

Significance of devolution

- **The Desire of citizens to access public services closer to them.** The main objective of devolution provided by the Constitution is about promotion of democracy and accountability in the exercise of power, fostering national unity by recognizing diversity, enhancing people's self-governance, enabling communities manage their own affairs, protecting and promoting interests and rights of minorities and the marginalized and ensuring equitable sharing of resources. To achieve these, there must be framework put in place and enabling environment provided to all stakeholders involved in implantation of devolution

- **Promote the democratic and accountable exercise of power;**

Leaders claim to be responsible to their people; people try to hold them to account. Accountability is thus the measure of responsibility.

Since only in every community it is possible for all voices to be heard, community-based decision-making requires that the population in question be represented in an accountable manner. In the absence of such representation, there is a danger that decision-making could be taken over by elite groups; dissent swept under the rug; and women, minority ethnic groups, religious sects and other marginalized social groups be excluded from the forum. Representation must be ensured for the diverse interests of communities, which are generally highly stratified along gender, age, class, religious, livelihood etc.

Elections are the most commonly evoked mode of representative accountability. Let's give an example the member of county ward represents people or the community that dwells in his ward to the local county government assembly. For him/her to represent they must contest to a general election and the community is given democratic right to elect to whom they are please to elect as their leader.

- **One of main significance is transfer of powers and funding from national government to local county governments**

It is important because it ensures that decisions are made closer to the local people, communities and businesses they affect. The result will be more effective, better targeted public services, greater growth and stronger partnerships between public, private and community leaders in local areas. Such as infrastructure's set in place for roads, lighting, public health centers, agriculture, sports, Tourism, security, etc.

Advantages of Devolution (Pros)

1) It has changed from Exclusion to Inclusion

.The creation of county government that has been decentralized from national government has brought inclusivity to the most marginalized by alleviating poverty through creating opportunities and access to social services which confirms that a number of smaller ethnic groups who have never had significant access to national resources now do so via their home counties.

. Article 91 of the 2010 Constitution emphasize the importance of political participation stating that every political party shall respect the right of all persons to participate in the political process, including minorities and marginalized groups. With this bear in mind has significantly promoted inclusivity by Political participation entails inclusion of marginalized and minority groups such as women and special interest groups who include youth and persons with disabilities. Through participation, the community is empowered to monitor and evaluate the county government's compliance with the decisions made and demand speedier government operations as well as push local institutions to enhance their capabilities in undertaking functions that have not been usually performed well by the national government. By doing so, the community will have the feeling of belonging thus embracing the development in the society.

2) It has created a Platform for Economic and Social Development

.with the setup of devolved systems and structures, it is easier to achieve growth both at national and county development. As county headquarters and centers develop, new opportunities for employment and investments arise paving the way for more significant progress. Currently, county governments

are implementing growth strategies that aim at improving the living standards of its people where some devolved counties have even established universal HealthCare systems making health care affordable and achievable in their areas. Growth of economies in the county aimed at stabilizing the economy through sustained growth in agriculture, manufacturing, mining and service sectors this bring growth in population and economy in the county and the greater national government at large.

3) Has created equal Distribution of National Resources

.Before devolution resources were majority at urban centers and cities. But, with devolution, each county has equal chances of growth as the share of resources is equal. Equitable share according to is governed by a set of criteria that include: economic disparities within and among counties and the need to remedy them; the desirability of stable and predictable allocations of revenue; and the need for economic optimization of each county and to provide incentives for each county to optimize its capacity to raise revenue. With fair allocation of resources such as wealth, healthcare, education, and opportunities across all segments of society, irrespective of gender, race, social status, or any other differentiating factor is a great importance in devolution, whereby we can give an example the counties in central region have lands with fertile soil and good climate for food production food productions from this areas are distributed to other counties even some exported earning the country foreign exchange

4) Promotion of Transparency, Accountability and Democracy

.Citizens at any given time will be given a chance to elect there desired elective leader making room for accountability and democracy. **Accountability** is one of the cornerstones of Public Policy and Administration and good governance which requires the due performance of tasks or functions by an individual or agency. This is achieved when persons in authority are answerable for their actions and also when there is transparency in leadership.

One of the objects of devolution is to promote democracy and accountability of exercise of power. Similarly devolution gives powers of self-governance to the people and enhances the participation of the people in the exercise of the

powers of the state and in making decisions affecting them. Devolution is used for a variety of reasons, especially democratization and improving governance, however it emphasizes on accountability by bringing participation and decision-making closer to the people, closer proximity of devolved governments to the citizen has increased transparency in the use of local resources and strengthens downward accountability mechanisms, resulting in a decrease in corrupt practices.

5) informed Decision Making through Public Participation

. Local representation in Devolved governments provide a means for regions to have a greater say in the decision-making process, which can lead to more local representation and responsiveness to local needs and concerns, this is enhanced by the ability of county members to engage into meaningful discussions in regards to running and management of the affairs of the county. Identification of specific problems affecting the community should be given priority. County management through public participation as provided for in the constitution should provide for opportunities for focused and prioritized community concerns to be addressed.

DISADVANTAGES OF DEVOLUTION (cons)

1. It is an expensive affair due to diversity of roles

. Devolved governments are very expensive to run and maintain, as they require their own bureaucracy, institutions, and infrastructure, which can lead to higher taxes for citizens. For instance given example to our great country Kenya we have 47 counties with each county with its own senators, governors, deputy governors, women rep, ward representatives and county executive committee means that the taxpayer is at a loss since the wage budget increased significantly. This was due to simultaneous process of devolving administrative, political structures and resources. The devolution system became even more expensive when there was no elected women MCAs forcing parties to nominate women to adhere to the two-thirds gender principle. Furthermore individual MCAs were hiring 3 to 10 staffs to man the 4450 ward offices countrywide. Due to

this, counties with many wards and those with large county executive committee experiences higher administrative costs.

2. There is Mismanagement of fund allocated from national government to county governments

.Lack of public participation guidelines permitted greedy officials to take advantage of the gaps and loopholes in the implementation process to mismanage the public funds. It is critical for citizen to be left out in preparing the budget and distribution of funds to various projects in the county. Where citizens are not included, there are high chances of officers to channel funds into projects that will benefit their personal interests and not the community and also use the funds to enrich themselves. Some county governments have been in the spotlight for misappropriating funds while most counties cannot even account for the money allocated. Where officials at counties take advantage of openness; accountability; equity; public participation in financial matters; prudence; and responsible use of public resources.

3. It can lead to Unnecessary duplicate of roles

Chances of wastage resources and misuse of funds are higher due to allocation of similar roles where more people doing similar jobs that can be done with fewer people. Due to this, county public administration and service delivery systems is affected mainly because of overlapping jurisdictions as well as functions. For example the role County Commissioners equal to the Governor, the sub County Administrator equal to sub County Commissioners, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. This has bred mistrust and a potent source of conflict

4. I can bring Political instability

.through ethnicity may find a certain political party thrives in predominately county due to ethnic backing and if they deemed not heard can result intolerant for the economic and political affair. This can lead to frequent changes in policy and potential instability, which can negatively affect the economy and social welfare.

5. Uneven development

.some counties are much ahead developed such as main urban centers eg.Nairobi, Nakuru, eldoret, Mombasa and Kisumu These counties have better infrastructure and public utilities as well as opportunities for employment and investment. It will take extra efforts and some years for other counties to catch up. This means that people's needs and wants vary between the arid and semi-arid North, the highlands, the rural Northern Rift, the urban centers of Mombasa, Nairobi, and Kisumu, the Coast, and Western Kenya. Giving example of health, counties that are lagging behind need to catch-up in providing basic health services. Counties that are in remote and marginalized areas will take longer time to develop since the national government does not allocate sufficient resources to assure a basic level of service delivery to their citizens.