

An Assessment of Citizens' Engagement in Public Administration in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to identify, describes trends in citizen participation in Kenya's democratic processes, and propose a citizen engagement framework reflecting best practices in the administration of public services through broadly tracing challenges, experiences and achievements of the citizen participation as provided for by the Kenyan constitution and Acts of parliament. It is important and inevitable that a formative assessment of citizen participation should be undertaken to determine whether the program is on course in terms of achieving the objectives for which it was put in place. This article is composed of four main sections: In the first section, authors conduct a quick inventory of existing legal and policy frameworks for citizen participation and summarize the shortcomings of current practices, then explores an emerging field of practice known as deliberative democracy. The article also provides some examples of where citizens engage face-to-face in addressing community issues. Third, authors provide a summary of key features and techniques for deliberation within a proposed framework. In the same section, authors provide an inventory of some of the most promising engaging techniques as a starting point for Government to choose among these techniques. Finally, authors conclude the article with a set of recommendations that are expected to encourage public deliberation in the activities of government and support the development of an "infrastructure of engagement" throughout the central government and county governments. To develop the article, authors relied on a substantial literature review including an in-depth review of existing public involvement guides.

Keywords: *Citizen, engagement, administration, Kenya*

1. INTRODUCTION

Kenya is a democratic republic, and the philosophy of justice, equality, liberty and fraternity are enshrined in its constitution. The democratic principles of the country flow from the Preamble of the Constitution itself. Democracy is a government of the people, by the people and for the people [1]. The theory and practice of public administration is increasingly concerned with placing the citizen at the centre of policymakers' considerations, not just as target but also as agents that have both rights and duties. The aim is to develop policies and design services that respond to individuals' needs and are relevant to their circumstances in cognizance and consensus that citizen participation and civic engagement. These are the building blocks for good governance and citizens should seek greater accountability from the service providers through increased dialogue, consultation and by monitoring and assessing performance externally and mutually.

Kenya covers 581,309 km² with a population of 38,610,097 [19] and is politically bi-cameral vide constitution 2010. President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta is the fourth and current president of Kenya. He was inaugurated on 9 April 2013 after the 2013 General Election together with his running mate, now the Deputy President Hon. William Samoei Arap Ruto. President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta is first President of the Devolved Government System with one National Government and Forty Seven County Governments that became operational in Kenya. The current Kenya Government is founded upon the concept of decentralization and

devolution of power. According to Article 10(2) (a) of the constitution [2], devolution and sharing of power were identified as values and principles that would guide Kenya Governance system. This meant that Kenyan majority voters of 67% in the Referendum of 2010 approved the multi-dimensional approach, which organizes and manages governance as well as state power along multiple lines. It defines, distributes and constrains the use of state power along multiple lines. It combines vertical, horizontal, lateral dimensions and forms the foundation of devolved systems and structures of government. [3].

Citizen engagement is part of a family of democratic reform ideas that includes public participation, public involvement, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, and collaborative governance [4]. This paper seeks to make the case for shifts in public administration from citizens as consumers to active shapers of government policies and programs [5]. Citizen engagement is viewed as a commitment from government to cultivate deeper levels of knowledge among citizens generally about the issue at hand and potential solutions, and to provide opportunities for citizens to exercise that knowledge in service of policy and program development in a regular and ongoing basis. Citizen engagement emphasizes the quality and depth of *learning* and *involvement* over the breadth and frequency of *exchange* [4].

Reference [4] in their article *public deliberation* noted that this is a basic adjustments toward viewing citizen engagement as fundamentally knowledge building and necessarily influential within the public

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administrative processes which can have profoundly positive benefits to the substance, transparency, legitimacy, and fairness of policy development as well as the general view of government held by citizens.

“Citizen Engagement” is composed of four goals: to inform, consult, engage, and collaborate with citizens. In this paper, it is emphasized that citizen engagement is an active and intentional partnership between the general public and decision makers. This core value fits well toward the “engage-collaborate-empower” end of the goals set forth in the public involvement spectrum as envisaged by the Kenya constitution 2010, the county Governments Act 2012 among other legal frameworks in Kenya.

1.1 Citizen Engagement in a Global Context

Citizen engagement is gaining popularity in the entire world, it is also done through international agencies such as United Nations, as one study observed that public participation is a sound investment as well as core element of good governance since it enables governments to access a variety of information, perspectives, and potential solutions, and this to a great extent improves the quality of the decisions reached [6]. Equally important, it contributes to building public trust in government, raising the quality of democracy and strengthening civic capacity” [6]. As one senior Canadian official from the Office of Citizens and Civics put it that Citizen Participation is a worldwide movement and it is a community-driven demand [7].

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The core function of every Government is to serve bonafide citizens through their resources, this calls for full participation of the citizens in policy development and decision making, if the objective of serving citizens better is to be achieved. However, most Governments world over lack the mechanism for public participation and those governments that lack clear public participation framework rarely involve their citizens in governance. This paper seeks to identify and describes trends in citizen participation in Kenya and propose a citizen engagement framework reflecting best practices in the administration of public services.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- To document an inventory of existing major legal frameworks for citizen participation in Kenya
- To identify and describes trends in citizen participation in Kenya
- To tracing challenges, experiences and achievements of the citizen participation in Kenya
- To propose a citizen engagement framework reflecting best practices in the administration of public services

1.4 Justification of the Study

Citizens in many African countries feel more often than not that their plight has not been addressed effectively by their Governments, this has become a source of conflicts which at times has resulted in civil unrest, fall of governments and at worst governments collapse through military coups. This study intends to unearth the importance of citizen participation in governance as a strategy to ensure that roles and responsibilities of governance are shared among all the actors including the leaders and their followers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reference [4] pointed out that Deliberation enables groups of citizens to come together in a non-coercive environment to learn about, discuss, dialogue, and ultimately render their recommendations for action to public officials. During deliberation, participants “consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, different perspectives, converse with one another and think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings. Examples of successful deliberations are those of participatory budgeting in Brazil and Consensus conferences in Denmark. Through the enactment of the new constitution in 2010, Kenya is moving closer to deliberative democracy. Deliberations can be implemented through different information exchange models such as surveys, public hearings, and public comment periods.

Reference [8] Suggested that Mechanisms of citizen participation can largely be categorized into vote and voice; Vote is the means through which citizens select their representatives at the local level while, voice is where citizens have the power to influence ‘the making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of decisions that concern their socio-politico-economic wellbeing and to demand accountability from their local leadership. *ibid*, p. 76

2.1 Evidence of the Influence of Citizen Participation on Decentralized Service Delivery

Reference [9] in their studies on water service delivery in Indonesia found that when users are involved directly it is probable that services meet the users preferences. Another researcher found put that community participation yielded to pressure on Local Governments for effective services [10]

In a study of Italian regional governments [11] found that ‘governments that were more open to constituent pressure, managed and delivered services more efficiently’ furthermore [12] established a shift in expenditure priorities in local authorities in Kenya as a result of citizen involvement in decision making through LASDAP, those results were in agreement with reference [13] study on Citizen Participation in Local Policy Making: Design and Democracy in developed countries, who found that citizen participation had a clear

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impact on policy through participatory governance than through deliberative forums.

Reference [14] in his review of Ian Bruce's book, *The Porto Alegre Alternative: Direct Democracy in Action* observed that participation energized citizen involvement and especially of the poor and illustrated the 'positive effects that government-supported citizen participation can have on urban planning'.

2.2 Success Stories: Participatory Budgeting and Auditing in Brazil

There exists international success stories that have accrued through public participation one such story is that of participatory budgeting and auditing in Brazil's southern city of Porto Alegre [15]. In this particular case local assemblies were organized to suggest, discuss and decide on 'allocations and spending of the municipal investment budget' [15]

2.3 Kenyan Success Stories

In Kenya, public participation was used in the process of vetting of constitutional office holders such as the Commission for Revenue Allocation, Judicial Service Commission, Commission for Land Review, National Police Service Commission, Salaries and Remuneration Commission, Judges of the Supreme Court, and Cabinet Secretaries among others. Through indirect (vote) public participation, Kenya has successfully gone through Four Governments, namely KANU Government, Narc Government, Grand Coalition Government, and Jubilee Coalition Government.

A case in the African context is that of Rwanda where President Paul Kagame runs a public participation program called citizen outreach tours that are often intertwined with interactive sessions with the area opinion leaders.

2.4 Cases of Challenges in Public Participation

Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan (LASDAP) was conceived in 2003 as a means of enhancing citizen role in decision making in local authorities which was managed by the then Ministry of Local Government. A study by Clarion indicated that LASDAP had failed to effectively engage the public due to lack well organized communities and elite capture, LASDAP did not realize effective public participation due to low levels of awareness by citizens.

3. INVENTORY OF EXISTING MAJOR LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN KENYA

3.1 The Kenya Constitution 2010

The quest for a devolved system of governance in Kenya popularly referred to, as 'ugatuzi' has been a longstanding one. The promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 [2] on 27 August 2010 paved way for realization of the "dream" system of governance. Chapter 11 (Cap 11) of the constitution 2010 – Devolved

Government specifically provides for the setting up of the County Governments [3].

Chapter two articles 6(3) requires the state to afford reasonable access to services through Article 35 gives citizens the right to information through publishing is affects the citizens, citizens can hence participate and even react through engagement. Citizens can equally participate in the removal of their members of parliament even before the expiry of the term through article 104 (1) this provides an opportunity for citizens to make sure that their concerns are communicated to the government through parliament and any representative failing to do this can be recalled.

Parliament as a law enacting institution is key and its operations affects the citizens through legislation, article 118 of the constitution 2010 provides citizens right of access and participation it specifically provides that parliament shall conduct its business in an open manner, and its sittings and those of its committees shall be open to the public; and facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other business of Parliament and its committees and Parliament may not exclude the public, or any media, from any sitting unless in exceptional circumstances the relevant Speaker has determined that there are justifiable reasons for the exclusion [2]. Article 119(1) further provides that every person has a right to petition Parliament to consider any matter within its authority, including enacting, amending or repealing any legislation.

Chapter eleven of the Kenya constitution 2010, on devolution further provides a raft of provision on citizen engagement based on principles of devolution. As in [3] points out that Devolution is actually a form of decentralization. Decentralization is about transferring of selected functions from a central authority to the lowest feasible structure. Devolution entails the ceding (legal act giving) of power from a Central Authority to Local Authority, the state powers of revenue collection and expenditure among others. In Kenyan case the current Centralized System Government headquartered in the Capital City of Nairobi has transferred power to the 47 Counties listed on the First Schedule of the constitution 2010. Each of these Counties form the County Governments comprising of the County Assemblies and County Executives with State powers of legislature – law making and Executive – Implementing the Laws and Policies respectively. This through the county governments act places citizen participation closer to the citizens.

On the objectives of the devolution article 174 provides that:

- a) To promote 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

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- exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them;
- 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 proximate, easily accessible services throughout Kenya;
 - g) To ensure equitable sharing of national and local resources throughout Kenya;
 - h) To facilitate the decentralization of State organs, their functions and services, from the capital of Kenya; and
 - i) To enhance checks and balances and the separation of powers.

These objectives puts the place of citizens on the forefront and acts as the cornerstones of citizen engagement as affirmed by 176 (2) that every county government shall decentralize its functions and the provision of its services to the extent that it is efficient and practicable to do so. On the governance and management of urban areas and cities article 184(1) (c) provide for participation by residents in the governance of urban areas and cities.

Just like parliament the county assembly has mechanisms for public participation; article 196 (1&2)“....provide that a county assembly shall conduct its business in an open manner, and hold its sittings and those of its committees, in public; and facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other business of the assembly and its committees. A county assembly may not exclude the public, or any media, from any sitting unless in exceptional circumstances the speaker has determined that there are justifiable reasons for doing so.”

Chapter twelve on public finance provides in article 201(a) that there shall be openness and accountability, including public participation in financial matters. On division of public revenue by the national government to county government, citizens have an opportunity to In determining the basis of revenue sharing; 217(2) (d) provide that the Senate shall invite the public, including professional bodies, to make submissions to it on the matter (division of public allocation).

Citizens also have a constitutional provision in Budget estimates and annual Appropriation Bill, article 221 (5) provide that in discussing and reviewing the estimates, the committee (of the Assembly) shall seek representations from the public and the recommendations shall be taken into account when the committee makes its recommendations to the National Assembly. Key Values and principles of public service is public participation, article 232 (1) (d) provide that in the attempt to provide responsive, prompt, effective, impartial and equitable

provision of services, public service commission shall involve people in the process of policy making as well as transparent and provision to the public of timely, accurate information.

Citizens also have an opportunity to participate in the removal of any member of the commissions established by the constitution other than commission's ex officio members. Article 251(2) provides that a person desiring the removal of a member of a commission or of a holder of an independent office on any ground specified in clause (1) may present a petition to the National Assembly setting out the alleged facts constituting that ground. Citizens also can participate in amendment and enforcement of the constitution, citizens can initiate constitutional amendment, article 257(1) paves way for constitutional amendment by popular initiative, section 1 reads “An amendment to this Constitution may be proposed by a popular initiative signed by at least one million registered voters” close to amendment is citizens ability to enforce constitution; 258 (1) Provides that every person has the right to institute court proceedings, claiming that this Constitution has been contravened, or is threatened with contravention.

3.2 The County Governments Act 2012

Part VIII and IX of the county governments' acts is exclusively dedicated to citizen participation, public communication and access to information. Article 87 sets forth the principles of citizen participation in counties as:

- a) Timely access to information, data, documents, and other information relevant or related to policy formulation and implementation;
- b) Reasonable access to the process of formulating and implementing policies, laws, and regulations, including the approval of development proposals, projects and budgets, the granting of permits and the establishment of specific performance standards;
- c) Protection and promotion of the interest and rights of minorities, marginalized groups and communities and their access to relevant information;
- d) Legal standing to interested or affected persons, organizations, and where pertinent, communities, to appeal from or, review decisions, or redress grievances, with particular emphasis on persons and traditionally marginalized communities, including women, the youth, and disadvantaged communities;
- e) Reasonable balance in the roles and obligations of county governments and non-state actors in decision-making processes to promote shared responsibility and partnership, and to provide complementary authority and oversight;
- f) Promotion of public-private partnerships, such as joint committees, technical teams, and citizen commissions, to encourage direct dialogue and concerted action on sustainable development;

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- g) Recognition and promotion of the reciprocal roles of non-state actors' participation and governmental facilitation and oversight.

Article 88 provides citizens with right to petition and challenge the county government on any matter under the responsibility of the county government. Article 90 enlists matters subject to local referenda as county laws and petitions; or planning and investment decisions affecting the county. Article 91 compels the county government to facilitate the establishment of modalities, platforms and structures for citizen participation including: information communication technology based platforms, town hall meetings, budget preparation and validation fora, notice boards: announcing jobs, appointments, procurement, awards and other important announcements of public interest, development project sites, avenues for the participation of peoples' representatives including but not limited to members of the National Assembly and Senate; or establishment of citizen fora at county and decentralized units.

Part IX of the acts provides an opportunity for citizens to access information concerning the functioning of the county government, through this citizens can make a decision of whether there need to engage government or otherwise, through article 94, the county government is compelled to use the media to: create awareness on devolution and governance, promote citizens understanding for purposes of peace and national cohesion, undertake advocacy on core development issues such as agriculture, education, health, security, economics, sustainable environment among others; and promotion of the freedom of the media. This information should get to the citizens through: television stations, information communication technology centers, websites, community radio stations, public meetings and traditional media.

3.3 Public Finance Management Act 2012

On ensuring compliance to this act, the budget and appropriation committee of the county assemblies of all county governments publish to the public (citizens) the public participation forums on the budget estimates for financial years. This enables citizens to participate in budget matters at ward level so that they do not have spent on traveling to such forums.

4. DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY AS A TOOL FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN KENYA

Citizen engagement is part of a family of democratic reform ideas that includes public participation, public involvement, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, and collaborative governance. Deliberation deepens a basic tenet of country's democracy: that placing citizen closer to the affairs of government strengthens representation, transparency, and accountability, and can improve results. The most critical distinction between deliberative forms of public participation and traditional

techniques of public engagement is that deliberation emphasizes information processing (meaning-making) as much as information exchanges (upstream and downstream communication). Deliberative democracy advances richer forms of public participation that engage citizens in structured dialogue around focused policy issues, yielding benefits to participants and sponsors that extend well beyond the collection of useful information. Democratic deliberation augments participants' levels of knowledge about issues, cultivates trust, builds civic capacity, and, over the long term, may increase general levels of civic engagement and political participation.

According to [4] "...Deliberation enables groups of citizens to come together in a non-coercive environment to learn about, discuss, and ultimately render their recommendations for action to public officials.."

While there are very few examples around the world where citizen deliberation has taken root within government as an "institutionalized practice" (for example, participatory budgeting in Brazil and consensus conferences in Denmark), a growing number of experiences at all levels of government indicate that deliberation is increasingly seen as a legitimate and effective technique for governments to partner with citizens in policy development and decision-making processes, Kenya as a country through the constitution 2010, the county government Act 2012, is inching closer to deliberative democracy.

Deliberations can be implemented through different information exchange models such as surveys, public hearings, public comment periods, and so on—through which individuals or organizations state their viewpoints, and the role of government is to collect these views and serve as an arbiter of public opinion. Through deliberative information processing models of citizen engagement, participants come to a shared understanding of underlying issues and trade-offs and, as a result, are collectively prepared to make substantively better policy recommendations [16].

Such processes can reduce friction and competition between interests, and citizens experience greater satisfaction with the process when agencies ensure that public input is accounted for and reflected in the final decisions. [4].

Several guiding principles of public deliberation distinguish it as an approach to citizen participation from more commonly used techniques this principles include clarifying values and focusing on action. According to [ipid] there are essentially five rationales for citizen deliberation in democratic governance; Citizen participation in policy formulation and decision making can reduce conflict, deliberative citizen participation can lead to better, longer lasting, and wiser policy choices, Citizen involvement in decision making is something governments should do, Deliberation builds citizen competence and Citizen participation cultivates mutual

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understanding; builds bonds of trust among citizens, decision makers, and governing institutions; and can effect changes in political attitudes and behavior.

Each implies a set of outcomes that offer compelling reasons for a manager to choose what can be a time-consuming and arduous organizational effort. While no single rationale should be taken as a central or primary justification for deliberative approaches to governance, together they offer a complete picture of successful public engagement.

5. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION MODELS AND HOW THEY CAN BE APPLIED IN KENYA

There are many face to face citizen participation models in existence some countries have used them successfully Kenya is yet to implement them, here are some of them according as documented by IBM center for business of government and how Kenya can apply them.

5.1 Choice Work Dialogue

Developed by Viewpoint Learning, is a public opinion research method that brings together a representative sample of around 40 citizens to work through the choices and trade-offs that public decision making must address. Choice Work Dialogues incorporate the use of scenarios and emphasize values-oriented discussion as opposed to information-seeking conversations, as participants develop solutions with which everyone can live. Recommendations from the group are supplied to sponsoring agencies. Choice Work Dialogues have been used to address a range of issues in the U.S. and Canada, including land-use planning, state and local governance, healthcare, aging, and housing. [ipid].

In Kenya with the new leadership dispensation, Choice Work Dialogue can be successfully implemented through both county and national government levels, using cluster sampling citizens can be sampled and involved in shaping government policies, at county level, ward administrators can reliable sample such population to be engaged, at national level district officers (DOs) can identity a sample of people from the divisions and creates a forum through which Choice Work design can be implemented and deliberations implemented.

5.2 Citizens Jury

This method was developed by the Jefferson Center, it is reported by Lukensmeyer, (2006) in their article *Public Deliberations*, the authors indicate that the methods brings 18 people into a forum to discuss public issues using a variety of approaches that yields to final decisions on the best approach.

In Kenya this approach can work well both at the national and county governments, employing a combination of stratified random and purposive sampling a team of 18 people including community opinion leaders

can be engaged on examination of public issues, purposive techniques should be used to identify and engage community people preferably those who have capacity to understand government policies.

5.3 Consensus Conference

This model was developed by Danish Board of Technology, it works through the bringing together of an inclusive and representative sample of 14 who meet over a time to explore complex technical issues, the engage each other through various methods and eventually weigh policy options and present their agreed recommendations to principal decision makers in a final report[4]. Consensus conferences have been used to engage the public around telecommunications policy, bioengineering, and, most recently, nanotechnology.

This approach can successfully be used when integrated with community professional groups particularly the elite, a consortium of professionals from such technical areas can be assigned to take care of community interests through such models. The structure in place both at national and county level can help facilitate both the individuals to the consortium and the consortium administration and management.

5.4 Deliberative Polling

This model was developed by the Center for Deliberative Polling it works by bringing together a random sample of 200 to 500 citizens to discuss pertinent issues in depth in two days. They are guided by experts and a decision is eventually obtained through voting [ipid]. Results provide decision makers with a snapshot of how citizens would be likely to respond to an issue if they had the opportunity to become fully informed. Deliberative Polls have been conducted around energy policy, U.S. foreign policy, healthcare, and municipal planning.

In Kenya with the new leadership dispensation, Deliberative Polling can be successfully implemented through both county and national government levels, using cluster sampling citizens can be sampled and involved in shaping government policies, at county level, ward administrators can reliable sample such population to be engaged, at national level district officers (DOs) can identity a sample of people from the divisions and creates a forum through which Deliberative Polling design can be implemented and deliberations implemented.

5.5 Issue Forums

Developed by the National Issues Forums Institute and the Kettering Foundation, involve variously sized groups of citizens who come together to explore public matters. Carefully framed background materials and skilled facilitators guide discussion. Group members are polled at the end of the forum, and results of the poll are made available to decision makers. Local Issue Forums have been used to discuss a range of issues including gun violence, healthcare, genetically modified foods, and immigration.

5.6 Study Circles

Developed and promoted by the Study Circles Resource Center and often employed as part of democratic organizing efforts, involve large numbers of people in discussion among diverse groups of eight to 12 participants. These groups come together during the same period of time (a weekend to several weeks) to develop solutions to a common concern. Community-wide study circles culminate in an “action forum” where all participants from study circle groups throughout the community come together to develop an action strategy to solve a common problem. Study circles have been used in communities across the country to tackle a range of issues including education, racism, and police relations.

In Kenya, with a myriad of community problems such as terrorism, drug abuse among others, this method can help address such issues, a solution obtained through such deliberations may benefit from the ground understanding of the problem and identification of owned solution mechanisms dubbed “action forum”.

5.7 On line or E-Deliberative Democracy

E-government, according to the World Bank, is the use of information technologies to “transform relationships with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government.” This includes improved service delivery, citizen empowerment, and more efficient management.

According to IBM center of business of government: A spectacular array of tools are emerging that give ordinary citizens a greater “voice” in nearly every aspect of society today. Called by some “extreme democracy,” by others “personal democracy,” and still others “we media,” these tools enable individuals with like interests to find one another; build and manage constituencies; spark meaningful conversations among diverse groups; publish text, audio, and video to the web to growing audiences; and collaboratively manage content using blogs, wikis, and other tools of the networked environment. “On a typical day,” a recent Pew Internet Project reports, “5 million people post or share some kind of material on the web through their own blogs” [17].

A study by the Council for Excellence in Government (CEG) recently concluded that e-government holds the greatest potential to shift citizens’ thinking away from the government to our government.

In their own words:
“Americans see the benefits of e-government as more than simply better or more cost-efficient services; they see it as a means of empowering citizens” [18].

Reference [4] points out that Online (or web-enabled) democracy opens a variety of opportunities for democratic participation: e-voting, access to information, e-petitioning, and so on. This article, however, focuses on forms of citizen engagement that involve deliberation online: processes that are complementary and analogous

to face-to-face participation, but that deliver unique benefits when carried out online.

6. CONCLUSION

Rethinking public engagement is a critical challenge for Kenya in the 21st century. In an era of declining trust in public institutions, public flight from politics, and urgent issues that require cooperative and collaborative solutions, authors encourage the public leadership to rethink the way government engages with the public. We want to stress in particular the emerging role of government as convener, and to think about ways both Kenyan national and county governments’ can contribute to the growth of an infrastructure for engagement. This means first and foremost, expanding both Kenyan national and county Governments’ participation techniques to include information-processing methods—specifically, deliberative and participatory techniques including ; Choice Work Dialogue, Citizens Jury, Consensus Conference, Deliberative Polling, Issue Forums, Study Circles, and On line or e-deliberative democracy that support the general interests of the public in sharing their experiences and perspectives, building knowledge, and building workable solutions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

To make Kenya a country where citizen engagement and participation is taken as a serious and important exercise, authors make the following recommendations:

- a. Both the national and county governments should create and staff a department focused on improving citizen participation alongside the existing communication and information departments.
- b. Both the national and county governments should develop assessment frameworks and monitoring and evaluation tools.
- c. Ensure that the procedures, budgets, and time cycles for policy and program development create sufficient opportunities to include citizen engagement, achieve an appropriate balance of expert and public input, and are tied to a transparent and accountable decision-making structure.
- d. Government departments need to incorporate citizen engagement practices into performance management review. Targets should be set and appraised accordingly.
- e. Serious work needs to be done to identify and resolve inconsistencies, deficiencies and obstacles to good citizen engagement practice that reside in existing policy frameworks
- f. The Kenyan parliament should carry out top-to-bottom review of existing acts of parliament with an aim of incorporating provisions that guarantees citizen engagement in matters of public interests.
- g. To build successful citizens participation in the country, the government will need invest

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sufficient funding for participation efforts in program and project budgets.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDY DIRECTION

The study was basically informed by ex post facto studies and literature reviewed which were mainly descriptive rather than empirical. This study would benefit immensely from a comprehensive and extensive empirical effort through qualitative testing combined with quantitative assessments of survey in order benefits from more results for comparative purposes.

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