INTRODUCATION

Devolution refers to the transfer of power from a central government to a subnational government that is regional and local authorities.It is a form of adminstrative decentralization.Devolved territories have the power to make legislation relevant to the area thus grunting them a higher level of autonomy

Devolution carries significant political, social, and economic implications. The significance of devolution can be understood through several key aspects:

* Democratic Representation: Devolution can enhance democratic representation by bringing decision-making closer to the people. Regional or local governments often have a better understanding of local needs and preferences, allowing for policies and services that are more responsive to the diverse interests of different regions or communities.
* Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: In countries with diverse cultural or linguistic groups, devolution can help preserve and promote cultural identity. Regional governments may have the authority to protect and promote local languages, traditions, and heritage.
* Efficient Service Delivery: Devolution can lead to more efficient and effective service delivery. Local governments can tailor services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure to meet the specific needs of their populations, potentially reducing bureaucratic red tape and improving service quality.
* Economic Development: Regional autonomy can stimulate economic development by allowing regions to set policies that attract investments and support local industries. It can also lead to better resource management and distribution, as regions have control over their own resources.
* Conflict Resolution: In regions with historical conflicts or tensions, devolution can serve as a mechanism for conflict resolution. By granting autonomy to different groups, it can help address grievances and promote peace and stability.
* Fiscal Responsibility: Devolution often involves financial autonomy, where regions have control over their own budgets and revenue sources. This encourages fiscal responsibility and accountability at the local level, as governments must manage their finances effectively.
* National Unity: Paradoxically, devolution can contribute to national unity by accommodating diverse regional interests. When regions have a say in their governance, they may be more inclined to remain part of a larger country rather than seeking independence.
* Experimentation and Innovation: Different regions can experiment with various policies, allowing for innovation and the testing of different approaches to governance and public policy. Successful policies can then be adopted by other regions or the central government.
* Challenges and Complexities: Devolution is not without challenges. It can lead to disparities between regions, as some may have more resources or capacity than others. Ensuring equal opportunities and addressing these disparities is an ongoing concern.
* Constitutional Framework: The specific significance of devolution can vary depending on the constitutional framework of each country. Some countries have highly decentralized systems, while others have more limited forms of devolution.

PROS OF DEVOLUTION

1.From Exclusion to Inclusion and more local representation.

Today, all people including the marginalized and minorities can reap the benefits of self-governance and manage

their development and affairs. The realization of citizen participation in decision-making has positively

contributed to political stability, improved governance and improved citizens’ welfare, while minorities are groups that are: numerically inferior to the rest of the

population of a state. Inclusion has reduced the continued use of minority by politicians as a proxy for ethnicity

and calls to action for political competition.

The regional government work towards improving the economy to reduce poverty, minimize the differences

in income opportunities and access to social services, paying special attention the most disadvantaged in the

community, a number of smaller ethnic groups who have never had

significant access to national resources now do so via their home counties.

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,participation in decision-making can also result in more flexible and effective administration since the county governments can tailor their services to the needs of the various groups in the county. The county government has a better understanding of community needs, and is therefore better placed in delivering relevant and responsive services.

2.Promotion of Transparency, Accountability and Democracy

People at the grassroots now get to choose their leaders and directly participate in decision-making processes making room for accountability and democracy. Accountability is one of the cornerstones of governance and requires the due performance of tasks or functions by an individual or agency. This is when persons in authority are answerable for their actions and also when there is transparency in

leadership. 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. Devolution provides a much more manageable, transparent, and accountable arena to prevent corruption from erupting or to control it if it. Accountable Devolution Program works with government at both

county and national levels,the introduction of participatory budgeting county governments are able to allocate a portion Of their development budget for projects that are identified and eventually selected by the community itself.

Counties are now able to go where the people are and to effectively bring out the voices of all citizens including

women, youths and marginalised

importance in making itself amenable to public scrutiny of its activities at all times, by actively making available

information on the functioning of every aspect of its governance machinery.

3.Equitable Distribution of National Resources

Previously, most of the resources including public institutions were in the major urban centers and cities. But, with

devolution, each county has equal chances of growth as the share of resources is equal. Equitable share 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 resulting to a more equitable development across all the regions.

4. Informed Decision Making through Public Participation

Decisions made at grassroot level focus more on the local needs. This has been enhanced by the ability of local leaders to engage into meaningful discussions in regards to running and management of the affairs of the locally.

Identification of specific problems affecting the community should have been given priority. Local management through public participation as provided for in the constitution has provide for opportunities for focused and prioritized

community concerns to be addressed.

The community are fully involved in decision making process. However the report challenges the community to

always ask and gauge themselves at what level of participation their leaders are involving them in decision-making,

and also always aim to participate in county activities.

5.Promotion of National Unity

By reducing the power of the central government and distributing it equally among the counties, the devolved

systems has achieved national unity. The objects of devolution states

that, devolution of government aims at fostering national unity by recognizing diversity,devolution has the ability to contribute to national unity and political stability. One of the functions of the decentralized government is to foster unity, cohesion and co-existence among

communities,The context of harmony, accord, and mutual agreement or co-existence among different entities.

6.Efficient Service Delivery

Local governments can often deliver services more efficiently because they have a better grasp of local conditions and can tailor services to meet local demands. This can lead to improved healthcare, education, infrastructure, and more.

7.Cultural and Linguistic Preservation

Devolution can help preserve and promote regional cultures, languages, and traditions. Local authorities may have the autonomy to protect and support cultural heritage.

8.Economic Development

Regional autonomy can stimulate economic growth by allowing regions to set policies that attract investment and support local industries. It can also lead to better management of regional resources.

9.Conflict Resolution

In regions with historical conflicts or tensions, devolution can serve as a means of conflict resolution by granting autonomy and addressing grievances, thereby promoting peace and stability.

10.Fiscal Responsibility

Local governments often have control over their budgets and revenue sources, encouraging fiscal responsibility and accountability. This can lead to more efficient use of resources.

11.Experimentation and Innovation

 Different regions can experiment with various policies, allowing for innovation and testing of different governance approaches. Successful policies can be adopted by other regions or the central government.

12.Reduced Bureaucracy

Devolution can reduce bureaucratic red tape, as decisions are made closer to the people. This can lead to faster response times and more streamlined government processes.

13.Tailored Solutions

Local authorities can tailor policies to address unique local challenges and opportunities. This can result in more effective solutions to regional problems.

14.Political Pluralism

 Devolution can encourage political pluralism by allowing for the existence of multiple regional parties and ideologies, which can enrich the overall political landscape of a country.

CONS OF DEVOLUTION

1. Mismanagement of funds allocated to county governments

many local governments have been in the spotlight for misappropriating funds while most counties cannot

account for the money allocated.Where citizens are not involved,there are higher chances for officials to channel funds and resources to projects that benefits their personal interest and not the local communities.In addition,poor coordination of financial services between the local and national government also contribute to mismanagement of funds.

Corruption reports also reveal how badly local officials have been looting public funds through improper procurement procedures.

Local governments are also neglecting development as priority and instead,they put many where they can be siphoned.Reporta suggest that oversight over public expenditure have also lost meaning.

2. Duplication of roles

Currently, more people are doing the same job. Therefore, the chances of misusing powers and wasting resources

are higher.Duplication of duties has led to internal political supremacy wars. Some of their roles have not been clearly

demarcated and hence there is redundancy in some cases.Due to this, county public administration and service delivery systems is affected mainly because of overlapping jurisdictions as well as functions.This has bred

mistrust and a potent source of conflict

It is clear that duplication of roles in devolved system is a challenge that was noted and brings inefficiency.In addition, duplication of roles has been exacerbated by lack of systems for instance financial allocation that affected allocation of funds to lower level institutions, including hospitals, health centers and dispensaries.

There is need to guard against duplication of duties. This will require personal initiative and a collaborative

approach, conduct civic education and technical support.

3.Uneven Development

Some regions already had a head start, development wise. These regions

have better infrastructure and public utilities as well as opportunities for employment and investment. It will take

extra efforts and some years for other regions to catch up. Regions that are lagging behind need to catch-up in

providing basic health services. On the other hand leading urban regions will be faced with new types of diseases

mostly non-communicable such as diabetes and cancer. Counties in the 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 citizen,these counties need additional resources if service and infrastructure gaps are to be closed.

4.Fragmentation of policies

Devolution can lead to policy fragmentation, where different regions or local governments implement their own policies, which can be inconsistent or conflicting with national goals.

5.Inequality

Devolution can exacerbate regional inequalities if some regions have more resources or capacity to govern effectively than others. This can result in disparities in service delivery and development.

6.Coordination challenges

Coordinating policies and actions across multiple levels of government can be complex and may lead to inefficiencies or delays in decision-making and implementation.

7.Risk of regionalism

In some cases, devolution can foster regionalism or separatist movements, as regions may seek greater autonomy or independence from the central government.

8.Accountability issues

 Determining responsibility for policy outcomes can become blurred in a devolved system, making it challenging for citizens to hold government officials accountable.

9.Lack of uniform standards

Devolution can lead to variations in standards and regulations across regions, which can impact issues like healthcare, education, and environmental protection.

CONCLUSION

It's important to note that the benefits of devolution can vary depending on the specific context and the degree of autonomy granted to subnational entities. While there are many advantages, there can also be challenges, such as managing disparities between regions and ensuring that decentralization does not lead to fragmentation or conflicts. The success of devolution often depends on effective governance structures and mechanisms for cooperation between different levels of government.