

PMRC DECENTRALISATION POLICY ANALYSIS

IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Unlocking Zambia's Potential

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ABBREVIATIONS

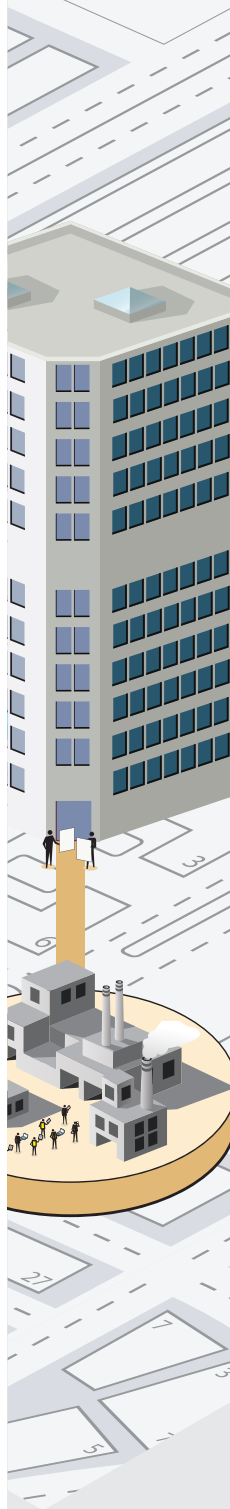
ADC	Area Development Committees
CDF	Constituency Development Funds
DDCC	District Development Coordinating Committee
KIP's	Key Performance Indicators
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PDCC	Provincial Development Coordinating Committee
SMART	Simple Measurable Attainable Realistic and Time bound
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ZEMA	Zambia Environmental Management Agency

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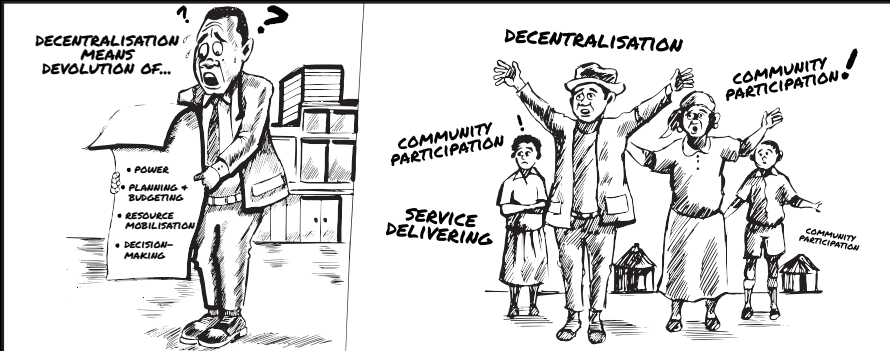
Message from PMRC

PMRC's vision is "Unlocking Zambia's potential". We recognize that it is only discussion and debate on social and economic policy issues critical to poverty reduction that ultimately leads to policy reform to support a robust and thriving economy.

We achieve our Vision by:

- Producing high quality, relevant and timely policy analysis, policy monitoring, and reform proposals
- Promoting and encouraging an informed public debate on critical social and economic policy issues.

PMRC DECENTRALISATION POLICY ANALYSIS



INTRODUCTION

The concept of decentralisation has origins that can be traced to the late 1700's in France with proponents such as Alexis-Charles-Henri Clérel de Tocqueville writing extensively on the concept. Decentralisation came into existence through the inefficiency experienced with centralisation¹. In the mid 1800's, there was a shift from centralisation to decentralisation during a French revolution. This was based on the need for more efficiency and reduced bureaucracy in the Government systems. In the 19th and 20th century, decentralisation was generally favoured and regarded as having administrative value and a civic scope that led to increased citizen participation. Decentralisation essentially refers to a model of power sharing and distribution of authority, to lower levels of Government administration from Central Government. Countries like The United States of America identified decentralisation as one of the major development trends of the 20th Century. In support of this, Leopold Kohr author of the 1957 book 'The Breakdown of Nations'- was reported to have issued the famous statement "Whenever something is wrong, something is too big". In Africa, the introduction of decentralisation came at a time of neo-liberalisation. The trend of adopting and implementing decentralisation policies

is said to have partially, emanated from the inability of central governments in delivering services effectively to local areas². Many countries have adopted the concept of decentralisation in one form or the other. Although broadly recognized as a process filled with complexity and potential failure, decentralisation is widely acclaimed as a key component of good governance and development.³ Decentralisation was a concept highly recommended through the introduction of structural adjustment programmes. These programmes initiated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), were utilised as a tool for downsizing central governments.

This Policy Analysis seeks to critically analyse Zambia's decentralisation policy and assess the extent to which it is likely to yield its objectives. The Analysis will first provide a background to what decentralisation is and the major arguments for and against the concept. This will then lay the foundation for analysing Zambia's decentralisation policy. The main aim of the paper is to examine the major components of decentralisation as laid down in Zambia's decentralisation policy in order to identify the form of decentralisation adopted and its likelihood of success in increasing community participation and improving service delivery.

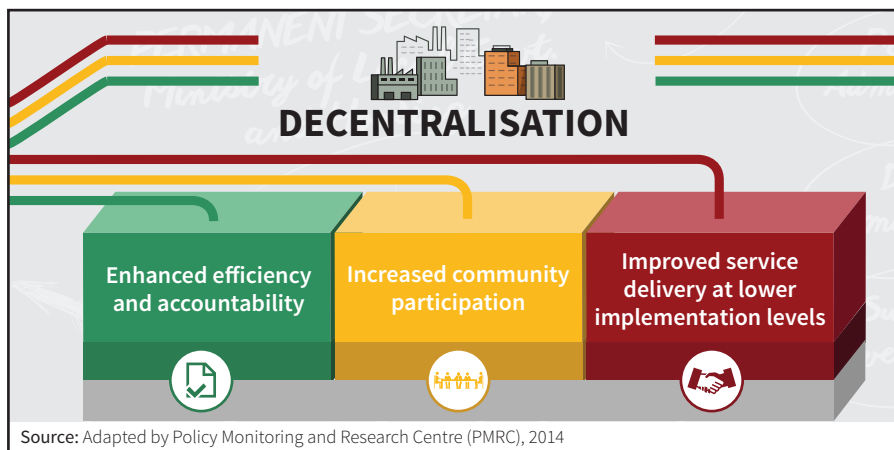
1. The concentration of management and decision-making power at the top of an organization hierarchy, with all or most main departments and managers at one facility. Read more: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/centralization.html#ixzz38mBWMZq>
2. G. shabbir Cheema and Dennis a. Rondinelli, "From Government Decentralisation to Decentralized Governance
3. Stacy White.2011 Government Decentralisation in the 21st Century: A Literature Review. Centre for Strategic & International Studies
4. World Bank 2000; Wunsch and Olowu 1995; Bhangwati 1982; Krueger 1974

BACKGROUND

Decentralisation has various comprehensive definitions. The UNDP (United Nations Development Program) (1998) defines decentralisation as “the restructuring or reorganization of authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiarity, thus increasing the overall quality and effectiveness of the system of governance, while increasing the authority and capacities of sub-national levels”.⁵ The UNDP definition emphasises two critical aspects of decentralisation – its practical outworking in restructuring of Government functions and its aim – increased efficiency. Similarly, the concept is defined as a transfer of competences from central government level to elected authorities at the sub

national level. Rondinelli, et. al. (1992) defines decentralisation as the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, and resource raising and allocation from the central government to sub units. In this definition, units listed include field units of central government ministries or agencies, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, and other authorities such as Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Basically decentralisation is the act of distributing power and authority to lower levels of governance. Some of the key aims of decentralisation are; enhanced efficiency and accountability, increased community participation and improved service delivery at lower implementation levels. The need for decentralisation in Africa has been attributed to the spread of multi-party political systems that have created demand for greater citizen voice and representation in decision-making.

Figure 1: Common Aims of Decentralisation



5. UNDP, (1999). Decentralized Governance Monograph: A Global Sampling of Experiences, Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Policy Development

TYPES DECENTRALISATION AND ARGUMENTS IN FOR AND AGAINST THEM

There are five major types of decentralisation that are commonly discussed and these are:

1. Political, decentralisation/ democratic decentralisation,
2. Administrative decentralisation/ deconcentration,
3. Fiscal decentralisation,
4. Devolution
5. Delegation

Below are brief descriptions of each type, with accompanying arguments for and against the types of decentralisation, establishing the foundation of why the Zambia must increase efforts to decentralise Government systems for social and;

1. Political decentralisation/democratic decentralisation; is the transference of powers and resources to authorities that are downwardly accountable to local populations⁶. Through transference of decision-making power to local units, it is believed to better target resources to community needs. Accountability is also believed to increase through proximity or the closeness of officials to community. This type of decentralisation is applauded because, representatives are held accountable by the communities. Political decentralisation is also thought to promote community participation, which in turn leads

to informed decision making by the representative body. This is based on an argument that local institutions are better placed to discern and respond to the local needs.⁷

2. Administrative decentralisation/ deconcentration; is the act of transferring power to local branches of the central state e.g. line ministry agents⁸. Deconcentration is considered a 'weak' form of decentralisation because this transfer of authority to lower bodies is conditioned by upward reporting lines for making decisions (authorisations and permissions). In most cases, power is still vested in central government hence these lower institutions still report to the central Government and control is retained at the highest governance levels. This supports the notion that, their primary responsibility is to execute directives from central government, as they must seek approval for all decisions; there are therefore minimal benefits to implementing deconcentration.

3. Fiscal decentralisation; this form of decentralisation relates to power sharing for decisions relating to fiscal resources and revenue-generating powers⁹. In many cases, fiscal decentralisation is the key to attaining the full benefits of overall decentralisation objectives. Despite the various prerequisites for success, (capacity of human resource and

6. Crook and Manor, (1998). Democracy and Decentralization in South-East Asia and West Africa: Participation, Accountability, and Performance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
7. Ribot J. C (2002), African Decentralisation, Local Actors, Powers and Accountability. Washington. D. C: UNRISD Programme on Democracy
8. Rondinelli et al. 1989:75
9. Wunsch and Olowu, (1995). The Failure of the Centralized State: Institutions and Self- Governance in Africa. San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies Press.

others) it has been argued to be a very effective form of decentralisation, as evidently seen in the case of Bolivia where fiscal decentralisation led to Government being more responsive to the needs of the poor (more spending on social services, education and training).¹⁰

4. Devolution; is the transfer of responsibilities for services to municipalities that elect their own mayors and councils, raise their own revenues, and have independent authority to make investment decisions.¹¹ Devolution is a form of Fiscal decentralisation. It is generally the most desired and favoured type of decentralisation because it fosters accountability directly to the locals and it facilitates fast and easy establishment of local needs. In most cases these authorities operate as semi autonomous institutions and groups that include a wide community representation, including the elected individuals.

5. Delegation; is when Governments allot responsibilities by creating public enterprises or corporations, authorities, special service districts, semi-autonomous school districts, regional development corporations, or special project implementation units.¹² This type of decentralisation is an example of true transfer of authority for decision-making.

In summary, there are different types of decentralization. The pre-eminence of one type over another would largely depend on the objectives of

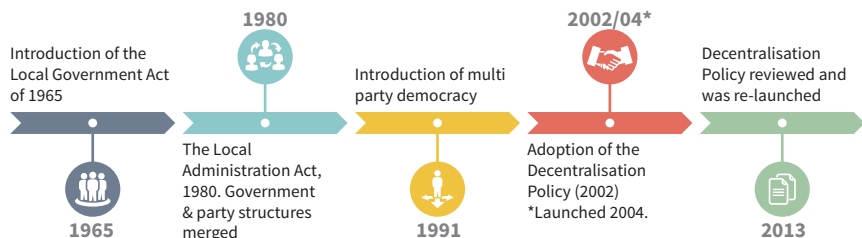
a decentralisation initiative, or the values of those designing it. Allen et al. (2010) supports this by an example; if there were a very strong desire to enhance participation then a devolutionary model would be superior. If key power holders wanted to maintain central control then they might favour deconcentration.

HISTORY OF THE DECENTRALISATION OF ZAMBIA

Dating back to pre-independence (1964) various policies, and legislative reforms have been made to foster the implementation of decentralisation in Zambia. Efforts at attaining a decentralised system of Government in Zambia are evident in two key legislative reforms. They are the introduction of the Local Government Act of 1965 and the Local Government Act of 1980, which were characterised by the establishment of administrative structures at provincial, district and sub district level (municipal, rural and township councils). One notable aspect of The Local Administration Act, 1980 was that Government structures were merged with party structures, which was an indication on Governments' intention to indirectly hold on to the power and authority (decentralisation in theory and not practice). This was followed by the abolition of local Government elections that were replaced by party elections. The legislative reforms marginally changed with the introduction of multi party democracy in 1991. Most structures remained the same, apart from the separation

10. Fauget, J.P. (2003): Decentralisation and Local Government in Bolivia: An Overview from the Bottom Up. London: Crisis States Programme.
11. Ferguson, I. and Chandrasekharan, C. Paths and Pitfalls of Decentralisation for Sustainable Forest Management: Experiences of the Asia-Pacific Region
12. Jannie Litvack (2009). Decentralisation Thematic Team, What is Decentralisation? Supported by the World Bank

Figure 2: History of Decentralisation in Zambia (Timeline)



Source: Adapted by Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC), 2014

of party and local Government. The failure of the decentralisation efforts from the 1960's to the 1980's were attributed to the over politicisation of the process. Decentralisation reforms were politically driven to cement control over administrative machinery. The failure of the implementation of the policy was also attributed to the lack of financial resources; officials were, for instance, not adequately remunerated¹³. In 2002, Zambia adopted the Decentralisation Policy (2002) and launched it in 2004 with the hope of implementing it within a decade. The policy was later reviewed and in December 2013, the Decentralisation Policy (2013) was launched.

for Zambia to attain the middle-income status (Vision 2030- 2006; 4).¹⁵ The goal of decentralising Zambia's administrative systems originates from the need for community participation in fostering effective implementation of significant development programs. It was determined that citizens must have a certain degree of authority to contribute meaningfully to development programs and activities through active decision-making. The policy is a guide to transference of authority, functions and responsibilities to lower levels of governance.¹⁶

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE POLICY

A summary of the sections of the decentralisation policy are;

- Introduction;
- A background of decentralisation in Zambia;
- Situation Analysis;
- Vision and Objectives;
- Policy Measures; Implementation Framework and;
- Resource Mobilisation and Financing a Decentralised System.

ZAMBIA'S DECENTRALISATION POLICY

The Decentralisation Policy, 2013 was founded on the vision of having a "decentralised system of Government within the unitary State of Zambia."¹⁴ This Vision is in line with various national plans and the overall long-term national agenda set by the Vision 2030. The Vision 2030 lists decentralised governance systems, among other characteristics needed

13. Mukwena R.M (1992), Situating Decentralisation in Zambia in a Political Context
 14. GRZ. (2013). Decentralisation Policy 2013. Ministry of Local Government and Housing p3.
 15. GRZ 2006, Vision 2030: A prosperous Middle-income Nation By 2030, Lusaka
 16. GRZ. (2013). Decentralisation Policy 2013. Ministry of Local Government and Housing p3.

The Policy has a list of specific objectives that have been outlined to help achieve the main objective. To empower provinces, districts and communities in order to achieve effective social economic development; In addition to these objectives, the Policy further outlines strategies that will be implemented to attain the above-mentioned objectives. The strategies are essentially “the how” to the set objectives;

OBJECTIVES

- I. To promote peoples' participation in democratic governance at the local level to enhance local governance;
- II. To promote co-operative governance with the national Government, provincial administration, provincial assembly, and local authority to support and enhance the developmental role of local Government;
- III. To promote the participation of chiefs' and other traditional leaders in governance and preservation of culture and heritage whilst respecting cultural diversity;
- IV. To promote political and administrative authority in order to enhance delivery of services;
- V. To coordinate gender mainstreaming programmes in the councils in order to promote gender equality and equity; and
- VI. To develop and manage human resources in order to enhance individual and organisation performance.

STRATEGIES

- (a) Realign functions and linkages of central, provincial, district and sub-district governance structures;
- (b) Devolve decision making authority, functions and resources from the Centre to the lowest level with matching resources;
- (c) Coordinate and implement mechanisms to ensure a “bottom up” flow of integrated development planning and budgeting from the District to the Central Government;
- (d) Promote accountability and transparency in the management and utilisation of resources;
- (e) Develop the capacity of Local Authorities and communities in development planning, financing, co-ordinating and managing the delivery of services in their areas;
- (f) Build capacity for development and maintenance of infrastructure at local level;
- (g) Develop and implement an integrated budget for district development and management;
- (h) Develop and implement a legal and institutional framework to promote autonomy in decision making at local level;
- (i) Monitor and evaluate implementation of programmes;
- (j) Facilitate appointments and training of gender focal point persons; and
- (k) Develop and implement human resource management programmes

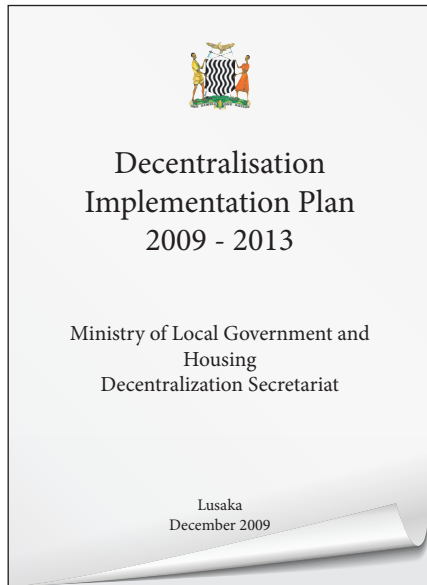
In summary, these objectives and strategies seem to be based on the principles of devolution.

The Decentralisation Policy has an accompanying Decentralisation Implementation Plan that is the Decentralisation Implementation Plan 2003- 2013. This plan has various activities, and functions assigned at national, provincial, district and sub district level. The plan includes challenges, opportunities and risks such as financial stability and sustained political will. Most importantly, the implementation plan contains an implementation matrix with 10 key components.

These mechanisms are;

1. Sensitization and civic education
2. Legal and regulatory framework
3. Institutional and human resource capacity development
4. Local development planning and budgeting
5. Financial management and accountability
6. Fiscal decentralisation and revenue mobilisation
7. Sector devolution
8. Infrastructure development and service provision
9. Monitoring and Evaluation
10. Program management and coordination

Figure 3: Decentralisation Implementation Plan



These components all have detailed activities, estimated costs, operational time and specified implementing agency. The Decentralisation Secretariat is a department of the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. This secretariat was established in 2003 to spearhead, plan, coordinate, and monitor the implementation of the Decentralisation Policy. The Decentralisation policy is has been in operation for less than a year since December 2013 when it was launched. This does not allow for a comprehensive evaluation to ascertain the extent to which the policy is being implemented. Nonetheless, the analysis of the policy gives preliminary observations, drawing from past experiences.

ANALYSING THE DECENTRALISATION POLICY 2013

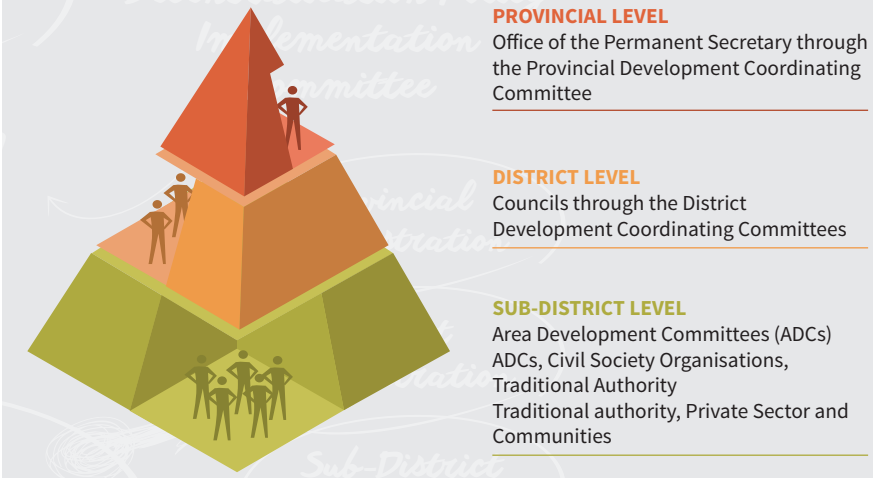
As stated in the decentralisation policy, PMRC believes that decentralisation can be utilised as a governing tool to increase overall citizen participation and improve service delivery. However the likelihood of success in attaining these goals is hinged on policy content and execution. According to the analysis carried out, the Zambian Decentralisation Policy is generally anchored on devolution. Although the actual activities on the ground may have aspects of deconcentration and delegation, the policy is focused on devolved systems of Government. This is the basis of all the objectives, and strategies of the policy. The current Local Government structure has a significant bearing on the

success or failure of the policy. Currently the local Government structure is a single tier system comprising three types of councils namely, city, municipal and district councils.

The expectation is that every district must have a council and there are 4 city councils, Kitwe, Ndola, Livingstone, and Lusaka. The objectives of the policy lack clarity and precision in terms of time. The policy objectives in are utilised as the foundation on which the implementation plan provides a guide for the preparation of detailed annual work plans.

Figure 4 displays the current local government structures at provincial, district and sub-district levels.

Figure 4: Current Local Government Structure



Source: GRZ. 2013. Decentralisation Implementation Plan 2009- 2013. Ministry of Local Government and Housing

Although the implementation matrix has an operational time for each activity, the KPI's in the SNDP chapter of decentralisation are utilised for monitoring and implementation purposes. The current structures may not necessarily be effective enough to effectively implement the policy strategies because the rural councils are not planning authorities in practice but theory.

Although the policy states that Government will realign functions and linkages of central, provincial, district and sub-district governance structures with matching resources, the reality of this has not been seen thus far. Contrary to this, in December 2013, the Zambian Government amended various pieces of legislation including The Competition and Consumer Protection Act, 2010; The Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) Act there were a few others and has introduced legislation, which instructs quasi-autonomous institutions to remit funds to Central Government. This is a case, of fiscal centralisation, which is contrary to the principle of devolution.

There have also been delays in the implementation of the policy from the 90's to date. These delays would lead one to question Government's commitment to power distribution. Falleti, (2004) points out that depending on the type of authority being decentralized, there may be a decrease or increase in autonomy for the lower levels of governance.¹⁷ This may be a factor in Zambia's case

as authority for decision making is limited or restricted, thereby limiting the decision making power of the devolved institutions. Political and administrative authority for enhanced service delivery of services can only be actualized if the practicality of decision making authority and resource allocation is evident and practical.

Analysis of the current situation also reveals that there are other types of decentralisation being implemented despite not being included in the policy. This is an indication that the policy seems to moderately contain various types of decentralisation. An element of deconcentration is notably depicted by the creation of new Districts. According to the Decentralisation Policy (2013) this transfer of authority is dependent on the management capacity of these lower level institutions/bodies, i.e. when the management capacity of the councils has been built, they will be given more autonomy while maintaining linkages with Central Government¹⁸. Although this trend is common to many other countries such as Benin, Burkina Faso, The Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Vietnam Green (2008; 1),¹⁹ It is important that Government follows the implementation plan laid out in the policy if they are to attain the objectives of increased community participation and for effective social and economic development. The number of districts in Zambia increased from 72 in 2012 to 103 in 2014. However, this is not a guarantee

17. Galleti, T. G. (2004). A Sequential Theory of Decentralisation and its effects on the intergovernmental balance of power: Latin American case in comparative perspective. Working paper: The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies

18. Decentralisation Policy 2013 (2013; 6).

19. Elliott Green (2008), District Creation and Decentralisation in Uganda, Crisis States Research Center, London

to successful decentralisation for increased community participation and improved service delivery. In most cases, the districts have been created but not given power or authority for decision-making and resource mobilization.

Devolution is further applied through financial mechanisms such as Constitution Development Funds (CDF). CDF refers to a policy tool and development initiative whereby public money is dedicated to benefit specific political subdivision.²⁰ Central government delegates and allocates funds through to Local Government, which has influence over various stakeholders represented by area Members of Parliament (MP's) and Ward Counsellors.

The purpose of these initiatives is to ensure development at lower levels of the communities is actualised. The concept of CDF is exceptional but there have been numerous calls for the restructuring of the administration of CDF and this is due to the lack of monitoring, and management capacity that has resulted in abuse of funds. Conyers (1981) highlights the importance of capacity building and integrity and states that, if those making decisions at the local level are inexperienced, inadequately qualified or corrupt, or merely overburdened, the quality of administration may actually deteriorate rather than improve. As highlighted above, capacity building is one of the major prerequisites of implementing decentralisation effectively.

Literature reviews reveal that

effectiveness of decentralisation in achieving increased efficiency, accountability, service delivery and community participation, is dependent on the practical steps the government takes in ensuring effective implementation. As opposed to having theoretical non-existent power sharing models that are not evident in practice, decentralisation must be evident and visible. The need for an enabling environment and structures that can support this practicality must be considered as prerequisites of implementing a decentralisation policy. Among the commonly noted ones are, capacity building, adequate financial resources, well established operational organisation structures with clear lines of command and continued political will.

Additionally, to attain the objectives outlined in the Decentralisation Policy 2013, there is need for the policy to be understood by all stakeholders and policy implementers at every level. The importance of translating decentralisation from theory to practice cannot be overly emphasised. According to UNDP, clear understanding of a decentralisation policy is key to effective implementation and the Government in the Decentralisation Implementation Plan has acknowledged this.²¹ By envisioning what decentralisation means, how best it can be planned and implemented, what its intricacies are, and how its challenges can be overcome, development practitioners can be equipped with appropriate tools for effective implementation.

20. Center for International Development, Constituency Development Funds Workshop, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy University at Albany, State University of New York, December 8-9, 2009

21. GRZ. 2013. Decentralisation Implementation Plan 2009- 2013. Ministry of Local Government and Housing, p.27

This approach may provide analytical knowledge of decentralisation from a conceptual viewpoint accompanied successful best practice examples.²²

LEARNING FROM BEST PRACTICE



Uganda



Uganda's decentralisation reforms, under the leadership of President Yoweri Museveni, when he assumed power in 1986, have been applauded for their scope and content. The process by which power has been deconcentrated and devolved to five levels of local Government have been called 'one of the most far-reaching local Government reform programs in the developing world'²³. These reforms are characterised by devolution (political decentralisation), a harmonised approach which is coupled with economic reforms, practical implementation in phases, a legal framework embodied in the constitution facilitated for enhanced pro-activity for the purpose of transferring power and authority

(horizontally and vertically), and creation of sub-units, such as districts and provinces. Uganda has a high number of sub-administrative units created as part of decentralisation. This was coupled with a robust resource allocation mechanism based on the number of districts, the social status of the district, poverty levels and the number of people in the district. The table below displays a comparison of units (districts and provinces) in Uganda, Kenya and South Africa.

Uganda's population per district unit (393,071 for 79 districts) places it as the lowest population per unit. This has been a key determinant for value-based resource allocation for improved service delivery and accountability. Uganda has generally taken a proactive practical approach to decentralisation and although these characteristics have proved to be effective for Uganda, the Government has faced challenges such as financial constraints and duplication of functions. Mugabi (2004) notes that, at lower levels, however, problems related to duplication of service delivery have surfaced, sometimes leading to revenue collection and finance disputes.²⁴

Table: Country Comparison of Sub Administration Units

COUNTRY	NAME OF UNITS	NUMBER OF UNITS	POPULATION PER UNIT
Uganda	Districts	79	383, 071
Kenya	Provinces	8	4, 692, 250
South Africa	Provinces	9	5, 397, 444

Source: CIA World Fact book, US Census Bureau Graphical

- UNDP, Decentralized Governance Monograph: A Global Sampling of Experiences, Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Policy implementations for individuals to explore. Development, April 1998, p. 6
- Francis, P. and R. James. 2003. 'Balancing Rural Poverty Reduction and Citizen Participation: The Contradictions of Uganda's Decentralisation Program', World Development 31:2, pp. 325-337.
- Edward Mugabi (2004) Uganda's Decentralisation Policy, Legal Framework, Local Government Structure and Service Delivery. Italy



Kenya

Similar to Uganda, Kenya's decentralised Local Government reforms have been applauded. A baseline survey of decentralisation in Africa published in 2002, ranked Kenya's Local Government third out of 30 countries in the sample, after South Africa and Uganda, Ndii (2010)²⁵.

Kenya's decentralisation policy is characterised by political decentralisation, and aspects of administrative and fiscal decentralisation.

Measures of fiscal and administrative decentralisation are detected in mechanisms such as;

- Administration of CDF;
- Strengthening the capacity of grant-aided parastatals;
- Creation of new units in local authorities;
- And a good sensitization program for political leaders and the general public.

One of the aspects of decentralisation in Kenya is the continued political will and practicality.

The Kenyan Government has further ensured that the functions of the decentralized process match the resources available from central Government to local authorities.



South Africa

In South Africa, Decentralisation was based on the rationale that there was a need for unity, integration and a non-racial society. In South Africa, decentralisation was anchored on promoting local Governments in "rebuilding local communities and environments, as the basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous and truly non-racial society"²⁶.

Devolution in South Africa is characterized by strong institutional arrangements of local Government at 3 foundational levels of decentralisation. These levels are called metropolitan, district and local municipalities and they are further layered to three levels titled district, local and electoral ward areas. The integrated development planning sequence has resulted to effective bottom-up participatory planning.

A notable characteristic of decentralisation is that, some functions are embodied in the constitution. The Government has further taken an aggressive stance at intensely sensitizing the general public on the processes.

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNT

In learning from best practice, the following are some of the key points noted as the characteristics that have

25. David Ndii (2010) Decentralisation in Kenya Background Note

26. Republic of South Africa: Department of Provincial and Local Government: The White Paper on Local Government, 1998

contributed to the effective policy implementation.

- **Phased approach:** Decentralisation is a long-term process that needs to be planned for and undertaken in stages. Uganda had a series of pilot projects in reference to decentralisation.
- **Proactive and practicality of implementation:** Ensuring that decentralisation is implemented in practice.
- **Matching plans to resources:** Resource allocation and mobilization has been highlighted as a key requirement for the effective implementation of plans.
- **Capacity building:** for efficient and effective resource management and decision-making.

WHAT DOES A REFORMED DECENTRALISATION POLICY MEAN TO ZAMBIA AND ZAMBIANS

There are various benefits that can be actualised by the effective implementation of a reviewed Decentralisation Policy 2013.

Some of these key benefits may include;



Active participation of citizens in development activities.



Employment creation through the new units of Government.



Enhanced accountability due to local representatives becoming more accessible to the local populace and stronger accountability mechanisms for policies drafted and outcomes than would be possible with distant national political leaders (or public servants).



Decentralisation policy (2013) and plans will be tailor-made for local area using detailed and up to date information.



Additionally, field-level personnel will be motivated when they have greater responsibility for the programmes they manage.²⁷

The UNDP (1999) further highlights additional benefits some of which include;

Resource allocation incentives-they face greater incentives to allocate resources (funds or staff) to those types of basic services and infrastructure that benefit the poor and greater local resource mobilization-it is easier for locally-based institutions to levy and collect taxes and user fees, because of the more evident returns seen by those who pay.²⁸

If successfully improved and implemented, the decentralisation process may also lead to access to information for transparency, and the creation of improved linkages between state and civil society.

27. GRZ (2013) Decentralisation Policy 2013. Ministry of Local Government and Housing, Lusaka

28. UNDP-Government of Germany (1999), Decentralisation a Sampling of definitions: Evaluation of the UNDP role in decentralisation and local governance

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

PMRC affirms that with effective implementation, well-defined responsibilities, definite functions, and distinct lines of authority and communication, Government may attain the set objectives of increased community participation and improved service delivery through decentralisation.

PMRC further recommends that Government;



Strengthen the M&E mechanisms set to monitor the effectiveness of the policy progressively.



Reinforce institutional and individual capacity building for exceptional performance.



Review objectives, strategies and implementation plan let them be SMART (Simple Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time bound).



Ensure financial resources are available for activities and functions to be carried out while reinforcing and building capacity for revenue collection. (broaden the revenue collection base for councils)

CONCLUSION

The operations and functions of Government's administrative systems are important to the overall implementation of all developmental plans. The decentralisation policy must be implemented in harmony with other supporting policy documents such as the constitution and the Local Government Act to ensure a clear and concise implementation approach. Local government is a key driver of poverty reduction, due to structure and connection to the grassroots. The concept of decentralisation has been viewed as an effective mechanism of extending and deepening the democratic practices (participation) and facilitating for increased service delivery. In order to promote people-

based development by increased participation and service delivery Zambia, there is a need for a shift of focus. More time and effort has been put into the formulation of the decentralisation policy while there is minimal pro-activity to implement and practice the principles of decentralisation. Authority for planning, managing and decision-making at lower levels must be exercised, and funds must be dispersed to the lowest levels of government for the attainment of service delivery. This will ensure decentralisation is not just a theory, but also a practical concept that yields all intended objectives for sustained social and economic development.

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