

Socio-Economic Status and Participatory Development in Kenya

Kariuki David Kinyanjui

Department of Sociology and Social Work
University of Nairobi
P. O. Box, 30197, Nairobi, Kenya

Misaro Josephine

Department of Sociology and Social Work
University of Nairobi
P. O. Box, 30197, Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

While Kenya's highly centralised political system has resulted in the widespread social-economic marginalization of rural areas, very little attention has been focused on analyzing the relationship between socio-economic marginalization and popular participation in management of constituency development funds (CDF) geared towards rural poverty alleviation. The underlying principle has been distribution of resources to the grassroots to complement efforts geared towards developing rural communities in Kenya. The main objective of this paper is to analyze the influence of socio-economic factors on the levels of households' participation in CDF projects in efforts to alleviate rural poverty. Using a quantitative survey research design, 100 respondents were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The raw data from the field was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that while most respondents had high literacy levels, they also suffered severe socio-economic deprivation. CDF projects had contributed to setting up of school bursaries, dispensaries, creating employment opportunities and efficient transport. Furthermore, respondents were aware of the role of CDF funds. Yet, participation in CDF projects, seminars, workshops or educational tours was generally low. Lack of transparency was mentioned as the major factor influencing low participation levels. Finally, respondents seemed to agree that while CDF was on course in addressing the country's development challenges, they were least satisfied with its achievements so far. Among others, the study recommended CDF projects be harmonized with the local development priorities/needs and the need to establish community based institutional mechanisms to make easy community participation in various projects.

Key words: Socio-economic, Sustainable Rural Development, Community Research Decentralization, Poverty, Participatory, Kenya

Introduction

In recent years, the poverty paradox in Kenya has met renewed attention among researchers, policy-makers and the common public. Yet, very little attention has been focused on the relationship between socio-economic factors and popular participation in management of constituency development funds geared towards rural poverty alleviation. According to World Bank (1995), Kenya is a low-income country, with an average per capita income of about US\$360 per annum. Smoke (1993) asserts that over the past 30 years, poverty has been on the rise in Kenya. The Kenya participatory poverty assessments suggest that income poverty is not necessarily the aspect of most significance to poor households. Lack of access to productive assets such as land and exclusion from economic, social and political processes that affect poor people's lives may be of much significance (Government of Kenya, 2000). Unfortunately, the over-centralization of government structures has posed challenges to the realization of the intended benefits of decentralization to rural people in Kenya.

Rural areas are often politically marginalized, leaving little opportunity for the poor to influence government policies, including policies regarding what they produce. Sustainable rural development has indeed become of urgent concern owing to seemingly endless crises of stagnation, poverty and famine, which have increasingly thrown the lives, and activities of rural dwellers into disarray (Kiros, 1985).

Development implies improvement of people's lifestyles through education, incomes, skills development and employment, decent housing, and security within those houses and being able to read and write (World Bank, 1997). Sustainable development thus refers to development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs with their huge capacities to produce, transmit and store information within countries and across national borders. In addition, in the pursuance of their development, goals countries have the capacity to allow people and organizations to share this wealth of knowledge (United Nations, 1997). In many developing countries, policies have consistently discriminated against agriculture through high levels of taxation and other macroeconomic policies (GOK, 2001). Today, more than half of the country's estimated 40 million people are poor (RoK, 2008), and 7.5 million of the poor live in extreme poverty. Poverty is defined here as a condition of deprivation of basic capabilities or a condition of having insufficient resources or income (Government of Kenya, 2001). Hence, about 80 percent of the population (three out of four poor people) lives in rural zones. Most Kenyans live in areas of a medium to high potential for agriculture, which comprise about 18 percent of the country's territory (Uwechue, 1996). Accordingly, it is paramount to ensure that the rural areas benefit from the national revenue owing to their contribution to the overall Gross Domestic Product.

This paper therefore analyzes the socio-economic factors influencing participation in CDF projects based on a study of Ol-kalou Constituency, Nyandarua District in Kenya. More precisely, the study was guided by the following research questions: what is the socio-economic status of households participating in CDF projects? What is the residents' level of awareness on CDF? What are the types of CDF funded projects are geared towards poverty alleviation? What is the degree of participation in CDF funded projects? What are the respondents' perceptions on the influence of local leadership on participation in the Projects? What is the level of satisfaction among the respondents on CDF projects? In order to answer these questions, the study tested three hypotheses:

1. Participating household's socio-economic status influences respondents' level of participation in CDF projects.
2. The type of CDF project determines respondents' level of participation.
3. A significant relationship exists between respondents' degree of satisfaction in CDF funded projects and respondents' level of participation.

Literature Review

Most studies carried out in rural areas in Kenya revolve around the general impact of CDF on local development challenges (IPAR, 2006; Republic of Kenya, 2008; Nyamori, 2009; 2005; Mwangi, 2005). Though numerous efforts have been in place to alleviate rural poverty, it is unrealistic to assume that such anti-poverty projects will always have poverty-reducing effects wherever they are implemented. In addition, there is an increasing level of rural poverty in Ol-kalou constituency in spite of multiple anti-poverty programmes. Hence, there is need to gauge the extent to which socio-economic factor are influencing participation in CDF projects. Indeed, empirical evidence shows that poverty is relatively more sensitive to distributional changes than to economic growth. Other dimensions of poverty include the impact of malnutrition and illness, illiteracy, social exclusion and lack of empowerment to improve one's situation.

Several studies conducted on performance of CDF have paid particular attention to the efficiency and efficacy rather than on socio-economic factors influencing participation in CDF fund. The tendency has been to view economic development as contributing to participation at the household level. This paper provides the constituents' perceptions on contribution of CDF to socio-economic and political development with emphasis paid on socio-economic factors influencing participation in projects funded by CDF where hitherto such an attempt has not been undertaken. On Economic Theory of Poverty (Todaro, 2000, p. 181-182), the "traditional argument" is that "highly unequal distributions are necessary conditions for generating rapid growth." The rich save and invest significant proportions of their income while the poor spend all their income in consumption. Gross National Product (GNP) growth derives directly from the national income saved, so that highly unequal income distributions would lead to more savings and faster growth.

Todaro (ibid.) continues to argue that widespread inequality and poverty deprive the poor of opportunities to invest and drive them to have many children as financial security. The rich in poor countries squander their incomes on luxuries or stash them abroad and do not necessarily save and invest more than the poor invest. Low incomes and low levels of living can lower the poor's economic productivity and slow down growth. Raising the poor's income will raise demand for basic domestic products like food and clothing, stimulating investment and growth more broadly and reduced mass poverty and income disparities can stimulate economic expansion through wider public participation in development (Todaro, 2000, p. 182-183). The rich get richer and the poor get children; "inequality is seen as a justifiable result of prosperity and, in this view history and politics are to be blamed, the poor's "rational decisions" to beget more children, elite capture of prosperity in poor countries, and bad (protectionist and populist) economic policies. Democracy and open markets, global market integration, and technology have also been creating a new divide among workers (Bird & Vaillancourt, 1998, p. 4-7).

Clark (2000) blames the capitalist society for creating artificial scarcity and under producing for the sake of profit, so that the rich could get richer at the expense of the poor. To this end, neoclassical economics switched from a science of abundance to one of scarcity, and to a "demand-constrained" business system that must maintain a rate of return on wealth and "the social power that attaches to 'scarce' wealth" (Clark, 2002, p. 416). Consequently, arguing that prosperity could produce poverty and inequality, Keynes (as cited Clark, 2002, p. 417) notes that capital is being kept scarce and concludes that "in contemporary conditions the growth of wealth, so far from being dependent on the abstinence of the rich is more likely to be impeded by its abstinence from consumption, by saving for investment. But to remain rich, or grow more, the rich must maintain a high rate of return, through high unemployment and lower economic growth. "In a very real sense, just as in Plato, wealth can cause poverty" (ibid.).

In Kenya, rather than emanating from unlimited wants of human nature, scarcity is socially created through "conspicuous consumption" and "industrial sabotage," as Thorstein Veblen theorizes in *Theory of the Leisure Class* (2007). The leisure class keeps raising consumption standards to maintain the scarcity value of the goods consumed, including the basic needs of the poor for land, housing, among others. The productivity of modern technology and industry is kept in check through industrial concentration to limit competition and by keeping interest rates "too high". Wealth, as well as rural poverty, is created through social exclusion, starting with the institution of private property, signs ownership rights to a person or entity at the expense of society. Redundant, easy-to-refill jobs generate low pay and low or no benefits due to strong competition. While exclusionary devices like unions, minimum wages, and tenure reduce labour competition, higher-level assets and incomes require higher barriers to protect their scarcity value. Such barriers keep the poor from participating in the economy and society.

Economic costs, which are not allocated through normal market operations, are assigned or shifted to disadvantaged groups. These include externalities like pollution and the full cost of the worker often borne by his family and others outside the workforce. Wealth is created through a utility owner's ability to shift "system losses", for example, to his workers, neighbours, and society as a whole, who are correspondingly impoverished thereby. To conclude, one observes that rural poverty in Kenya has not declined appreciably despite significant national growth because this growth has been attained at the expense of the poor. When the amount of wealth has grown much faster than the output of the economy, part of this has to come from either redistribution of existing wealth and incomes or in a shifting of costs away from capital.

The main theme in decentralization theory is the difference between hierarchies based on authority - two players in an unequal-power relationship and an interface - a lateral relationship between two players of roughly equal power. The more decentralized a system is, the more it relies on lateral relationships, and the less it can rely on command or force. According to Musgrave (1959), fiscal decentralization is the devolution by the central government to local governments of specific functions with the administrative authority and fiscal revenue to perform those functions. The "proper" distribution of tax authority and expenditure responsibility is an extremely complex issue. Economists generally focus on issues of efficiency and equity, while public administration and political science scholars tend to focus on distribution of powers, responsiveness and accountability, and tax competition and coordination. To make them more equitable than would otherwise be the case, the distribution function involves the role of government in changing the distribution of income, wealth or other indicators of economic well being.

The case for assigning this function to the national government rests on two assumptions: that the national government's broad taxing powers can more easily redistribute income, and that the ability of taxpayers to move from one jurisdiction to another to take advantage of more attractive spending and taxation policies weakens local government's ability to redistribute to the poor. The case for regional and local redistributive policies rests on the fact that sub-national levels of government provide the services most used by low-income families.

However, most economists view the national role as primary. The Allocation Function is government's role in deciding the mix of public and private goods that are provided by the economy or by government. Each level of government may be more efficient in delivering certain governmental goods and services. The superiority of the national government in delivering national defence or national health research is obvious as is the likelihood that certain services such as fire and police protection are more suitable for local government. In attempting to match local revenues and expenditures in the allocation process, the concern is about efficiency, vertical imbalances (mismatches between revenues and expenditures), horizontal equity (fiscal capacity among regions), externalities (spill-overs), and tax exportation. Additional public management concerns have to do with overlapping of taxes and roles, and responsiveness and accountability for service delivery.

This framework is most helpful in thinking about which taxes are levied at each level of government and the total tax authority of each level. A commonly cited public finance principal is "finance should follow function." If certain expenditure roles are assigned to a level of government, that level must have the resources to meet those responsibilities. Taxes are the principal source of "own-source" revenue for governments at all levels. If tax collections or fiscal capacity falls short of expenditure responsibilities, then that level of government must have additional taxing authority, develop user fees, or rely on intergovernmental transfers (such as grants and shared taxes) to support its expenditures. The theoretical case for continuing the efforts to find the right mix of tax and revenue sharing for sub national governments is the following.

When regional and local governments are involved in financing their own expenditures, at least at the margin, they will be more accountable to their citizens (and the central government) for the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, when the bulk of financing of local services comes from revenues transferred from a higher level of government, local governments are less likely to be parsimonious with those expenditures. Thus, tax-sharing formulas need to be constructed in a fashion that encourages (or at least not discourages) local governments from developing their own-source revenues. The case for local tax administration and at least some local discretion on tax rates is to place greater responsibility on local government to collect taxes owed and to use discretion as to tax rates to provide discretionary services or to use for economic development purposes. The goal is to provide the greatest stake in the success of local governments with the local officials and to take away the excuse that they are "bound" and therefore unfairly limited by national legislation.

Kenya has strongly moved in the direction of fiscal decentralization reform and shares some common problems typical of developing nations. During the 1990s, fiscal decentralization and local government reform became among the most widespread trends in development. Many of these wide-ranging and costly efforts, however, have made only modest progress toward meeting their stated goals. Given this uneven performance, the rural inhabitants have been left out of the development wagon leaving them with little possibilities of reversing their current plight. The government moved swiftly to avert the regional imbalances caused by political marginalisation playing a central role in tax collection and distributing to the remote rural areas, which are vested with the mandate of prioritizing their development goals. This has indeed reduced the disparities of top-down approach to development thus giving the rural communities more autonomy in handling their needs. Though the central government is seen to play a key role in overall nationwide development, the rural people now have a stake. The focus of this study was on the forces that would result in alleviating rural poverty. The theoretical foundations of this study therefore emphasize on causes of poverty (economic theory of poverty) and dangers of over centralisation and their contribution to rural poverty (decentralization theory).

Economic theory of poverty explains the outcomes of unequal distributive process of national resources thus causing some geographical regions to be left out in the development of the nation thus witnessing an uninterrupted trend of abject poverty. The bottom-up approach to development through CDF fund thus addresses the limitations of over centralisation that has cause persistent rural poverty in rural Kenya. The above model depicts the approach to alleviating poverty at the local level through utilization of CDF funds.

The model borrows greatly from decentralization and economic theory of poverty. The study affirms that improvement of local's livelihood is hindered by unequal distribution of national income thus engendering rampant poverty. The model suggests with effective utilization of CDF funds from the Gross National Product (GNP) the turn over effect will socially, politically and economically empower low-income earners. In essence, this will increase their productivity through renewed impetus geared towards development agenda. Raising individual households' socio-economic status through active participation in CDF funded projects triggers a shift in distribution of national income ultimately, reducing levels of household poverty. The devolved model approach in the study comprised eight variables interacting closely to arrive at the predicted study outcome (poverty alleviation). Social economic status of the participating individuals is the propelling indicator invoking the need for intervention especially in marginalized rural areas. It also determines whether an individual is likely to participate in CDF funded projects. The obvious assumption is that people of high and middle-income levels are likely to shelve themselves from CDF projects while those with lower income status largely lead to active participation.

On the other hand, the leadership structure (whether accommodating or rigid) and levels of awareness on CDF among the constituents affect the degree of active participation. Under normal circumstances, leaders give sense of direction in any given group. Leadership stewardship in CDF project attracts participation while the opposite is also true. Also enlightens (creates awareness) and directs recipients (respondents) in achieving the intended development goals. Ostensibly, the total amount allocated to each constituency translates to types and numbers of CDF anti-poverty projects. This creates a solid connection between locals' participation and projects viability particularly in projects geared towards poverty alleviation. The anti-poverty bridges the development gap. Thus, how well projects objective(s) succeed translates to improved livelihood.

Active interplay between a network of study variables results to high level of satisfaction among the respondents. This is derived from active participation trickling down to improved livelihood at the local level. Consequently, the interrelated web made up of equitable distribution of resources (amount of money allocated to CDF projects), power (leadership), accountability, active participation emanating from individuals socio-economic status, CDF leadership style and level of awareness on CDF among the constituents accounts for the overall degree of satisfaction. Notwithstanding limitations in terms of geographical coverage and limited resources, the scope for this study was seen as significant in its quest to provide key information and make recommendations that will aid in the process of effective and efficient utilization of CDF funds aimed at alleviating poverty in rural areas. It will also seek to contribute to the academic debates on poverty reduction, to help governments improve their policy formulation and implementation and for civil society organizations involved in poverty alleviations programmes.

Limitations of the Study

The study analyzed the socio-economic factors influencing participation in CDF projects based in Ol-kalou Constituency, Nyandarua District in Kenya. Apart from not being the only factors that affect participation by locals, it must be noted that socio-economic factors differ according to regions. As such the findings of the study may not be generalised to all regions in Kenya or beyond. Nevertheless, the study provides a framework for identifying and analysing factors that influence community participation in development projects.

Materials and Methods

Using a quantitative survey inferential research design, 100 respondents were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The independent variables were socio-economic status, type of anti-poverty projects and degree of satisfaction among participating households. On the other hand, level of participation was the dependent variable. Households' socio-economic status was measured using the following indicators: gender, marital status, number of children, literacy, religion, employment status and type of housing and individual source of income. Respondents' perception on influence of local CDF leadership refers to the structure and composition of CDF committees at the constituency and locational level. Accordingly, the measurements were: respondents' knowledge of CDF managers, criteria for selecting members of CDF committees, ideal number of CDF committees, CDF committees' management problems and ways of reducing CDF management problems. Types of anti-poverty projects referred to projects funded by CDF that specifically address poverty and have an element of poverty alleviation. These included: Water, Electricity connection, Health/dispensary, Bursary, Road, Cattle dip, Dams, Community policing/security, Sanitation, School upgrading and construction, Youth/women group projects.

Household's level of awareness was measured in terms of: existence of CDF awareness on existence of CDF, amount allocated to CDF projects (knowledge of annual allocations to the constituency), perception on amount allocated and proposed amount by respondents, existing decision making structure in management of CDF and cost of accessing the services/products from CDF. Level of satisfaction was measured by assessing respondent's views and opinions on CDF based on the following indicators; attainment of CDF development agenda, self-satisfaction with CDF, challenges to poverty alleviation, respondents sentiment on CDF and suggestions on improvement areas of CDF funds. Livelihoods improvement/poverty alleviation denoted benefits derived from CDF funds. Thus, it referred to efforts geared towards improving the general living conditions of the locals. To evaluate the variable, the following indicators were used: respondents' opinion situation of poverty before inception of CDF, accessibility of facilities and infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, and school and changes/improvements and benefits reaped from the CDF projects. Level of Participation referred to constituents' contribution in poverty alleviation through participating in CDF funded projects and to some extent the ability or autonomy in setting the development agenda. It was measured by: projects respondents engaged in, level of participation, acknowledgement of CDF benefits, decision making/management and willingness to recommend others to join the projects.

Results and Discussion

Households' Socio-economic Status and Participation

The study found out that although a majority (93%) had high literacy levels, their socio-economic background was weak. More than half of the respondents (57%) earned less than Ksh 20,000 annually; this was typified by high levels of unemployment as 55% of respondents were unemployed while 78% reported to live in semi-permanent houses. The study revealed that a majority of the respondents (97%) were aware of CDF. Ninety-eight percent were males compared to 95% females. Of the respondents, 79% gave the correct definition of CDF as Constituency Development Fund indicating awareness of CDF was very high among the respondents. It also emerged that 50% of the respondents heard about CDF through the mass media while CDF committee public meetings constituted 34%. About three in every five people (62%) were knowledgeable on how much money was allocated to the constituency by the Central government. Those who did not know gave the reasons as lack of transparency and accountability in the allocations (33%).

The first hypothesis of the study stated that there is a significant relationship between respondents' socio-economic status (age, sex, marital status, annual income, and number of children, literacy, language, religion and employment) and level of participation in CDF. Level of participation was measured using the following scale: Very high, high, moderate, low and not at all. The null hypothesis stated there is no significant relationship between respondents' socio-economic status and level of participation in CDF projects. The Chi-square test of independence results between socio-economic status and level of participation was significant ($P > 0.05$). In explaining the level of respondents' participation as indicated in Table 1 below for the following variables were used: level of education, marital status, annual income, religion, number of children and literacy levels. Hence, the data gathered from the field provided sufficient statistical evidence to warrant the conclusion that the socio-economic variables were partially significant in explaining the respondents' level of participation in the CDF projects.

Seemingly, this can be pegged on high levels of education among respondents thus contributing towards understanding of the different facets of government development policies. Married couples are likely to have a wide range of needs from child rearing to economic development. People with low income tend to exhibit high levels of participation to supplement their annual income. The contemporary fusion of religion and politics may result to acceptance of development efforts. Young families are assumed to be more active in the projects as a result of their wide spectrum of socio-economic needs while high literacy levels increase the ability to communicate effectively ultimately generating ease in participation. While age, gender, employment and language at $P < 0.05$ were conversely not significant in explaining the level of respondents' participation. This is because, age comes with specific needs and fact that the projects were not age specific they did not fully cater for every age group needs. With regard to gender, men's participation did not differ markedly from that of women. Equally, ones employment status did not significantly influence participation in CDF projects while literacy did not contribute to communication barrier and thereby both literate and less literate respondents participated equally in the projects.

Table 1: Cross-tabulation between Households' Socio-economic Status and Level of Participation

Socio- economic Status		Cross tabulations Level of participation						Significance level
Variable	Categories	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	Total	
Age	18-25	9	0	6	1	3	19	$\chi^2 = 13.464$ df= 12 P<0.05
	26-33	10	1	5	2	3	21	
	34-41	5	0	7	3	8	23	
	42 and above	8	3	8	5	13	37	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Sex	Male	16	3	18	5	18	60	$\chi^2 = 4.101$ df=4 P<0.05
	Female	16	1	8	6	9	40	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Education	None/Primary	9	3	5	6	10	33	$\chi^2 = 44.681$ df= 16 P>0.05
	Lower primary	6	0	9	0	9	24	
	Upper primary	5	2	5	0	0	12	
	Sec school	3	0	1	5	5	14	
	Tertiary	2	5	1	1	8	17	
	Total	25	10	21	12	32	100	
Marital status	Married	14	2	16	4	18	54	$\chi^2 = 21.585$ df= 12 P>0.05
	Single	16	1	8	2	5	32	
	Divorced	1	1	1	3	1	7	
	Widowed	1	0	1	2	3	7	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Annual income	Less than 9999	9	0	11	7	6	33	$\chi^2 = 45.010$ df = 16 P>0.05
	10000-19999	9	0	9	0	6	24	
	20000-39999	6	0	4	3	2	15	
	40000-59999	3	0	1	1	5	10	
	Above 60000	2	4	1	0	8	15	
	Total	29	4	26	11	27	97	
Religion	Roman catholic	17	0	11	8	6	42	$\chi^2 = 22.344$ df=12 P>0.05
	Protestant	14	3	13	3	14	47	
	Other Christian	1	1	2	0	4	8	
	None	0	0	0	0	3	3	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Employment	Unemployed	25	2	13	7	7	55	$\chi^2 = 10.067$ df =20 P<0.05
	Employed	2	0	4	3	16	25	
	Retired	5	2	3	1	0	11	
	Students	0	0	0	0	2	2	
	Business	0	0	2	0	0	2	
	Farmer	0	0	2	0	0	2	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Number of children	1-2	13	1	5	2	4	25	$\chi^2 = 47.821$ d.f= 16 P>0.05
	3-5	4	1	9	7	14	35	
	6-8	5	0	4	1	5	15	
	9-10	0	0	0	0	4	4	
	None	10	2	8	0	1	21	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Literacy	Yes	30	3	24	9	27	93	$\chi^2 = 29.504$ d.f =4 P>0.05
	No	2	1	2	2	7	7	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	
Language	English	6	0	6	3	7	22	$\chi^2 = 2.093$ df=8 P<0.05
	Swahili	20	3	15	6	14	58	
	Mother tongue	6	1	5	2	6	20	
	Total	32	4	26	11	27	100	

Types of Anti-poverty Projects and Participation

Respondents were highly enlightened on types and numbers of CDF anti-poverty projects. 16.5% of the respondents participated in water related projects, dams (8.3%), school (6.9%), health (11.5%), security (10.4%), cattle dip (9.2%), electricity (11.5%), roads (8.3%), women and youth (11.9%) and sanitation (5.5%). Health and dispensary facilities were ranked as easily available by 51% of the respondents. The respondents however unanimously (89%) concurred that the amounts allocated to the projects were not enough. Many of them suggested amounts exceeding Ksh50 Million.

Although respondents confirmed paying levies for services from various CDF projects, the amounts were very low or concessionary as evidenced by majority of the (54.0%) respondents. The charges were in the lowest range (Ksh0-300), 12.0% paid Ksh301-500, 6.3% were charged Ksh801-1000, 8.0% paid above Ksh1000 and 22.0% above Ksh1000. Respondents thus acknowledged CDF projects also helped in availing social amenities such as schools bursaries (20.0%) and hospitals (15.0%) brought services close to people and no response (8%) respectively. As well as creating employment opportunities (10.0 %), high agricultural output (2%) and efficient transport 4%.

The study hypothesised that there is a significant relationship between type of CDF projects and respondents level of participation. The null hypothesis stated there no significant relationship between type of CDF projects and respondents level of participation. To cross-tabulate level of participation in different types of CDF anti-poverty projects, the study categorized the indicators into three categories. These were: economic projects (roads, cattle dip, and energy, youth and women economic projects), socio-economic projects (water, dams and education) and welfare projects (security, sanitation and health) as variables for the second hypothesis. Using Chi-square test, the study generated the findings as shown in Table 2 below.

The alternative hypothesis, that there is a significant relationship between type of anti-poverty projects and respondent's level of participation, corresponded with the study's overall outlook of the project(s) as a poverty alleviation strategy. The nature/type of CDF projects was perceived as influencing respondent's level of participation. On testing the hypothesis, the converse was true; the nature/type of CDF projects was not significantly related to respondents' level of participation. Cross tabulation showed that the P values were below the 0.05 level of significance across all types of CDF projects. Therefore, the data provided enough evidence to warrant conclusion that there is no significant relationship between the types of CDF projects and respondents level of participation. As a result, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 2: Cross-tabulation between types of CDF Projects and Level of Participation

CATEGORY	Projects	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low	Total	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
(Welfare projects)	Sanitation	1	0	6	0	5	12	$\chi^2 = 3.653$ df = 8 P < 0.05
	Health/dispensary	1	0	13	1	10	25	
	Community policing/security	1	1	9	2	10	23	
	Total	3	1	28	3	25	60	
CATEGORY	Scale/Projects	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Not at all	Total	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
(Economic projects)	Roads	0	1	7	1	9	18	$\chi^2 = 7.755$ df = 12 P < 0.05
	Energy/electricity connections	0	1	8	3	13	25	
	Cattle dip	1	1	9	3	6	20	
	Youth and women projects	1	0	14	2	9	26	
CATEGORY	Total	2	3	38	9	37	89	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
(Socio-Economic Projects)	Scale/Projects	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Not at all	Total	$\chi^2 = 9.045$ df = 8 P < 0.05
	Water	2	2	11	6	15	36	
	Education (Bursary)	0	1	10	1	3	15	
	Dams	0	0	7	4	7	18	
Total	0	1	17	11	25	69		

Among others factors, the authors attributed the situation to the following factors: low levels of awareness on specific aspects of a given project; high levels of poverty, and respondents' broad spectrum of felt needs leaving them with no specific projects to engage in. Consequently, the type of project did not influence respondents' level of participation.

Respondents' Degree of Satisfaction with CDF Projects and Participation

As regards to participation in CDF projects, majority (82%) of the respondents stated that they did not participate in seminars, workshops or educational tours as would be desirable for exposure. On the other hand, 47% of the respondents revealed members were involved in making key decisions. Members of participating households (85%) would refer their counterparts to participate in CDF projects. The main reasons for recommending others to join were that the projects were beneficial to the community (51.4%) and that they had learnt or got enlightened (16%). Those who were reluctant to invite others mainly cited lack of transparency as the main reason. On overall participation, 32% participated very highly, 27% of the respondents participated on a high scale, 26% participated at a moderate scale whereas 11 % participated on a lower scale

Fifty six percent (56%) of the respondents reported CDF to be embroiled in management problems, 30% had no response while 14% had no idea. Lack of transparency (30%) was pointed as the major reason for lack of engagement, 16% of the respondents had partly participated in selection of committees members. Of the respondents, 10% had no information on the selection procedure, 13% of the respondents were of the position the leaders were selected by the area Member of Parliament, 19% had never met the leaders, 7% cited the employees were the main beneficiaries of the bursary and 5% were informed of the selected ones.

On the other hand, 24% had knowledge of CDF managers and majority (76%) of the respondents did not know local CDF managers. Forty-one percent of the respondents suggested an ideal CDF committee should have 12-15, 26% preferred committees of 10-11 members, 23% were not sure, 5% suggested 40 from every location, 3% every location to be represented by 15 members while those who suggested 50 and 100 members were 2%, respectively.

Forty percent (40%) of the respondents wanted the MPs disassociated from the management of the funds. This implies the residents would prefer the funds to be administered by non-political agents. In addition, according to respondents, the inclusion of professionals 14%, fining corrupt leaders and conducting seminars 7% respectively. Majority of the respondents (90.7%) agreed CDF had attained development agenda, 6.2% were neutral while 1 % and 2.1 % disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. A majority or more than 70% of the respondents were dissatisfied with all the statements pertaining to allocation and implementation of CDF projects. On overall satisfaction, majority of the respondents (52%) reported CDF had not satisfactorily addressed their problems. Partly satisfied constituted 29% of the respondents, 25 somewhat satisfactory, 10.0% satisfactory, only 1% were very satisfied and 6.0% did not respond.

The study further sought to investigate if there was a significant relationship between respondents' degree of satisfaction and level of participation in CDF projects. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between respondents' degree of satisfaction and level of participation in CDF projects. Respondents were asked to indicate their levels of satisfaction with CDF projects under scale: satisfied, somewhat satisfied and dissatisfied. Table 3 below presents the cross-tabulation of results between the level of respondents' participation and levels of satisfaction with CDF anti-poverty projects in realizing the study area's development agenda.

Table 3: Cross-tabulation between Levels of CDF Participation and Satisfaction

Satisfaction with CDF projects in attaining development agenda	Cross tabulations Level of participation					Total	Significance level
	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low		
Satisfied	2	1	6	0	2	11	X ² =8.108 d.f=8 P< 0.05
Neither satisfied nor Dissatisfied	19	2	17	8	17	63	
Dissatisfied	8	1	3	2	7	21	
Total	29	4	26	10	26	95	

On cross-tabulating the two variables (satisfaction and level of participation), no significant relationship was observed between them. This sufficed to conclude that the degree of satisfaction does not influence respondents' participation in CDF projects.

Lack of association is presumably owing to poor leadership of the projects, respondents' low level of awareness, effects of patronage politics in the management of the funds, shortage of professionals in the administration of the CDF projects and existence of corrupt leaders. In the end, the null hypothesis there is no significant relationship between respondents' degree of satisfaction and level of participation in CDF project was accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

CDF funded projects have immensely contributed in lessening rampant poverty levels witnessed in the study area prior to its inception. Before the introduction of CDF, poverty was highly prevalent among the households in the area. Most of the households lacked even the most basic facilities like water. CDF funds have to greater extent contributed to household poverty reduction. The numerous anti-poverty projects are perceived to have cumulative household's socio-economic progress. In addition, awareness on the amount of money allocated to the constituency CDF kitty was high. Conversely, war on poverty alleviation was largely impeded by delay in disbursement of finances, leadership, changing climatic conditions within the area and insufficient funds. However, the available funds only catered for immediate needs like water, education and health rather than initiating more developments that would translate into direct income for the households.

A significant relationship between household level of participation and its corresponding socio-economic status translated to respondents' satisfaction with CDF anti-poverty projects. Water, youth and women group projects and health/dispensary projects attracted more participation than any other projects funded through CDF. Further the research indicated that overall participation in projects was encouraging, however there was need to encourage more households to actively participate in the projects to maximize benefits. Participation in capacity building activities was extremely low. This scenario was attributed to the CDF management committee citing that there were minimal allocations to capacity building exercise within the locations. In addition, attendances of capacity building sessions were by males rather than females. Finally, the locals' perceptions were that development can only be attained through bottom-up approach. To sustain CDF's impact towards alleviating poverty, they pointed out the need for locals' wider participation in the selection of members of CDF committee. Since active involvement of the locals at the grass root level will create supplementary room for varied needs and skills.

There were many economic challenges that faced the residents within the area of study. The projects were hailed to be of great input to livelihood improvement. Interestingly, health, school and water projects attracted the highest level of participation. The above prompted the authors to conclude that projects perceived to have multiple benefits based on respondents' development needs attracted participation at different levels. The research concluded that decentralization of resources through CDF was an effective tool in alleviating poverty in rural areas. However, more benefits can be realized by increasing awareness on the importance of participating in CDF funded projects.

Attributes with differing degrees in determining CDF leadership structure at the constituency level accounted for the respondents' level of satisfaction with CDF anti-poverty projects. Based on this argument, the respondents overtly characterized local CDF leadership as corrupt and to some extent incompetent. Further, they noted prioritization lacked in project funding. Thus, the inclusion of incompetent political allies in management of CDF funds had ultimately hampered its effectiveness in addressing poverty in the region. In spite of low levels of participation, among the locals and exposure to patronage politics, respondents rated the level of satisfaction as average arguing the funds efficacy cannot be wished away notwithstanding concerns over quality and projects contribution in assuaging rural poverty.

Based on the findings, the research came up with the following recommendations: CDF projects should be realigned to reflect locals' development needs. Thus, the government needs to focus more on community-felt needs and apportion a certain percentage of CDF fund to projects that will yield to direct benefits to individual households. There is need to raise awareness on knowledge, management and prioritization of CDF funded projects. To realize this, the local CDF committee needs to intensify their public awareness campaigns through workshops, education tours and public meetings. To address CDF management problems, there is need to strictly adhere to a structured leadership selection criteria based on academic qualification, leadership skills, adherence stipulated number of CDF committee members and encourage the local people to actively engage with their CDF leaders.

While it is desirable and natural for the residents to wish allocation of hefty amounts translating to implementation of numerous projects, they should be sensitized against overdependence on CDF. The government and other key stakeholders therefore need to educate (by encouraging active participation) the residents on the need to supplement CDF funds with their own resources.

References

- Bird, R. M., & Vaillancourt, F. (1998). Fiscal Decentralization in Developing Countries, An Overview. In R. M. Bird, & F. Vaillancourt, (Eds.), *Fiscal centralization in Developing Countries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, C. M. A. (2002). Wealth and Poverty: On the Social Creation of Scarcity. *Journal of Economic Issues*, 36(2): 415-420.
- Government of Kenya (2001). *Poverty Reduction Strategy papers, Information Kit*. Nairobi: Government Printers.
- Government of Kenya (2000). *Second Report on Poverty in Kenya: Incidence and Depth of Poverty, Vol 1*. Ministry of Finance and Planning.
- Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (2006). *Discussion Paper No. 076. The Management and Utilization of the Constituency Development Fund in Kenya*, February 2006, community participation and CDF.
- Kiros, F. G. (Ed.). (1985). *Challenging Rural Poverty Experiences in Institution Building and Popular Participation for Rural Development in Eastern Africa*. Africa World press.
- Musgrave, R. A. (1959). *The Theory of Public Finance*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Mwangi, S. K. (2005). *Efficiency and Efficacy of Kenya's CDF Theory and Evidence*. University of Connecticut working paper No. 200542, Department of Economic
- Nyamori, R. O. (2009). Making Development Accountable: A Critical Analysis of the System of Accounting and Accountability for the Constituency Development Fund in Kenya . *Journal of Accounting and Organizational Change*, 5, Emerald Group Ltd.
- Republic of Kenya (2008). *The Constituency Development Fund: An Examination of Legal Structural Management and Corruption Issues in Kenya*. Report by The National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Team.
- Smoke, P. (1993). *Local Government Fiscal Reform in Developing Countries: Lessons from Kenya*. World Development.
- Todaro, M. P. (2000). *Economic Development*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- Uwechue, R. (1996). Re-Inventing Government, 4th Global, Forum held in Marrakech, December, 2002. *Historically, Africa today* (3rd ed.). Nairobi: African Books.
- Veblen, T. (2007). *Theory of the Leisure Class*. Teddington, Middlesx: Echo Library.
- World Bank (1997). *World Development Report: The State in a Changing World*. Oxford University Press.
- World Bank (1997). *Taking Action to Reduce Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington D.C: The World Bank.
- World Bank (1995). *Population and Human Resources Division, Eastern Africa Department, Africa Region. Kenya Poverty Assessment*. Report No. 13152-KE. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.