

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA



2. PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED BY PRACTICE.

- Citizen participation or public participation is an action or series of actions a citizen takes to participate in the affairs of his or her own government and/or community.
- When done correctly citizen participation can bring the government close to its citizens, produce more transparent public policies and decisions and enable citizens to hold government leaders more accountable.
- In order for a democratic government to function properly citizens need to participate actively in decision-making policy formulation and service delivery.
- Public participation in Kenya finds its roots in development projects that benefit local communities. Throughout the post-colonial era the country took legislative steps to provide ways for citizens to be active participants in governing of their country.

- Most of those ways, however were limited to local authorities and implementation of laws incorporating public participation did not reach their full potential because citizens did not fully understand their rights or embrace the opportunity.

INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS.

- The promulgation of the new Kenyan constitution in August 2010 provided a strong legal framework for public participation.

3. POLICIES AND LEGISLATIONS FORMULATION.

- The 47 counties are currently in the process of formulation of policies and regulations to legislate public participation inline with tenats of constitution.

4. BENEFITS/SUSTAINABILITY.

- Public officials are better able to understand and respond to the needs of the community.
- Increased credibility between public officials and the community on important issues and services.
- Citizens who feel they belong and trust in their community and local government.

- Alternative views from a greater diversity of citizens contributing to the public debate on issues and decisions-making.
- Citizens who are better informed on projects and proposals undertaken by the government.
- Community concerns that are more focused and prioritized for public officials to address.
- Citizens diverse and unique skills sets are revealed to government officials and the community.
- A public that is more aware of community concerns and can thus more effectively judge government responses.
- Increased capacity of citizens to contribute to future public debates and decisions impacting their community.
- Citizens who feel they have greater ownership over government decision, when public officials consult them.

5. LESSONS LEARNT.

- Ownership sustainability still not possible with entrenched corruption and unaccountability by government and other public agencies.
- Motivation lacking on the part of the public to take in public participation.
- Institutions not willing to engage the public on projects.
- Politicization of the forums.
- Lack of education and awareness to the citizens.

TRANSFER

- Formation of policies and regulations that encourage public participation in urban development critical for ownership and sustainability.