Improving public participation in the preparation of Siaya County Integrated Development Plan in Kenya

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Abstract

In accordance with the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, Kenya's devolved system of governance provides for public participation in county planning and in the implementation of those plans. In Siaya County, this process is skewed towards county government budget scrutiny. Other sectors only apply the same framework for their sector's public participation processes which often leads to unsatisfactory outcomes for citizens. This action research study uses a Yala Community Participation Framework to prepare the Siaya County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018–2022. Results show that the implementation was done with remarkable degree of success. The five framework's steps and its base of Community Facilitator and Information Resources Hub were applied with very minimal adaptations. The application has addressed new planning issues, facilitated the creation of public participation directorate, and ensured substantial adoption of participatory methodologies for county planning framework. However, successful deployment requires a mindset shift among the county citizens and government staff which remained a major challenge. The study recommends the use of Yala Hub Framework for the development and revisions of county management plans. Finally, the need for and value of a Community Facilitator and Information Resources Hub in county integrated development planning to strengthen Kenya's devolved system of governance.

Keywords: Devolution; Kenya; Public Participation; County Planning; Yala Community Participation Framework

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, participation has become a key element in development matters. The awareness that individuals are responsible for managing and benefiting from the available resources has increased throughout time (Ostrom, 1990; WWF, 2006; Lockie and Sonnenfeld, 2008; GoK, 2010; Hardin, 1968; IUCN, 2009; Cooke and Kothari, 2001). The Aarhus Convention of 1998 states that citizens not only need to have access to information but also have the right to participate in decision-making and be included in justice in environmental issues (DETR, 2000; Stec et al., 2000). As in Kenya, public participation is a constitutional requirement under article 69 (1) of the Constitution and Part VIII Section 87-92 and 115 of the County Government Act, 2012 and Part 2 section 6 (1) a-e, 2(1) of Public Participation Bill, 2020 (GoK, 2017; GoK, 2020).

The desire to adopt participatory approaches stems from a perceived paradigm shift in development that supports participation as a means to advance development (Cleaver, 1999; 2001). Promoters of participatory approaches observe that the traditional top-down management style is inefficient, corrupt, and exploitative of the poor and the marginalized (World Bank, 1998; 2002). Participation is therefore a means to meet locally felt needs, redistributing scarce resources, empowering the poor and marginalized by enhancing local management capacity, increasing trust and raising collective consciousness of participants (Chambers, 1997). In this regard, the people-centred participation is closely related to the concept of "strong" participation, as initially promoted by Chambers (1983). From these perspectives, the people-centered participation is seen as a way of substituting empowerment to enable the disempowered and the excluded to make their own decisions. As a result, participation is presented as a feasible response to these challenges.
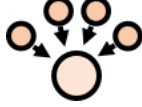
Participation has been studied under different models (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Michener, 1998). These models include, for example, the ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969); the wheel model with four levels (Davidson, 1998); and the spectrum model (Stuart, 2017; ODPM, 2004). According to the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2, 2008) public participation consist of five levels: Information (lowest level, where participation does not go beyond information provision), consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment (highest level, where the public are given a final say on the project decision).

In this paper, the Spectrum of Public Participation developed by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) to help clarify the role of the public (or community) in planning and decision-making, and how much influence the community has over planning or decision-making processes (Stuart, 2017; IAP2, 2008; ODPM, 2004) has been used as the basis for the study. It identifies five levels of public participation (or community engagement) from inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower shown in Table 1. This study is grounded on two theories, namely: Systems Theory and its related adaptations to deal with complex issues including Ecosystems Approach Theory, Post-Modernism, Theory U for leading profound changes; (Scharmer, 2016; Stave, 2002; Von Bertalanffy,1968); and Empowerment and Transformational Learning Theory to anchor the learning element of the social sustainability of aspect the decentralized systems management (Page and Czuba, 1999; Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005; Taylor, 2007; Mezirow, 1991, 1995, 1996, 1997; Cranton, 1996).

Empowerment refers to supporting people in becoming agents in their own development (Sen, 1997; Duveskog, 2013) and that communities cannot be empowered by orders from above. But that empowerment, comes through self-realisation, self-organisation and collective action (Lightfoot (2002). Since community organizations include individuals of mixed ages, gender, occupations and abilities who strive to gain more power over their own lives and surroundings, it is thus interesting to explore the extent to which

empowerment can have decentralized systems of governance. Transformational Learning anchors the fact that human beings naturally tend to make meaning of their daily lives and continuously change their perceptions based on new experiences (Mezirow, 1991, 1995, 1996, 1997; Cranton, 1996).

Table 1. Spectrum of Public Participation

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner.	To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions.	To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE	"we will keep you informed"	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns"	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made	"we will look to you for advice and innovations and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible"	"We will implement what you decide"

(Adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, Stuart, 2017)

Kenya's devolved governance system provides for public participation in county planning and execution of these plans (GoK, 2010; GoK, 2012, CGS, 2018). Specifically, public participation in Siaya is done at two levels: directly by visiting all the 30 wards and through written memoranda from the citizenry. But there are challenges that have often led to complaints by members of the public. Some of the main complaints include slow pace of implementation of projects, failure to include some of the proposals in the planning documents; low budgetary allocations to projects; lack of adequate copies of progress reports on ward projects and lack of time for participation. In some occasions, stand-off have been precipitated by local politics.

Further, public participation processes and outcomes have been a challenge with citizen's expressing great dissatisfaction and feeling very disappointed with the dividends of devolution compared to other sister counties. This action research sought to investigate the Siaya County public participation framework and deploy the Yala community participation framework to optimize citizens' participation in the preparation of Siaya CIDP for 2018-2022.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 created a two-tier system of governance, a national and devolved county governments, that are distinct and interdependent and thus requires a paradigm shift in development planning (GoK, 2010). Devolution was expected to have the most transformative impact on governance, public administration, and resource management across the country. County Governments are required to prepare five-year CIDPs to guide planning and budgeting activities at the county level. The CIDPs should be aligned to national plans such as the Kenya Vision 2030, its Medium-Term Plans and the National Spatial Plan as well as to international commitments such as the Africa Union Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030(AU, 2013). This coherence seeks to guarantee effective and efficient use of scarce resources.

2. The Yala hub Community Participation Framework

Article 220(2) (a) of the Kenyan Constitution 2010 states that, "National legislation shall prescribe the structure of the development plans and budgets of counties". Several Acts of Parliament are in place to provide the legal framework for the implementation of this Article 220(2) (a). They include the County Government Act 2012, the Public Financial Management Act 2012 and the Urban Areas and Cities Act 2011(GoK, 2012a; GoK, 2012b; GoK 2011).

The County Government Act 113, (2) states that "each county integrated development plan shall provide clear input, output and outcome performance indicators, including (a) the percentage of households with access to basic services contemplated under Article 43 of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution.

Further Article 43 (1) of the Constitution states that "Every person has the right (a) to the highest attainable standard of health, which includes the right to health care services, including reproductive health care;(b) to accessible and adequate housing, and to reasonable standards of sanitation;(c) to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality; (d) to clean and safe water in adequate quantities;(e) to social security; and (f) to education". The decentralized governance system seeks to deliver the aspirations of the Constitution and CIDP is the basic document that guides the county in attaining them.

2.1. County integrated development plan

Integrated development planning is a process through which efforts of national and devolved levels of government and other relevant stakeholders are coordinated at local level, through which economic, social, environmental, legal and spatial aspects of development are brought together to produce a plan that meets the needs and sets the targets for the benefit of local communities (GoK, 2012a, NEMA, 2016; JICA, 1987).

A good plan therefore is one that is simple, realistic, comprehensive, consistent, precise, and facilitative in terms of policy and resource outlay for project implementation. Consequently, preparation of the CIDP should ensure that the following issues are taken into account: CIDP strategies with sectoral objectives are translated into specific targets; environmental sustainability; inclusive and participatory.

The CIDP preparation process entails the six phases namely: phase one; preliminaries, phase two: data collection and analysis, phase three; strategies development, phase four; designing programmes and projects, phase five; Integration and phase six; approval which entails adoption by the County Executive and County Assembly(this adoption entails validation through public participation and adherence to existing laws and regulations which the Yala Hub framework was deployed to improve the processes (GoK, 2020; Odero, 2021; Odero and Odenyo, 2022).

3. The Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR-Hub Framework

The Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR-Hub Framework (Yala Hub Community Framework) was originally designed to optimize community participation in Yala wetland ecosystem management in Lake Victoria basin Kenya (Odero, 2021; Odero and Odenyo, 2022). The framework sought to remedy the weaknesses of the original Yala Project Advisory Committee (YPAC) mechanism as well as to tap opportunities presented as an outcome of an action research. The Yala Hub framework is both a diagnostic and optimizing tool for public participation processes that requires learning from the environment to maximize it benefits.

3.1. The framework steps

The framework is divided in five steps namely: 1. React/Act. 2. Restructure/Adjust the participation framework based on the reactions. 3. Participation Preparations. 4. Community Participation and 5. Review, Evaluate and Follow-up and these are supported by a base of a Community Facilitator (CF) with a supportive Information Resources Hub (IR-Hub) to support its execution as presented in Figure 1. The details of how this framework works are outlined below.

3.1.1. Step 1. React/act

The first step is to gain entry to participate in the process. The intervener has to find appropriate entry point which depends on the context and how the facilitator is positioned (e.g. researcher with their interest at heart, their own representative with technical expertise in the process, known conservationist of good reputation with community) and also application of emotional intelligence to get into the ongoing process (e.g. understand their areas of greatest need to participate in the process). Since this is an ongoing/already started process, one should proceed to conduct stakeholder analysis tier two, which reviews existing stakeholders and their level of participation, and special preference for local communities.

The guiding questions for this step are:

- 1. What does this community regard highly that can lead to high degree of acceptance of an outsider/ a facilitator?
- 2. Who is participating in this process? Who is missing on the decision-making table? Which other important voices are not being heard on this planning agenda? Are the divergent voices included in this process? Does participation ensure fair geographic representation? The process facilitator should identify these and ensure their inclusion.

- 3. What are the strengths and challenges of the existing community participation framework currently being implemented? On the spectrum of public participation (informing, consulting, involving, collaborating to empowering levels).
- 4. Using the 10 indicators for public participation effectiveness, what are strengths and weaknesses of the current community participation framework in development intervention processes? How do you ensure the weaknesses are mitigated going forward? The 10 indicators are Objective of participation; Contexts for the participation; Levels of Involvement; Who was involved, how were they chosen and by who? What methods were used (maps, interviews), if they did, did they work? Innovation of the methods used; Commitment to community participation; Inputs (time, money etc. and results in relation to those inputs); Outputs (hard outputs, reports, posters, press, completed survey forms); and Outcome.
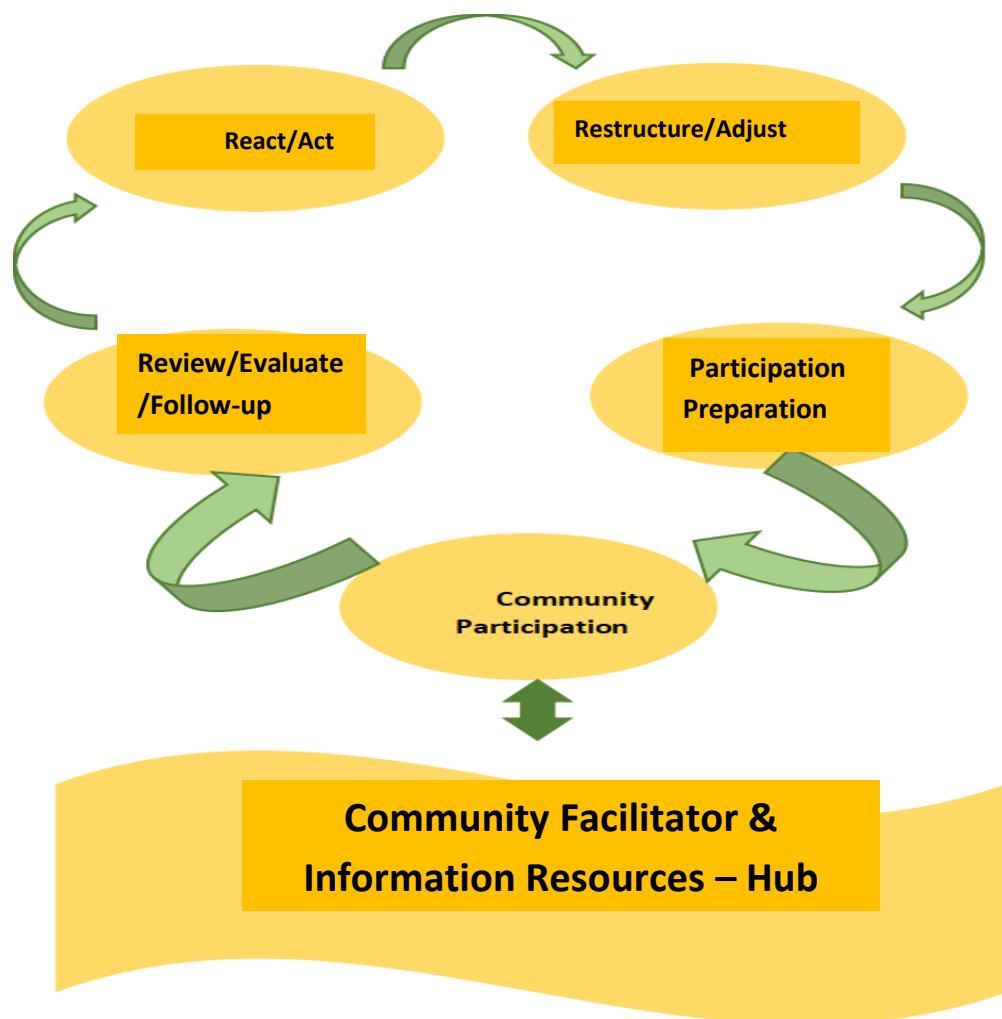
Figure 1. The YALA RAPPEF-CF-IR-Hub Framework for Optimizing Community Participation in Yala Delta Land Use Plan

3.1.2. Step 2. Restructure/adjust the participation framework based on the feedback step

The outcome of first step forms the basis for adjustment and restructuring this stage. In the processes, the researcher adjusts the participation process by bringing to the decision-making table important stakeholders who were initially left out. It expands the representation of local communities to include community formations/organizations and learning institutions at their bases. Preparations and actual implementation methodologies are modified, and new ones are added based on feedback of the first stage. If the project is new, it moves directly from step 1 to step 3.

Guiding questions were:

- 1. Who needs to be added to the participation processes? What uniqueness do they bring on board?
- 2. How can one ensure meaningful participation from the people joining an ongoing process?
- 3. How are the elements that were hampering community participation effectiveness being tackled in the adjusted mechanism?
- 4. How can one use participatory methodologies to improve participation?
- 5. What should one do to improve the environment for participation and harness creativity?

3.1.3. Step 3. Participation preparations

The third step requires extensive preparation before actual participation. Therefore, this step, one, evaluates participation readiness and ensures that the process is ready by addressing identified concerns; two, it identifies and empowers facilitator(s) to manage the process effectively by providing hands-on training in facilitation skills, including mock training among facilitators; three, enabling logistical support, and framing issues for discussion with the identified stakeholders in the first step using appreciative lenses focusing on root causes and suggesting the possibilities of tackling them.

The guiding questions for this step are:

- 1. What is the level of community participation in this activity? Does the process provide local communities with room to articulate their interests and concerns?
- 2. What are the units of participation? What is the smallest unit for participation in this case? How are they organized to enable smooth flow of information and receive timely feedback?
- 3. What type of persons will be required to facilitate this participation process?
- 4. What type of skills and training are required to equip facilitators of this process?
- 5. What logistical support and budget will be required to conduct this participation?
- 6. How does one frame issues for effective discussion with the identified stakeholders in step 1 above?
- 7. Which participatory methodologies are appropriate/best? And how will one use these in community participation processes?
- 8. What creativity and innovations will one bring to this community participation process?

3.1.4. Step 4. Community participation

This step is where the target communities interact with the planning processes and provide feedback to the main CIDP secretariat (technical team). Various methods are used for these interactions which enable the communities to express themselves holistically. For example, by empathy walks; consulting in communities'

local languages; artistic works where talented community members express themselves; and cultural artifacts to express themselves. The CF manages the community participation processes using various participatory methodologies and resolves any participation challenges to ensure maximum interaction of communities in the planning process and relaying critical feedback to the technical team and other planning organs.

The guiding questions were:

- 1. How does one conduct community consultations that will allow participation of the new groups to smoothly integrate with other existing teams?
- 2. Summarize the key issues about (CIDP) process to date? What are the areas of convergence? What are the areas of disagreement? What other concerns about resources do the communities have?
- 3. What participation tools are appropriate for the targeted community and why?
- 4. How are the processes outcomes documented, validated by the communities and relayed to the technical team for inclusion?
- 5. What do the target communities' value most about the planned resource and why? What are the communities' non- negotiables on resources being planned?

3.1.5. Step 5. Review, evaluate and follow-up: participants feedback about participation processes

At this stage stakeholders evaluate the participation processes and outcomes guided by the following questions:

- 1. What went very well? b. What could be done even better/improved next time?
- 2. How does one feel about the final outcome of the plan?
- 3. What follow-up mechanism is in place to ensure community participation issues/outcomes in the plan are later implemented?
- 4. How does one get the community as a key player in the implementation processes?
- 5. How does one ensure that the benefits from planned resources are shared equitably with the target communities and their key actors with a mutual accountability system?

3.2. Community facilitator

At the core of optimizing community participation in planning processes is the Community Facilitator (CF) who helps communities navigate those five steps and is supported by an Information Resources Hub (IR-Hub). The CF should have relevant attributes and skills in interpreting scientific and technical information to the community. A key feature CF also provides was for a safe environment of trust, inspired confidence and mutual respect for participation. Thus, relationship building is vital aspect of increasing community participation which the CF brings into participation in CIDP process. The CF has to build relationship and nurture trust in relationship building to increase participation levels and quality. This requires capability to apply emotional intelligence skills by the CF to hasten this process.

The type of stakeholders targeted in the expanded process determines the type of data collection tools adopted. For example, the youth prefer a mix of media concurrently (audiovisuals, social media whatsapp, facebook, instagram, group work sent to their phones directly), while in schools one can use artwork, debates, essays with queries that focused on challenges and what future they envisioned of the future of the resource /planned area. For environmental events days the team can choose gallery walks, display of artistic works,

display of resource products, live performances like poems and dramas with planning messages, display of ecotourism sites and thematic songs delivered with aid of traditional instruments (such nyatiti, ohangla, orutu, pekee, tung) and talks by both government and community leaders based on the theme of the event. The CF also seizes these occasions to update them on CIDP progress, key planning issues and obtained their feedback on the same (leveraged participation points and new feedback loops).

In addition, the steps intentionally involved the use of local leaders to co-facilitate the meetings with the researchers after being trained on CIPD specific issues to guide focus group discussions and community meetings.

3.3. Information Resources Hub (IR-Hub)

The IR-Hub was vital in gathering, processing and relaying timely data and information required to inform the processes. The IR-Hub is a support mechanism to enable communities to access relevant and timely information and knowledge for decision making in planning processes. It entails sourcing, processing, repackaging, storing, retrieving, dissemination and feedback.

Thus, Yala Hub Community framework is a facilitative model with a CF and IR-Hub being the foundation to its execution (35%). Its five steps which accounts for 65% of its effectiveness are: Step 1. React/Act; Step 2. Restructure/Adjust the participation framework based on the reactions in step one; Step 3. Participation Preparations, Step 4. Community Participation; and Step 5. Review, Evaluate and Follow-up. Each of these five steps has coaching/guiding questions to help tease out information for actualizing the process. Whereas the processes are sequential, the application can be iterative as feedback from preceding steps provide insights and revelations that may take the user back to mine more data and information before moving ahead in the continuum.

4. Context and methodology

4.1. Location and population of the study area

The County Government of Siaya is one of the 47 county governments created by the constitution of Kenya 2010. It was established in March 2013 following the general elections held that year. It consists of two arms; the executive and the legislature headed by the Governor and Speaker respectively. The executive has 10 departments headed by County Executive Committee Members and a semi-autonomous Public Service Board headed by a chairperson. The first legislature comprised 30 elected and 18 nominated members (CGS, 2018).

Siaya County is one of the six counties in Nyanza region (Figure 2). It has a land surface area of approximately 2,530km² and the water surface area is approximately 1,005 km2. It borders Busia County to the North West, Vihiga and Kakamega counties to the North East, Kisumu County to the South East and Homa Bay County across the Winam Gulf to the South (Figure 3). The water surface area forms part of Lake Victoria (the third largest freshwater lake in the world) It approximately lies between latitude 0º 26´ South to 0º 18´ North and longitude 33º 58´ and 34º 33´ East (CGS, 2018).

Figure 2. Location of Siaya County   **Figure 3.** Administrative and Political Units

Population size, structure and distribution against the county resource endowment are major challenges to the setting of priorities for development and in implementing plans. In 2009, the population of the county was 842,304 consisting of 398,986 males and 443,318 females. The latest census of 2019 shows the county population was 993,183 (consisting of 471,669 males, 521,496 females and 18 intersex (KNBS, 2020). The population has been further projected to rise to 1,114,735 comprising 529,646 males and 585,088 females and 1,285,971 comprising 610,179 males and 675,792 females in 2022 and 2030 respectively (KNBS, 2010). The population of the county is dominated by females at 53 percent against 47 per cent males due to high mortality rate for males between ages 0 years to 19 years and high life expectancy for females. The rapidly increasing population requires increased investments in basic social infrastructure and utilities such as schools, health facilities, water, sanitation and services.

4.2. Data and methods

Given the complex nature of the new devolved system of governance in Kenya, action research is the best methodology to unravel participation issues therein. Developed by Kurt Lewin in 1994, Action Research methodologies assist the "actor" in improving and/or refining his or her actions (Reason, 1994; Stringer, 1999; Mills, 2000). It seeks transformative change through the simultaneous process of taking action and doing research, which are linked together by critical reflection (Lewin, 1958; Johnson, 1976). Thus, Action Research is problem centered, client centered, and action oriented. It involves the client system in a diagnostic, active-learning, problem-finding and problem-solving process.

In this study, action research used multiple methods including purposive and stratified sampling to collect data. Training Thirty-one (31) CIDP facilitators were identified, trained and deployed to facilitate public participation consultations on CIDP development in 31 Siaya County wards.

The data gathered were analyzed in an inductive manner, where themes were generated based on emerging similarities of expression in the data material. Many of these elements provided quotations in the write- up of research findings and other similar elements were quantified using descriptive statistics to give a sense of the emerging themes. The results were validated, final document approval by executive and county assembly levels.

Additionally, multidisciplinary research using case study design has employed exploratory action research with both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis (Dawson et al., 1993, Krueger and Casey, 2008; Natasha et al., 2005; Neuman, 1997; Reason, 1994). Appreciative Inquiry (AI) methodology, participatory approaches and secondary data were used for data collection and analysis (Dweck, 2008; Cooperrider, et al., 2006). Secondary data included policy and legal frameworks, National government planning guidelines and procedures, and relevant public participation studies. This qualitative research used was supported by quantitative methods. Strauss and Corbin (1990) noted that quantitative and qualitative methods are tools that complement each other.

Finally, literature review was conducted on public participation, policies, laws and relevant studies that provided secondary data and a valuable source of additional information for triangulation of data generated by other means during the research, which has also been used by many researchers (Friis-Hansen and Duveskog, 2012; IYSLP, 2017).

5. Results and discussions

This study presents the process and outcomes of applying a Yala community participation framework in the preparation of Siaya County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP).

The County Government Act (2012a) provides for development of a CIDP in a participatory manner. Whereas this is a requirement, Siaya County government had been grappling with how best to conduct this while conducting County budgeting process where they have faced many challenges as discussed earlier.

5.1. Deployment of Yala Hub community framework to preparation of CIDP 2018-2020

During the development of CIDP 2018-2022 from September 2017to April 2018, the Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR Hub framework was applied in CIDP development process as follows:

5.1.1. Step 1. React/act

The researcher joined the process as the lead mentor for the county government by providing technical skills and building their capacity for CIDP development as component of Public Expenditure Management (PEM) Cycle. This process had already started earlier and even generated draft one of CIDP 2018-2022 by November 2017. In providing technical assistance, the researcher (as Process Facilitator) reviewed the processes that had taken place up till then. It was found that the process had a technically skewed membership of CIDP secretariat and departmental technical specialists. They had reviewed previous plans, generated sector plans like Environment, Agriculture, Health, Lands, Education, Trade and Industries which touched on conservation and utilization of Yala wetland resources.

The researcher applied stakeholder analysis tier two which identified the following as missing or underrepresented: students, professionals both from within and outside the county; members of the county who were in the diaspora. These eventually organized themselves and their submissions treated as from the diaspora ward number 31.

The team conducted public participation for County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) and Budgeting process only to meet legal compliance as per the Public Finance Management Act (2012b). In the first generation of CIDP 2013-2017 the team did not conduct public participation citing time pressure to deliver the plan to enable the national government to release funds to counties to start operationalizing devolved governance units. Thus, the CIDP secretariat, where the researcher mentored the team, proceeded to conduct public participation by applying Yala RAPPEF–CF-IR Hub framework to improve the quality of the participation in the remainder of the CIDP 2018-2022 process based on its effective use in Yala Landuse Plan development (Odero, 2021; Odero and Odenyo, 2022).

Thus, from the analysis of how the county had done public participation for CFSP and budgeting processes; it was determined that improving public participation would require inclusivity at the secretariat, the departments, wards and village levels, and the non-governmental agencies working within the county. It further needed good linkage with the national government to ensure compliance and to benefit from lessons learnt from the first generation of CIDP planning cycle.

5.1.2. Step 2. Restructure/adjust the participation framework based on the feedback from reaction step 1

Informed by the above analysis, the CIDP secretariat expanded the consultation framework. The stakeholder's analysis tier two was done at the public participation training of trainers for Ward administrators, technical staff, sub-county administrators and representatives of civil society to equip them for the task. Each ward mapped out their own stakeholders with respect to the planning functions expected for generating integrated county plan, required resources and their sources.

Among the stakeholder left out initially but second level of identification brought on the fore were: Motor cycle operators (boda boda); supporters of leaders who lost in the general election of August 2017; people who are not in groups such as older person in the society; students in schools; and county residents who were out of the county and country at the time (i.e.diasporians).

Step 3. Participation Preparations

This entailed preparing draft document arising from plans from various county sector and departmental plans; previous CIDP 2013-2017 review and peer reviews inputs. The CIDP development facilitators at the ward level were trained on CIDP planning process, facilitation skills, data collection, processing and documentation.

The team identified facilitators from county government departments, CIDP secretariat and non-state actors. The ward administrators with the help of CIDP secretariat, subject matter specialists and non-state actors managed the participation processes at each ward level. The facilitators were given a two day-training of trainers (TOT) to equip them with the new approach to county planning (Figures 4 and 5).

The training curriculum included: Understanding the County Integrated Planning Processes; Review of 2013-2017 CIDP at ward levels; Why Public Participation? Public Participation Data Collection Tools i.e., Stakeholder mapping and analysis, Problem Analysis using problem tree tool, Appreciative Inquiry (The

Opportunity Tree); Group work and simulation; Facilitation skills for public fora; Ward based Action planning and development of a road map to public participation (Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 4. Public participation training workshop group photo at Distinction Gardens Siaya January 25-26, 2018. The Siaya County Secretary and the CECM for Finance officially opened the training.

Photo credit: Author 2018

Figure 5. Stakeholder mapping and analysis tool simulation session by trainees during TOT on Public Participation for CIDP development.

Figure 6. Multifaceted approaches including Video of the "disabled mum taking care of her child" being aired to the participants as part of emotional intelligence package for helping change mindset from helplessness to using what you have to transform,

Photo credit: Author 2018
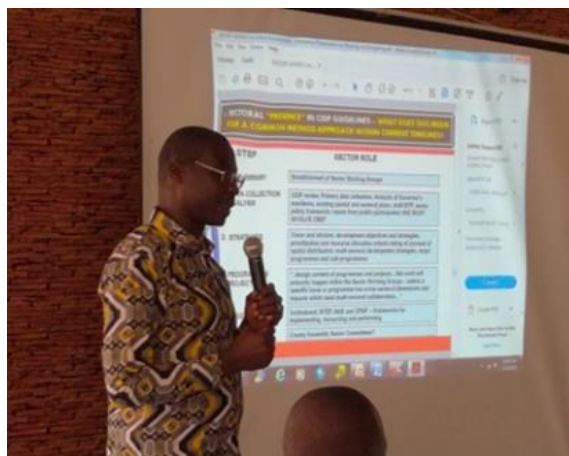
Figure 7. Dr. Douglas Ouma CIDP mentor and researcher taking participants through CIDP Process and Content.

The County Secretary challenged the TOTs trainees about the lack of money mindset as a hindrance to creativity in planning and implementation, saying. "It is a good thing to plan when you are broke" while the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) of finance and the head of County Treasury spelt out his expectation as "Siaya County needs to come up with a bankable CIDP".
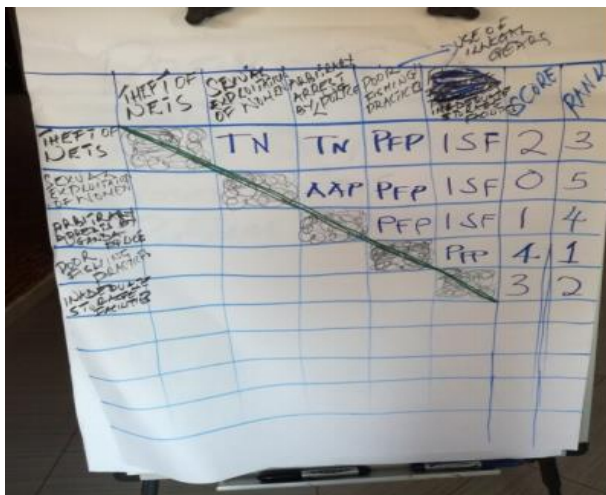

Figure 8. Presentation of sector working group feedback to the plenary in Boro, West Alego sub-county during CIDP public participation forum

Figure 9. The Siaya County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education facilitating incorporation of public participation feedback into the draft CIDP.

Photo credit: Author 2018

Figure 10. Sample pairwise ranking for problems facing the fishing communities in the fisheries department.

Figure 11. CIDP Public Participation conducted in 30 wards and submissions and other interest were covered under ward 31 (diaspora ward).

The trainees conducted mock public participation where they applied the pair-wise ranking and recorded the feedback from the communities (Figure 10). The mock identified areas where they had difficulties, had these clarified by trainers and members of CIDP secretariat deployed as back-up to the teams during public participation. The team also mapped out potentially challenging stations based on prior experience, incitement by local leadership; territorial control base of some leaders and back-up team assigned appropriately with those concerns in mind. Likewise, teams in these potentially challenging areas were psychologically prepared. The ward administrators developed a plan and a checklist preparation of CIDP public participation to ensure proper preparations.

5.1.3. Step 4. Community participation

The notice for the meeting was advertised in the local daily newspaper (Figure 11) and on local FM radios. The ward administrators then mobilized the teams while ensuring representation reflected the agreed upon list of stakeholders identified during the TOT training stakeholder analysis tier 2. The public participation forums were held between 10 a.m. and 5.00p.m. from February 5 to 9, 2018 in all the county's 30 wards. The following week of February 12-15, 2018, the team also conducted a separate public participation for County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) which focused on policy guidance on budget ceilings. The teams met every day to prepare at the county headquarter, then departed to their respective wards and reconvened at the end of the day to debrief especially with the county director of planning. The ward administrators provided leadership in their respective wards. The new CIDP-style planning concept, integrated development planning, was explained and given local metaphors for the communities to comprehend it being "Lek mar county mag ndalo mabiro" translated as the dreams and aspiration of the county.

Due to historical resource challenges over time, communities found it difficult to believe that they could envision a world where there would be no constraints indicating a shift from resource constraint mindset to resource abundance mindset. Interestingly, some community meetings within the Yala swamp (a key resource for the county) they were able to present issues they had presented during SEA/LUP meetings (where the framework was developed) like expanding the fishing industry, protection of Yala swamp while deriving benefits from the swamp, co-management of wetland resources with government agencies, fear of the wetland being taken by the government as a protected area thereby allowing only limited community access to its benefits (Odhengo et al., 2018a; Odhengo et al., 2018b).

In one ward, the local communities, and their elected member of County Assembly (MCA) warned the CIDP public participation team by stating their pre-conditions for participation. First, that they would participate only if the facilitators guaranteed that discussion from the communities will be taken seriously. Second, that they would not be rushed but rather take the meeting to its logical conclusion. And when the meeting started, they said they were mobilized for budget presentation and not CIDP hence they would have to go back and prepare for the CIDP meeting later. With a bit of persuasion and use of local communities who understood and thus explained new form planning; and with the respect they had for the local chief, the communities agreed to proceed with the meeting.

The communities engaged in prioritisation of their issues using pair wise ranking tool and appreciated how different choices coalesce to give priority having taken everybody's opinion on board without conflicts (Figure 10). Additionally, they identified transformative projects in the counties 10 departments as per the Executive Order No 1 of 2017(County Government of Siaya, 2017).

The research used the following participatory tools to increase community participation in CIDP planning processes: stakeholder analysis tier two, priority ranking, focus group discussions and community meetings at ward levels, requested for submission of memorandum, advertisement of the meetings through national newspapers, radio announcement on local FM radio stations and finally mounted on participation dates on county headquarter, sub-county and ward offices notice boards

The ward administrators in each ward became community facilitator who mobilized their respective communities. The various groups that came to ward level meetings included: CBOs, NGOs, religious leaders, youth groups, and County Technical officers (Figures 8 and11). The NGOs like World Vision organized their community teams to review the draft CIDP and prepare their issues before the actual day. Then on the material day they participated in sectors groups raising issues in their respective memos.

5.1.4. Step 5. Review and evaluation: participants feedback about participation

The preparation of TOT for Public participation was evaluated and feedback used to fine tune planning processes by the ward administrators. Some of the feedback about the training included: "Complaints might not be the issue but how to turn them into something positive" a member of CIDP secretariat.

The ward level consultations were done for five days. They involved mobilization of communities by announcements through vernacular FM radios on Mayienga and Ramogi FM Radio stations; word of mouth by the ward administrators; chiefs and their assistants at local community meetings (barazas). Participants said the consultations made them feel like co-owners of the CIDP plan hence would actively participate in plans' implementation.

Despite some of these positive feedbacks, some citizens did not trust that the county government was genuine in seeking their views as expressed by some community members. While conducting CFSP public participation in West Ugenya, a ward administrator was insulted by a member of the public who said "Tunajua unatafuta per diem, ndara ma ugero no, iko kwa tumbo yako" meaning "we know you are looking for per diem /allowances, the road you purport you want to build is in your stomach". This clearly underscores the mistrust the communities had on the ward administrator and the county government officials conducting community consultations on government plans and budgeting process.

The following quotations capture their feedback on application of the framework from all the 30 wards based on draft CIDP:

> "There is need to establish the County Budget and Economic Forum to facilitate public participation, have a comprehensive civic education in relation to key policy documents and the departments should take the process very seriously to facilitate early release of the technical staff".

> "There should be adequate funds which should be set aside for the public participation process while public participation forms and language should be simplified".

> "The county should use the bottom-up approach that is from the village-Ward, Sub-County then finish at the County level for the PP process with more time allocated to the PP process not just one day".

"Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation should be done and given a true picture on the ground while there should be a feedback mechanism back to the public and periodic oversight on the implementation of CIDP".

"Some major flagship projects may have been left out, yet they are very political and they include Fish Processing factory in Ratiya, Dominion Farms after the Mzungu left and the cold storage structures in Usenge and Wichlum being underutilized".

"Public and Community land missing in the CIDP and the theme of Research and Development that would transform the County through Research Development".

Some feedback from professionals and county citizens from the diaspora are captured in the quotation below.

"The CIDP is well written and provides sufficient information which if implemented can give the County a proper take-off. However, a document of this nature is worthless unless the Siaya executive and legislature can internalize and implement it. So far, the executive in Siaya has been relatively inert, now six years down the road. One key observation is the lack of recognition of possible roles of Professionals from the County who are both retired and active in backing up the implementation of the plan, be it formally or informally. Similarly, the County people in the Diaspora and their possible involvement is lacking in the proposal. You need to look at other County's CIDPs and see how they have addressed these resources. Finally, there is need to link the CIDP with Agenda four of the current government. Development is politically driven and Siaya county must see itself as a microcosm of the Kenya nation in development" a professor of agriculture and rural development at a Kenyan public university.

The members of county assembly requested for documentation of public participation feedback from their respective wards as evidence to countercheck the final CIDP during the second County Assembly training on CIDP Scrutiny, Budget and Approvals held in Kisumu. The mentor availed the excel sheets where the feedback was captured as well as gave them an overview of the CIDP process and content as part of the training delivered by AHADI and Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training.

5.2. Community facilitator support

A key element of Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR Hub framework is a dedicated community facilitator (CF) who seizes the concerns of local communities and ensures they are integrated in the planning processes. The facilitator provides a safe environment of trust and mutual respect for participation. In the CIDP this function was done by the lead mentor for CIDP process. The mentor again was native of the county, Planner and Policy Analyst and had access to decision makers such as some the CECMs and chief officers, directors and development partners' support. The American Government through USAID/AHADI gave some leverage in accessing top leadership on short notice. The CF (as lead mentor) was pivotal in finalizing the CIDP with views from the expanded stakeholders brought on the planning process.

5.3. The Information Resources Hub (IR- Hub)

The researcher used information resources from mentoring toolkit available for mentors who were supporting Kenya Devolution Support Programme and personal information resources relevant for mentoring demands of the county. Mentoring toolkit and information resources always held on the cloud (dropbox for easy access: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4ji6ldfqsvuchhz/AAAS-P4t71rl-Q0vWju3Zanxa?dl=0). The information and tools contained in the mentoring toolkit were mainly: the Constitution of Kenya 2010; Devolution policy, CIDP guidelines, CIDP review, Planning tools, Sector Planning Process, Sector working groups, Public participation toolkit, Sector Tool for Climate change and Disaster Risk Screening, Gender and Climate change, Rapid Results Initiatives. This IR- Hub was very useful during the plan development and implementation phase of the plan. The facilitating team updated this with new resources and lesson learnt in the process of executing the task.

5.4. Key outcomes of deploying Yala Hub Framework in CIDP development

5.4.1. New planning issues

Some unique planning issues had not been raised during draft development but emerged during the application of this framework. The issues included: cage fish farming environmental impact assessment; warehousing system to manage post-harvest losses, mental health, commercialization of agriculture, Fish processing, institutional structure for public participation and its resourcing, lack of recognition of possible roles of Professionals from the County (including retirees and diasporians) in backing up the implementation of the plan, County think Tanks, Minority/ special groups, and gender.

5.4.2. Creation of a directorate of public participation

The Siaya county public consultation mechanism was designed to serve the CIDP development but was not institutionalized for other development interventions since there was no directorate with staff to continue public participation processes.

The application of the Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR-Hub framework contributed to the creation of a directorate of public participation which elevated the public participation function and profile in the county. It was agreed that the directorate be housed in the department of Governance and Administration. Secondly, the directorate structure provided for consultation up to village level with village administrators which would deepen the level of consultation as shown in Figure 12.

In applying this Yala Hub participation framework, the following were identified as its main challenges. First, the public consultation mechanism was designed to serve the CIDP development but not institutionalized for other development interventions. Second, the two-day TOT training for public participation was inadequate for course content and practicum required for facilitators. Third, there were logistical challenges particularly limited and late release of vehicles to take the secretariat teams to public participation sites, stationary, inadequate funding for the process that was to be used for staff allowance, mobilization, attendance and refreshments. Fourth, the data collection forms provided for use were not user friendly/simple for public use especially on prioritization on issues.
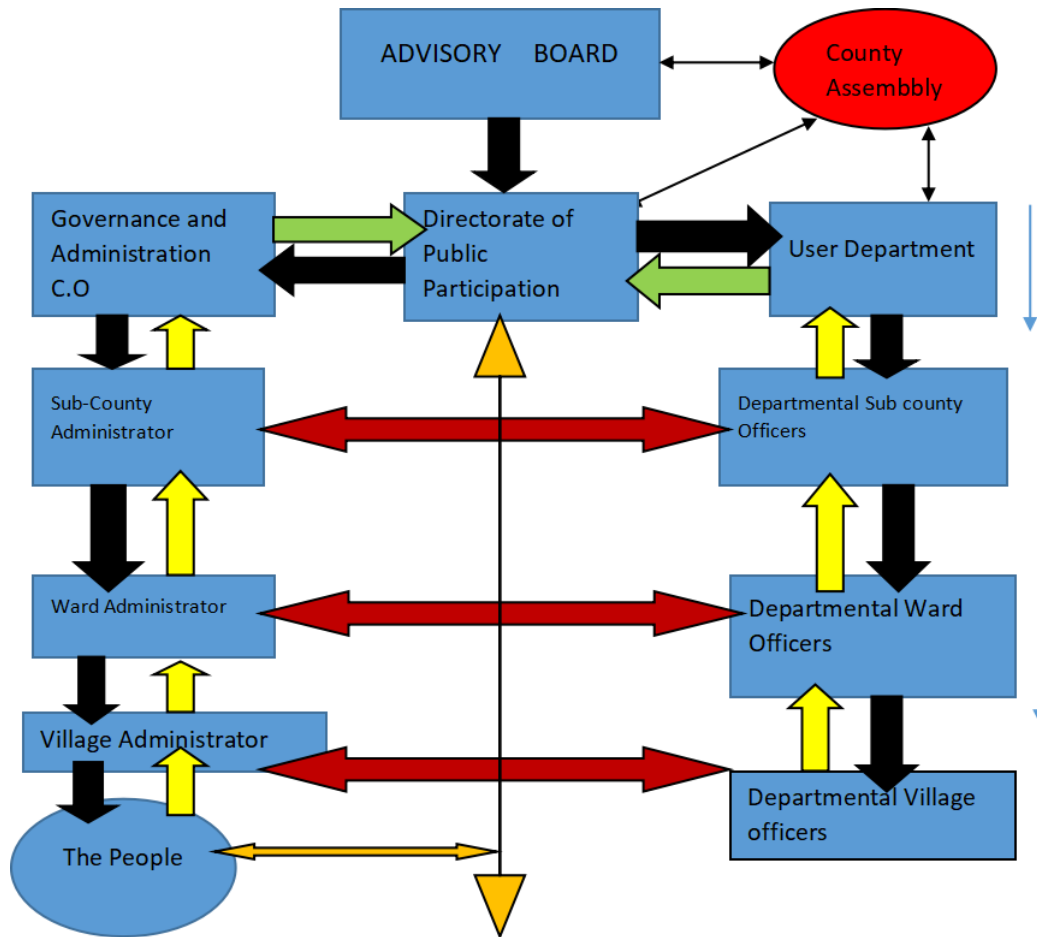
Figure 12. Public participation structure for Siaya County adopted at Consultative meeting at the Vic Hotel in KisumuDiscussion on deploying the Yala Hub Community Participation Framework in CIDP development

Fifth, a superiority complex/power conflicts between the Executive and the County Assembly played out in the field and thereby derailed the process in some areas as the citizens demanded that their MCAs must be present for the process to continue. Sixth, the absence of Project Management Committees (PMCs) budget allocation made this structure non- functional. Due to absence of financial facilitation there were no community participation in project implementation and subsequently high rate on uncompleted projects. Lastly, there was outright hostility towards some county staff (based on previous unfulfilled promises by the same staff) thereby delaying the process which called for impartation of conflict resolution skills and mindsets among the facilitation team.

The application of the Yala RAPPEF-CF-IR Hub framework on CIDP development brought out the lessons which should be used to improve this process in future. The County Public Participation directorate needs to consider these lessons and frame the 5-steps guiding/coaching questions appropriately and adapt the Community Facilitator and Information Resource Hub accordingly.

First, the local communities appreciated their involvement in the developmental processes of their county and asked the county to embed consultations on development activities up to the village levels. Therefore, CIDP

consultations should adopt an inverted pyramid model for participation which entails using the bottom-up approach starting from the village with more consultations on projects and services, obtaining innovative ideas and conceptualizing their application, prioritisation of development activities and implementation. Then proceed to ward, sub-county then finishes at the county level with public participation process with a clear feedback mechanism to the public. The lower level consultations at village levels require support of community facilitator (CF) who would take lead to relate with various stakeholders taking part in the development consultations. This requires a mindset shift on the citizens and county government staff to do what they have not been accustomed to do.

Second, on language used in the public participation, the data collection forms were not user friendly to communities, therefore required simplification, use of multiple communication channels for mobilization including "pavement" radios for older generation, social media platforms especially for the younger generation and use of participatory tools. Likewise, the community facilitator will help in this simplification and repackaging process.

Third, the community had very high expectations and unrealistic timelines for achieving the devolution outcomes. There must be continuous civic education in relation to key government policy documents and technical staff availability as part of public participation support team to level the expectations of devolution and its various processes.

Fourth, the community facilitator has to meet the following criteria: one whom the community respects, trust and has the power to engage with at all stages and structures of CIDP development mainly heads of two arms of county government. On the other front, good networking and advocacy skills with development partners, national government, and the business community. For example, it took the facilitator's professional reputation to negotiate with the hotel to avail the facility for the team for one more day at no cost to the county government nor the development partner.

Fifth, Information Resources Hub to aid the process for CIDP was mainly availing the previous CIDP 2013-2017, guidelines from national government, some case studies of what worked well with devolution; challenges, lessons and access to technical resources for CIDP secretariat, updated county data/statistics. The researcher had mentoring toolkit which was developed by AHADI to support devolution and mentors' own network in 22 counties in Kenya who provided additional resources.

Sixth, use participatory methodologies that were emotionally intelligent. These included trainings and guidance for various stages of CIDP development that were packed with materials, coaching with emotional intelligence, empathy walks with communities, living with the people (i.e. total immersion), previous experience, societal structures to get people issues very deeply and infuse creativity in the process. The study identified other participatory methodologies and situations where they are best applicable that would be useful in optimizing communities' participation in various county development interventions. These include the watering plants and circles and stars tools for financial data and services; the extension river tool for community advisory services; the food diary tool for dietary diversity; the ideal job tool for youth job opportunities, the land access and control matrix tool for women empowerment; and the social protection traffic light tool for community social protection.

Seventh, change of mindset is key in applying this framework. Siaya county communities used transformational learning methodologies to reflect and act upon their world to change it to future aspirations.

This changed world view became the basis for their inputs in the CIDP 2018-2022 development. In this modified framework, the CF inducted the citizens on the application of opportunity-based view/lenses through appreciative inquiry methodology which they quickly adopted to generate their inputs into the plan. The broader Siaya community representation through this modified framework enabled local communities to envision, dream, and articulate their aspirations of the future Siaya county and eventually provided for wider ownership for quality service delivery and sustainable (CGS, 2018). This mindset shift among the citizens and the county government staff is required to apply this framework with appreciable degree of success.

Eighth, effectiveness of public participation requires technical and institutional knowledge, information resources, trusted broker and a genuine commitment to implement the plan in which the citizens see themselves as co-creators. The researcher became (a Mentor/ Community Facilitator (CF) in CIDP planning process thereby providing the link amongst local communities, the CIDP secretariat team and the elected leaders (i.e., MCAs). The CF provided multiple feedback loops to the CIDP secretariat at various plan development stages.

The creation of CF/process facilitator to the framework served many practical purposes. A key feature it provided was a safe environment of trust, inspired confidence and mutual respect for participation. This is confirmed by top-level leadership respondents' remarks "you are our son please tell us, will our ideas be taken seriously, or they will do like what Dominion Farms did". And the meeting with MCA leaders on CIDP 2018-2022 while expressing their sentiments on participation in Lake Region Economic Block regional programmes on establishment of a proposed regional bank. The proposed bank required every county to contribute Kenya Shillings 200 million (USD$ 2,000,000) in which they expressed the following, "You are our son, is this thing really going to benefit us? Why are the governors deciding up there and then forcing it down without consulting us?" This further confirms the need for inspired confidence to participate in CIDP in which the researcher played the role Process Facilitator. The CF-IR-Hub component of the framework sought to reduce the disconnect between decision makers and technical information for Siaya County. The CF had access to the decision makers and was part of the technical team hence would weigh in to provide this nexus.

The stakeholder analysis tier two further revealed primary influencers of decision makers as an avenue of participation which is central to information transmission continuum at both community and county leadership levels and should be utilized as participation entry points appropriately. The citizen focused facilitation helped with simplifying the CIDP processes, languages and simulations of the issues at community meetings. Likewise, local communities were able to draw simple maps to give their inputs, used their proverbs and sayings to pass their concerns on the CIDP which were then repackaged by the researcher and relayed to the technical team. Thus, repackaging CIDP information this way for communities helped to educate them and then sharpened their contribution in CIDP remaining phases using different channels namely: community channels, radio, music, religious leader sermon, local administration barazas, funerals, special community events, special events such as Environment Days, and Partners Field days, competition in learning institutions through essays, debates, performances such dramas, songs, and artwork among others.

6. Conclusion and recommendation

The Yala Hub participation framework was deployed to Siaya County Integrated Plan Development 2018-2022 with a fair degree of success. The framework's five steps and its base of Community Facilitator and Information

Resources Hub were applied with very minimal adaptations. The application increased participation rates of the public and contributed new planning issues, facilitated the creation of public participation directorate and ensured substantial adoption of participatory methodologies for county planning framework.

The components of this framework which operate as a complete system have relative weights that determine the overall effectiveness community participation based on action research outcomes as demonstrated in SEA/LUP processes (Odero, 2021, Odero and Odenyo, 2021) and now in Siaya CIDP 2018-2022 development. The relative weights of effectiveness the various components of the Yala Hub Community framework as applied in CIDP preparation were Step 1. React/Act; (10%); Step 2. Restructure/Adjust the participation framework based on the reactions of step 1 (7%); Step 3. Participation Preparations (20%); Step 4. Community Participation (16%); Step 5: Review, evaluation and follow-up (12%) and the base- CF-IR-Hub (35%). Whereas the processes are sequential, the application are iterative as feedback from preceding step provides insights and revelations that will take the user back to mine more data and information before proceeding to the next step. This proposition is supported by the works of Dr. Brent Peterson of Columbia University (2004) who found that learning effectiveness is a product of three subsystems namely pre- work (26%); learning event (24%) and follow- up/post learning event (50%), thus pre-course work and post-event follow-up contributes a combined total of 86% of learning effectiveness.

The Public Participation Bill 2020 (Part 2 section 6.1a-e; 6.2(1) requires that a responsible authority (national and county governments) aid interested persons in accessing and giving their views on various proposals; therefore, Yala Hub Community Participation Framework provided a mechanism to aid Siaya County Government meet this requirement as well as improved the quality citizen participation in CIDP preparation. Thus, the Yala Hub Community Framework is both a diagnostic and optimizing tool for community participation that has made special contribution to formative stages of Kenya's devolved governance system. However, successful deployment of the framework requires a mindset shift among the county citizens and county government staff.

The study recommends the following: recognition and documentation of local knowledge to be integrated into county development planning; application of stakeholder analysis tier two in program design and implementation of community-based development activities; the need for and value of a Community Facilitator and Information Resources Hub in county integrated development planning; deploying the Yala Hub framework in development and reviewing of CIDPs and other county planning and management frameworks to further strengthen Kenya's devolved system of governance and managing sensitive ecosystems.

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