are still innocent until the investigation and the prosecution process is finalised.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): I think that matter is in the public domain. I remember watching news, where those officers and their names were flashed everywhere, a month or two months ago. Therefore, I do not think there is any harm to say, "so-and-so is not at work right now because he is under investigation." You will not do any harm when you say that. If you Google those officers, you will not see them. We just want the Cabinet Secretary to pronounce himself.

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, one of them is Mr. Makokha, the Deputy Commandant General. He is being investigated and we are waiting for a report from the EACC. The second one is Mr. Mbogo, who was the Head of Procurement and the other one is Mr. Kagiri, who was Head of Accounts.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): That is sufficient enough.

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

It was stated that the NYS used to operate buses some years back and the question sought to find out if we were going back to the same? My response is that we are not going back to the same. The NYS, as we know it, will not be in business operation but in training. It will train our young people paramilitary skills and also offer vocational training. We will ensure that everyone who goes through the NYS offers one-year national service. It takes three years for one to be fully trained before they graduate from NYS. So, the NYS, as we know it, will not be in business.

The entity which will be in business, is the limited company managed by a different chief executive officer. That company will follow the market processes such as the supply and demand of market forces to earn money and make profit. It is a totally different business model. It is not the model which was implemented those years when NYS used to offer transportation, buses and other business which it tried to do. It is a completely new way of thinking and a complete paradigm shift from the way business was conducted in those previous years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the ninth question was on what is provided in the company and what is provided in the NYS Act. As I have said again and again, the NYS Act is established by an Act of Parliament. The company we are registering is not established by an Act of Parliament. It is a completely different entity, but owned by the NYS. Therefore, it is a complete paradigm shift from the way things were done in the past. We are doing that to take advantage of the skills the young people are getting from the three years training at the NYS. We plan to commercialise those skills, so as to get more money for our NYS. With that, we will make the NYS much stronger and it will achieve its mandate as stipulated in the Act that established it.

The second last question was about the vast land. There is a leasing programme, the PPP model. The NYS has vast land in different parts of the country and most of it is not utilised. That is why we are coming in with a limited company, which will ensure that commercial farming activities takes place in the vast land. I gave a very simple example without going into complex and lofty ideas.

We do experience drought cycles in this country and many livestock end up dying due to drought. The NYS can farm livestock fodder which will be sold at the right time. With that, the NYS will earn money. It is a simple idea which can help the NYS earn millions of Kenya Shillings when it utilises its vast land. Some of the land is in Laikipia County. The NYS can farm fodder on that land and sell it to people who keep livestock in Garissa, Mandera, Wajir and Marsabit counties.

The last question was asked by Sen. Okenyuri. She wants to know the revenue that we are going generate from the commercial activities and how much we will save for the Government? What we have at the moment from commercial activities that we anticipate to start are estimations. However, as the Cabinet Secretary, I will push the NYS Limited to ensure that the revenues go beyond Kshs4 billion. The estimation at the moment is Kshs4 billion. For the first year, this will save the budget with about 40 per cent of what is required for the NYS.

We need to implement this with speed and urgency because Government resources are very limited yet the Government is supposed to finance many activities. We need to be innovative and creative in the way we approach the Government business for us to support our young people across the country. If we do that, our young people will have proper skills and we will also train many of them from all corners of the country.

The NYS has enough training grounds for young people in the country. What we are missing at the moment are the resources because it is an expensive affair. Therefore, we have to think out of the box to get these resources for us to train many young people. When you go to our counties or constituencies, you will get young people involved in *boda boda* operations and other activities in the village. We need to harness their

youthful age and train them. We have to make sure they acquire proper skills, which can be used to build our nation.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Cabinet Secretary, we have two more questions. Our time is almost up. We are only left with 12 minutes from the One Hour question time.

Let me hear from Sen. Oketch Gicheru.

Sen. Oketch Gicheru: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Cabinet Secretary has talked for long and my question is informed by the data that he has talked about. I request that you allow me one minute.

What he has referred to is a project by the Government that is not economically viable. I do not know why the Government would want to do business with itself in the context that he has shared here. I want the Cabinet Secretary to tell us the viability framework for what they are proposing. This question is informed by what he has talked about here.

Today, the NYS recruits about 18,000 to 20,000 people. In his own strategic plan and the Government's strategic plan, they have said NYS is going to recruit up to 100,000 people by 2028. On job placement on the recruitment, which he has cited, the recruits are eligible for up to 30 per cent of all Government jobs. The biggest asset for the National Youth Service (NYS) is not land nor what is quoted here. The biggest asset for NYS is manpower, the people who are employed here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if these young people who are trained are numbering 100,000, how will the Ministry form a company that will utilise that asset, which is the young people? For instance, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), which is the biggest bank in this country making over Kshs60 billion today, can only employ 12,000 people. Equity Bank can only employ 7,700 people. Safaricom can only employ 6,600 people. Diageo, through the East Africa Breweries Limited (EABL), can only employ about 3,000 people.

Is this realistic? Should the Government not spend time on training these young people, use those assets to create opportunities for them outside Government, as well as enlarge their placement within other Government departments? This is a Cabinet Secretary who used to be in this House and is running the entire public sector of Kenya. Where is the viability framework?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): What is your question, Sen. Eddy?

Sen. Oketch Gicheru: Let him tell us the viability framework of this company that he is talking about. It does not make any sense. The Government cannot trade by itself. In my assessment, there is no viability programme on this at all.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Hon. CS, what he is asking, if I got him right, is, once you start this company, where will this company get jobs from? Is it from the Government? Like maybe, say, building, constructing houses or from where? What the Member is saying in a different way is that if you start that company, then you are killing the business community because that is the same boat they get business from.

(The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku) stood in his place)

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Senate Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Director, Hansard and Audio Services, Senate.*

Just have a seat CS, you will get another chance.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, can I answer that question first?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): No. Hold your horses, Hon. CS.

(Laughter)

I am just coming to you. Just a minute.

Sen. Kinyua: Asante Bw. Naibu Spika. Nimeskiza Waziri Ruku kwa makini akizungumza kuhusu vile huduma kwa taifa itafanywa kampuni. Sikuona sababu yoyote ambayo inasababisha hii Huduma ifanywe iwe kampuni.

Ametuambia itabaki vile vile kwa sababu asilimia 99 itakuwa ni ya huduma kwa taifa, halafu asilimia moja itakuwa katika Wizara ya Fedha. Kile kimenishtua zaidi ni vile alivyosema ya kwamba hii kampuni itakayoanzishwa itaweza kuwa na akaunti zake za benki. Haitakua ya kwanza kwa sababu mashirika mengi ya Serikali yamekuwa na akaunti zao halafu tunapata hizi shirika za serikali, ijapokuwa ziko na akaunti zao, zinaendelea kupata hasara na pia tunapata ufisadi pale.

Ametuelezea kwamba kwa sababu pesa hazitakua zikipelekwa katika hazina ya kitaifa ama hazina kuu, kutakua na ule msisimko wa kazi kufanywa kwa haraka. Hakutuelezea utendakazi umeharibikia wapi katika huduma ya kitaifa, kwa sababu hawana hizi akaunti za benki.

Vile vile, nimemskiza kwa makini wakati alipokuwa akituambia kuhusu mambo ya ufisadi, akasema ufisadi ulikuwa ni wa mwaka 2014. Lakini hivi juzi, akiwa Waziri, ametoa taarifa na kusema ya kwamba kuna kisiwa zaidi cha Shilingi bilioni mbili za kitaifa zimepotezwa pale Huduma ya kitaifa ya Gilgil na akasema uchunguzi ufanywe kuanzia mwaka wa 2019.

Kwa hivyo, sijui kwa nini anasema kukisiwa kupotea kwa Shilingi bilioni mbili ambazo ni pesa za umma ni kitu kidogo kwa sababu yeye sijui anapata pesa ngapi.

Ningependa atuelezee kinaga ubaga, ni mambo gani. Alafu amejaribu kulinganisha Chuo Kikuu cha Nairobi na Huduma ya Kitaifa. Chuo Kikuu cha Nairobi kina matatizo chungu nzima. Umeona vile ambavyo tumekuwa tukipitia katika haya mambo. Kwa hivyo, sioni haja ya kulinganisha watu wawili ambao wanaelekea kufa.

Asante.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Veronica Maina, please proceed.

Sen. Veronica Maina: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you for the opportunity to seek a clarification. I had requested the Hon. Cabinet Secretary to confirm whether it is possible for his Ministry to be youth-focused and to focus all the procurement around the National Youth Service (NYS) and that Ministry to the youth. This is a specific question; is it possible that you become so youth-focused that we concentrate on the youth, especially for your Ministry, designate the procurement in your Ministry to the youth, because we have a youth bulge and a youth population? I have a tournament right now in Murang'a County. The youth I am speaking to, graduates, are in the villages, seated, not

doing much. Can we focus on the youth in your Ministry, and perhaps, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development?

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Cherarkey Samson, please proceed.

Sen. Cherarkey: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I have heard *Waziri*, Hon. Ruku saying that there are people being investigated by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) in the NYS over corruption. This is okay. However, I need to know from him, since we know the history of NYS with corruption is enormous, as a Cabinet Secretary, what strategies has he put in place to avert any misappropriation of funds within the NYS? In line with that, he should say something about the youth, concerning the internship programme under the Public Service Commission (PSC), which is under him. In all honesty and fairness, I would like to advise him that the Government does not do business anywhere in the world. Is it in order for him to retract the statement that he made? I know he has been busy campaigning in Mbeere North, which is understandable, but he must retract that statement.

I thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri): Sen. Cherarkey, you are out of order. Your question has no relationship with what is happening in any part of the country. Ask your question in good faith, so that the CS can answer you in ultimate good faith. Right?

Let us hear the last question. Sen. David Wakoli, please, proceed.

Sen. Wafula: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for this opportunity.

The number of graduates from the NYS is quite encouraging. I would like to find out from the good Cabinet Secretary; the Police and the Army are about to recruit the young people who have gone halfway training in military courses. I would like to know from the Cabinet Secretary how many are we going to tap from the NYS? From our interaction with them, they are professionals. They are plumbers, electricians, drivers and chefs.

It is important that when they are recruiting, we need to know how many and from which region, so that it is equal across the country and our forces are equally united when they meet at the battlefield.

Thank you and welcome.

[The Deputy Speaker (Sen. Kathuri) left the Chair]

[The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji) in the Chair]

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Hon. CS, you can proceed to answer the questions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programme (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, for the questions and the good work which the Senate is doing to keep Kenyans informed, and for us, who are in the Executive, that we are accountable on our day-to-day activities.

I would like to start with the question on whether the company that the NYS is registering is viable. I would like to speak now as a student of business. I have spent

approximately six years in the School of Business. I hold a Bachelor of Commerce as well as Masters of Business Administration in Finance.

I am able to analyse keenly, not only when we get experts from the University of Nairobi (UON) to advise on whether this can be viable or not, but also as the Cabinet Secretary and someone who has been involved in entrepreneurship in the past before I joined Parliament. I can state categorically without fear or contradiction, that this is a viable venture and the NYS is not utilising the resources it has.

The Government cannot continue financing paramilitary training with taxpayers' money. There is paramilitary training in Gilgil and vocational training in our 22 TVETs institutes, where NYS trainees are sent to. Kenya's taxpayers' money is what we use to pay for the training of these recruits. We have to think outside the box. We have to ask ourselves what NYS, as was established by Parliament, can do to scoop the cream of the market. We have a lot that it can do to scoop the cream of the market.

The Government of Kenya, through the Presidential initiative of 15 billion tree planting across the country, is an ambitious programme and important for landscape restoration for our country, so that we can avert the effects of climate change. If you go to the IATA training camp, we have vast land belonging to the NYS that can be used to germinate seedlings for them to be sold at market price. Therefore, NYS can take advantage of that programme and earn money which can train more youth of our country.

That is just one simple example, selling seedlings across the Republic of Kenya. Today, if you go to IATA, there are more than 3,000 seedlings of Hass avocados, one of the best variety of avocados in the country. It earns huge amounts of money for Murang'a and other counties through selling avocados in China and other markets.

The germination of Hass avocados can bring us money which we can utilise to grow activities for young people. We cannot continue training only 18,000 young people every financial year. This country has millions of young people who can be trained at the NYS. We want to grow from 18,000 to even 500,000 every year, if it is possible, so that young people can get skills.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, skills development is extremely important for ensuring this country---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): One moment, hon. Cabinet Secretary. What is your clarification, Sen. Eddy?

Sen. Oketch Gicheru: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I am not being impatient, but I asked a specific question. However, the hon. Cabinet Secretary has spent a lot of time talking about the rationale of why they want to start this company.

I asked about the viability of this company. The viability is; what product is this company going to engage in? Has the Cabinet Secretary looked at the market potential of that product or its revenue streams? This is because we do not want a situation whereby a company is going to be formed to do everything in this country; to grow Hass avocados, sugarcane or sell alcohol.

I want a specific product that this company is going to offer. He should tell us whether it is profitable as a company and whether it can address the problem of placing the 100,000 young people who do not have jobs and even pay them if they are to be employees of that company. What he is presenting is not a viability framework, he is still

giving us rationale. I do not want that. I want the viability framework for the company they are proposing.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Cherarkey.

Sen. Cherarkey: Mr Temporary Speaker, Sir, under Standing Order No.58, we have understood the background of what the Cabinet Secretary is saying. We want precise answers on the questions. First, this is not a lecture room.

Second, under the Companies Act, there is what we call the objects of a company. Whatever the Cabinet Secretary is saying, whether it is growing seedlings, planting 15 billion trees, growing avocados or doing construction, that is okay. However, this is not an abracadabra company. The Companies Act, Cap. 480 is very clear that before you establish a company, you must have aims and objectives. Can the Cabinet Secretary be precise, so that we can proceed with other business of the House?

I thank you.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Eddy and Sen. Cherarkey, I must confess that you did not give the Cabinet Secretary an opportunity to conclude his submission. He was probably coming to that. If you had been patient as you stated, Sen. Eddy, he probably was transitioning to the viability of the company. Let us give him an opportunity to answer. Do not jump the horses.

Cabinet Secretary, please proceed.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir. Sen. Cherarkey and Sen. Oketch are my very good friends.

The object of the company is to do business in the following areas-

- (1) Engineering and mechanisation services;
- (2) Construction services;
- (3) Agricultural production;
- (4) Agri-value addition;
- (5) Hospitality services;
- (6) Garment and textile;
- (7) Security services; and,
- (8) Development services.

(Sen. Cherarkey spoke off record)

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Senators, let us hear the Cabinet Secretary in silence. You have asked the question, let him answer.

Proceed, Cabinet Secretary.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, it is clear, straight and precise.

Regarding the question asked by Sen. Kinyua that the Government must not spend money, it has lost Kshs2 billion and that it is a matter under investigation. I never said anywhere that the National Youth Service (NYS) has lost Kshs2 billion.

What I said and I want it to be on record is that there is an investigation going on by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC). The EACC is investigating whether there is a likelihood that NYS lost Kshs2 billion. That investigation is ongoing to unearth whether it is true or not. The investigation is active and once we have the report from the EACC, we will report to Kenyans and this Parliament.

The question from Sen. Veronica is to confirm whether it is possible for the Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes to be youth-focused. All ministries operate through executive orders issued by the President, the Head of State and Government. The mandate given to the Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes by the President is clear. That is what I am focusing on as Cabinet Secretary and I cannot deviate from the Executive Order.

Having said that, the Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes is charged with the responsibility of internships. At the moment, we are in process of ensuring that by January, 100,000 young people will be included in the internship programme. At the moment, we have 3,800. You can imagine, moving from 3,800 every year to a 100,000; it is a huge step forward. We have many young people who are graduating from colleges and universities, getting opportunities to get trained in different Government institutions, and thereafter, after one year, they can be employed in other sectors.

Therefore, the Ministry is ensuring that the internship programme will increase intake from 3,800 to 100,000 to take care of the needs of young people, many of whom are not getting these opportunities at the moment. That is the effort which we are working on as a Ministry. We also have the effort of ensuring the National Youth Service, in January, will recruit 40,000 young people for training. The Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports also has quite a number of initiatives.

There are strategies which the Government is using to ensure that there will be no corruption at the NYS. As I said, I instructed the Public Procurement and Regulatory Authority (PPRA) to do a thorough audit from 2018 all the way to now, which they have just completed. We are analysing that report, so that we can take the necessary action to ensure that we strengthen the governance structures at the NYS.

In addition, we have the involvement of the EACC which is an active matter at the moment. It is also a process and strategy of ensuring NYS will not be taken to “Intensive Care Unit (ICU)”; that it will continue having good health, so that it can conduct its business as it stipulated in the NYS Act.

The good Senator has asked how many NYS graduates will be recruited in the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) and the police service? There is a presidential directive. The President of Kenya gave a directive during the graduation ceremony in Gilgil, on 27th August, 2025 that the National Police Service (NPS) will recruit 4,000 trainees and graduates from the NYS. Out of the 10,000 recruits this year, 4,000 will come from the NYS. That is quite impressive. We continue to thank the President for his leadership in that direction.

I thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir.

(An hon. Senator spoke off record)

Is there a question, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, that I have not responded to?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Hon. Senators, we have concluded question time. Is there a point of clarification?

Yes, Deputy Speaker.

Sen. Kathuri: Thank you, Hon. Cabinet Secretary. It is a good idea to recruit the 4,000 NYS graduates to the National Police Service (NPS). However, how will this be done? Will you consider the time they left training? Will you be considering those who left earlier? What about those who left this year? Which system will you use to---

Sorry, *Waziri*, this is a good idea of recruiting the 4,000 NYS graduates, but you must be careful and also make it very open. From which year will you be starting to recruit? There are those who left five, four or three years ago. Others finished the training this year. If the maximum age is 26 years, could you try to recruit those who left earlier, so that they are not more than 25 years before they are recruited as police officers?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Cherarkey, what is your intervention?

Sen. Cherarkey: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I would have expected *Waziri* to be precise with an eye of a military marksman because I asked a very simple question. I wanted to know the strategies he has put in place to fight corruption in NYS. That was a specific question, but instead, he has talked about audit. The question is; what has he put in place?

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, you and I know that even in Garissa, there are many young people who do not have opportunities. The Cabinet Secretary has just given a blanket statement by saying that the Ministry has many youth initiatives. Could he perhaps tell us about the internship programme, confirmation of teachers of Junior Secondary Schools, the NYOTA Programme or the Hustler Fund? He should be precise.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, when you go to Garissa, the young people there will put you to task by asking what is there for the youth that the Government is doing. Could *Waziri Ruku* be precise?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you, Senator.
Cabinet Secretary, please respond.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, starting with the Deputy Speaker, there is a matrix which will be announced to the public during recruitment of 4,000 graduates from NYS for them to get into the National Police Service (NPS). That matrix will involve what these graduates trained because they do different courses at NYS, graduate in different years and attain different grades. All that will be made available to the public, so that we are as transparent as possible. Also, all the regions will be taken care of out of the 4,000 who will be recruited into the NPS.

Sen. Cherarkey is asking about strategies. I thank you, Senator. Digitisation of NYS operations is something we have stressed on. At the moment, there is no paperwork in terms of all procurement activities going on in the NYS to ensure that we have a proper trail and sense where there could be acts of corruption as early as possible. That is

why we stopped those three individuals who we have mentioned here before it went out of hand. Therefore, digitisation is one of the strategies that we have put in place in the NYS. It is not only just in the NYS, but also the entire Ministry of Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes.

As far as the question of Sen. Veronica is concerned, I said we have many programmes which are being implemented by the Government to involve young people. They include Kazi Majuu Programme, Kazi Mtaani, Affordable Housing Programme (AHP), Internship Programme and NYOTA Programme. All these are meant to ensure that our young people are engaged. They also have opportunities to get 30 per cent of procurement opportunities. All these are efforts aimed at ensuring that young people are actively engaged economically. They are all considered by the effort which the Government is putting in place.

I thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you very much, Cabinet Secretary.

Hon. Senators, we have come to the conclusion of the question and answer session by the Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Geoffrey Ruku. Cabinet Secretary, I take this opportunity to thank you for your presence here today and for responding to the questions raised by the Senators. I wish you all the best in your new duties.

We may let you go now.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku): Mr. Temporary Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank all the Senators for their time and questions. It is our responsibility, those of us in the Executive, to ensure we give Kenyans correct information on what the Government is doing on a day-to-day basis.

There is a saying in our community which I will translate directly from my mother tongue because I do not know how to put it in proper English. It says that if you are given an opportunity to feed someone who is not be able to see, you have to keep on whistling for the person to be sure that you are not eating his or her food. Therefore, it is the responsibility of those who are tasked with the Executive responsibility of this nation to keep on informing Kenyans what we are doing on a day-to-day basis.

I thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, for giving me that opportunity to inform Kenyans on what we are doing as a Ministry.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank, Cabinet Secretary and keep whistling.

The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Ruku): I will keep whistling, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir.

[The Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Human Capital Development and Special Programmes (Hon. Geoffrey Ruku) was ushered out of the Chamber]

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Hon. Senators, we shall proceed to the next Order.

Disclaimer: *The electronic version of the Senate Hansard Report is for information purposes only. A certified version of this Report can be obtained from the Director, Hansard and Audio Services, Senate.*

Clerk, call the next Order.

POINT OF ORDER

NON-APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SENATE BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR NATIONAL TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING

Sen. Kinyua: On a point of order, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Kinyua, what is your point of order?

Sen. Kinyua: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I am reading my Order Paper, which shows that there is another Cabinet Secretary coming. I am seated here because I am still waiting for him.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you, Sen. Kinyua for reminding me.

My apologies, hon. Senators. We have received an apology from the Cabinet Secretary, Hon. John Mbadi. He has requested for his question time to be rescheduled to a later date. The request was received through the right channel, let me just put it that way.

Hon. Senators, we shall proceed to the next Order.

What is your point of clarification, Sen. Cherarkey?

Sen. Cherarkey: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, the Cabinet Secretary for National Treasury and Economic Planning, Hon. John Mbadi, was supposed to appear. If my memory serves me right, I think he has requested for many deferments of his response for far too long. When we left the Chamber yesterday, we were sure that three Cabinet Secretaries will appear today. They included the Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Labour and Social Development; Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports and the Cabinet Secretary for National Treasury and Economic Planning.

We have questions on the allocation of money to Junior Secondary Schools (JSS); confirmation of interns into permanent and pensionable; payment of pensions and many other things.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you---

Sen. Cherarkey: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, just 30 more seconds, so that I can conclude.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): No, I have understood your clarification.

Sen. Cherarkey: Can I conclude?

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Conclude.

Sen. Cherarkey: Is it in order for you to direct that the Cabinet Secretary appears here as soon as next Wednesday?

I do not think there is enough reason he is avoiding to appear before this House. We need his expert advice. He is one of the expert Cabinet Secretaries. We need to see the contents of that letter in our official *WhatsApp* group.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Cherarkey, let me first correct you. You do not know if the letter was received this morning. I am actually informed that the letter was received yesterday, but it was received after the Senate Business Committee (SBC) sat and that is why there was no earlier communication. However, the request that you have put forward for the Chair to rule that the Cabinet Secretary appear next week is also not within the Chair. This is a matter that will be rescheduled by the SBC and they will inform the House.

So, Sen. Cherarkey, like I said, the apology has been received, it will be rescheduled and the House shall be informed accordingly. Can we proceed to the next Order?

(Sen. Cherarkey spoke off record)

No, I am not taking any more clarification. Sen. Mwaruma, move your Motion.

MOTION

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TEACHING AND REFERRAL HOSPITALS

Sen. Mwaruma: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, for this opportunity to move this Motion on the establishment of national teaching and referral hospitals in Kenya. I would like to move that---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Sen. Kinyua, what is your intervention?

Sen. Mwaruma: Aware that Article 43(1)(a) of the Constitution of Kenya---

(Interruption of Motion)

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Just hold on, Sen. Mwaruma. What is your intervention, Sen. Kinyua?

Sen. Kinyua: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, we have our Standing Orders, which are very clear. When we invite outsiders, even in our committees, we give seven days. We cannot just invite them in the morning and expect them to come. The same applies to them; when they are not coming for purposes of answering questions, the Standing Order is clear on the time duration that they are supposed to give to this House. We are so busy, like my colleague and leader, Enock Wambua, is here for purposes of---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): What is the time duration?

Sen. Kinyua: Seven days, the same time that we are supposed to give them. Then my concern is, why is this issue of the Cabinet Secretary being brushed aside so quickly, and we move on as if nothing has happened when we were busy here waiting? You heard what Sen. Cherarkey said on the question he wanted to ask the Cabinet Secretary. People in Laikipia, Kitui and Nandi counties are waiting for answers.

Sen. Cherarkey: Clerk, can you give me the mic? Thank you. These are the Standing Orders that guide us like a Bible, through the Speaker. This is the creation of the Constitution under Article 123. When you look at Standing Order No.51A, which we amended, Part (6) is on scheduling the date for appearance, under Paragraph 5. The Senate Business Committee shall provide at least seven days' notice to the respective Cabinet Secretary.

So, the absolute interpretation of this Standing Order is that we never ambushed the Cabinet Secretary. Even the Standing Order says the response shall be provided 24 hours before the appearance of the Cabinet Secretary. Is it 24 hours? So, is it in order for the Cabinet Secretary to ambush this august House yesterday evening by giving an apology not to appear today? This is not the first time that Cabinet Secretary Mbadi has failed to appear before the Senate.

There are so many questions that we need to know from the Ministry of National Treasury and Economic Planning, especially concerning money. Money is a very serious issue of resources. I hope the Table Office will guide appropriately. You should invoke Standing Order No.1 because you have the power and direct that the Cabinet Secretary appears without fail by Wednesday next week to answer the questions we have raised.

These questions have been in the Order Paper for almost three months. We have given him seven days as per Standing Order No.51A (6). Is it even fair to this House? If the CS knew he was not going to appear, why could he not give us adequate notice of even three or five days, so that we can reschedule the business of the House?

Sen. Mwaruma would have moved his Motion had the CS told us he would not be available. Tell the CS, "apology not accepted."

Sen. Wambua: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, Sen. Cherarkey also needs to be reminded that these are the fruits of some engagement called "broad-based government." If you make your bed, you must be willing to lie on it.

Article 125 of the Constitution, which is a higher authority, is very clear that either House of Parliament and any of the committees has the power to summon any person to appear before it for purposes of providing information.

Article 32 on the functions of the President, the first responsibility of the President is to address Parliament. If the President is required by the Constitution to appear before Parliament, I do not know why CSs find it hard to appear.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I say this with a lot of pain. On your desk, because you are the Speaker, there is a Censure Motion against the CS for National Treasury and Economic Planning requested by yours truly the Senator for Kitui. This is because the CS has made it a habit that he can only appear before Parliament if and when he chooses. Senators are saying that you exert the authority of the Chair. Let us not send the wrong signal to these CSs that we are requesting them to appear before us because we are not. It is a requirement.

When Sen. Kinyua and Sen. Cherarkey ask you to give orders that the CS should appear next Wednesday, it is not an idle request. It is an attempt to exert the authority of this Parliament and the Chair. The Senate Business Committee (SBC) is also a creature of this House. It is not as if it is superior to this House or to the authority of the Speaker.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, give direction. Order the CS to appear before Senate on next Wednesday and close this matter and we move on. If he does not appear, breathe life to the Censure Motion and let us discuss him.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you, Sen. Wambua. The CS has appeared before, just to correct your submission. This is the first time he has not appeared for this set of questions.

(Sen. Wambua spoke off record)

I am informing you. We are not censuring him. You are wrongly censuring him. Sen. Cherarkey, we are guided by the Standing Orders. Standing Order No.51A (5) on Procedure for Asking Questions provides as follows-

“The Senate Business Committee shall schedule a date and time of appearance of relevant Cabinet Secretaries before the Senate to respond to the Question.”

Your request asking the Chair to instruct the CS to appear next week is not guided by the Standing Orders. That is the work of SBC. Standing Order No.51A (6) provides as follows-

“In scheduling of the date for response under paragraph (5), the Senate Business Committee shall provide at least seven days’ notice to the respective Cabinet Secretary.”

I wish to take you to Standing Order No.51C (5) on Response to Questions by Cabinet Secretaries, which is why I informed you that the letter was received yesterday, which is 24 hours before.

Standing Order No.51C (5) States as follows-

“A Cabinet Secretary shall provide a physical and electronic copy of a response to a Question at least twenty-four hours before appearing before the Senate.”

So, the Cabinet Secretary did send his apologies 24 hours before.

(Loud consultations)

It is a response; his request not to appear before this Senate is also a response. So, we shall leave it at that.

Sen. Mwaruma, please, proceed to move your Motion.

(Loud consultations)

Hon. Senator, please allow the Senator to move his Motion. We will take this matter forward.

(Resumption of Motion)

Sen. Mwaruma: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the following Motion-

THAT, AWARE THAT Article 43(1)(a) of the Constitution of Kenya provides that every person has the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including reproductive healthcare;

NOTING THAT in Kenya, we have five National Teaching and Referral hospitals with Kenyatta University Research and Teaching Hospital in Kiambu County and Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County being the only ones outside Nairobi County;

CONCERNED THAT the bed capacity, medical equipment and human capital in these National Teaching and Referral hospitals are not sufficient to absorb all the patients seeking specialized treatment;

FURTHER CONCERNED THAT many Kenyans with critical health conditions travel long distances in order to access specialized services in Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret or Nairobi, where the other four National Teaching and Referral hospitals are located, leading to high cost of travel, augmented disease and in some cases deaths along the way;

NOW THEREFORE, the Senate urges-

1. The Ministry of Health to:
 - i. Establish National Teaching and Referral hospitals in the Coast, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza and Western regions; and
 - ii. Fully equip the National Teaching and Referral Hospitals with modern medical equipment, medical supplies and personnel; and
2. The County Governments to allocate more funds to their respective health dockets to adequately facilitate their County Level 5 and Level 6 hospitals to enhance the provision of critical health services to reduce the demand for such services from the National Teaching and Referral Hospitals.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, Sir, this is a very straightforward Motion, which recognises the fact that there are areas with teaching and referral hospitals. They are Nairobi, Kiambu and Rift Valley. The rest of the regions, which are the former provinces in Kenya under the previous Constitution, do not have these very important facilities, which deal with the specialised treatment of our people.

The current referral hospitals that exist, and I would like to look at their profiles. The first one is Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), which is in Nairobi, Upper Hill. It has 1,800 beds. It is actually the largest in East and Central Africa. It serves as a teaching and referral hospital for the University of Nairobi.

The other one, which is Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH), is located in the Rift Valley. It has a capacity of 1,020 beds and serves as a teaching and referral hospital for Moi University.

The third one is Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital (MNTRH), which is in Nairobi. It has a capacity of 800 beds and it specialises in mental health services.

The other one is the Kenyatta University Teaching and Referral Hospital (KUTRH), which is located in Kiambu and has a capacity of 600 beds. The fifth one is the National Spinal Injury Hospital (NSIH) located in Nairobi. It deals with treatment and rehabilitation of spinal injuries. These hospitals are crucial as they provide specialised services and are equipped to handle complex medical services. They are operated and financed through the Exchequer from the national Government.

We have adequate provisions in the Constitution, national development frameworks and other statutes that deal with the provision of healthcare. The first one is a

right under the Constitution. Article 43(1)(a) of the Constitution provides that one has the right to access of quality healthcare. That Article states-

“(1) Every person has the right--

(a) to the highest attainable standard of health, which includes the right to healthcare services, including reproductive healthcare;”

This Motion urges the state to do its obligations. The first obligation under the provision of the Constitution is to make necessary legislative policy framework and other measures to achieve progressive realisation for attainment of this right. Generally, primary healthcare is devolved and we have tried to achieve equitable distribution of healthcare. Under devolution, there is money that goes to counties as shareable revenue, which deals with Level 1 up to Level 6 hospitals.

The distribution of these national teaching and referral hospitals, however, has not helped us achieve equitable distribution of hospitals. This is because they are just in three regions: Nairobi, Central and Rift Valley regions. The unequitable distribution of the hospitals has made it impossible for us achieve access to quality and highest attainable quality healthcare.

The other framework that has required our Government to ensure that there is provision of health care is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG goal three talks about good health and well-being. The objective of this goal is to ensure that we have healthy lives and that we promote well-being of our people at all ages. The key target under SDG goal three is that we need to achieve or attain Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

I know the national Government in collaboration with the county governments have moved some steps with the passing of legislation on social health or establishment of the Social Health Authority (SHA) and the Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF). However, this is not adequate.

On the development blueprint of our national Government, we have the Kenya Vision 2030. That blueprint prioritises the provision of equitable, affordable and quality healthcare as a pillar for socio-economic transformation. What captures my attention under Kenya’s Vision 2030 is the term “equitable”. As we are struggle to prioritise healthcare, that provision of healthcare must be equitable. The national Government hospitals, which provide specialised treatment, are not equitably distributed because they only exist in three regions.

So, this Motion, which requires, urges and implores the national Government to establish these national referral hospitals, is not just requesting for those referral hospitals to be established, but to be established equitably within the regions.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, there is also the National Health Policy 2014-2030, which is a national framework designed to align the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with specific focus on implementing the constitutional provisions for health. It seeks to establish a framework on which to operationalise or actualise the provisions of the Constitution, that is provision of healthcare to all citizens, which is affordable and quality in nature. This quest to establish these hospitals in these regions is also to ensure that we have equitable distribution of national resources.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, under the Constitution, under the devolved ecosystem, we have tried, through the laws that we pass in this House, that is the Division of Revenue Act, the County Allocation of Revenue Act and the County Governments Additional Allocations Act, to distribute equitably the resources in the county governments. However, there is lack of a framework to make sure that every region in Kenya gets equitable distribution of the resources under the national Government.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I have always wondered that after we distribute the money as shareable revenue to counties under conditional grants, we do not have any framework to make sure that whatever remains in the national Government has been distributed equitably. Actually, what goes to different regions in the country mostly has to do with political expediency; possibly how many votes a county or a region brings to the table, so much so that if you come from a region that does not have a lot of votes, you will be left behind in terms of development from the national Government.

So, this framework to establish hospitals within the regions is part of the quest for equitable distribution of the national Government resources. Some of these laws cannot be passed under the Senate. Rather they are passed under the National Assembly. There should be a framework of making sure that if we pass a national Government budget, some money should go to counties, for instance, Kshs1 billion or Kshs2 billion per county to make sure that the national Government money or resources are equitably distributed within the regions.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, if that was happening, such a Motion would not even be necessary. However, it is necessary because there is no framework for making sure that taxpayers' money goes equitably to different regions of our country. So, this Motion is fashioned or geared towards ensuring that health services can be distributed equitably. Otherwise, achievement of equitable and highest attainable healthcare within the regions would still remain a mirage.

So, my proposal is that we establish national referral hospitals in the former provinces in Kenya. These regions are the Coast region which does not have a referral hospital, North Eastern region, that is the northern frontier districts where, you come from; we do not have a referral hospital, the former eastern province, which has no referral hospital, Nyanza region, although I am told that information could be inaccurate because we have Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital (JOTRH), which might have transitioned to national referral and possibly Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital (Level 6) is almost there. However, if they have not been established, then that is the thrust of this Motion.

Let us also have in the Western region a national teaching and referral hospital. In the former Nyanza region, we have a teaching and referral hospital, in Rift Valley, Nairobi and in Central region.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, apart from just distributing these resources equitably, we will also reduce the distance that patients have to travel and it will make specialised healthcare cheaper as well. I am imagining someone who comes from Lamu or Tana River and they have to travel all the way to Nairobi to access specialised treatment at KNH, KUTRRH or to Eldoret in Uasin Gishu. That is very expensive.

When you have specialised operations, for example, brain surgeries, you must go for regular clinics. It does not end there. Imagine, every two weeks you are supposed to travel from Lamu to access clinics, that becomes extremely expensive. Therefore, to reduce these expenses, we are proposing that, for example, in the Coastal region, the people from that region can decide whether it is Taita Taveta or Mombasa where that hospital can be based or even whether, to upgrade the Coast General Hospital. Shall it be located in Kilifi or Tana River, so that we have the people of that region getting this important service?

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, there are also other benefits that come with having a referral hospital in a region. For example, if people go to Eldoret, they are treated, but the people who are taken to the hospital do not spend at the hospital, but in Eldoret Town. They, therefore, bring a lot of money to that town in terms of what we call medical tourism. If we had these hospitals in the Coastal, Western, Lower Eastern and Eastern regions, benefits would accrue from the existence of these hospitals and they would be enjoyed by those regions as well.

We are crying that we want equitable distribution of these healthcare facilities to reduce the travelling expenses. At times, it is not just about expenses, these people end up dying along the way. If you come from Lamu and you have to travel all the way to Nairobi, those are about 1,000 kilometres and before you reach Nairobi, the patient may pass away.

This Motion can be improved because if you look at the former North Eastern region, shall we put them at headquarters? This is because, former headquarters of those regions could be far off from the counties. It should be possible to not use the previous headquarters of provinces and use a central place to allocate those referral hospitals. Therefore, it is subject to a lot of debate.

Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, the most important thing is to have these hospitals established in those regions, so that we can have healthcare thriving and assist our people access medical care at any given time.

With these, I beg to move and request Sen. Beatrice Ogola to second this important Motion.

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Thank you, Senator. Sen. Beatrice Ogola, you may second.

Sen. Ogola: Thank you, Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, for granting me the opportunity to second the Motion of Sen. Mwaruma, my senior colleague, both in the House and in the party.

I rise to second this Motion which speaks to my heart and to the hearts of most Kenyans. It is a Motion that seeks to establish national teaching and referral hospitals in Kenya. This is crucial to me and should be crucial to everyone in the Republic because this Motion addresses the issue of access to health in specialised areas of medical attention sought by our sick people in the country. The Motion speaks to equity and affordability.

I am also a champion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a believer that a healthy nation is a productive nation. The people of Kenya have a right to

access not only in terms of quantity, but also in terms of quality, which speaks to the services that the Mover of the Motion has clearly outlined.

Hon. Temporary Speaker, for a long time, Kenyans have had to travel long distances to access referral hospitals. These are sick Kenyans, some terminally ill and not in good shape, yet they must travel to the established referral hospitals, primarily Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH), which has limited bed capacity.

We also have the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH), the Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital (KUTRRH), the National Spinal Injuries Referral Hospital (NSIRH) and the Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital (MNTRH).

Having only five referral hospitals for over 50 million Kenyans is a historical disservice to our communities. I, therefore, support the Motion moved by Sen. Mwaruma that the Ministry establishes teaching and referral hospitals in other regions, particularly at the Coast, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza and Western regions.

I come from Nyanza and most of our people are often referred to MTRH. A number of them lose their lives on the way because of the distance. Many are transported in ambulances while on oxygen and others medical support equipment. This is not comfortable even for the guardians accompanying them.

This Motion is rightly before us. It will ensure we improve access in terms of distance and services. It also addresses bed capacity. The KNH has only 1,800 beds. Anyone who has gone there for treatment or to visit a patient has seen the overwhelming population. Sometimes, you even feel for the personnel attending to such numbers. Establishing more hospitals would alleviate the pressure on the current national referral hospitals.

The Motion also speaks to medical equipment and human capital that must be provided. The second component of the Motion is that the Ministry of Health should fully equip these hospitals. 'Fully equip' refers to the services and equipment needed in the hospitals that are to be created.

I request---

The Temporary Speaker (Sen. Abdul Haji): Hon. Senator, when the House resumes, you will have a remaining balance of nine minutes to conclude seconding the Motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Senators, it is now 1.00 p.m., time to adjourn the Senate. The Senate, therefore, stands adjourned until later today, Wednesday, 12th November, 2025, at 2.30 p.m.

The Senate rose at 1.00 p.m.