

## **What next on the County Integrated Development Plans?**

### **Introduction**

The dispensation of the Constitution of Kenya (CoK), 2010 has seen tremendous changes in the whole governance system of Kenya; more so the transition from centralization to devolution. One of the most significant changes introduced is the major functions given to the county governments. Kenya Vision 2030, Medium Term Plans and County Integrated Development Plan provide a critical foundation for accelerated, inclusive and sustainable development. Counties as independent actors should focus and plan strategically on how to manage public resources as well as revenue raising and mobilization hence by means of this blueprint the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).

### **Why CIDPs?**

In preparing the County Integrated Development Plans, counties should consider a participatory approach through consultations with the public and input from various development stakeholders to ensure that the CIDP conforms to the priorities of the public and inspires confidence in involvement in this process. Public. For any organization to run effectively there is need to formulate, implement and evaluate decisions. County governments are not exceptional as far as this is concerned. According to Mbambisa, 2014 an integrated development plan is a strategic plan that enables an organization to gain and maintain a competitive advantage.

### **What are the experiences of CIDPs as far as implementation is concerned?**

Counties developed their first CIDPs between 2013 and 2014 formulating a strategy on how different programmes and projects could be implemented and realize the envisaged benefits in development agenda. It is however noticeable that most counties have not managed to realize their strategy as outlined in this document. Among the greatest challenges that have been insurmountable over the years, have been to realize local revenue collection targets that looking back were way beyond what the counties could meet. It is important to appreciate the foundation of these ambitious targets were presumably achievable by the elaborate county government structures contrary to the previous local authorities that were faced with immense leakages in revenue. Several mistakes occurred in preparation of these planning documents.

1. Lack of proper consultations in preparation putting the legitimacy of these strategies in to question in addressing the priorities of the citizens.
2. There was no scientific way of establishing how much the counties could raise in local revenue resulting to over-estimation and stalling of the projects anticipated. For example, Garissa, Tana River Isiolo and Vihiga are among the counties that missed their revenue targets by a big margin.
3. Leadership challenges have been cited as an obstacle to the implementation of the CIDP. These manifests in form of; lack of ethical and moral conduct by leaders, lack of clear

vision articulation to foster implementation of CIDP, poor communication and coordination.

4. On the other hand, Financial constrains has been a stumbling block for several counties in many occurrences, there has been delay in funds disbursement from the national government to the county governments. This has curtailed effective implementation of the CIDPs.
5. Finally, there were disparities on salary scales, human resource challenges and inadequate technical capacity especially in collection of revenue.

For instance, according to an evaluation report by the International Budget Partnership (IBP), 2015 Narok County Government was unable to achieve strategic objectives as captured in the CIDP.

### **What next in the next phase of the CIDPs?**

Budget making process gains its legitimacy by the extent to which the citizens are involved in making these decisions. In preparation of the next phase of the CIDPs, county governments should involve the public in reviewing the previous CIDPs, to evaluate success story, scrutinize the challenges to form a foundation for the next CIDPs. Counties should work towards having an elaborate involving approach with all the key stakeholders. Further counties need to evaluate the potential of their tax base to resolve the hurdle on the persistence shortfalls in local revenue collection. In any case, automation of revenue has not worked so well in resolving this, in some cases counties have collected less revenue than they collected before automation. Counties have also demonstrated limited technical capacity in preparation of the County Integrated Development Plans. Understandably counties operate from a scope of limited resources and thus the need for prioritization. This principle regards some projects more important than the other based on the available resources and the existing needs of the citizens. In conclusion, the need for positive synergy between county government and the citizens cannot be overemphasized. This enhances transparency and accountability on public resources and increases people's confidence on the government.

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