

## **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING HOLDS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM ON BUNGOMA COUNTY FINANCE BILL, 2022 AND ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADP) 2023-2024**

The Committee on Finance and Economic Planning of the County Assembly of Bungoma led by the Chairperson Hon Barasa Mukhongo conducted public participation forum to gather stakeholder views on Bungoma County Finance Bill, 2022 and the Annual Development Plan (ADP) 2023-2024 on Monday 13th February, 2023 at Santa Mara Hotel in Kanduyi.

The Finance Bill that is prepared in accordance with Sections 132 and 133 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012. The Bill intends to introduce amendments to the existing tax laws and propose tax incentives in a bid to raise additional revenue to Finance the budget in a fiscal year and subsequent years.

The Chairperson of the Committee Hon Mukhongo revealed that the Committee was keen on working with the stakeholders to improve revenue collection in the County.

He added that the Committee shall hold sensitization meetings on revenue collection across all the Sub-Counties to enlighten the public on various revenue targets, gather the views of the public and unearth any wrong doings by officers in charge of revenue collection.

Key among the issues raised were the two days' tax holiday to registered traders which the Acting Revenue Director Mr. Moses Walekhwa stated that it is still under deliberations and once the execution plan is made it will be presented to the County Assembly for their input and approval before execution.

Walekhwa further added that to curb loss in revenue collection, County Government had introduced cashless payment which he urged members of the public to adhere to.

The following were key suggestions made by the stakeholders;

- ✓ County Government to seal the loopholes in revenue collection
- ✓ Public to be on the lookout for enforcement officers who purport to be collecting taxes from traders and report to County Government revenue office
- ✓ Traders to raise any concerns that affect revenue collection so that they may be addressed rather than resorting to not paying taxes
- ✓ Traders suggested that 1% of the levies collected from markets to be ploughed back to implement development projects in the same markets.
- ✓ Tax collected for Public health and sanitation to be channeled directly to County Revenue Department and not to be paid to Public Health Officers.
- ✓ County Government to provide more space for demarcation of market to avoid congestion of traders along the road side
- ✓ To move cattle traders from the market street at Mayanja Market

- ✓ The County Government to install street lighting in most market centres to curb insecurity incidences
- ✓ County Government to decentralize tractors in the wards that will improve agricultural production as well as increase revenue collection
- ✓ Empowerment of Fire Department to be able to tackle fire outbreaks in schools.

The participants included stakeholders drawn from organized groups such as private Hospitals, Auction Rings, Motorcycle operators commonly known as '*bodaboda*', Tuktuk/ Lorries/ Pickup/Canters operators, Public Service Vehicles or '*matatu*' operators, Petrol station owners, Private Schools, Wholesalers and Supermarkets, Civil Society, open air market traders and Chamber of Commerce.

Also present in the forum were Hon Francis Chemion, Hon George Makari, Hon Violet Makhanu, Hon Stephen Wamalwa, Hon Jack Kawa, Hon Godfrey Mukhwana, Hon Everlyne Mutiembu, Hon Job Mukoyandali, Hon Christine Mukhongo, Hon Everton Nganga and Hon Aggrey Mulongo.

ENDS.