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**FARM HOUSEHOLD'S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE:  
LESSONS FROM DEVOLVED SYSTEMS IN KENYA**

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By

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## **Tegemeo Institute**

Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development is a Policy Research Institute under Egerton University with a mandate to undertake empirical research and analysis on contemporary economic and agricultural policy issues in Kenya. The institute is widely recognized as a centre of excellence in policy analysis on topical agricultural and food security issues of the day and in its extensive dissemination of findings to government and other key stakeholders with a view to influencing policy direction and the decision making processes. Tegemeo's empirically based analytical work and its objective stance in reporting and dissemination of findings have over the past decade won the acceptance of government, the private sector, civil society, academia, and others interested in the performance of Kenya's agricultural sector.

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## **Abstract**

Citizen participation is widely recognized as a critical strategy for improving governance as it is seen to increase the efficiency of public service delivery, government responsiveness to local needs, and accountability for government spending. Kenya promulgated a new Constitution in 2010, which now places more emphasis on citizen participation in governance. A new structure of government, where functions are devolved to County (local) governments, came in to place in March 2013. In this structure, consultative approaches with the citizenry are expected to be critical in planning and implementation of programs by both the national and county governments.

This study, therefore, aims at providing an understanding about the extent of citizens' participation in the agriculture sector after devolution of functions to County governments. Our results show that the strongest factor that affected household's decision to participate was their own experience in participation in development and planning meetings. In addition, traditional modes of communication such as friends/relatives/neighbours, schools, churches, public boards, and public meetings are still effective in getting information to households. Also, being involved in group activities and knowledge about local projects increased the likelihood of participation by households in development meetings.

Farm households' participation in development meetings has been minimal after the first year of devolution. The study, therefore, recommends that the county governments should create a greater awareness of the development programmes and projects and support community-based organizations in civic education to enhance awareness besides the already existing channels of communication. In addition, the policy action should target mobilizing households to increase participation in meetings.

***Keywords:*** *Devolution, Governance, Community Participation, Kenya*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

AEZ	Agro-Ecological Zones
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
DDC	District Development Committee
EPSEM	Equal Probability Selection Method
DFRDS	District Focus for Rural Development Strategy
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LATF	Local Authorities Transfer Fund
NASSEP	National Sample Survey and Evaluation Program
RMLF	Roads Maintenance Levy Fund
SRDP	Special Rural Development Programme
TAPRA	Tegemeo Agricultural Policy Research Analysis

## **1.0 Introduction**

Citizen participation is widely recognized as a critical strategy for improving governance (Eversole, 2011; Speer, 2012). This is because it is seen to increase the efficiency of public service delivery, government responsiveness to local needs, accountability for government spending, and empowers citizens (Agarwal, 2001; Blair, 2000; Speer, 2012). Citizen participation involves using the local citizen's input over: design of public policy, allocation and distribution of funds, and accountability of government spending.

Decentralization of governance has been widely promoted over the past decades in developing countries and has been credited with the economic transformation in countries such as India (Bardhan, 2002). Devolution, which involves the transfer of decision-making and implementation powers, functions, responsibilities and resources to legally constituted and elected local government, is now seen as a better form of decentralization (De Mello, 2000; Bingham et al., 2005). Citizen participation and the level of participation influences the success of any governance system (Francis & James, 2003). However, it is expected that decentralization or devolution will lead to higher participation by citizens, thereby improving accountability and responsiveness by local governments.

Several terms such as “community participation” “community empowerment” albeit loosely, have been used to capture citizen’s participation (Botchway, 2001). Of importance is who gets to participate and what the levels of participation are. Households that are located in remote areas, i.e. far away from the headquarters have little contact with their leaders and have little confidence that their voice matters in decision making (Krishna & Schober, 2014). As such, these households are likely to have poor public service delivery and supply of public goods. On the other hand, wealthy households and those with greater access to public officials are likely to participate (Agrawal & Gupta, 2005). Specific groups such as women, youth and the poor have been found to be excluded from participation due to social norms and social perceptions that discount their abilities and opinions (Agarwal, 2001; Bingham et al., 2005; Devas & Grant, 2003). In addition, a robust civil society has been found to increase participation due to its role in mobilizing citizens to hold leaders accountable and calling for information to be made available to citizens (Devas & Grant, 2003).

In Kenya, the government has had several iterations of decentralization all aimed at improving governance, public service delivery and supply of public goods, especially to rural folk. However, challenges emerged in each system with citizen participation or lack of it cross-cutting across all these systems. Kamau et al., (2010) show that in the agriculture sector, there was a disconnect between smallholder farmers and the governance system yet farmers were represented in sector development committees. This highlights the elite capture that has existed in the decentralization process. Therefore, this study will explore whether participation is likely to change for smallholder farmers with the changes in the governance structure.

In developing countries, scarcity of data has limited research on citizen's participation and government's responsiveness in improving governance and accountability (Speer, 2012). This study will contribute to this body of literature by analyzing the determinant of citizen's participation in the devolved system in Kenya. The study takes advantage of the recent changes in the governance system in Kenya that were introduced following the inauguration of the current constitution in 2010 that eventually introduced a two-tier government, i.e. the national and county governments. One of the key objectives of the new constitution was to raise public participation in governance with the aim of improving accountability by government. County governments came into office after the elections held in March 2013. The new constitution requires that the public participate in governance and are consulted in crucial decisions including identification of priorities and financing. Therefore, we explore factors that affect the participation of rural households, i.e. which type of households or individuals were likely to participate in devolved governance systems.

### **1.1 Governance Structures in Kenya and Public Participation**

Over the years, Kenya has progressively shifted from a centralized to a decentralized system of governance. This involved decentralizing planning and implementation of programmes.<sup>1</sup> In 1968, Kenya initiated integrated decentralized planning under the Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP) that was managed by the Ministry of Finance and coordinated by the National Rural Development Committee. SRDP was focused at the sub-district level covering six rural administrative divisions as an experiment on decentralization with the primary objective of

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include: Kenyatta's administration's Special Rural Development Program in 1968, Moi's administration District Focus for Rural Development Strategies in 1983 and Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan Program in 1998 and Kibaki's administration Constituency Development Fund Program in 2003

increasing rural incomes, employment and welfare (KHRC & SPAN, 2010). But the primary drawbacks of the SRDP programme were: i) lack of clear objectives and plan of action, ii) political issues at the local administrative level, iii) inadequate and trained staff to handle the planning process at district level, iv) lack of clear guidelines from the treasury on budget ceilings, v) poor coordination between planners and ministries in developing sectoral recommendations and vi) limited participation by local citizens and their resources in the development process (IEA,2010).

As a result of SRDP shortcomings, the Government, in July 1983, introduced a new approach to decentralized development to all districts in Kenya through the adoption of a District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) strategy. The purpose of this strategy was to change from the top-down sector-based approach to an integrated, participatory and bottom-up development planning approach. The centrepiece of the system was the delegation of development planning and coordination to the District Development Committee (DDC), a consultative forum that brought together the civil servants at the district level, elected representatives and community leaders while having a focus on citizens' participation at grassroots levels.

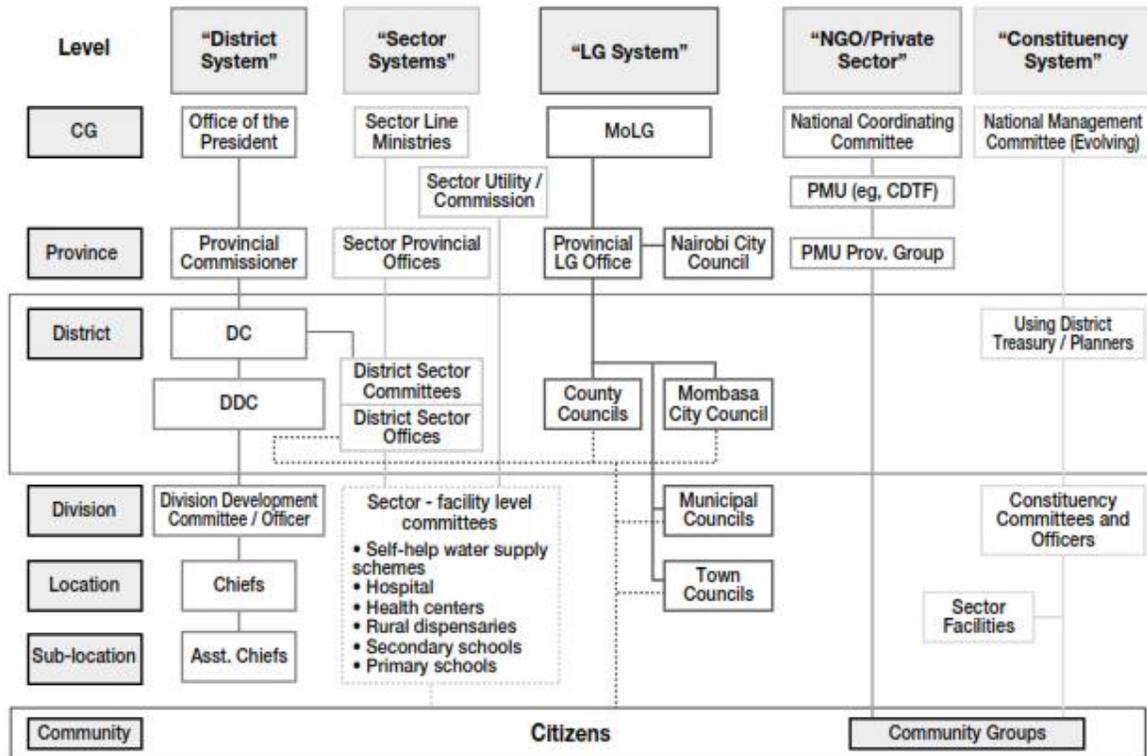
Some significant progress was achieved as a result of the implementation of the DFRD strategy. This include the restructuring of a district planning system to make it more efficient, improvement of the quality of district development plans, and an increased awareness of the need for locals to participate in decision making. However, the initiative had its own shortfalls which included: i) lack of legal basis as in an Act of Parliament; ii) did not facilitate meaningful mobilization of resources; and iii) dominance of the strategy by government officials and lack of citizen's awareness of and participation in planning and implementation of the strategy (Ndi, 2010). In the end, although districts prepared very well-articulated district development plans, funding which came through line Ministries did not match the development goals at the district. Instead, funding was more reflective of goals and target of specific ministries. At the planning committees, selection of community representative resulted in elite capture, and no forward and feedback information was available at the grassroots levels.

It is from the above background that the government introduced decentralized funds to the constituencies with the primary objective being to correct the mismatch between planning and

budgeting at the decentralized levels. These were aimed at resolving the development imbalances across regions and improve citizens' involvement in the management of public resources towards poverty alleviation and improving service delivery. It was also designed to ensure that development planning was initiated at constituency level, where grassroots priorities would be taken into consideration through citizen participation in the identification, prioritization of projects through the participatory planning process. These funds include Local Authorities Transfer Fund (LATF), Roads Maintenance Levy Fund (RMLF) and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) (IEA, 2012).

The most visible and notable of these funds were LAFT and CDF. These funds supported projects across different sectors and were aimed at reducing regional imbalances in terms of delivery of public goods and public service delivery. These funds facilitated the putting up of new water, health and education facilities in all parts of the country including remote areas. For both funds, public participation was an essential component in determining priorities and projects to be funded. However, citizen's participation for both of these funds was minimal (IEA, 2012; Muriu, 2014) and did not lead to significant improvement in public service delivery in the case of LATF which was implemented through local governments (Muriu, 2014).

Figure 1 shows the government structure before devolution to county governments. It shows the various systems that were running concurrently at the national and decentralized levels. Community participation is at the base of the diagram to inform the priority project in each system as well as to provide feedback for their effectiveness. However, for farming households, elite capture, weak civil society, community mobilization mechanism and a lack of awareness contributed to ineffective citizen's participation (Kamau et al., 2010).

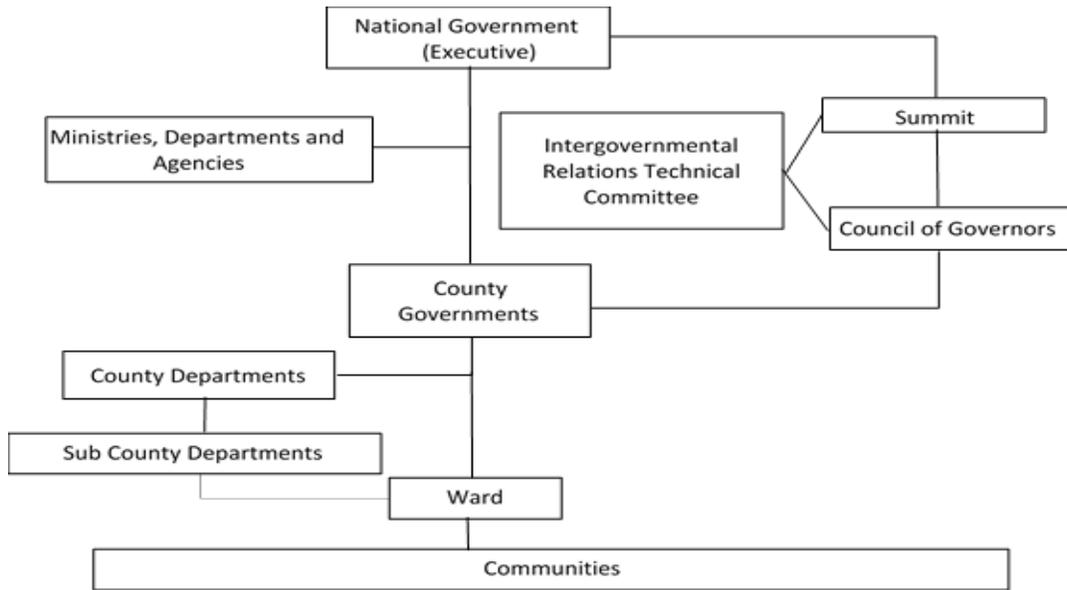


**Figure 1:** Government structure before Devolution

**Source:** JICA, 2008

Citizen’s participation in governance and increasing public service delivery and accountability by public officials became the rallying call for change in the governance system. In 2010, Kenya promulgated a new Constitution which provided a firm legal foundation for the enhancement of participatory governance by establishing a two-tier governance system. Establishment of county governments is expected to not only make government accessible to the majority of the rural folk by reducing bureaucracy but will also lead to enhanced participation in shaping the development agenda for local level governments, increase public service delivery and delivery of public goods. Several laws were passed which established citizen’s participation as a right, outlined the structure for public participation thereby making it mandatory for the county and national government to involve the public in crucial decisions. These laws include the County Government Act (CGA), 2012, Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 2012 and Urban Areas & Cities Act (UACA), 2011. Thus, citizen participation becomes very crucial as it significantly contributes to the sustainability of development initiatives, strengthens local capacity, gives a voice to the poor and the marginalized in the society and links development to the people’s needs.

Figure 2 depicts the current structure after devolution of a majority of the functions to county governments. Fundamental contrast to the structure in Figure 1 is the collapsing of several systems into one central system and reduction in the number of tiers. Communities now participate at the ward level, which is also the lowest level for political representation.



**Figure 2:** Government structure after devolution to county governments  
**Source:** Authors' depiction

## 1.2 Objectives and Central Research Question

Despite the apparent advantages of citizen participation, if citizens are not well organized, where mobilization structures are weak, and there is little or weak incentive among public officials to interact with the public, the public policy led initiatives may be ineffective. For instance, anecdotal evidence suggests voters punished elected officials who were perceived to have misused CDF funds in Kenya during general elections in 2007 and 2013. Nevertheless, this is quite difficult to wholly attribute to the level of citizens awareness and demand for accountability because there was minimal citizen participation in the identification of projects. Therefore, such accountability measures may be influenced by perception based on whether public officials misappropriated the funds or choose projects which were considered not effective. In addition, many officials who were perceived to have misused funds still got re-elected.

Therefore, by looking at characteristics of farmers who have participated in the former and current governance system, factors that affect their participation, and level of participation, we hope to draw critical lessons that will help improve public service delivery to rural households. The study, therefore, contributes to the current policy debate in improving governance and precisely the role of citizens achieving this goal.

By contrasting the previous governance system, the current study aims to draw lessons from past and present experiences on citizen participation in governance and provide lessons to policymakers to improve and sustain good practices. We explore factors that affect the participation of rural households, which households or individuals were likely to participate in governance systems, and whether there are groups of citizens that are excluded from participation.

The study also aims at providing feedback to policymakers on strengthening citizen's participation in governance. This will contribute to the improvement of policy guidelines that govern the operation of the current system of governance, especially with regard to the role of citizens in the country's development. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: section two is methodology, section three results and section four conclusions.

## 2.0 Data and Methodology

The data comes mainly from the Tegemeo Agricultural Policy Research and Analysis (TAPRA) II Rural Household survey, a nationwide survey of Kenyan farm households conducted by the Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development, Egerton University and Michigan State University in 2014. This sample covered 38 counties across seven agro-ecological zones (AEZs). Sampling was done using a two-stage stratified cluster sampling method. In the first stage selected 350 rural clusters from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) household-based sampling frame (NASSEP V)<sup>2</sup> using equal probability selection method (EPSEM). The second stage randomly selected a uniform sample of 20 households in each cluster from a roster of households in the cluster using systematic random sampling method. A total of 6,512 sedentary agricultural households were interviewed in the survey out of a target 7,000 households (93% response rate).

Citizens' participation refers to the involvement of citizens in all policy-making activities, including determination of levels of service, planning, budget prioritization, the establishment of performance standards and physical infrastructural projects. This way, citizens orient government programs toward community needs, build public support and encourage a sense of cohesiveness within neighbourhoods. (GRADIF-K, 2014). Further, it implies the active involvement of citizens in planning and decision-making processes of the County Governments' so as to increase their influence on service delivery, equitable distribution of devolved resources, enactment of favourable policies and implementation of programs to ensure a more positive impact on their social and economic lives.

We define a household to have participated if any adult in the household participated in one or more development meetings at the grassroots level. In practice, many meetings are called to discuss a wide range of issues affecting communities. For instance, the majority of meetings touch on public safety, law and order. We classified development meetings as those that discussed potential or ongoing development projects. Between 2007 and 2012, these projects would be attended by a representative or the entire management committee of decentralized funds such as CDF. After 2013, the meetings were called by County Governments and would be attended by a representative from the County Government.

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<sup>2</sup> The NASSEP V was developed from the population census conducted in 2009

Recall information on participation at the local level between the previous planning period (2007-2012) and after county governments came to office was collected. We also inquire about the agenda of the meeting to confirm that households attended a meeting related to governance. We additionally collected information on household characteristics, land, income and composition, agricultural productivity, input use, livestock production, access to infrastructural facilities and services.

## 2.1 Empirical estimation

We, therefore, estimate probability models to evaluate the determinants of participation for households for both periods, before and after devolution. We make a strong normality assumption on the error term and report estimates from the probit model.

$$X_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } X_i^* > 0 \\ 0 & \text{if } X_i^* \leq 0 \end{cases}$$

Where  $X_i = X_i^*$  is observed when a household attends a meeting. We estimate the model as follows:

$$X_i^* = \alpha_i + \beta Z_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

Where  $X_i^*$  is a binary variable for attendance to a meeting for household  $i$ ,  $Z_i$  is a vector of independent variables,  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are coefficients to be estimated and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term.

The independent variables used in the model include (1) household-level characteristics such as household size, wealth (2) Household head characteristics in the household model such as age, education and marital status and replace these with individual member characteristics in the individual model. Additionally, we also control for region effects. We report both probabilities and marginal effects from our estimation estimated as

$$\frac{\partial X_i}{\partial x_{ji}} = \beta_j \phi(\beta Z_i)$$

We also identify four categories based on household participation behaviour. These categories are: (1) never attended any meeting, (2) attended in 2007-2012 but not in 2013 (attended in past but not present), (3) never attended in 2007-2012 but attended in 2013 (attended in present but not past) and (4) those who have consistently attended in 2007-2012 and in 2013 (attended both past and present). To compare the characteristics of households in these four categories, we estimated a multinomial logit equation estimated as follows

$$Pr_{ij} = \frac{\exp(\gamma_j X_i)}{1 + \sum_{j=1}^4 \exp(\gamma_j X_i)} \quad \text{for } j=1,2,3 \text{ or } 4 \quad (2)$$

Where  $Pr_{ij}$  is the probability of being in category 2, 3 or 4, for the  $i$ th household, and  $X_i$  is a vector of explanatory variables. The base equation is given by

$$Pr_{i0} = \frac{1}{1 + \sum_{j=1}^4 \exp(\gamma_j X_i)} \quad \text{for } j=0 \quad (3)$$

Equations 2 and 3 will help us determine which explanatory variables were significant for past and current participation choices for households

In deriving our estimates, we take into account the survey design in estimating our statistics which improves the efficiency of standard errors. If we ignore the sample design, our standard errors will be overestimated for failure to control for stratification and underestimated for failure to control for clustering.

### 3.0 Results and discussion

#### 3.1 Descriptive statistics

As explained earlier, the former governance models in Kenya aimed at improving citizen's participation. In later years, the decentralization of development funding was expected to enhance this and entirely revolutionize economic development in rural areas. The promulgation of the new constitution 2010 provides a strong legal foundation for the enhancement of participatory governance through devolved structures. It places the citizens at the centre of everything and promotes the aspect of participation and involvement as a critical factor to enhance successful implementation and good governance. In this study, we consider a household to have been represented in a meeting held by local governments to discuss governance issues if at least one member of the household attended a meeting. Table 1 shows the distribution of households and individuals in these households who have participated in development meetings.

**Table 1: Household's attendance past and present in development meetings (%)**

<b>Participated</b>	<b>2007-2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Consistent in both periods</b>
Yes	31	7	5
No	69	93	67

**Note:** 28% participated in either period

**Source:** TAPRA 2014 Survey

During the past planning period (2007-2012), only 31% of farming households attended development meetings. These meetings were convened to discuss decentralised funds such as CDF and LAFT and other government programs being implemented at the local level. This proportion falls sharply in 2013 for meetings organised by county government in 2013 (7%). Only five percent of farm households have consistently attended development meetings both in the past and current periods, while two-thirds of the farm households (67%) have never attended any development meetings. These underline the importance of sensitizing the citizens about the need to actively participate in governance to enhance service delivery, promote accountability and good governance for improved standards and realization of sustainable development.

Table 2 shows the source of information for households who attended the meetings. Majority of rural households mainly learnt about the meetings from barazas, their neighbours, friends, or relatives, and announcements made in churches and schools. This was consistent for households who attended meetings between 2007 and 2012 and in 2013. In 2013, the proportion of

households who learnt about meetings from adverts made in radio, television and newspapers rose to a total of 5.6 percent from 0.3 percent.

**Table 2: Percentages of sources of information about development meetings**

<b>Source of Information about meeting attended</b>	<b>2007-2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Church/School	14.8	12.2
Public Notice Boards	10.0	11.3
Barazas	32.6	38.5
Village elder/local leaders	5.7	5.3
Neighbours/Friends/Relatives	36.6	27.1
Radio/TV	0.2	5.4
Newspapers	0.1	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** TAPRA 2014 Survey

Table 3 shows the household head and household characteristics by meeting attendance. Similar patterns in household characteristics are observed for those who attended meetings in both periods before and after devolution. For instance, slightly more than half of the heads whose households attended this meeting had completed secondary education or higher. This is the reverse for households that did not attend, i.e. more than half have not completed secondary education or higher for both periods.

On average, heads from households that participated in meetings were older (52 and 53 years in 2007-2012 and 2013 respectively) with only 13% and 12% of the heads being in the youth category in 2007-2012 and 2013 respectively. The proportion of head in youthful age was higher for households not participating (21% and 19% for 2007-2012 and 2013 respectively). In addition, there was a modest representation (19%) by female-headed households, with the proportion of female-headed households being higher for households that never attended meetings. This may reflect the social structure in many rural areas in Kenya, where older citizens, were likely to command attention and respect of their views compared to that of women and youth. In addition, it is also estimated that a large population of the youth category migrate out of the rural areas to urban areas in search of better opportunities.

**Table 3: Head and Household Characteristics by meeting Attendance (%)**

		2007-2012		2013	
		Attended	Never Attended	Attended	Never Attended
<b><i>Proportion:</i></b>					
Education level of the household head	No education	11	18	10	17
	Completed primary education	38	38	36	38
	Completed secondary education	25	25	23	25
	Completed tertiary education	26	19	30	21
Gender, Income characteristics	If head is female	19	25	19	24
	If head is youth (18-35 years)	13	21	12	19
	If head has salary	33	30	36	30
	If head has business income	47	46	43	47
	If a member of the household belonged to a group	71	53	76	57
	Awareness of local projects funded through decentralized funds	78	58	79	63
<b><i>Means:</i></b>					
Age	Age of household head	52	50	53	50
Distance in Km to	Nearest motorable road	.3	.4	.4	.3
	Nearest tarmac road	9.1	9.7	9.1	9.6
	Nearest market	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.2
	Nearest County/sub County headquarters	15.6	14.1	15.9	14.5
Received subsidies	Seed	11	5	14	6
	Fertilizer	10	8	11	8
	Annual Per capita income (adult equivalent)	1,124	855	839	945
Assets, Income (USD)*	Value of productive assets	404	302	463	325
	Value of other assets	3,665	3,382	4,498	3,376

\*1 USD=88.43, September 2014

More than two-thirds (71%) and more than three quarters (76%) of heads of households that participated in meetings in 2007-2012 and 2013 respectively belong to a group. This was much lower for households that did not participate in meetings for the two periods. This could be because membership and active participation in groups increased the likelihood of acquiring information on government plans and programs.

A higher proportion of households that attended meetings reported to have received seed and fertilizer subsidy compared to those that did not attend. Households that attended meetings were located slightly further from the district headquarters compared to those that did not. This ideally

is ideal for households in remote areas are participating. A higher proportion of households attending meetings were aware of local projects compared to those that were not attending meetings between 2007 and 2012. However, in 2013, the slightly higher proportion of households that did not attend meetings were aware of local projects. This may suggest that awareness about local projects was more critical for participation in the past but not the current period.

Households that participated in development meetings between 2007 and 2012 had higher per capita incomes compared to that did not attend. However, the reverse was the case in 2013. Those that participated in both periods had more assets, both productive and other household assets for both periods.

### **3.2 Factors determining citizen participation in devolved systems**

Having participated in development meetings prior to the establishment of county governments increases the likelihood of a household to participate in meetings currently. In addition, awareness of a local project that was funded through decentralized funds was also positively correlated with attendance in current meetings. Awareness was important for past participation but may not be an essential factor for present period. However, as past participation has a strong influence on current participation, this results is not unexpected.

Participation in group activities was also positively correlated with attending meetings. Participation in groups not only increased information flow but also increased the interaction with other members and coalesced community's objectives on development.

Participation was positively correlated with the age of the household head. Older households were likely to attend meetings as they were likely to be heard in meetings, commanded more respect than younger men. Receiving seed subsidy was also positively correlated with participation. Seed subsidies have usually relied on local mechanisms for distribution, unlike fertilizer subsidy which relies on a national organization for distribution. As such, people who receive the subsidy are likely to be aware of going on at the local level.

Households whose heads did not have any formal education or had completed primary level education were less likely to attend development meeting when compared to their counterparts who had completed tertiary level schooling. It could be that more educated households made a

better contribution towards government policies or understood the policies discussed better, therefore providing an incentive to participate.

**Table 3: Determinants of farm household Participation in Governance**

	(1) Participation in Meetings by County governments		(2) Marginal Effects	
Participated in meetings between 2007 and 2012 (dummy)	0.799***	(0.0750)	0.108***	(0.0128)
Belonging to a self-help group (dummy)	0.264***	(0.0686)	0.0264***	(0.00684)
Awareness of local projects funded through decentralized funds (dummy)	0.171*	(0.0768)	0.0169*	(0.00713)
Age of household head	0.00949***	(0.00280)	0.000978***	(0.000281)
Household Size	0.0198	(0.0138)	0.00204	(0.00142)
Received seed subsidy (dummy)	0.272**	(0.0952)	0.0339*	(0.0141)
Received fertilizer subsidy (dummy)	-0.0101	(0.0869)	-0.00104	(0.00885)
Distance to nearest market in Km	0.00307	(0.00631)	0.000316	(0.000650)
Distance to nearest motorable road in Km	0.0503	(0.0310)	0.00518	(0.00319)
Distance to nearest tarmac in Km	-0.000903	(0.00237)	-0.0000930	(0.000244)
Distance to nearest govt headquarters in Km	0.00174	(0.00196)	0.000180	(0.000201)
Female headed household (dummy)	-0.185	(0.113)	-0.0176	(0.00992)
Received a salary (dummy)	0.0324	(0.0725)	0.00337	(0.00765)
Received business income (dummy)	-0.0491	(0.0634)	-0.00504	(0.00648)
Head is Married (marital status dummy)	-0.0389	(0.223)	-0.00407	(0.0237)
Head is widow(ed), divorced or separated (marital status dummy)	0.135	(0.212)	0.0148	(0.0248)
Head has completed primary education (dummy)	0.212	(0.122)	0.0229	(0.0137)
Head has completed secondary education (dummy)	0.285*	(0.133)	0.0331	(0.0172)
Head has completed tertiary education (dummy)	0.408**	(0.139)	0.0511*	(0.0203)
Head is between 18-35 years (dummy)	0.0583	(0.108)	0.00619	(0.0118)
Per capita income (adult equivalent)	-0.00146	(0.00166)	-0.000150	(0.000171)
n	6,407		6,407	
N	6,819,796		6,819,796	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0. Standard errors in parentheses

Table 5 shows the results of the multinomial regression comparing the different categories of participation. The base category is farm households who have not participated in any development meeting. For the first category, those who attended in the past but not present, when compared to the base category, we find that the critical explanatory variables that strongly increased the likelihood of participation were being a member of a group, awareness of local

projects funded through decentralized funds, receiving seed subsidy and completion of higher levels of education. Other variables that increased the likelihood to participate were the age of household head, household size, distance to the nearest government office, and per capita income. Households who head were female or in the youth bracket were less likely to participate.

Understanding participation in the past is necessary to provide advice on how to improve participation in the present period. Female-headed households and youth-headed households were less likely to participate. This is similar to studies (Agarwal, 2001; Bingham et al., 2005; Devas & Grant, 2003) that find the dominance of males in rural setting excludes youth and women. Similarly, we find that wealthier households and those whose heads were more educated were more likely to participate.

**Table 4: Determinants of Participation in Governance across Farm Household Categories**

	(1)		(2)		(3)	
	Attended Past but Not Present		Attended Present but Not Past		Attended Past & Present	
Belonging to a self-help group (dummy)	0.599***	(0.0887)	0.770***	(0.2274)	0.998***	(0.1796)
Awareness of local projects funded through decentralized funds (dummy)	0.723***	(0.1081)	0.184	(0.2493)	1.248***	(0.1931)
Age of household head	0.00966***	(0.0032)	0.0175**	(0.0073)	0.0276***	(0.0071)
Household Size	0.0545***	(0.0186)	0.0294	(0.0492)	0.0911***	(0.0282)
Received seed subsidy (dummy)	0.633***	(0.1468)	0.534	(0.3645)	1.131***	(0.2049)
Received fertilizer subsidy (dummy)	-0.0359	(0.1553)	-0.501	(0.3807)	0.178	(0.2138)
Distance to nearest market in Km	0.000807	(0.0084)	0.0133	(0.0171)	-0.000232	(0.0139)
Distance to nearest motorable road in Km	0.00818	(0.0503)	-0.145	(0.1120)	0.206***	(0.0689)
Distance to nearest tarmac in Km	-0.00353	(0.0032)	-0.00796	(0.0083)	-0.000951	(0.0050)
Distance to nearest govt headquarters in Km	0.00766***	(0.0029)	0.00756	(0.0064)	0.00947**	(0.0045)
Female headed household (dummy)	-0.426***	(0.1568)	-0.392	(0.3803)	-0.698**	(0.2797)
Received a salary (dummy)	0.00391	(0.0975)	-0.273	(0.2953)	0.275*	(0.1456)
Received business income (dummy)	0.0485	(0.0891)	-0.428*	(0.2206)	0.163	(0.1586)
Head is Married (marital status dummy)	-0.0452	(0.2504)	-0.113	(0.7970)	0.0437	(0.5672)
Head is widow(ed), divorced or seperated (marital status dummy)	0.274	(0.2208)	0.00398	(0.7304)	0.826	(0.5370)
Head has completed primary education (dummy)	0.435***	(0.1423)	0.587	(0.3936)	0.774**	(0.3189)
Head has completed secondary education (dummy)	0.517***	(0.1347)	0.859*	(0.4655)	0.915***	(0.3325)
Head has completed tertiary	0.519***	(0.1782)	0.426	(0.5135)	1.522***	(0.3229)

education (dummy)						
Head is between 18-35 years (dummy)	-0.413***	(0.1318)	-0.329	(0.3551)	-0.0420	(0.2511)
Per capita income (adult equivalent)	0.00129*	(0.0008)	-0.00759	(0.0120)	-0.00195	(0.0031)
Constant	-3.064***	(0.3936)	-5.189***	(1.1421)	-7.542***	(0.8347)
n	6,407		6,407		6,407	
N	6,819,796		6,819,796		6,819,796	

Base Category = Never Attended any Development Meeting, Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

For the category that was attending for the first time under the county governments, belonging to a self-help group, the age of household head and attaining a higher level of education were positively correlated with participation. However, those who were engaged in business and drawing business income were less likely to attend. This suggests that age, especially getting the younger households to participate will require innovative mobilization mechanisms to get them to attend meetings. Similarly, that having a business reduces likelihoods to participate, which suggest that the timings of meetings should be flexible to reduce opportunity costs for households.

For the category that had consistently attended the development meetings, belonging to a self-help group, awareness of local projects funded using decentralized funds, age of household head, household size, receiving seed subsidy, attaining higher level of education, those in salaried employment and distance to nearest motorable road and government headquarters increased the likelihood of participation. On the other hand, households whose head were female were less likely to attend.

These findings suggest that own experience in participation is vital for current participation. The causality for awareness of local projects could be going in both directions. However, it was an essential factor in the past. Currently, age is important and could be capturing the social structure in rural areas. Education is also essential for current participation signalling elite capture that participation was not inclusive. Being in a group creates an advantage in getting information. This is because groups are likely to be seeking support either technical or financial from government departments. A requirement that groups have to renew their registration each year puts them into contact with government officers raising more awareness about meetings. People engaged in business were less likely to participate than those who did not, which suggest opportunity cost of time. Figure 3 shows a newspaper advert for a development meeting under

County Governments. This is a typical advert among county governments. The timing suggested for the meetings are convenient for government officers and bureaucrats but less convenient for farmers. Although meetings are now held in locales near households, the timings should also be flexible to accommodate seasonal activities in rural areas. Changing the timings to more flexible time including evenings and weekend potentially may increase participation especially among groups such as women and youth.

#### **4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study aimed at understanding the determinant of citizen's participation in governance in rural settings in Kenya. The recent changes on the governance system were aimed at improving citizen's participation, make governments more people-centred and therefore responsive to the needs of the local folk. As a result, it is expected that there will be improved service delivery, improved delivery of public goods thereby having a positive impact on rural household's livelihoods. In the past, participation has been hampered by elite capture, where wealthy households and those with greater access to public officials are the ones who participate and influence decisions (Agrawal & Gupta, 2005). In addition, inadequate mobilization has also contributed to the marginalization of specific groups such as women, youth and the poor (Agarwal, 2001; Bingham et al., 2005; Devas & Grant, 2003).

The study revealed that citizen participation in development programmes in the first year of devolution was minimal among the farm households. The percentage of women and youth attending development meeting was low. The study findings also established that the most influential factor that affects household's decision to participate was their own experience in participation. Participation in meetings held between 2007 and 2012 increased the probability of attending meetings in 2013 by 11 percentage points. In addition, we also find that traditional modes of communication such as using friends/relatives/neighbours, using schools, churches, public boards, and public meetings are still effective in getting the messages about meetings to households. Additionally, being involved in group activities and knowledge about local projects increased the probability of participation by 3 and 2 percentage points respectively.

This suggests that policy action should target mobilizing of households to get them to attend meetings. Other than using the already existing channels of communication which are still useful to reach a broader segment of communities, we also recommend that county governments should create a greater awareness of the development programmes and projects, and support community-based organizations in civic education to enhance awareness about the importance of participation in development meetings and having a voice in policy decisions.

## 5.0 References

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## 6.0 Appendices

Figure 3: Newspaper advert for a decentralized meeting



Telegraphic address 'TCA' **REPUBLIC OF KENYA P.O.BOX 25-30500**  
 Telephone **THE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF TURKANA LODWAR**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**In the Matter of Public Participation**

Article 196(1) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 provides that a County Assembly shall facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other business of the Assembly and its committees. Section 13(1) and (2) of Turkana County Public Participation Act, 2015 provides for publication of a public participation plan and Timetable for every proposed legislation while County Assembly of Turkana Standing Order 123 (3) states that the sectoral/select committee to which a Bill/document is committed shall facilitate public participation and shall take into account views and recommendations of the public when the committees makes their report to the Assembly.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON THE TURKANA COUNTY DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION BILL, 2015 SUBMISSION OF MEMORANDA**

Pursuant to provisions of Article 185 (1) and (2), 196 (1) of the Constitution of Kenya, section 87 of the County Government Act, Section 13 (1) and (2) of Turkana County Public Participation Act, 2015 and Standing Order No. 123 (3), County Security, Administration and Disaster Management Committee hereby invites members of the public to give their inputs on the Turkana County Decentralized Administration Bill, 2015, to:

**The Clerk  
 County Assembly of Turkana  
 P.O. Box 25-30500  
 Lodwar  
 or  
 Email: clerktca@gmail.com**

The committee is also scheduled to conduct citizens' forums on the following areas:

**Name of the Bill: THE TURKANA COUNTY DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION BILL, 2015**

DATE	SUB-COUNTY	VENUE	TIME
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> Nov, 2015	T. South	Katilu Social Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon
	T.North	Lokitaung Resource Centre	9.00-12:00 Noon
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> Nov, 2015	T.South	Lokichar RCEA Hall	9.00-12.00 Noon
	T.North	Kaikor Centre	9.00-12:00 Noon
Tuesday 24th Nov, 2015	T. East	Katilia Social Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon
	Kibish	Napak Chief's Camp	9.00-12:00 Noon
Wednesday 25th, Nov 2015	Loima	Lorugum Centre	9.00-12:00 Noon
Thursday 26th Nov, 2015	Loima	Lokiriama Social Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon
	T. West	Kakuma-Muiltipurpose Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon
Friday 27th Nov, 2015	Central	Bishop Mahon Lokiriama Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon
	T.West	Lokichoggio-Former UN Camp	9.00-12:00 Noon
Saturday 28th Nov, 2015	Central	Kerio Social Hall	9.00-12:00 Noon

**LINUS L MIINYAN  
 CLERK-COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF TURKANA**