

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON MAKUENI COUNTY YOUTH, MEN, WOMEN, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND TABLE-BANKING GROUPS EMPOWERMENT FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2021

PREAMBLE

I draw your attention to the contents of my report which is in three parts:

- A. Report on the Financial Statements that considers whether the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework, accounting standards and the relevant laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the financial statements.
- B. Report on Lawfulness and Effectiveness in Use of Public Resources which considers compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, gazette notices, circulars, guidelines and manuals and whether public resources are applied in a prudent, efficient, economic, transparent and accountable manner to ensure Government achieves value for money and that such funds are applied for intended purpose.
- C. Report on Effectiveness of Internal Controls, Risk Management and Governance which considers how the entity has instituted checks and balances to guide internal operations. This responds to the effectiveness of the governance structure, the risk management environment, and the internal controls developed and implemented by those charged with governance for orderly, efficient and effective operations of the entity.

An unmodified opinion does not necessarily mean that an entity has complied with all relevant laws and regulations, and that its internal controls, risk management and governance systems are properly designed and were working effectively in the financial year under review.

The three parts of the report are aimed at addressing the statutory roles and responsibilities of the Auditor-General as provided by Article 229 of the Constitution, the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and the Public Audit Act, 2015. The three parts of the report, when read together constitute the report of the Auditor-General.

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Qualified Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Makeni County Youth, Men, Women, Persons with Disabilities and Table-Banking Groups Empowerment Fund set out on pages 28 to 65, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June, 2021 and the statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, statement of cash flows and statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information in accordance with the provisions of Article 229 of the Constitution and Section 35 of the Public Audit Act, 2015. I have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of the audit.

In my opinion, except for the effect of the matters described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion section of my report, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Makueni County Youth, Men, Women, Persons with Disabilities and Table-Banking Groups Empowerment Fund as at 30 June, 2021, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Accrual Basis) and comply with the Public Finance Management (Makueni County Youth, Men, Women, Persons With Disabilities and Table Banking Groups Empowerment Fund) Regulations, 2014.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

1. Errors of Presentation and Disclosure in the Financial Statements

- i. The report of the Fund Manager does not include the following information which is prescribed by the financial reporting template issued by the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (PSASB):
 - The budget performance against actual amounts for current year and for cumulative to-date based on programs, explained in pictures, tables, pie charts and graphs.
 - Physical progress based on outputs, outcomes and impacts since establishment of the Fund, using actual figures and percentages.
 - Comments on each of the programs implemented by the Fund and the achievements attained.
 - Comments on value-for-money achievements in the year under review.
 - Highlights of the key risk management strategies initiated by Management.
- ii. Tables, graphs, pie charts and other descriptive tools in the Management discussion and analysis section to make the information as understandable to readers of the financial statements as possible.
- iii. Information on the Fund's compliance with statutory requirements.

In view of these omissions, the presentation of the financial statements and the disclosures made thereon do not wholly comply with the reporting format prescribed by the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (PSASB) and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

2. Unconfirmed Balances

The following balances reflected in the financial statements were not supported with sufficient appropriate records:

2.1 Cash and Cash Equivalents

The statement of financial position reflects cash and cash equivalents balance totalling Kshs.138,011,257, as further disclosed in Note 7 to the financial statements. The balance

is composed of fixed deposits and current accounts' balances totalling Kshs.73,882,885 and Kshs.64,128,372 respectively. However, the fixed deposits balance totalling to Kshs.73,882,884 was not supported with sufficient appropriate documents such as certificates of bank balances, bank statements, bank reconciliation statements and cashbooks.

In view of these discrepancies, the completeness and accuracy of the cash and cash equivalents balance totalling Kshs.138,011,257 as at 30 June, 2021 could not be confirmed.

2.2 Net Assets

The statement of changes in net assets reflects opening balances totalling Kshs.212,283,715 and Kshs.1,559,254 as at 1 July, 2020 for the revolving fund and accumulated surplus respectively. However, the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June, 2020 reflected closing balances of Kshs.213,791,265 and Kshs.51,704 for the revolving fund and accumulated surplus respectively. The variances between the closing and opening balances in the two accounts were not explained.

As a result, the accuracy and completeness of the net assets balances as at 1 July, 2021 could not be confirmed.

The audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). I am independent of the Makueni County Youth, Men, Women, Persons with Disabilities and Table-Banking Groups Empowerment Fund Management in accordance with ISSAI 130 on Code of Ethics. I have fulfilled other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the ISSAI and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in Kenya. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my qualified opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgment, are of most significance in the audit of the financial statements. There were no key audit matters to report in the year under review.

Other Matter

Prior Year Matters

The audit report for the year ended 30 June, 2020 raised several unsatisfactory issues in regard to balances reflected in the financial statements, lawfulness and effectiveness in use of resources and effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and governance. Management's report on progress made in resolving the issues indicated that activities to resolve them were ongoing as at 30 June, 2021.

REPORT ON LAWFULNESS AND EFFECTIVENESS IN USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES

Conclusion

As required by Article 229(6) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, based on the audit procedures performed, except for the matters described in the Basis for Conclusion on Lawfulness and Effectiveness in Use of Public Resources section of my report, I confirm that, nothing else has come to my attention to cause me to believe that public resources have not been applied lawfully and in an effective way.

Basis for Conclusion

1. Failure to Recover Loans

The statement of financial position and Note 8 to the financial statements reflects the receivables from exchange transactions totalling Kshs.79,775,546 as at 30 June, 2021. The balance includes write-offs of defaulted loans totalling Kshs.24,008,943. Management indicated that legal means and visits to defaulters to demand payments had been made without much success.

Failure to recover loans undermines the achievement of Fund's main objective of empowering the targeted groups economically. Further, the defaults have put sustenance of the Fund's services at risk.

2. Skewed Memorandum of Understanding on Fixed Deposits

The statement of financial position and Note 7 to the financial statements reflects cash and cash equivalents totalling Kshs.138,011,257 as at 30 June, 2021. The balance includes a Fixed Deposit Accounts' balance totalling Kshs.73,882,885 held at a local bank. The fixed deposits earned no interest in line with requirements of Clause 1 of the Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2017 between the County Government of Makueni and the bank. The MOU did not provide for the payment of interest on the deposits since the fixed deposit accounts were held as lien for loans issued to borrowers.

In the circumstances, the Memorandum of Understanding appears to favour the bank and the Fund has continued to forfeit interest income due to the skewed contract.

Management did not provide a satisfactory explanation for not renegotiating the contract. The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 4000. The standard requires that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance, in all material respects, with the authorities that govern them. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS, RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Conclusion

As required by Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015, I confirm that, nothing has come to my attention to cause me to believe that internal controls, risk management and overall governance were not effective.

Basis of Conclusion

The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 2315 and ISSAI 2330. The standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether effective processes and systems of internal control, risk management and overall governance were operating effectively, in all material respects. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

Responsibilities of Management and those Charged with Governance

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Accrual Basis) and for maintaining effective internal control as Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and for its assessment of the effectiveness of internal control, risk management and overall governance.

In preparing the financial statements, Management is responsible for assessing the Fund's ability to continue to sustain its services, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to sustainability of services and using the appropriate basis of accounting unless Management is aware of the intention to terminate the Fund, or to cease operations.

Management is also responsible for the submission of the financial statements to the Auditor-General in accordance with the provisions of Section 47 of the Public Audit Act, 2015.

In addition to the responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements described above, Management is also responsible for ensuring that the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities which govern them, and that public resources are applied in an effective way.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Fund's financial reporting process, reviewing the effectiveness of how the Management monitors compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, ensuring that effective processes and systems are in place to address key roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and risk management, and ensuring the adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.

Auditor-General's Responsibilities for the Audit

The audit objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs will always detect a material misstatement and weakness when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

In addition to the audit of the financial statements, a compliance audit is planned and performed to express a conclusion about whether, in all material respects, the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities that govern them and that Public Resources are applied in an effective way, in accordance with the provisions of Article 229(6) of the Constitution and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution.

Further, in planning and performing the audit of the financial statements and audit of compliance, I consider internal control in order to give an assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and overall governance processes and systems in accordance with the provisions of Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. My consideration of the internal control would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses under the ISSAIs. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control may not prevent or detect misstatements and instances of non-compliance. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the Fund's policies and procedures may deteriorate.

As part of an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Management’s use of applicable basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Fund’s ability to continue to sustain its services. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in the auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my audit report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Fund to cease to sustain its services.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information and business activities of the Fund to express an opinion on the financial statements.
- Perform such other procedures as I consider necessary in the circumstances.

I communicate with Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that are identified during the audit.

I also provide Management with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.



CPA Nancy Gathungu, CBS
AUDITOR-GENERAL

Nairobi

20 July, 2022