Definition of devolution ,

Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government. It is important because it ensures that decisions are made closer to the local people, communities and businesses they affect.

A ‘Devolved Government’ Is a system of government where there is a transfer or allocation of authority from a central government to a regional government.

Origin of devolution in Kenya.

The Lancaster House Conference of 1962 forms the basis of devolution in Kenya. When the independent constitution was drawn during the conference, a federal system of government as proposed by the KADU delegates was adopted in Kenya. It made provisions for six regions.

The legislature was to comprise two chambers. However after independence in 1963, the Kenyatta Government began plans to scuttle the system of government. By December 1964, KANU and KADU merged to form a unitary government of the republic of Kenya.

The Ministry of Devolution Is responsible for supporting County Governments through policy formulation, capacity support and intergovernmental relations. Additionally, the state department manages the shared function of disaster risk management between the National and County governments.

**Significance of devolution in the society**

a) They were established as a means of promoting democratic and accountable exercise of power.

b) To Foster national unity by recognizing diversity.

c) To give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers.

d) To recognize the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development. E) To protect and promote the interests and rights of minorities and marginalized communities.

f) To promote social and economic development and the provision of services throughout Kenya.

Devolution has both benefits and drawbacks, and its effectiveness depends on the specific circumstances and implementation of devolved powers. Here are some potential benefits and drawbacks of devolution:

**Benefits**

**1.Regional representation**: Devolution allows regional governments to better understand and address the needs of their populations and tailor policies to their specific circumstances. This can lead to greater regional representation and more effective governance.

**2.Decentralisation**: Devolution can reduce the burden on central governments by delegating powers and responsibilities to regional governments. This can lead to more efficient and effective governance, as regional governments can respond more quickly and effectively to local issues.

**3.Recognition of national identities**: Devolution can recognize the unique cultural and historical identities of different regions within a country. This can promote a greater sense of pride and ownership in regional identities and reduce tensions between regions.

**4.Experimentation:** Devolution can allow for experimentation with different policies and priorities in different regions, which can help identify effective policies that can be applied nationally.

**Drawbacks**

**1.Potential for conflict**: Devolution can create conflicts between regional and central governments over issues such as funding, policy priorities, and authority. This can lead to a lack of coherence in national policies and potentially weaken the central government’s authority.

**2.Inefficiency:** Devolution can lead to duplication and inefficiency in governance, as regional governments may adopt different policies and priorities that are not aligned with the rest of the country. This can create a fragmented approach to governance and potentially hinder national progress.

**3.Political instability:** Devolution can lead to political instability, as regional governments may have different political priorities and parties in power. This can lead to frequent changes in policy and potential instability, which can negatively affect the economy and social welfare.

**4.Cost**: Devolution can be costly to implement, as it requires the establishment of new institutions and the transfer of powers and responsibilities. It can also lead to increased administrative and financial burdens on both central and regional governments.

Overall, devolution can have both positive and negative effects on governance and national cohesion. The effectiveness of devolution will depend on various factors, including the specific circumstances of each country, the nature of devolved powers, and the management of conflicts between central and regional governments.