

An Assessment of Community Participation in Constituency Development Funded Projects : A Case of Laikipia East District, Kenya

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Abstract

Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is a fiscal decentralized strategy that was established to increase community participation in development. A number of African countries have realized the significance of local initiatives in coping with development problems and are now trying to incorporate local people in development. Some of the weaknesses that have been cited through studies done on CDF include political patronage and administrative influences, top-down mentality and mismanagement. This has greatly hampered community participation in CDF funded projects. This study was carried out to assess community participation in CDF funded projects in Laikipia East District, Kenya. The study employed descriptive survey research design. To draw a representative sample, the study adopted purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected by use of a questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study established that community participation in CDF management is very low. 69.5% of the respondents indicated that they had never participated in CDF funded projects. CDF awareness was average as indicated by 50% of the respondents. The community members of Laikipia East District were not satisfied with CDF funded projects as indicated by 80% of the respondents.

Keywords: Constituency Development Fund (CDF), Fiscal Decentralization, Community Participation, Kenya

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was established in the year 2003 under the Constituency Development Fund Act 2003 in the Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 107 (Act No. 11) and amended in the CDF Amendment Act 2007 (TISA, 2011). CDF was established to increase community participation in decision making where local affairs are concerned. As a fiscal decentralized fund, it was initiated to provide infrastructure and amenities to the Kenyan citizens by enlisting participation of the members of the community. The fund initially got 2.5% of all the government ordinary revenue collected in the fiscal year but in 2007 the fund was tripled (Mwenzwa, 2006). The fund is divided equally among the 290 constituencies, with a small weighting to poorer constituencies (Musyimi, 2005).

The concept of decentralization was amplified in 1983, when the District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) strategy was put in place (Chitere & Ileri, 2004; Mapesa & Kibua, 2006). It is on the principle of local participation in development projects that the Kenyan government officially adopted DFRD policy in 1983 (GOK, 1983). This was also based on the principle of complimentary relationship between the government's ministries and the local people, thus improving the productivity of development work and increasing effectiveness in problem identification and project implementation. According to Mwenzwa (2007), the concept failed because it did not give local communities, who were the beneficiaries, the opportunity to participate in development initiatives. For any strategy, like DFRD, to survive and improve lives, beneficiaries must be fully involved in the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development that concerns them.

CDF is thus another strategy which aims at devolving and decentralizing development in the grassroots. Some of the weaknesses that have been cited through studies done on CDF in Kenya reveal that there is political and administrative influences, top-down mentality and mismanagement which have greatly hampered its success (Mwenzwa, 2007). Political influence on CDF management can be, and has been, an avenue for corruption and embezzlement of funds meant for local development. For instance, Mapesa and Kibua in their study conducted in 2006 in some selected constituencies, found that majority of constituents thought that CDF funded projects were as a result of local politicians' own development gesture extended to the community. With this kind of mentality, it is expected that when such funds are mismanaged, the local people may not know. The weaknesses with CDF management stem from the failure to incorporate and actively involve grass root community in development activities (Mwenzwa, 2007).

To ensure efficiency of CDF in improving the quality of life of local people, community participation is key. The local people are best placed to make decisions concerning their needs (Botes, 1999). Failure to be inclusive makes the community get alienated and this can be enough fuel to ignite passivity and possible

resistance to development initiatives (Chitere 1994: Mulwa & Nguluu 2003). It is on this premise that this study seeks to find out whether community members of Laikipia county are involved in CDF funded projects.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

How best the Kenyan government can incorporate the community in the development projects such as CDF? A number of African countries have realized the significance of local initiatives in coping with development problems especially in rural areas, and are now trying to incorporate local people in the planning strategies. This is exemplified by the fact that over the past three decades governments in Africa have recognized that top-down approaches, characterized by traditional development strategies have largely failed to reach and benefit the rural poor. As a result, most developing countries have adopted bottom-up approach to development, which requires active participation of the rural people in identification, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project processes. Kenya, like many other developing countries has been pursuing decentralized policies with mixed results, which are aimed at promoting people driven development. This was the idea behind CDF, as a fiscal decentralized fund, that was to encourage target beneficiaries to develop a sense of ownership and commitment for the initiated projects, to ensure their sustainability. Indeed one of the principles behind it is participation; the involvement of people in decision making regarding their welfare. In spite of all this effort, there is lack of community participation in the selection of projects, execution, monitoring and evaluation of CDF funded projects. This study sort to find out whether community members of Laikipia East District are involved in CDF funded projects.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives,

- i. To identify types of projects the CDF has funded in Laikipia East District
- ii. To establish community participation in CDF funded projects in Laikipia East District.
- iii. To investigate the level of awareness of CDF among community members of Laikipia East District.
- iv. To determine the level of satisfaction of community members of Laikipia East District in CDF funded projects

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions directed the study,

- i. What projects have been funded by CDF in Laikipia East District?
- ii. Do community members of Laikipia East District participate in CDF funded Projects?
- iii. What is the level of awareness of CDF in Laikipia East District?
- iv. To what extent are community members of Laikipia East District satisfied with CDF funded project?

1.5 Justification of the Study

In order to achieve meaningful development, community participation is very key. The study builds a strong case to the public and private development agents that community participation is a vital prerequisite for sustainable development.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Kenya, Laikipia East District. Laikipia East District has four divisions namely; Central, Daiga, Lamuria and Mukogondo The study was done in Central and Daiga divisions. The study investigated the extent to which community members had participated in CDF funded projects. This sought to find out which stages in the project life cycle, members of the community were involved in, that is, selection of projects, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The study also sort to know the level of knowledge about CDF and the level of satisfaction by community members.

1.7 Limitation of the study

There were inadequate funds to carry out the research and therefore the researcher minimized this constraint by typing all the documents that needed to be typed. Poor terrain because of poor road network was another limitation, the researcher used motor bikes which were faster and could withstand poor roads.

1.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Constituency Development Fund (CDF): It is an annual budgetary allocation by central government to each of the country's parliamentary jurisdictions. It was established through Constituency Development Fund Act of 2003.

Fiscal decentralization: Fiscal decentralization (FD) in this research refers to independent revenue public spending decisions by local governments which are expected to free up participation from the grassroots.

Community Participation: Refers here to Community involvement in community based projects that leads to desired change.

Kenya: It is a country in Africa and specifically in East Africa. Its capital city is Nairobi

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section presents a review of past studies and evaluation of Community participation and theoretical framework. The literature explains the place of community participation in decentralized strategies in Kenya since independence.

2.2. Community Participation effort in Kenya

2.2.1 Harambee Movement

Participatory approaches in Kenya have evolved gradually since independence. Chitere and Mutiso, (1991) say that between 1960s and early 1980s, Kenya experimented with a number of decentralized measures which did not succeed because of the “center’s unwillingness to involve local levels in decision making”. The self help, Harambee, meaning “let’s all pull together” which was launched in 1964 was a grass root movement. It was to be used to mobilize local resources through local participation. (Ngau, 1987). At first, the movement, through community participation brought growth to various sectors especially on infrastructure and basic social amenities in rural areas. Walter (1981) echoes that many schools; dispensaries and other social projects were put in place. Though the key participants in the harambee process were supposedly local people, Administrative officials, elected politicians and church leaders became very influential (Ngau, 1987). Disinterest in project activities on the part of communities was widespread and the failure rate of such development projects was high (IEA, Bulletin, 2007). The whole idea of Harambee was an ideal approach of community participation in development initiatives, but it was distorted when the politicians and corruption crept in.

2.2.2. District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD)

Kenya DFRD was inaugurated in 1983. Its rationale was to turn districts into centers of development, allowing for more equitable distribution of resources and to provide the citizens with avenues for active participation in planning and implementation of projects (Crook and Sturla, 1999). Indeed as Mulwa (1994) observes that DFRD aimed at broadening the rural based development efforts, encouraging local initiatives and more decision making in the day-to-day operation of development projects close to the people whom development was meant for. DFRD as a de-concentration strategy delegated authority to staff of the central government ministry to perform development activities in the districts (Chitere and Ileri, 2004).

Chitere and Ileri (2004) however inform that the main weakness of DFRD was that, it was a political rather than a development strategy. Indeed Ng’ethe (1998), as quoted by Sturla (1999) laments that “President Moi used the District Focus Programme to restructure the regional political support base in his favour, especially after the coup attempt of 1982”. The strategy also was the exclusive focus on the government institutions which enabled the central bureaucracy to retain effective power and served to alienate rural people rather than to bring them into development process. This is elucidated by Mwenzwa (2007) who echoes that failure to enlist members of the community in participation of projects that could better their lives as happened on the DFRD programme makes them feel alienated. This can be enough fuel to ignite passivity and possible resistance to the development initiatives. For example, because of the suspicion of the rural community, there were some cases where rural people refused to participate in family planning clinics citing that they were established to castrate men before drafting them into armed forces. In some places in rural areas, people did not allow land to be used for agricultural demonstrations, fearing that the government would later take over the improved property. (Rondinelli 1983).

2.2.3 Decentralized funds in Kenya

The Government of Kenya has put in place a decentralized system of funding development projects at the grass root level. Such funding mechanisms include the youth enterprises development fund (YEDF), women enterprise fund (WEF), national development fund for persons with disability, and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) among others (Aukot et al, 2011). Decentralized funds are based on the premises that the government at the local level has a better understanding of community needs, and is more capable of delivering improved, responsive and relevant services.

Decentralized funds in Kenya face challenges that have prevented them from attaining their full potential. A survey done by Kippra in 2006 shows that community awareness and involvement leaves a lot to be desired. In many cases, communities are not involved in project identification processes and even so in decision making and monitoring (Musyimi, 2005). As a result, projects have been implemented that do not meet community priority hence waste of public resources. The management of the funds is often characterized by lack of transparency and accountability in funds allocation. This has therefore resulted to, for example, Members of Parliament or local authority using the funds as a form of political patronage.

2.2.4 Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

CDF is a form of fiscal decentralization. Fiscal decentralization is a core component of decentralization where the Central Government collects mandated revenue and transfers it to the grassroots (Smoke, 1994). This has become an important theme of governments in many developing countries in recent years (Fjeldstad, working paper, 2001). As a consequence of much dissatisfaction with the results of centralized economic plan, reformers have turned to decentralization to break the grip of central government and induce broader participation in democratic governance (Manor, 1999). Being closer to the people makes it easier to identify their needs and thus supply the appropriate forms of public services. One of the few things the Kenyan ninth parliament will be remembered for is the introduction of Constituency Development Fund (CDF). The inception of the CDF in Kenya shifted development planning to the constituency level. Before CDF, the unit of development was the district where the decisions were sanctioned by District Commissioners who shared development committees. (Rono et al, 1990). The problem with this model was that it depended on the goodwill the region had with the President. The CDF is an example of what is generally referred to as Community Driven Development (CDD) initiative that empowers local communities by involving them to identify, prioritize, plan and implement their own development. If utilized well, the CDF can have significant impact on rural development, but studies done by Kenya Institute of Public Research and Analysis (KIPPRA, 2006) and Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA, 2007) reveal that there is mismanagement of the fund and community alienation.

Following numerous awareness campaigns by research bodies, civil society organizations and the media, Kenyans are now awake and critically reviewing the impact of the funds on the quality of their lives since the fund was introduced ten years ago. Decentralization is about good governance. In the final analysis, it is expected that the government and the constituencies will be equal partners in the development process. In this process, there ought to be full participation of the local people, greater transparency and accountability.

The principle behind CDF is participation, that is, involving community in decision making regarding their welfare that uplift their livelihoods. For this reason, the local people should not be seen as passive development objects but should be treated as principle stakeholders who must be engaged in decision making. However, there has generally been inadequate consultation between the members of the community and the lawmakers who are patronizing the fund (Mwenwa, 2007). There are glaring loopholes in the CDF Act of 2003 (Ogonya & Lumallas, 2005) and Mapesa & Kibua, 2006). There is no position of the ordinary citizen in the utilization of CDF (Mwenzwa, 2007). CDF Act places the operationalization of CDF in the Constituency Development Committee (CDC). The Act is also silent on the procedures for selection of CDC members, who have the responsibility to coordinate and supervise CDF projects (Ongoya & Lumallas, 2005). These loopholes give room for Malpractices including corruption. In the process, the CDF initiative may not be used to address the felt needs of the communities. It follows that the lives of over forty million people will be at the mercies of member of parliament.

Despite the challenges faced by the introduction of CDF, there is no doubt that the CDF is a novel idea and one that is expected to have major positive impact in development of the rural areas if utilized well. In addition to advancing the welfare of the people through community projects, CDF has a salutary effect on participation which is itself pivotal to empowerment of communities (Kimenyi, 2005). As Africa waits to emulate Kenya's CDF initiative in the continent, politicians should stop soiling it with their endless greed and selfishness.

2.3 Types of projects funded by CDF

The CDF Act 2007 stipulates that the projects to be funded should only be as follows:

“Schools – nursery, primary, secondary and libraries construction; Agricultural projects -cattle dips, irrigation water, etc.; Water project- boreholes, drilling, drainage etc; Electricity projects – rural electrification, lighting public institutions etc; Health projects – dispensaries, health centers, mobile clinics etc; Bursary (15%); Emergency fund (5%); Administration (3%); Security – police posts, administration camps, security apparatus etc; and transport e.g. roads. It is evident that CDF is helping provide services to communities that for many years did not benefit substantially from Government services (Kimenyi, 2005). In particular, the poor, who make the bigger population in rural areas have problems accessing basic services that are now made available through CDF.

2.4 Theoretical FrameworkThe study was guided by the Decentralization theory. Theorists, practitioners and advocates of this theory believe that decentralization can lead to a number of positive outcomes including democratization, participation, rural development, public service performance and poverty alleviation. Therefore democratization is lauded as a key component to good governance and sustainable development (Stacey White, 2011).

Decentralization is a political process, and therefore requires commitment of the top leadership. Decentralization involves democratization and participation of the people in their own development (Crook &

Manor, 1998). The ultimate objective of decentralization is to transform people's livelihoods and eradicate poverty by devolving political, administrative and financial powers to the people so that they can effectively control their own destiny and thus render the whole process of development sustainable (Makhura, 2000). CDF as a decentralized fund can only transform people's lives if it gives people an opportunity to choose their projects that address their felt needs.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives methodological aspects of the study, sampling techniques, data collection tools and methods of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This was a descriptive study. As Nachmias (1996) observes, descriptive study provides tools for describing collections of statistical observations and reduces information to an understandable form.

3.3. Study Site

The study site was Kenya, Laikipia East District. Laikipia East District, is in the Rift Valley Province. The study focused on two divisions namely Central and Daiga. Laikipia East District was purposely chosen to serve as a study site because no study of this nature has been conducted in the constituency and particularly in the divisions. The researcher was also convinced that the information got from there would be an indication of what was happening in the entire county due to its centrality and number of CDF funded projects.

3.4 Target Population

The target population was the residents of Laikipia East District, Central and Daiga divisions as shown below in Table 1

Table 1. District's Area by Divisions, number of locations, number of households the Population and the number of funded CDF projects

Divisions	Locations	Number of sub-locations	Number of households	Population	Number of CDF Funded Projects
Central	3	8	20,632	77,478	18
Daiga	3	12	10,191	39,226	43
Lamuraia	2	4	914	3,657	10
Mukogondo	2	3	889	3,896	7
TOTAL	10	27	32,626	124,256	78

Source: District statistic office, Nanyuki and CDF office, Nanyuki, 2013

Sample Size and sampling design

According to Kothari (2004) a sample size is a number of items to be selected from the population of the study. Singleton (1988:137) defines sampling design as that "part of the research that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation". The Sample for this study was obtained through purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Two locations and two sub-locations with the highest number of CDF funded projects were purposively selected. Purposive sampling is a technique that allows a researcher to use cases that have required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

Simple random sampling method was used to obtain a sample of 201 households from 2,012 households in the 4 sub-locations. This represented 10% of the households.

Table 2: Proportionate distribution of sample population by Divisions locations, Sub-locations and households

Division	Location	Sub-location	Households per Sub-location	Sample size of households per sub-location
Central	Nanyuki	Thingithu	1,263	126
		Kanyoni	239	24
Daiga	Muramati	Mukima	262	26
		Nturukuma	248	25
Total	2	4	2,012	201

Source: District statistic office, Nanyuki and CDF Office, Nanyuki. 2013

It was felt that the sample obtained would capture as much as possible the characteristics of the constituency and thus provide a representative situation of the community participation in CDF funded project.

3.5 Method of data collection

The study used both primary and secondary data. A structured questionnaire, with closed and open ended questions enabled the research to organize relevant questions which were easily coded and analyzed. The secondary data was collected from Laikipia East CDF offices, Library and internet. This data was carefully reviewed,

3.6 Procedures for Data analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This method was used because it enables the user to analyze more data with greater accuracy and produce high quality statistical reports and presentations.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the results and findings for the research carried out in Laikipia East District. The research questions were answered by the data collected.

4.2 Types of Projects

Table 3 below shows responses on different types of projects funded by the CDF in the Laikipia East District. Majority of the respondents selected school related projects as cited by 28.9% of the respondents. Other projects cited were water (19.9%), health (17.4%), police posts (12.4%), electricity (8%) and roads (13.4%). This indicates that school related projects receive the highest percentage of CDF in Laikipia East District.

Table .3: Types of CDF funded projects

	Frequency	Percent
School	58	28.9
Water	40	19.9
Health	35	17.4
Police post	25	12.4
Electricity	16	8.0
Roads	27	13.4
Total	201	100.0

Source: Survey data, 2013

4.3 Community Participation on CDF Funded Projects

The study sort to establish community participation in CDF funded projects. Table 4 below reveals that 69.5% of the respondents had never participated in CDF funded projects. 10.5% and 9% of the respondents participated in selection and evaluation of projects respectively. 6.5% and 4.5% of the respondents indicated that they were involved in implementation and monitoring of the projects respectively. The data clearly shows that there is low community participation in CDF funded projects in Laikipia East District.

Table 4: Community participation

	Frequency	Percent
Selection of projects	22	10.5
Implementation	13	6.5
Monitoring	9	4.5
Evaluation	18	9.0
Never participated	139	69.5
Total	201	100.0

Source: Survey data, 2013

4.4 Level of the CDF Awareness

As shown in Table 5 below 10% of the respondents indicated very high level of awareness and high in equal measures. The degree of awareness was rated as low by 20% of the respondents and very low by 10% of the respondents. However, there were those who rated it as average (50%). This clearly shows that the level of CDF awareness in Laikipia East District is relatively high. In general the community is aware of the CDF funded projects.

Table:5 Level of Awareness

Degree of Awareness	Frequency	Percent
Very high	20	10
High	20	10
Average	101	50
Low	40	20
Very low	20	10
Total	201	100

Source: Survey Data, 2013. **4.5 Community's level of satisfaction**

Table 6 below generally indicates that community members of Laikipia East District are not satisfied with CDF funded projects. Only 20 % of the respondents indicated overall satisfaction and 80% of the respondents were not satisfied.

Table 6: Community's level of satisfaction Indicators	Satisfied	%	Dissatisfied	%	Total	% Total
How projects are identified	20	10	181	90	201	100
Types of projects being funded	68	34	133	66	201	100
Location of the projects	70	35	131	65	201	100
Community participation	60	30	141	70	201	100
Relevance of projects to people's needs	20	10	181	90	201	100
Quality of the work done	20	10	181	90	201	100
Time taken to implement projects	20	10	181	90	201	100
Composition of CDF committees	40	20	161	80	201	100
Transparency in management of CDF funds	19	9.5	182	90.5	201	100
Overall ratings of CDF funded projects	41	20	160	80	201	100

Source: Survey Data, 2013.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The study found that the CDF has funded more education related projects. It is also clear that the community participation in CDF projects is very low. This is quite detrimental to development as it shows clearly that it is top-down. In most cases such projects are unlikely to succeed because the community does not own it. For example in this study many people, that is 69.5% indicated that they had never participated in CDF funded projects. This is a replicate of what is happening in the entire country. Although many of them are aware of these CDF projects as indicated by 50% of the respondents, their success has been hampered by the community's low participation. This is possibly why most of the community members of Laikipia East District are not satisfied with CDF funded projects as indicated by 80% of the respondents. The high level of dissatisfaction by the members of the community communicates a message which cannot be ignored. If CDF was initiated to help the local Kenyan citizens, then why not involve them in its management? Why not allow the people to identify the projects which they need? These are serious issues raised in this paper which need more attention and reflection.

6.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendation,

- i). The CDF management committee should consult the community members before selecting any project so that the community can choose those projects that address their felt needs and participate in implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

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