

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ALLOCATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS: A CASE OF DAGORETTI SOUTH CONSTITUENCY, NAIROBI, KENYA

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Abstract: *In Kenya, public participation in NG-CDF-funded projects is required to maintain openness and good governance in the administration of public resources. The study sought to investigate the Public Participation in Allocation of National Government Constituency Development Funds (NG-CDF): A Case of Dagoretti South Constituency, Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to investigate the level of public mobilization in (NG-CDF) allocation, to examine the level of public sensitization in (NG-CDF), to assess the level of decision-making in (NG-CDF) allocation in Dagoretti South Constituency, Nairobi County, Kenya. The study aims to enhance public participation and resource allocation in NG-CDF projects, benefiting policymakers, planners, and the Kenyan National Government. It provides insights and literature on effective public engagement. The following theories guided the study and had a substantial impact on the results. Stakeholder Theory holds that the primary objective of any business is to produce money and benefit its stakeholders, whereas public participation theory advocates for the inclusion of program and project beneficiaries. The target population was 178,691 residents of Dagoretti constituency spread across the constituency, and the formula of Krejcie and Morgan 1970 which determined the study sample size. A study sample of 407 respondents was chosen using a stratified random sampling procedure, and main data was obtained using a semi-structured questionnaire. Quantitative data was examined using descriptive statistics design in SPSS (version 25), while qualitative data was evaluated using thematic content analysis. Furthermore, the validity of the research instruments was confirmed through expert analysis, and the reliability of the research instruments was determined using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient. According to the study's findings, a high level of public mobilization has a beneficially impacted on NG-CDF allocation to the residents. High Level of Public Sensitization aided in understanding of essential aspects of NG-CDF allocation, addressing the requested of the community in their progress, and informing their educated opinions about the funds. The study concluded that public participation in CDF allocation positively impacts NG-CDF funds allocation. Lack of community involvement can lead to fund theft and hinder gender balance. Information, education, and communication tactics, sensitization programs, and effective constituent participation promote budgetary decisions. Decision-making should consider all constituency people for effective allocations. The researcher suggested that the government must ensure citizens are informed about their rights, responsibilities, constitution, and the NG-CDF Act. Respect for communal effort, deference to elders, and obedience to leadership should be integrated into projects, while denying youth leadership positions should be avoided, and public mobilization should increase turnout during scheduled meetings and ensure gender representation.*

Keywords: *Mobilization - Sensitization and Decision-making*

INTRODUCTION

Public participation and resource allocation are crucial for the success of development projects. Public participation involves involving all stakeholders, (Abate, 2019) including citizens, advocacy groups, and experts, in decision-making processes, Mukuri, & Wamitu, (2020). It is essential for transparency, accountability, legitimacy, efficiency, prioritizing needs, dispute resolution, long-term planning, and community ownership (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

International studies show that public participation influences planning and allocation of resources, guaranteeing transparency, accountability, and better decision-making, Zhou, Y., et al, (2019). It entails disseminating information about available resources, demands, and allocation alternatives, enabling the public to make educated decisions. Public involvement can help prioritize community needs, promote accountability, improve decision quality, develop trust, and resolve conflicts, Liu et al, (2018).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, public participation has not been effectively utilized to inform resource allocation, Muse, (2016) challenges include lack of awareness, lack of skilled staff, inconsistent legal systems, political meddling, and unequal representation. Zimbabwe faces difficulties in encouraging public engagement in resource allocation choices, with issues such as lack of access to platforms, lack of representation, and challenges with accountability, Masvaure (2016).

Regionally, public participation in resource allocation has gained prominence due to the benefits gained from such involvement, Kamu (2019) successful public participation in Rwanda through early communication, consultation, and decision-making promoted resource allocation. In Uganda, effective public participation based on access to and use of information and awareness creation was a key determinant of fair resource allocation, Guta et al, (2022).

In Tanzania, lack of public participation resulting from lack of awareness, poor communication, unclear roles and responsibilities, insufficient resources, insufficient managerial ability, and financial constraints significantly impacted resource allocation, Kilewo and Frumence (2015). Addressing these concerns can increase public engagement by raising awareness, increasing communication, allocating resources, and building managerial capacity. Tanzania can enhance its inclusive system by addressing public participation in resource allocation. Kenya's lack of effective public participation leads to unequal resource distribution, Songole (2019). Strategies like community involvement, capacity building, cultural sensitivity, transparency, and local ownership are needed. Kenya's National Green Development Fund should incorporate effective public sensitization, mobilization, and decision-making for better resource allocation, Ndegwa et al, (2017).

The National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NGCDF) in Kenya funds social and economic projects, allocating 2.5% of the government's revenue annually, Samwel Emmanuel & Sylvester, (2015). However, challenges include low stakeholder participation, poor project selection, and lack of transparency. The study focuses on issues within Dagoretti South Constituency, highlighting the need for improved public participation and allocation, CDF Act (2003).

Kenyan constituencies often lack community participation in NG-CDF-funded projects, leading to project failure, misappropriation, (Iminyi and Miroga, 2018) and poor public service delivery. Dagoretti South Constituency faces impoverishment, overcrowding, and substandard schools. (GoK, 2018) Challenges include project identification criteria, organizational structure, and unclear distribution within decentralized constituencies, as well as distrust in authority, DmytroKhutkyy, (2017).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive survey design to analyze individual characteristics and determine if variables are associated, Kothari (2019). The target population is the entire group in the Mutuini, Ngando, Riruta, Uthiru, and Waithaka wards of Dagoretti South Constituency. A sample size of 407 respondents was selected using Krejcie and Morgan's sampling theory formula, dividing the target population per ward by the constituency population, Orodho (2017).

The study used sampling techniques to select voters from the Dagoretti South Constituency and purposive sampling to select NG-CDF officials, (Bryman and Bell, 2015).

A semi-structured questionnaire was used for primary data collection, with Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.6 indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Face and content validity were used to evaluate tool accuracy.

Data analysis involved classifying, categorizing, and organizing information, (Kothari 2017).

RESULTS

Level of public Mobilization in the constituency development funds

The study investigates public mobilization in constituency development funding and its factors, including constitutional oversight, influence on citizens, direct and indirect influences, and degrees of agreement on elements enhancing mobilization. Respondents scored statements on the Level of Public Mobilization in Development Funds on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 5 strongly concurring.

Table 1

Level of public Mobilization in the constituency in constituency development funds

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
I. Public turn-out during planning meeting promotes effective NG-CDF allocation in the constituency	14	2.6%	9	2.3%	17	4.4%	117	30%	233	59.7%
II. Public advocacy and lobbying enhance NG-CDF allocation	11	2.8%	14	3.6%	38	9.7%	104	26.7%	223	57.2%
III. Gender representation promote NG-CDF allocation in the constituency	24	6.2%	40	10.3%	59	15.1%	76	19.5%	191	49%
IV. Public mobilization results in acceptance of budget estimates	12	3.1%	14	3.6%	46	11.8%	111	28.5%	207	53.1%
V. Poor mobilization of the public results in misappropriation of constituency funds	8	2.1%	15	3.8%	24	6.2%	95	24.4%	248	63.6%
VI. Public mobilization significant in keeping the constituency officials in check especially on gender balance law	12	3.1%	29	7.4%	35	9.0%	108	27.7%	206	52.8%

Source: Researcher, 2023

Public participation in planning, advocacy, and lobbying significantly impacts NG-CDF allocation in constituencies. Gender representation is crucial, and civic education, public hearings, and project vetting enhance mobilization.

Level of Sensitization and NG-CDF Allocation

The study investigates the community's sensitization to NG-CDF projects and its impact on participation. It assesses the effectiveness of the NG-CDF office in disseminating information, understanding its role in grassroots development, and their understanding of their participatory roles under the Constituency Development Fund framework.

Table 2 level of sensitization and NG- CDF Allocation - agreement to the following statements that relate to the role of sensitization on CDF allocation

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
I. Information, Education and Communication methods such as posters, TV or radio programmes are used to sensitize the constituents about funds allocation.	2	3.4	1	4.4	1	4.6%	125	32.1	209	53.6
	1	%	7	%	8			%		%
II. Sensitization initiatives enhance understanding of key provisions of NG-CDF allocation	6	1.5	9	2.3	2	6.7%	125	32.1	224	57.4
		%		%	6			%		%
III. Sensitization enhance informed opinions and decisions about the funds allocation.	7	1.8	6	5.3	2	6.9%	138	35.4	212	44.4
		%		%	7			%		%
IV. Sensitization promotes effective participation of the constituents on NG-CDF allocation	6	5%	2	0.5	2	5.4%	138	35.4	223	57.2
				%	1			%		%.
V. Poor sensitization result inappropriate fund allocation	9	2.3	6	1.5	2	6.7%	140	35.9	209	53.6
		%		%	6			%		%

Source: Researcher, 2023

The study demonstrates that Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) methods effectively raise community awareness about NG-CDF allocation, thereby enhancing civic education and committee electability.

Decision Making and NG-CDF Allocation

The study aimed to analyze the influence of decision-making on NG-CDF allocation, with respondents expressing their views on the scale of 1-5, with the findings presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Level of agreement to the following statements that relate to the role of decision making on CDF allocation

Statement	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
I. The constituents are given opportunity to make informed decisions about the funds allocation.	17	4.4%	12	3.1%	26	6.7%	126	32.3%	209	53.6%
II. Soliciting expertise advice promote effective funds allocation.	4	1.0%	13	3.3%	23	5.9%	139	35.6%	211	54.1%
III. Poor decision-making result in over or under funds allocation.	2	0.5%	4	1.0 3%	29	7.4%	131	33.6%	224	57.4%
IV. Delayed decision-making results in poor funds allocation.	3	0.8%	5	1.3%	27	6.9%	133	34.1%	222	56.9%
V. Lack of participation of electorate in decision making hinders effective funds allocation.	1	0.3%	7	1.8%	21	5.4%	120	30.8%	240	61.5%

Source: Researcher, 2023

The study found that 53.6% of participants support constituents making informed budget decisions, with expert counsel promoting effective fund allocations. Poor decision-making can lead to overfunding and delayed development. Key informants include citizens, committees, and MPs. Enhancing decision-making involves public participation, civic education, and accessible meetings, aligning public engagement in development.

DISCUSSION:

The study found that public participation in planning meetings significantly impacts the effective allocation of National Green Fund (NG-CDF) in a constituency. Public advocacy and lobbying also improve NG-CDF CDF allocation. Gender representation is also a key factor in constituency development. Public mobilization leads to the acceptance of budget estimates, demonstrating the benefits of community engagement and trust in budget distribution. Poor public mobilization can result in misappropriation of funds, leading to corruption. Public mobilization is also important in keeping officials in check, particularly regarding gender balance legislation. The representation of men and women, children, youths, and people with disabilities in development is prioritized in NG-CDF allocation.

To enhance public mobilization, civic education, public hearings, and project vetting can be implemented. that insufficient community engagement negatively impacts resource distribution and rural development. Public participation in planning meetings, advocacy, and vetting can help ensure the allocation of funds effectively. Overall, public involvement and knowledge are crucial for effective resource allocation in constituencies.

The study found that Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) methods are effective ways to sensitize constituents on fund allocation. Sensitization initiatives improve understanding of key NG-CDF allocation provisions and informed opinions about fund allocation. The majority of respondents agreed that adopting these strategies could address community needs. Sensitization also improves effective constituent engagement in NG-CDF allocation. That public awareness is a significant predictor of resource allocation, and awareness campaigns and sensitization initiatives improve participatory budgeting processes. Poor sensitization results in insufficient funding allocated to constituencies. The study suggests that sensitization can be done through websites, working with influencers, and education on the role of NG-CDF. The larger the number of sensitized public, the higher public participation and project prioritization. Enhancing sensitization initiatives can improve civic education, cohesion, and electing qualified committee members. These findings align with findings that public sensitization is essential for resource allocation, enhancing accountability and transparency.

The study found that most participants (53.6%) agreed that constituents should have the opportunity to make informed budget decisions, with seeking expert counsel promoting effective fund allocations. Poor decision-making results in over or underfunding, and delayed decision-making can lead to inappropriate fund allocations. Lack of electorate participation in decision-making impedes effective fund allocation, and marginalizing communities in democratic procedures can impact timely development. Key informants influencing decision-making during NG-CDF allocation include citizens, committees, and area MPs. Key considerations before NG-CDF resource approval include public participation, assessment of project quotations, and availability of funds. Enhancing decision-making during NG-CDF allocation includes public participation, mobilization, and sensitization through civic education, as well as accessible meetings and oversight boards. Public engagement in decision-making, highlighting the importance of public participation in development.

A survey of 407 Nairobi residents found education significantly influences mobilization, sensitization, and decision-making. Public participation and campaigning increased NG-CDF allocation, with gender representation promoting effective allocation. Strengthening public mobilization through civic education and sensitization campaigns is crucial for gender balance legislation.

CONCLUSION:

The study found that public participation in planning meetings positively impacts NG-CDF allocation in Kenya's Dagoretti South Constituency. Lack of community participation can lead to theft of funds and hinder the implementation of Constituency Development programs. Budget distribution is crucial for executing these programs, and a unit increase in financial distribution leads to increased implementation. Information, education, and communication tactics, such as posters, TV, and radio, are cost-effective ways to reach the population. Sensitization programs improve public informed opinions and budgetary decisions. Experiencing expert assistance promotes effective funds allocations, and excluding communities from democratic practices

hinders effective allocations. Enhancing decision-making in NG-CDF allocation should consider all public input and be based on civic skills, political consciousness, and education.

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