



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
AFRICAN WOMEN'S STUDIES CENTRE
WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE) HUB

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Tel: +254 20 318262/28075; 725 740 025
Email: awsckenya@uonbi.ac.ke
Website: <http://awsc.uonbi.ac.ke>
Nairobi, Kenya

A GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE VIHIGA COUNTY FINANCE BILL 2022

**SUBMISSION BY THE WEE HUB IN RESPONSE TO A CALL FOR
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH A DEADLINE OF 9th MAY 2022**

AT A GLANCE

- i. The Vihiga County Finance Bill 2022 largely mirrors the Vihiga County Finance Act (2021) with minimum changes with the intent of maintaining the status quo.
- ii. Access to Health Services (Under the Seventh Schedule) has several proposals to increase the fees charged and that will affect the plight of women. However, it is notable and commendable that the Finance Bill proposes to reduce the normal charge for using an Ambulance from Vihiga to Nairobi from Ksh. 40,000 to Ksh 25,000. The special rate (using NHIF) will also be halved from Ksh.50,000 to the Ksh 25,000.
- iii. There are opportunities to reduce licencing and registration fees for the Early Child Development Education (ECDE) and Domestic Water connection fees which will help in pushing for access and quality of education and clean and affordable piped water for households.
- iv. The proposals contained in the Finance Bill 2022 must also take into consideration the operating economic environment characterised with a trend of recovery from the impacts of Covid 19 and the coming general elections.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
FOCUS OF ANALYSIS	4
Parameters to be Analysed.....	4
TABLE OF ANALYSIS	5
CONCLUSIONS.....	7
RECOMMENDATIONS	7

INTRODUCTION

The African Women Studies, UON WEE Hub takes a keen interest in Kenya's Fiscal Policy situation with the view of supporting the increased participation of women in the Kenyan Economy. The engagements of the African Women Studies, UON WEE Hub on Kenya's Fiscal Policy environment is a deliberate approach to support the policymakers (National Treasury, County Assemblies and Parliament) by providing alternative choices on matters that directly affect the plight of women in the country and their involvement in economic activities. For instance, directing efforts on policies aimed at improving food security, Women's Economic Empowerment, childcare, financial inclusion, social protection among other issues would directly impact on the abilities of women to engage more in the economy and that would yield accelerated growth. The focus of the issues is drawn from Article 43 and 53 of the Constitution which lists the rights of Kenyan Citizens to the highest attainable level of healthcare services, be free from hunger, clean and safe water, social security and education. Article 53 further compels the Government of Kenya to provide free and compulsory basic education.

FOCUS OF ANALYSIS

The focus is on women's economic empowerment by pin-pointing the inclusion, omission, reduction and increment of charges and rates contained in the Vihiga County Finance Bill 2022 that have an impact on affecting the economic empowerment and participation of women in the economy. The analysis is in line with the critical areas that the AWS UON WEE Hub attaches importance in uplifting the lives of women which are Health, Water and Sanitation, Clean and Affordable Energy. It compared the current situation as captured by the Vihiga County Finance Act (2021) and the current proposals in the Bill Finance Bill 2022 which will have the impact of changing the existing one.

Parameters to be Analysed

The analysis focuses on different schedules in the proposed finance bill that have a direct impact on the livelihoods of women and hence impacts on their ability to engage in economic activities. On that regard, these are the identified schedules that informed the analysis;

- a) The First Schedule -Dealing with general fees and charges.
- b) The Third Schedule - Department of Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Resources.
- c) The Seventh Schedule- Department of Health Services.
- d) The Tenth Schedule - Department of Education, Science, Technical and Vocational Training.

TABLE OF ANALYSIS

FOCUS AREAS	KEY ISSUES	Proposals by the AWS UON WEE Hub	Justification for the Proposal by the AWS UON WEE Hub
Business and Enterprise Development – First Schedule	The Bill fails to mention the Single Business Permits (SBP) which would have otherwise favoured those who have long term plans for engaging in business in the area.	Re-introduced the Single Business Permits	Having a Single Business Permit to operate will help shield small enterprises from harassment by the county officials and it is also cost saving in the long run and aids purposes of business planning
Water Sale Service- Third Schedule	Charging a 35% fee of all costs of material as a connection fee (under the miscellaneous tariffs) for the domestic households is a hindrance to access to clean and affordable water.	The cost be subsidized to be free or be reduced to less than 10% through a campaign that targets an increase in the number of households that are served with clean piped water.	The county should focus on increasing the coverage of households that are served with piped water within the town centers and across other parts. That will save the time taken by women in looking for clean drinking water and also save on the costs incurred.
Access to Health Care- Seventh Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Levying a standardized Bed Charge of Ksh. 3,000 per day in the Amenity ward. In the current Vihiga County Finance Act 2021, a distinction has been made for the normal amenity bed (Ksh.1,000) and the Special one charge on account of the NHIF card (Ksh. 3,000). ii. Increasing the cost of oxygen administration from Ksh. 1,000 to 1,500 per day in the amenity ward iii. The increase in the cost of the Chest Tube insertion at the Female Medical from Ksh .1,500 to Ksh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The charge for the oxygen administration be maintained at Ksh.1000 per day as is currently the case since the increase is unjustifiable. ii. That the same distinction be made as not all the people in the area have access to the NHIF cover and leaving the charge as currently stated gives a leeway for raising the charges even for those paying using cash. iii. The cost of the Chest Tube insertion at the Female Medical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The increase in the cost of oxygen at such a time where costs of living are high will adversely affect the access to health care and impact on the cost of health care. ii. Bed Charges at the amenity ward are a critical component of the total bills incurred at the hospitals especially for the families that make payments with cash. Making the distinction and re-introducing the normal rate will help in ensuring access to health at an affordable cost. iii. The increase in the cost of Chest Tube Insertion in the female ward is

FOCUS AREAS	KEY ISSUES	Proposals by the AWS UON WEE Hub	Justification for the Proposal by the AWS UON WEE Hub
	2,500 will increase also increase cost of health care	from Ksh.1,500 to Ksh. 2,500 will increase also increase cost of health care	unexplainable and only contributes to increased costs of care for women
Early Child Development Centers – Tenth Schedule	The high registration and licensing of ECDE Centres for the private entities at 10,000 and 20,000 is unattractive for such entities to join and complement the efforts of the public institutions in offering early primary education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. These licensing charges are unattractive to setting up more private ECDE centres. The honourable committee should consider reducing the licensing charge as it will have an impact in increasing the access and quality of early primary education. <li>ii. There is no explanation on why the charge is more than 4 times the charge for the public registration and licensing. 	A reduction will increase the access to and quality of the early primary education offered in the county as the private ECDC complement the efforts of the public institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

Whereas the Vihiga County Finance Bill 2022 has largely sought to maintain the status quo of the Vihiga County Finance Act 2021, it is noted that there are insertions that if adopted would increase the costs of doing business, access to clean and affordable water and access to health. The AWS UON WEE Hub thus views such increments to be contrary to the prevailing economic times in an economy that has not fully recovered from the impacts of the Covid 19 Pandemic and one which is uncertain given the fact that that it is an election year.

The AWS UON WEE Hub also sees many of these proposed increments in fees as an affront to the efforts that are geared towards empowering the plight of women across the country and in Vihiga County since women are currently facing a host of challenges. For instance, the unexplained increment in chest tube insertions at the Female Wards and the increment in the bed charges for maternities if not revised will directly affect the access to health care by women in the county.

On a positive note, it is commendable that the Finance Bill proposes to reduce the normal charge for using an Ambulance from Vihiga to Nairobi from Ksh. 40,000 to Ksh 25,000. The special rate (using NHIF) will also be halved from Ksh.50,000 to the Ksh 25,000. These will help the residents of the county in accessing referral services whenever needed in Nairobi and it is also contributes to the reduction of medical bills and access to affordable health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The county should focus on increasing the coverage of households that are served with piped water within the town centers and across other areas by lowering to 10% or eliminating the connection fees for the domestic households. That will save the time taken by women in looking for clean drinking water and also save on the costs incurred.

The Vihiga County should also re-introduce the Single Business Permits given to all scale traders who spread the warehouses on verandahs and stalls rather as was the case in the 2021-2022 financial year.

To ensure there is ease of access to quality and affordable care, the Vihiga County government should ensure that the charge for the oxygen administration is maintained at Ksh. 1000 per day as is currently the case since the increase is unjustifiable. It should also ensure that we have a distinction be made as not all the people in the area have access to the NHIF cover and leaving the charge as currently stated gives a leeway for raising the charges even for those paying using cash. The cost of the Chest Tube insertion at the Female Medical should be maintained at Ksh. 1,500

ANNEX

TENTH SCHEDULE

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING			
(a)	Advertisements		
	<i>Item Description</i>	<i>Unit of Measure</i>	<i>Charges</i>
1.	Registration and Licensing of ECDE Centre		
(a)	Provisional Feeder ECDE Centre	Per year	2,000
(b)	Full Feeder ECDE Centre	Per year	5,000
(c)	Private Provisional Feeder ECDE Centre	Per year	10,000
(d)	Private Full Feeder ECDE Centre	Per year	20,000
2.	Inspection of private ECDE	Per year	2,000
3.	Registration of day care centers	Per year	2,000