



PTD Newsletter

Partnership for Transformational Devolution

**ARE YOU INVOLVED...
JIHUSISHE!**

**Strengthening the capacities of state and non-state actors for
effective devolved governance in Kenya**



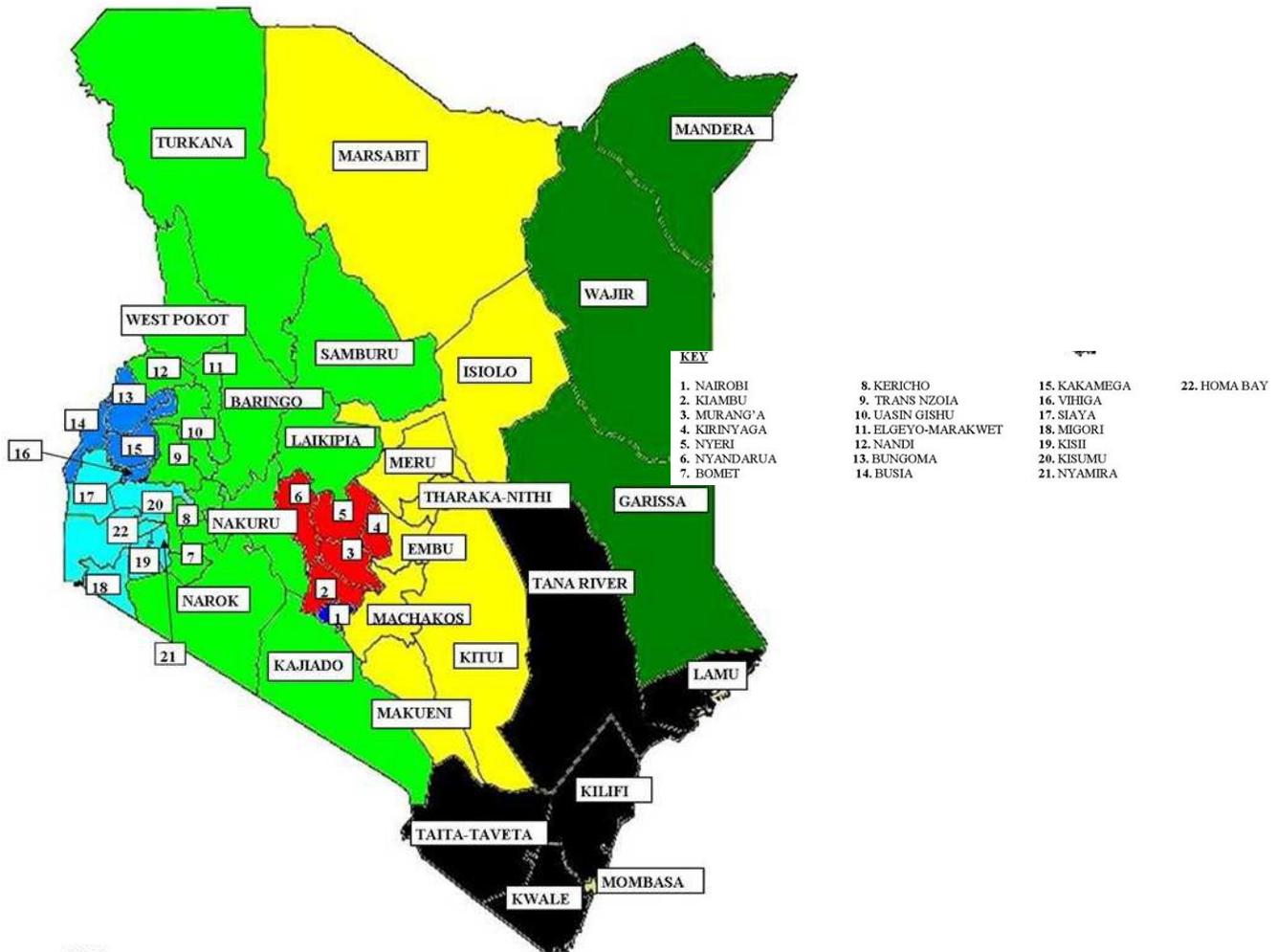
**Konrad
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COUNTIES OF KENYA



WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

Every year the Annual Devolution Conference brings together policy makers, civil society, international partners, government officials and media to discuss the status, the successes and the challenges of devolution in Kenya. In my point of view the most important outcome of the event in Kakamega is twofold: Firstly, this time – in contrast to preceding years - all policymakers and stakeholders who deal with devolution participated. This is an essential signal that devolution enjoys the support of Kenya’s (political) leadership. Secondly, there was a consensus among participants: **“Devolution works!”** It is true. Devolution works and Kenya is definitely better off with than without a devolved governance system: Development is coming to marginalised areas, citizens have more and better ways to participate in decision making and service delivery is gradually but steadily improving.



However, besides all these achievements, challenges still abound which – if remain unsolved – have the potential to destroy the successes of devolution. Those challenges are very well known: Corruption or the theft of public money, public financial and human resource management, intergovernmental relations or civic engagement are only a few of them. The problem is that everyone knows about them, everyone talks about them but apparently not enough of them try to solve them. Together with other civil society organisations, the Partnership for Transformational Devolution (PTD) has produced a policy brief in which we discuss those challenges and give concrete recommendations on how to tackle them. **It is essential to deal with these issues!**

The second generation of devolution will show if the first outcome of the Kakamega conference – the support of devolution by all stakeholders – is just lip service or substantial commitment. The problems are known, the solutions are there. It is time for action! So this is the responsibility of all stakeholders!

Are you Involved?

Thomas Tödting
Director Program on Devolution
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

PTD in Kakamega

Western Kenya's traditional and political capital, Kakamega County played host to the 5th Annual Devolution Conference. More than 6,000 delegates among them County Governors, Senators, Cabinet Secretaries and other high profile guests pitched a tent in the rural county to take stock of devolution successes and challenges five years on. However, the list would not be complete without the PTD Team. The PTD delegation in Kakamega encompassed project representatives from all over Kenya. Besides the team from Nairobi, every partner sent one representative and every region one of their Liaison Officers, for example, from Tana River, Kitui and Elgeyo Marakwet. The team notably saw its mission in sharing experiences, challenges and lessons learnt in the last four years and to help setting targets for the next five years.



Representatives of the EU Delegation at the PTD booth

500 visitors at PTD booth

The PTD was present with its own booth where the team informed interested visitors about the objectives, the achievements and the activities of the EU co-funded project and offered publications and project goodies. During the three conference days, around 500 people visited the booth. Among them were Senators, Governors, CEC members, MCAs, civil society organisations as well as representatives of the EU Delegation in Kenya. The PTD team also took the opportunity offered by the conference to visit other CSOs booths and exchange with colleagues on their projects and experiences.

Busy schedule

The conference opened its doors at Kakamega High school on the 24th April 2018. This was to be home for the PTD team for the entire week. The event days were 25th through the 27th April.



PTD at the 5th Annual Devolution Conference



It was a busy schedule because PTD had prepared a policy brief and statement which it was supposed to share with the policy makers. Together with a few County Liaison Officers, led by the Project Director the PTD team was up and down looking for the slightest opportunity to meet the target audience.

This came to fruition, for example, on the 25th April when there was had an opportunity to sit down with H.E. Governor Godhana from Tana River County and in the afternoon with Deputy Governor for Kitui County and the Governor for Baringo County.

Additionally, the team managed to share also with Senators like Mutula Kilonzo Junior from Makueni and Petronila Were Lokorio

Devolution brings resolutions for wide range of areas

The fifth Annual Devolution Conference was held from the 23rd to the 27th of April 2018, at Kakamega High School in Kakamega County.

The conference's theme was "Sustainable Productive and Efficient Governments for Results Delivery", adopted a sector approach with the focus on H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta's 'Big Four' agenda focusing on health, urban development, agriculture as well as manufacturing.

All actors within the respective sectors, the National as well as County government, the private sector, civil society and development partners, assessed the sector's status quo. Moreover, they determined the enablers for desired results, analysed the human resource management issues and finally discussed opportunities for adequate financing.

Resolutions in 10 different areas

(1) Intergovernmental relations

All actors agreed that in order to achieve the Big Four agenda, an extensive collaboration between both levels of government is required. Moreover, the emphasis was put on addressing and adapting to climate change, implementing the remaining resolutions from previous devolution conferences, as well as strengthening the relations between the CoG and IBEC.

(2) Governance and Leadership

The participants identified the adoption of a practical public participation approach to enable citizens' participation, in determining development priorities. Moreover, fighting corruption, through lifestyle audits and corruption risk assessments as well as the protection of whistle-blowers find themselves on the agenda.

(3) Enablers

Gender, youth, minorities, marginalised groups as well as persons living with disabilities should be included in the planning and implementation of all programmes.

(4) Information, Communication and Technology

To improve the communication and technology, the parties obligated themselves to invest in elaborate data management systems for enhanced tracking of progress, to inform decision-making.

(5) Finance

To make the distribution of financial flows more efficient, both levels of government agreed to revise the Equalization Fund guidelines. Moreover, the County Governments agreed to wipe off all outstanding payments.



(6) Human Resource

Human Resource Management is one of the major challenges for counties. Both levels of government obliged themselves to address all human resource challenges within the big four sectors.

(7) Health Sector

Point seven underlines the importance of enhancing leadership, quality as well as efficiency in the health sector. Moreover, the counties should receive sufficient amount of adequately trained medical staff, which is according to their needs.

(8) The Agricultural Sector

Emphasis was put on food security in Kenya. Moreover, both levels of government “shall jointly formulate a harmonised framework for coordination, resource mobilisation and funds flow transfers in implementing the priority interventions”. The national government supports the county government through incentives, to achieve the national priorities.

(9) Urban Development

Through the implementation of an integrated and all-inclusive mechanism, both levels of government obliged themselves to provide affordable housing.

(10) Trade and Manufacturing

In order to facilitate business activities in the country, both governments agreed in the tenth point to harmonise the respective regulatory frameworks.

In the end, all participants agreed that the implementation of the Communiqué should refer to the corresponding Big Four Sector Reports. The question is to what extent those resolutions will be realised since many of them of previous Annual Devolution Conferences have not been implemented so far.

PTD presents solutions to policy makers

Ahead of every Annual Devolution Conference, the Partnership for Transformational Devolution (PTD) project brings together other civil society organisations to draft a policy brief and to develop concrete policy recommendations. Since the conference in Kakamega was the first one of the second phase of devolution the organizations decided to take stock of the devolution process, in particular of the key policy areas around which concern has evolved such as intergovernmental relations, public expenditure and financial management, human resource management, corruption, civic participation as well as innovation and learning.

Bloated county staff & missing standards

One of the most significant challenges facing devolution is the bloated county staff, which causes enormous costs and keeps the recurrent expenditures at an astronomical level while the development expenditures remain low. According to the Controller of the Budget counties spent in average 67.9% in the fiscal year 2016/17 on recurrent costs. Additionally, county governments have no harmonised public service since it is a mix of staff consisting of former local authority staff, seconded staff and its own staff. National policies for county public service boards with uniform procedure and standards are a possibility to improve the situation.

It is all about the money

Many of the existing challenges are closely connected with the issue of funds. Counties face a massive problem concerning meeting their revenue generation targets. Although they have only limited possibilities, more local revenues could be a valuable source for better funding of service delivery. It would also mean that counties are not as dependent on the equitable share from national government as they are at the moment. The funds transferred to the county level are mostly insufficient for the responsibilities they have and their disbursement is delayed.



PTD representatives discuss policy recommendations with the Governor of Baringo

Participation and innovation

Civic participation was identified as a further component on which stakeholders have to work in the next years. Although, improvement can be seen much more ought to be done. This means pushing social audit and accountability tools, developing policies and guidelines to implement public participation laws and building the capacity of CSOs and citizens. According to the policy brief, the rich pool of learnings and experiences has not been sufficiently shared among counties so far. The drafting organisations propose the establishment of information and exchange networks, which would help the counties to find new and innovative solutions, for instance, web-based seminars.



Policy makers visit the PTD booth

Presentation to policy makers

The policy brief also encompasses a number of recommendations to help decision makers dealing with the identified challenges. During the Annual Devolution Conference, PTD met with several policymakers and presented the analysis and the solutions. The feedback was very positive and they welcomed the input from the CSO sector.

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