

Urban Verses Rural Citizens' Participations in Devolved Funds. The Case of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in Kanduyi Constituency of Bungoma County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to compare participation in CDF projects between urban and rural citizens in Kanduyi constituency of Bungoma County. The study compared the fund's awareness levels among the two groups, their participation in project identification, planning and implementation. A descriptive survey design was adopted with the study sampling 42 projects from the departments of water and sanitation, roads and bridges, agriculture, health, education, environment and electricity. First the administration Wards were stratified as urban and rural, from each ward and per department one project was randomly sampled for the study. From each project sampled, five beneficiaries and two project officials were randomly selected to participate in responding to the questionnaire. Thus a total of 84 project officials and 210 beneficiaries took part in the study. Data was analysed with the help of SPSS computer package and results presented quantitatively in form of frequency tables and bar graphs. The findings indicated that awareness and knowledge of the fund and participation in the projects is higher among rural citizens. Since the trend across developing countries is that populations are moving towards urban centres and that urbanizations is increasing rapidly, the study recommended that CDF should rethink its strategy towards reinforcing higher urban participation so as to go the trend of urbanization and in so doing it will be a stimulus for better urban development.

Keywords: Participation, Citizens and Projects

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1.1 Introduction

Many governments in developing countries have been shifting to decentralization in order to adequately deal with local needs of populations and due to the necessity for an active local economy within (World Bank, 2001). In the decentralization framework, community participation has been recognized as an essential asset in the promotion of the independence of local people with decentralized units implementing multi-sectorial activities based on local conditions such as activities in agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as in non-agricultural income generation, education, health care and hygiene or infrastructure improvement. Participation approaches recognizes the fact that local people themselves are the main implementers of their development. It argues that if the citizens participate passively in projects, they become inactive and will depend on external inputs. According to the participatory approaches, the projects that the local people themselves plan and implement should be given priority since local materials and human resources are utilised effectively by the citizens' initiative and responsibility. Similarly, in this strategy, local independence and sustainability of project outcomes are enhanced due to the effective use of local resources (Chitere and Mutiso, 1993)

There is a close relationship between urban and rural communities. According to Oyugi (2001), in Kenya three-quarters of its impoverished population live in rural areas. Research indicates that many poor people in urban areas are migrant workers and farmers who have left rural areas due to economic reasons. People move to urban centres to seek economic opportunities so as to improve their standards of living beyond basic sustenance. Rural society is primarily agrarian. In fact in rural areas the main source of income is from agriculture, mining and logging while urban areas are believed to be places where money, services and wealth are centralized. Thus people from non-urban societies identify cities as a place where social mobility is possible. Any development in urban areas therefore is supposed to be geared towards provision of services like, health, water and sanitation, housing, environmental conservation, education and trade so as to help citizens achieve a decent living. Conversely, if living standards and income generation in rural areas are enhanced and immigrants to urban centres return to rural areas, excessive population influxes to cities will be reduced and in so doing reducing poverty in urban centres. Thus improvement of rural areas can be a safety net when there is lack of job opportunities in urban centres due to depressed economic conditions. To achieve the above, Chitere and Mutiso (1993) proposes that rural projects

should target; trade opportunities, improved road network to access markets for their products, access to education for their children, availability of clean drinking water, cottage industries for the agricultural produce.

1.2 Constituency Development Fund

Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was established in Kenya by an Act of Parliament in 2003. It is a home grown initiative that was intended to address inequalities in development around the country. The purpose of CDF is to bring faster and relevant development to grass root levels. Kimenyi (2005) posits that CDF is supposed to enable individuals at the grass root level make expenditure choices that benefit their welfare in line with their needs and preferences. Decisions about the utilizations of funds are to be done by beneficiaries of the planned project since the fund is intended to benefit them directly.

In addition to advancing the welfare of the people at grass root, CDF is expected to have an outstanding effect on participation, which in itself is pivotal to the empowerment of citizens. The notion of participation is based on the understanding that communities and populations are better placed to manage their affairs and in view of project management, inclusion of a wide range of interested parties in decision making gives development projects more legitimacy in the eyes of the beneficiaries, because such projects deal with real needs in communities (Odhiambo and Anyembe, 2009).

The CDF Act 2003 compels the minister of Finance in Kenya to allocate 2.5% of the total government revenue collection to the CDF kitty. Of all the money in the kitty, 75% is shared equally among the total number of constituencies in the country, but 25% is disbursed to each constituency based on population size and poverty index (IEA, 2006). Government revenue comes from taxes collected by the central government, hence every Kenyan contributes to the CDF kitty and therefore it is their responsibility to ensure that the fund is well spend and also a right for them to get involved in its expenditure.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to compare participation of urban and rural citizens in CDF funded projects in Kanduyi Constituency in Bungoma County of western Kenya. Although there has been efforts to involve citizens in CDF projects, little efforts had been made to describe the nature and level of participation. Urban and rural communities are different in very many ways, including social set-up, daily activities, income levels and communal needs. This differences impact in the way they get involved in communal issues and consequently their participatory nature, levels and style. However, one way of empowering citizens is by recognizing their initiatives and eliminating social blockages that suppress their participation in making decisions and in resource acquisition. Equally, urban and rural communities maybe faced with the same end problems but the approach to navigate through this problems is different as per their natures. Hence, for any project to solve a communal challenge, it should be able to capture the needs of the citizens in the community during the project identification and planning (Oyugi, 2007).

1.4 Methodology

Kanduyi constituency, which is also a sub-county was purposively selected for the study in Bungoma county because it has both urban and rural setting and therefore was found very appropriate in relation to the research objective. It is located in Bungoma county in the western part of the republic of Kenya. It covers an area of 318.5 sq. km. there are six administrative wards in the constituency, namely; Bukembe, East Bukusu, Kibabii, Musikoma, Khalaba and Township of which Khalaba, Township and Musikoma have urban set-ups while the rest are rural (CIDP, 2013). Because of the constituency size and level of urbanization, it is one of the most populated constituencies in Bungoma County. CDF activities are evident at ward level with committees getting involved in project approvals.

The administrative wards were stratified into two strata as; urban and rural. Thus projects in each ward were divided in to seven categories, namely; water and sanitation, education, healthy, roads and bridges, agriculture, electricity and environment. From each category, one project in each ward was randomly selected for the study. Hence, in total seven projects per ward were sampled, twenty one in the urban set up and a similar number in the rural set-up. In each project sampled five households who were beneficiaries of its services were randomly picked and interviewed. Also two project officials were randomly picked and interviewed bringing a total number of interviewed citizens to 294.

The researcher also made a transect walk through the entire study area with an aim of observing the status of the selected projects and used the observation as a tool of cross checking the data collected through the interview schedule.

The obtained data was first cleaned, then edited and coded as per the themes identified. Data was then analysed using descriptive statistics with the help of a computer software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The descriptive data obtained then was presented in form of bar-charts, pie-charts, column frequency tables and percentages.

1.5 Findings

Through the transect walk the research established the following status of projects sampled in the study; 15 projects were complete, 24 projects were incomplete and 3 projects were yet to start as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Project Status as sampled

Project Status	Number of Projects	Percentage
Completed	15	35.72
Incomplete	24	57.14
Yet to Start	03	7.14
Total	42	100.00

Field observation indicated that most incomplete projects were under use by beneficiaries and they include those in the categories of health and education. The classrooms that had been constructed lacked wall and floor finishing and in health facilities, budgets indicated that equipment had not been procured.

The study sort first to compare awareness at the ward level among urban and rural citizens. In comparing awareness at ward level, the study showed that rural citizens were more aware of CDF activities with 82% as compared to the urban citizens with 78% as indicated in figure 1

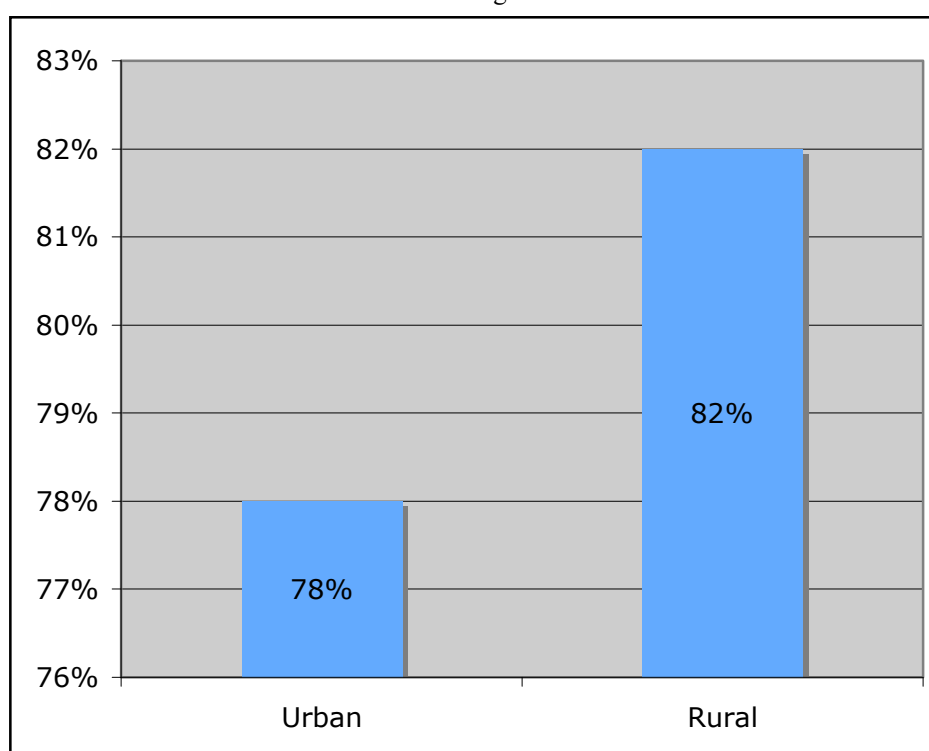


Figure 1: Awareness of CDF at Ward Level

The findings show that the awareness of the fund is high both among the urban and rural citizens. This observation may be attributed to awareness creation methods that are open, structured and easily accessible, which include the local chief's forums (barazas), local radio stations and billboards.

Knowledge of the costs, amount dispersed and status of the projects was compared among the urban and rural citizens. The findings were that urban citizens had more knowledge about the cost, amount dispersed and status of the projects than rural citizens. 39.5% of urban citizens had knowledge of the cost of projects as compared to 38.1% of rural citizens, 30.6% of urban knew of the amount dispersed as compared to 25.9% of rural and 78.9% of urban were aware of the status of the projects as compared to 55.1% of rural respondents (table 2).

Table 2: Knowledge of projects’ cost, amount dispersed and project status

Knowledge	Urban			Rural	
	Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Cost of Projects	Knew	58	39.5%	56	38.1%
	Not Knew	89	60.5%	91	61.9%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Amount Dispersed	Knew	45	30.6%	38	25.9%
	Not Knew	102	69.4%	109	74.1%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Status of Projects	Knew	116	78.9%	81	55.1%
	Not Knew	31	21.1%	66	44.9%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%

The knowledge of the cost of the project and amount dispersed is generally low as compared to the knowledge of project status.

Citizens in both set ups were asked if they participated in the identification of the project in their communities, if not, they were asked if they knew anybody who was involved. The study revealed that in both cases, citizens’ involvement in project identification process is quite low, where only 12% of urban citizens were involved as compared to 13% among the rural citizens. Of those not involved, 43% of urbanites knew at least a person involved as compared to 55% of the rural citizens as indicated in figure 2.

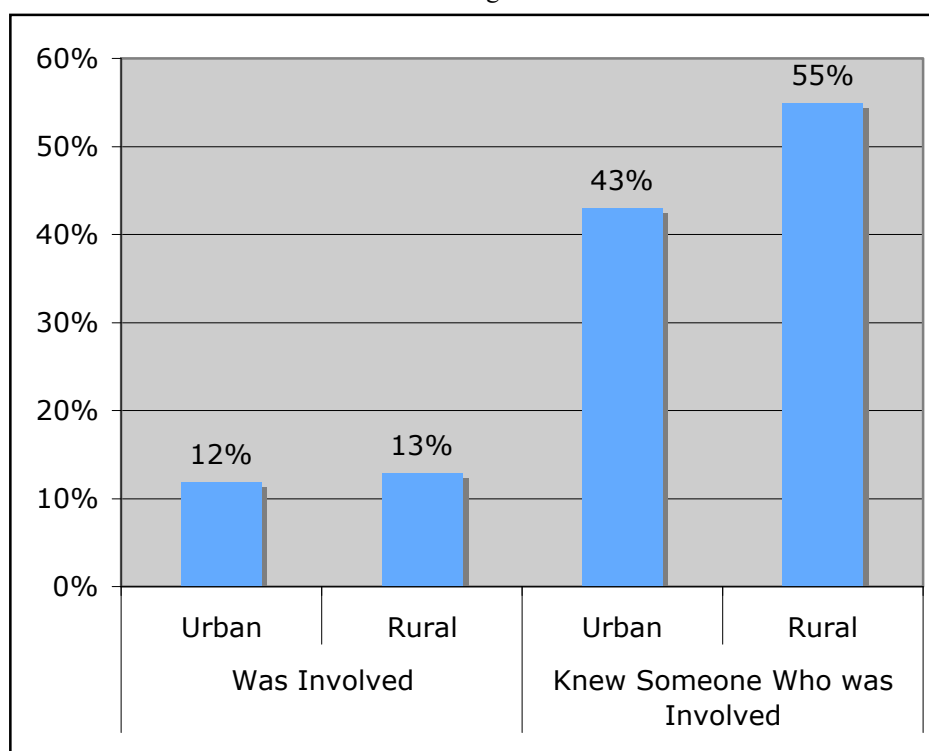


Figure 2: Urban and rural citizens’ participation in project identification

The above findings indicate that rural citizens are more involved in project identification than urban ones.

Concerning planning of the projects, citizens were asked if they were given opportunity to participate in the process, knew how to get involved and if they tried to be involved. The findings indicate that 32% of rural citizens acknowledged to have been given opportunity to be involved in planning as compared to 24.5% of urban respondents. Similarly 23.1% of the rural as compared to the 16.3% of the urban knew how to be involved and 17.7% of the rural as compared to 14.3% of the urban tried to participate in planning as shown in table 3

Table 3: Citizens participation in project planning

	Urban			Rural	
	Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Given Opportunity to Participate in Planning	Given	36	24.5%	47	32.0%
	Not Given	111	75.5%	100	68.0%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Knew How to be Involved in Planning	Knew	24	16.3%	34	23.1%
	Not Knew	123	83.7%	113	76.9%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Tried to be Involved in Planning	Tried	21	14.3%	26	17.7%
	Not Tried	126	85.7%	121	82.3%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%

As revealed in the above table 3, rural citizens were more involved in project planning process than urban citizens. With 32.0% of rural citizens having been given opportunity to participate as compared to 24.5% of the urban citizens, 23.1% of the rural citizens knew how to participate as compared to 16.3% of the urbanites and 17.7% of the rural citizens tried to participate as compared to 14.3% of the urban citizens.

As per taking decisions on the implementation of CDF projects, citizens in both set ups were asked if they were given opportunity to participate, knew how to be involved and if they tried to be involved in the process. The results in table4 showed that 36% of urban citizens as compared to 32% of rural were given opportunities to participate in taking decisions on CDF project implementation as compared to 35.4% for urban, 30% of urban and 21.7% of rural knew how to be involved while 14.3% of urban as compared to 17.7% of rural citizens tried to get involved in decision making towards the implementation of projects.

Table 4: Taking decisions on the implementation of CDF projects

	Urban			Rural	
	Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Given Opportunity to Participate	Given	52	35.4%	47	32.0%
	Not Given	95	64.6%	100	68.0%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Knew How to Participate	Knew	44	30.0%	32	21.7%
	Not Knew	103	70.0%	115	78.3%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%
Tried to be Involved	Tried	21	14.3%	26	17.7%
	Not Tried	126	85.7%	121	82.3%
	Total	147	100%	147	100%

More rural citizens are involved in monitoring of CDF projects than urban citizens, with 27% of rural citizens acknowledging to have been involved as compared to 24% of the urban ones

As in indicated in figure 3.

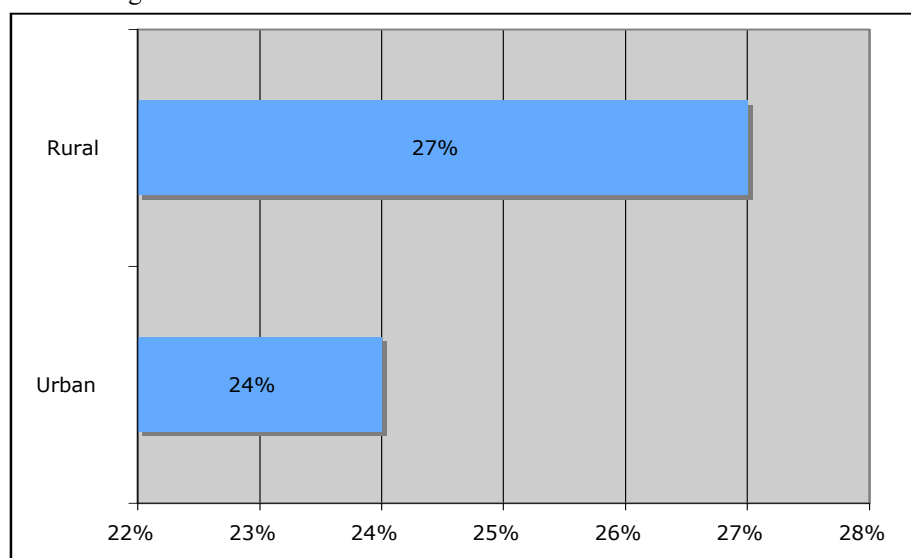


Figure 3: Involvement of urban and rural citizens in project monitoring

According to the CDF Act 2003, citizens' are supposed to be in charge of their development agenda. CDF

funding is given to the community members to implement their development plans and they are supposed to monitor the process themselves. The above findings show that rural citizens are more involved in knowing the progress of the projects more than their urban counterparts.

1.6 Discussion

The study revealed that the awareness of CDF activities is very high both at the constituency and ward levels. This finding, agrees with a previous study carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA, 2006). This could be due to community sensitization mechanism put in place through the provincial administration and the electronic media, especially the FM radio stations, which have effectively served to draw the attention of populations to the fund's activities. The awareness among rural communities was more at the ward level as compared to urban communities.

The findings further showed that both urban and rural citizens have low knowledge of the cost and amount dispersed for the projects. This may be due to low accessibility to information in both cases. However urban citizens were more informed about the costs and amounts dispersed as compared to rural ones. The study further shows that urban citizens are more aware of the status of their projects than rural citizens. The status of a project is through observation and regular users are bound to see the state and condition of such projects. Some projects especially in the rural communities have been allocated funds by the CDF organizing committee but are yet to begin the implementation. This could explain why rural citizens have a lower knowledge on the status of their projects.

Mawhood (1983) posits that citizens can voluntarily participate in a community activity when they have better knowledge about the activity and when the activity is perceived as a solution to a troubling challenge, however if they have limited information they either shy away or resist the attempts of the development agencies. Wilcox (2007), argues that citizens in any free space are reluctant to be involved in any community activity when they do not have enough information to help them act responsibly. In fact they will avoid to be involved until when they have what they believe to be sufficient information to propel them in to action. On the other hand, Brian (1985) postulates that people generally do not only wish to have knowledge and information to propel them in to participation but they also weigh information against previous knowledge and experiences in relation to the present situation. Traditional beliefs, cultural practices and daily routine can be an impediment or a strength to citizens' involvement in their development agenda (Kate, 2007). An impediment arises if such practices and routine come in conflict with methods of program implementation but a strength if the approach used does not undermine residents' beliefs but instead it upholds their values and respects customary practices. In relation to urban lives, citizens' lives is anchored on office and business routine whereby household heads leave early in the morning and return late in the evenings, yet CDF sensitization and awareness forums for the fund are usually planned during the day at the community level. The above can be used to explain why urban awareness is lower as compared to the rural which tend to have flexible daily activities.

On project identification, the study showed that more rural citizens were involved than urban citizens. Urban communities are made of more informed people as compared to rural communities, they access more information through posters, notices, booklets, libraries and public meetings. However, because of the diversity of the population and engagements they are involved in, it is harder to experience solidarity and be available for community activity. The livelihoods in urban populations rotates on individual efforts where if one does not actively work to earn something for food and other necessities, an individualised household suffers, while in rural populations there is communal support and engagement where lack in a household is seen as a village need, if an individual household lacks, there is freedom to walk to the neighbour and request for support and it is almost seen as a right to be given. Also citizens in the countryside tend to enjoy the flexibility of programmes since their timelines are not strictly fixed unlike in urban workforce where they have to report on duty and leave within fixed timelines. Because of solidarity in rural living, people tend to know each other, they easily can identify gifts in the community and have the capacity to have social capital based on relationships that exist, these explains as to why more rural citizens may have participated in project identification as compared to their urban counterparts.

Study findings shows that more rural respondents participated in project planning than urban respondents. Urban people tend to lose interest once the projects have been identified. In the CDF approach, getting involved in project activities is voluntary and does not attract enumerations and in moments where tokens of appreciation are given, the amounts are insignificant as compared to the time spend in the planning. Agreeing to the above, Wilcox (2007) posits that the motivation of moving from rural to urban is to seek for opportunities for increased income and to run away from un progressive static lifestyle that is associated with rural living. Conversely, as argued by Kimenyi (2005) CDF initiatives have proved to be life changers in rural communities because they have brought services in places that for years had never seen such, they include permanent build schools as compared to mud furnished classrooms, opened up roads with well compressed earth finishing, repaired water wells and boreholes for easy accessibility and clean supply to households. This development was never available in rural set up and when it has emerged through CDF it has brought some excitement and enthusiasm to draw the attention of

citizens. Also, rural citizens have more relevant resources, which can be donated or sold to the project at less costs since much of the construction materials in projects are what makes up livelihood in rural areas; eg stone harvesting or brick making, logging and murram for roads construction. In terms of project management, Kimenyi (2005), postulates that community contributions are necessary for the sustainability and ownership in a donor funded development, in reference to CDF it is more easier to get donations into the projects from rural communities as compared to urban ones since in rural places the donations may come in kind and that in itself increases project ownership.

As observed from the findings, generally both set-ups show low involvement in planning of community projects and that in itself has disadvantages, as argued by Shuman (1998), Low participation in planning has the following risks: most resources are bound to be sourced away from the community thus making the whole process expensive, it makes the quality of work poor and low relevance of the decisions taken.

The study further established that rural citizens participated more in the implementation of CDF projects than urban citizens. The above findings tend to agree with the expectations of the style in which CDF is implemented. The fund is political and political patronage is a factor that is played out during committee setting and citizen involvement. As per the CDF Act 2003, the area member of parliament is the patron of the fund and a signatory to all fund accounts. He remotely hand picks community representatives to be in the committee, ratifies who to be contracted to construct the project and determines the suppliers of materials and equipment. Being a politician he would maximise on voter support, which is a driving force in CDF activities. According to World Bank (2001) participation in local development agenda is a tool that brings political stability, consolidate power and national unity among warring communities and when applied in rural communities it yields maximum outcomes. Urban dwellers are majorly immigrants and may not have the vote and time to play political games so as to be involved in the fund activities, they have a rural home where they channel their political energy and support and that in itself hinders their focus in urban development. In fact Oyugi (2007) posits that in decentralized development, immigrants tend to be passive and allows indigenous leaders to make for them decisions and implement projects in their neighbourhoods. Similarly, rural citizens are more involved in implementing these projects than urban groups because when innovations come in rural places, people are bound to be more inquisitive than in urban communities that regularly receive innovation. They are bound to offer services requested by the development agency at minimum cost and sometimes offer to volunteer the service, which is unlike urban groups.

As concerning monitoring of CDF projects, the findings showed that rural citizens were more involved in monitoring of the projects. According to the CDF Act 2003, beneficiaries of the planned development are supposed to be in-charge of their development agenda. Since the funds are given to the project committee and the committee constitutes of community representatives, the fund is by extension given to the community members so as to implement their planned development and in the process monitor the actual implementation with government agencies coming in only to provide oversight services. Citizens are to ensure that appropriate site for the project is selected, quality materials are used, procurement procedures are followed, the implementation is as per the plan, community values are upheld and the time-lines are followed as recommended in the Act and reflected in the plan (ROK, 2003). From the above description, it is difficulty for one to monitor such a project especially when they lack permanency, long term attachment and with lack of monitory reward, as is the case with urban citizens. Rural populations are advantaged in this function due to their proxy and social solidarity that is a product of a long and continuous interaction and is reflected in their blood relations that define such communities in indigenous Africa.

1.7 Conclusion

Following the study findings and discussion, the conclusion is as follows; generally the awareness about CDF fund and its activities is high among both urban and rural citizens, however, comparatively, it is higher in the rural community. The rural citizens are more informed about project activities, budgets and even amounts into the projects so far released as compared to their urban counterparts. This findings are associated with the fact that the fund campaigns and awareness forums as is being done favours rural set up. Unlike rural citizens who have a form of uniform routine, urban citizens' diversity and types of commitments makes them to be less involved in project identification. As for the rural communities, their blood relationship web is a source of their solidarity and used as a pillar in getting involved in project identification. Conversely, urbanites live in a more individualised way which hinders their ability to congregate towards a particular course in the community.

The excitement and enthusiasm that comes with new development in the rural areas can be used to explain as to why their participation in project planning and implementation is higher as compared to urban set up. What is bound to excite urbanites are initiatives that increase their household incomes rather than community services as is tailored in the CDF strategy of development. The leadership opportunities as is revealed in CDF is more of sacrifice than is financially rewarding, this type is better admired among rural communities because besides the opportunities to exercise leadership and increase their social standing, individuals have assets that they can sell to the project and in so doing find it more valuable because of the attachment as compared to selling to individuals/groups where they won't share in the benefits of their assets.

Political interference and patronage cannot be ignored in the functioning of CDF given the fact that the patron of the fund is the Area Member of parliament. The political class uses the fund to gain political mileage that they use to win elections in the next seasons and therefore projects that are favoured by the ruling class are those that are located in voter rich regions, and such regions are in rural communities. Urban citizens live in a temporal way and most of them rarely get involved in local politics since it is not their priority. In most cases, urban residents also have rural homes where they exercise their political life.

1.8 Policy Implications

The trends across the world is that more populations are moving to urban centres for the purpose of accessing better services and in search of employment and it is a truism that more and more urban centres are going to be created due to population sage and therefore any development should have this in planning. Also decentralised development that embraces participation is being preferred in most developing countries as it has been found to captures citizens real needs and implements the development with beneficiaries' values. If CDF has to uphold the tenets of participation, then its strategies have to be rethought so as to factor in the urban populations needs, aspirations, representations and values, and in so doing it will be on the path of sustainability. Strategies that can capture urban citizen participation should target projects that influence their settlement patterns; establishment of better education facilities, construction of decent houses, improving accessibility to markets, improving water supply and help in constructions of security posts to improve their security in neighbourhoods.

Investment in rural places through participatory approaches can be an impetus towards encouraging urban-rural migration, which can easy pressure on urban services and encourage less project investment in urban places that is comparatively expensive and complicated. Rural set-up has a history of using project services more efficiently, with less maintenance costs and therefore good value for the development money. Investments in rural communities has far reaching positive effects in a nation management for it builds apolitical stability and a cohesive society that is rejuvenated.

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