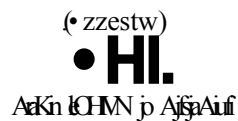


**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF  
THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND IN WESTLANDS, NAIROBI**

BY

EVELYNE MAJALE OFWONA  
REGISTRATION NO.: N69/72352/08


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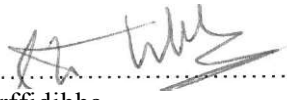
## DECLARATION

This Project Paper is my original work and has not been presented to any study program by me in any other University.

Signature :   
Evelyne Majale Ofwena

Date: 01 July 2020

This Project Paper has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signature:   
Professor Simiyu rffidibba

Date: 14/11/2020

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this Project Paper to all the grassroots women. My heart goes out to them. They were my motivation in taking up this study.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the role of women in the management of the Constituency Development Fund in Westlands constituency, Nairobi. The CDF was set up by the government under the CDF Act 2003. The main aim of its establishment was to alleviate poverty at the grassroots and to encourage citizen participation in governance. Since its inception, it has had a positive impact where it has been managed well. However, in some constituencies, there have been numerous complaints on how it is managed.

The research had two specific objectives. First it sought to investigate the extent to which women are involved in the management of the CDF in Westlands Constituency. Secondly, it sought to identify and discuss the factors that might work against women's participation in the management of the CDF in the constituency.

In undertaking the study, secondary data was used to identify the research problem and was used throughout the study. Primary data was collected through in-depth interview guides using open ended questions. All the respondents interviewed were aged between 18 and 50 years, and most were small medium entrepreneurs. Twenty per cent had no education while 40% had only attained primary level education.

The study found that several factors account for the poor participation of women in the management of the CDF. These include: lack of information/awareness, education/training, capacity building, transparency, adequate representation and nepotism were the main obstacles hindering women from participating effectively. Others were corruption, family, cultural attitudes, poor lobbying skills, permission from husbands and lack of time.

The results showed that 80% of the respondents felt that women's participation in the CDF management was very low while 30% stated that they had accessed the CDF through bursaries for their children. Seventy per cent felt that lack of information and awareness was the key factor that deterred women from participating effectively, while another 70% felt that corruption was another major impediment.

The study also revealed that the fact that the MP nominates the CDFC has played a big role in the CDFC not representing the grassroots needs. Thus even the women representatives in the CDFC are not actively involved in the governance of the CDF.

The following recommendations are made: The government should review section 23 (8) of the CDF Act 2003 which gives the MP power to constitute and convene the CDFC and section 23 (1) that stipulates the composition of CDFC to conform to the Affirmative Action Act.

Participation of women in the management of the CDF should be enhanced. Information regarding how women can access the CDF funds should be disseminated. The government may need to create an enabling environment for the grassroots women in order for them to participate effectively.

## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

CDF	Constituency Development Fund
MP	Member of Parliament
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
CDFC	Constituency Development Fund Committee

## **CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was established in Kenya through an Act of Parliament in 2003 (ROK). This was one of the promises the new ruling political party, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), had made during its campaigns prior to the elections in 2002. It is one of the devolved funds established by the government to enhance citizen participation in governance and accelerate national development. The fund aims at alleviating poverty at the grassroots level and reducing regional imbalances brought about by the partisan politics of previous regimes. It also aims at removing the fundraising burden from Members of Parliament and at ensuring citizen participation through decision-making in project identification, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Aukot et al. 2008). Participation of the local communities was also meant to enhance the bottoms-up planning approach to development. Decentralization, which implies transfer of power and responsibility from the centre to lower levels of governance, is perceived as a way of opening government structures to citizens to facilitate access to government services (Odhiambo, 2007).

The implementation of the fund is guided by the CDF Act of 2003, as well as regulations and circulars released by the Ministry of Planning and Vision 2030 from time to time. The Act was amended by the CDF (Amendment) Act of 2007, passed in October 2007. This amendment introduced in the CDF operations such things as monthly reports on projects and disbursements, exclusion of personal awards and strict measures on cost estimates (ROK, 2007).

Since its inception, the CDF has been one of the most effective forms of devolved funds in Kenya in terms of its catalytic impact on rural development. It has widely been viewed as a key strategic driver of socioeconomic development and regeneration in the country.

It is a development initiative targeted at the constituencies by devolving resources to the regions to meet socio-economic objectives which have previously been managed from the centre.

## **1.2 Source of CDF Funds**

CDF is allocated as a percentage of ordinary government revenue, which is principally taxation revenue. In this way, each and every Kenyan contributes towards CDF and it is, therefore, the responsibility of every Kenyan, regardless of gender, to make sure CDF is well managed and spent. The CDF Act states that 2.5% of all government ordinary revenue collected in every financial year and any other monies accruing to or received by the "National CDF Committee from any source shall be paid into the Fund. It further states that 75% of the funds will be divided equally among the 210 constituencies. The remaining 25% is allocated to the constituencies depending on the poverty level in each constituency. Due to the growth of the economy and the Kenya Revenue Authority's improved efficiency at tax collection, the total amount allocated to CDF has grown each successive year since its introduction in 2003 (ROK, 2003).

Projects under this Act are community-based in order to ensure that the prospective benefits are available to a widespread cross-section of the inhabitants of a particular area (Gikonyo, 2008).

## **1.3 Problem Statement**

Governance is one of the most serious challenges not only facing developing countries but the whole world. Thus, governance is a problem of both the developed and developing countries. Women are often excluded from decision-making, from the household up to the highest level of policy making (Brody, 2009). Ideally, women should be at the centre of making decisions on how devolved funds should be spent or allocated. However, experience shows that this is the prerogative of men.

This is due to the socio-cultural practices that have assigned men prestigious roles such as decision-making. In patriarchal cultures women are supposed to be invisible. Their place is in the private domain and not the public one. Their situation is made worse by their triple roles, that is, productive, reproductive and community.

Women hardly have time to participate in development activities as they are the ones who produce food for their families, take care of the children and provide for their husbands.

As the Kenyan government strives to bridge the inequality gaps, more people-centred strategies have been modelled with resources being allocated more to devolved funds. The situation with the CDF has never been any different, with civil societies and other non-state actors continuing to demand reasonable and proper engagement of women and active participation in public resource management characteristic of good governance.

The CDF fund is supposed to be participatory, but due to lack of transparency and awareness by the public, there has been very low or lack of participation especially by women. Besides, Kenya is a patriarchal society that perpetuates the insubordination of women and girls. The cultural beliefs, practices and attitudes dictate that the female's place is in the private and not public domain. Thus, women are often excluded from decision-making, from household up to the highest levels of policymaking.

This study, therefore attempted to answer the following two questions:

- 1) To what extent are women involved in the management of the CDF in Westlands constituency?
- 2) Which factors work against their involvement and their participation in the management of the Fund in this constituency?

## **1. 4 Research objectives**

### **1.4.1 General objective**

To explore the role of women in the management of the CDF in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To investigate the extent to which women are involved in the management of the CDF in Westlands Constituency.
- ii. To identify and discuss the factors that might work against women's participation in the management of the CDF in this constituency.

#### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

Although this was just an exploratory study, the findings could throw light on whether or not women are actively involved in the management of CDF funds in the country and to the factors that might be impeding them from doing so. Armed with this information the government and the various stakeholders, including constituents should be in a position to come up with better ways of managing the Fund.

#### **1.6 Scope of the study**

This study intended to explore the extent to which women are involved in the management of CDF in the Westlands Constituency of Nairobi province. It has shed light on factors which militate against their involvement in the management of the funds.

#### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

Most of the key informants were uncomfortable to express their true feelings for fear of victimization. This might have affected the accuracy of data collected. The researcher used more than one method of data collection to deal with this limitation.



## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

There is a lot of literature which explains how cultural attitudes and women's triple roles have an effect on women's participation in the public arena. Most of the literature points to the fact that cultural values, norms, beliefs and gender divisions of labour play a big role in defining one's role. These roles in turn shape one's thinking and the way one portrays oneself. Cultural attitudes determine what one becomes in society.

### **2.2 Literature Review**

#### **2.2.1 Gender equality**

Research has established the business case for gender equality: development projects that take gender relations into account are more likely to achieve their objectives than those that do not. Progress towards gender equality is directly correlated with the alleviation of global poverty. The process of incorporating gender equality considerations into development institutions, projects and programmes is often referred to as "gender mainstreaming". Studies confirm that without direct intervention, mainstreaming of gender equality concerns will not occur (Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, 2009).

There has been a lot of effort, both regional and international, to bring the women's agenda to the fore. These include : The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1996), the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC, 1966) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979), all of which Kenya has fully adopted, and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), which Kenya signed in 2005 but has not yet been ratified.

### **2.2.2 Socio-Cultural Practices**

Culture, subculture and social class are particularly important influences on one's behaviour. Culture consists primarily of values and norms (Price et al., 2004). Values are enduring beliefs about desirable outcomes that transcend specific situations and shape one's behaviour. Kotler and Keller (2006) observe that culture is the fundamental determinant of a person's wants and behaviour. Each culture consists of smaller subcultures that provide more specific identification and socialization for their members. Subcultures include nationalities, religions, racial groups and geographic regions. In Kenya culture manifests itself in the form of tribe, religion and geographic regions. What women become therefore is a reflection of their socialization and perception by the society around them.

Patriarchy is one of the socio-cultural practices that have perpetuated women's insubordination. Patriarchy and gender inequality reveal how patriarchy operates to achieve and maintain the gender inequalities essential for the subordination of women (Walby, 1990). Walby's explanation sees the household and household production as being a key site of women's subordination but acknowledges that the domestic area is not the only one that women participate

### **2.2.3 Gender budgeting**

Gender responsive budgeting involves analyzing the impact of the budget on men and women, boys and girls, and on different groups of men and women (Budlender and Sharp, 1998). It is a strategy of mainstreaming gender equity in economic policy while taking into consideration the fact that gender inequalities persist in all spheres of life. Gender equality can be achieved through government policy interventions. Inadequacies occur in access to resources, education, social services, etc. These disparities constrain women's effective participation in the economic, social and political life of the nation (Institute of Economic Affairs, 2004).

#### **2.2.4 Affirmative Action**

Affirmative actions are positive steps taken to increase the representation of women and minorities in areas of employment, education and business from which they have been historically excluded (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2009).

Types of affirmative action include quota system, positive discrimination, reverse discrimination, preferential treatment, desegregation and reservation policies. Integrating these policies could go a long way in promoting women's participation in the management of the CDF. Deliberate measures such as implementation of affirmative action to ensure equitable representation of men and women in Constituency Development Committees will ensure that interests of men and women, girls and boys are taken on board when making decisions related to the CDF including prioritization of projects and selection of proposals (Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, 2009).

#### **2.2.5 Governance**

The Act of Parliament that created the CDF gives the Member of Parliament immense powers. Cases of Members of Parliament giving preference to their allies are rampant. MPs have been criticized for converting CDF into a campaign tool. There have been numerous claims that decisions on how to spend the funds are made by MPs. The fact that the MPs appoint the CDF committees in their constituencies makes the situation worse. Most of the MPs are known to be partisan and thus appoint their allies in the committees to take care of their interests. This has led to areas that are sympathetic to them to be the only ones that benefit from the funds. Out of all the devolved funds CDF is seen as the most abused (Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, 2006).

### **2.2.6 Participation**

Participation of the communities is generally very low. Constituents are hardly involved in the setting of the development agendas for their areas. This is mainly caused by the fact that they are not aware of their rights and the lack of transparency regarding the funds (National Council of Churches of Kenya, 2005). One of the main aims for introducing the CDF was to encourage participation at the grassroots. The CDF Act stipulates that each location develops a list of priority projects to be presented to the Constituency Development Committee. Involving men and women in the CDF projects and programmes creates a sense of ownership. Involving local women and men in identifying and managing the CDF projects is very important as the people understand their problems better (Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, 2009).

### **2.2.7 Women's Triple Roles**

The Moser Gender Planning Framework introduces the idea of women's "triple roles" in production, reproduction and community. Productive roles involve work done for remuneration, in cash or kind. Reproductive roles include child bearing and rearing, house chores, etc. Community management roles consist of work that supports collective consumption and maintenance of community resources. This tool assists in making the gender division of labour visible (Moser, 1989).

### **2.2.8 Women's Empowerment**

The Gender Equality and Empowerment Framework was developed by Sara Longwe. Her model postulates that women's poverty is as a result of their oppression and exploitation by men. She notes five progressively greater levels of equality namely: control, participation, conscientisation, access and welfare that can be achieved (Longwe, 1995).

However, in as far as the CDF is concerned, the women at the grassroots may not be in a position to challenge the existing power relation unless they are conscientized to such level that they begin to understand the fundamental structures that perpetuate their oppression and continued poverty. This is the level that Sarah Longwe refers to as level three in her Gender Equality and Empowerment Framework.

### **2.2.9 Gender Analysis**

The Harvard Analytical Framework brings out data collection as key at the individual and household level. It is based on the assumption that women and men are affected by development differently and women and men affect development differently as well. It is a matrix of collecting data at the micro-level. It emphasizes the role of data and information. It demonstrates the fact that providing data and information starts to create the visibility of women and men in projects (Overholt et al., 1984).

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study used Caroline Moser's framework of gender analysis. Caroline Moser developed her framework as a method of gender analysis in the early 1980s. This framework challenges the traditional planning methods which are based on women in development (WID). She proposed a shift from WID to a gender and development (GAD) approach which advocated for integration of both women and men in development.

The relevance of this framework in this study is to ensure both men and women have control over their resources and participate in decision-making on issues that affect their lives. The study took the view that the CDF management and implementation should take this direction.

The framework recognizes that for the CDF to achieve desired results, it is critical that issues of men's and women's access to the CDF resources in participation of identification of priority projects, participation in allocation of resources, participation in decision-making on issues relating to CDF, participation in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities are given due consideration (Moser, 1989)

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section describes the research site, research design, study population, sample population, sampling procedure, data collection and ethical issues.

### **3.2 Research Site**

The study was carried out in Westlands Constituency, one of the constituencies in Nairobi, Kenya. It is the home of some of the highest income areas in Nairobi. Over twenty educational facilities are found within Westlands, and most of them are prestigious. However, within the Westlands constituency also lie the Deep Sea settlement, Kangemi and Kabarage slums. Within the settlement and slums poverty is rife and is exacerbated by the area's poor sanitation. The main economic activity is business with many commercial offices which have provided employment for many Nairobi residents both skilled and unskilled. The fact that Westlands is mainly a residential area of the upper and medium class has made it possible for many unskilled workers to be employed. Most of the unskilled workers reside in the Deep Sea Settlement and Kangemi slums and are employed as watchmen or house-helpers. About 31% of the constituents live below the poverty line. It is ranked position 15 under the poverty ranking for all constituencies meaning it is the 15<sup>th</sup> wealthiest constituency in the nation while the income inequality index is 40, the highest of the 8 constituencies in Nairobi (<http://www.information.go.ke/cdfdocs/2003-2006-westlands.pdf>).

### **3.3 Research Design**

This was an exploratory and cross-sectional study. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through in-depth interviews. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews, key informants and focus group discussions. The data was coded by identifying themes within the interview notes, then interpreted by attaching importance to the themes and patterns the researcher noted from the field notes.

### **3.4 Study Population**

The study population consisted of women of ages ranging from 18 to 50 years. The unit of analysis was the individual adult woman.

### **3.5 Sample Population**

Twenty women from the study area were subjected to in-depth interviews using a questionnaire with open-ended questions.

### **3.6 Sampling Procedure**

The grassroots women from the settlement and slums were identified through convenience sampling. This type of sampling is important to get a feel for what is going out there (Bernard, 1995). Key informants were identified from leaders of women groups that have benefited from the CDF and those in the CDF management.



### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

#### **3.7.1 In-depth interviews**

An in-depth interview is a qualitative research technique of collecting data. The questions were open-ended (Appendix II). The researcher used this technique to expound on the respondents' point of view regarding the role of women in the management of CDF management in the study area.

#### **3.7.2 Key Informant Interviews**

The key informants were respondents who have first hand knowledge regarding the role of women in the management of CDF in Westlands constituency. A key informant guide was used to conduct interviews with key informants (Appendix III).

#### **3.7.3 Focus Group Discussions**

Two focus group discussions were held. They were open discussions of approximately 6 - 10 women per group facilitated by the researcher. The participants were aged between eighteen and fifty. They were drawn from the grassroots and had participated in a CDF project. A focus group discussion guide was administered to the groups with the aim of getting consensus regarding the role of women in the management of CDF in the study area (see Appendix IV).

#### **3.7.4 Secondary data**

Secondary sources were used to identify the research problem. The researcher continued to use them throughout the study. They included: literature from reports dealing with Devolved funds I in Kenya and literature from international reports regarding gender and governance.

1

### **3.8 Methods of data analysis**

The researcher read and reviewed the interview notes which aided her to code the data. Coding the data assisted the researcher to identify themes. The researcher has compiled the report detailing the findings using selected quotes. The findings are also presented in frequency tables and a pie chart, followed by interpretations by looking at the emerging themes.

### **3.9 Ethical Issues**

The researcher sought permission from the CDF office to interview the respondents. A research permit was obtained. The researcher asked for oral consent from the respondents to interview them. She also signed an assurance document assuring the respondents of their privacy.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CDF IN WESTLANDS CONSTITUENCY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the findings of the study and provide discussion based on these findings. The chapter provides information on the participants, involvement of women in the management of the CDF in the study area, factors that work against their involvement and participation in the management of the CDF, effects of low participation of women in the management of CDF and ways of enhancing their participation.

### **4.2 General information on respondents**

Table 4.1: Type of participants

Groups/participants	Frequency	Percentage
Uwezo Women Group	10	23
Jikaze Women Group	8	18
Key informants	5	12
Ordinary women	20	47
Total	43	100

### **Education level of participants**

Education is key to community development. This is why the education level of the respondents was examined. Figure 4.1 shows that 20 % of the participants had no education while 40% had attained primary level, 15% had attained secondary education, 15% had attained university education and only 10 % of the respondents had attained postgraduate education. The majority of participants had attained primary education. This explains the low participation of women in the CDF activities.

0%

- No education
- Primary education
- Secondary
- University
- Post graduate

**Figure 4.1: Education level of participants**

### **Respondents' occupation**

The respondents were asked to state their occupation. The largest number (45%) were small and medium size entrepreneurs while the smallest number (10%) were not employed.

**Table 4.3: Respondents' occupation**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Not employed	2	10
Permanent employment	5	25
Temporary employment	4	20
Self-employment	9	45
	20	100

### **4.3 Involvement of women in the management of CDF in the study area**

#### **4.3.1 Participation of women in the management of the CDF**

The study assessed the participation of women in the decision making of CDF in Westlands constituency, Nairobi. Most of the respondents (80%) felt that the participation of women in the management of CDF in Westlands constituency is very low. The feeling is that generally women have been left out.

All the key informants felt that the women's participation was poor and needed to be enhanced. The research established that there is only one project, the toilet at Westlands Bus Park, that is managed by women.

The chairlady of Uwezo Women's Group had this to say: 'It is only now that women are beginning to come out aggressively to participate in the management of CDF activities. We had to wrestle with the youth to take over the management of this project. When it comes to voting that is when we are seen to be important. We are tired of being left out and we have resorted to fight for our rights'. However, 50% had no idea how women were involved.

#### **4.3.2 Access to CDF**

Seventy per cent felt that women mainly accessed the CDF through bursaries for their children. About 60% had visited the CDF offices to enquire about the CDF education bursaries and 30% had benefited. Eighty per cent felt that one had to be connected to be able to participate.

One respondent stated, "It is true that women have accessed the CDF education bursaries; however, the men applicants tend to receive more. Most women receive Kshs. 5,000.00 but somehow we have noticed that a majority of the men are able to receive Kshs. 10,000.00. Most of us are widows or single mothers and are really in need of this cash. We don't understand the criteria used. This needs to be looked into."

#### **4.4 Factors that work against women's involvement and their participation in the management of the CDF**

When asked which factors work against their involvement and their participation in the management of the fund, they seem to have quite a variety of answers.

##### **4.4.1 Lack of information and awareness**

The majority of women (70%) interviewed felt that lack of knowledge regarding how they can participate in CDF activities was the main problem. They felt that if they had knowledge of how they could apply for funds or participate in the identification and implementation of projects, they would participate actively.

Sixty five per cent said that they had no idea how they could participate in the CDF activities while 70% had no idea whether there are women who were participating at all as there was no evidence of any women's group project in the constituency. Fifty per cent said they had only heard about the CDF but had no clue on who participates in its activities.

#### **4.4.2 Lack of education and training**

Women have been sidelined in education and training due to our socio-cultural attitudes and beliefs. Education is the cornerstone of development as it gives one the power to make informed decisions. The study established that 60% of grassroots women in Westlands had either no education or had only attained primary level education.

#### **4.4.3 Lack of capacity building**

A lot of women lack capacity to participate in CDF activities. For the women to participate in the CDF activities, they must know what the requirements are. Women are easily put down by men when it comes to participating in the public arena. This is mainly due their low level of education. Figure 4.1 indicates that a majority of women had no education at all or had only attained primary education. This has impacted greatly on the poor performance of women in the CDF activities.

The chairlady of Jikaze Women's Group said, "We need women like you, (referring to the researcher), who are educated to come and join our groups. You are the people who can assist us in writing the proposals. The problem is that most women who are educated do not want to become members of the local groups. Most of us are illiterate and thus we can do very little for our groups."

The research established that for women groups to participate in CDF activities, they must be registered. They must know how to write proposals and have a bank account. It is important that women's capacity in the management of the CDF is built.

#### **4.4.4 Corruption**

Generally the CDF has been associated with corruption. In Westlands constituency, the thought is not any different. Seventy per cent of the women interviewed felt that there was a lot of corruption when it comes to allocating the resources. They felt that all the projects within the constituency have been allocated to men to implement. Much as the women might lack the capacity to write proposals, and so on, the men were good at promising commission to the officials to allocate the contracts to them. One of the female CDF officials was quote saying that "the male officials were very sly. They are bribed by their fellow men, so by the time they get to the table for discussions, they have been promised a bribe by the other men in advance and thus they ensure the contracts are allocated to their allies. They are good at lobbying and usually have approached possible contractors for a cut in advance."

#### **4.4.5 Nepotism**

Section 23 (1) of the CDF Act 2003 gives the MP the power to nominate the CDFC. This has led to the Members of Parliament nominating their relatives and friends rather than professionals. According to one of the chairladies of one of the women's group, all the members of staff and the CDFC come from the MP's home area. This means that they are all there to serve the MP's interests. "It is very difficult to get help from this office if you do not belong to their dialect. The bursaries are allocated to friends and relatives, some who do not belong to Westlands Constituency. Even the so-called women who are supposed to represent the women in the grassroots cannot do so. They only take orders from the MP. This is very sad. We pray to God that the proposed constitution can sail through as it addresses this kind of irregularities in that if the MP does not perform, we recall him. As a matter of fact, we cannot wait for it to be implemented as this is the next action we want to take." There is a general feeling that one must have a connection with the MP or the officials before they can benefit.



#### **4.4.6 Lack of transparency**

The attitude of the staff at the CDF office is that persons seeking to have knowledge of CDF management are up to malice. The moment one shows interest in knowing how the CDF is run, they develop a negative attitude towards one and start tossing one around. The information is handled with a lot of secrecy which leads the public to start thinking there are fishy deals going on. Best practice is when the CDFC remains open to the public and readily supplies CDF information upon request (Gikonyo, 2008). The information on how one can participate, how projects and funds are allocated should be disseminated to the women through seminars and workshops. The research established that in Westlands Constituency the tenders are not advertised openly. This has led to the public developing a very hostile attitude towards the CDC.

#### **4.4.7 Lack of adequate representation**

Fifty per cent of the key informants felt that the idea of the MP having to nominate the women representatives is also a factor that contributes to women's poor participation. They felt that the women nominated to the constituency development fund committee are not true representatives of grassroots women. Having women in the decision making role for the sake of it is defeating the purpose of affirmative action. Where the law stipulates that women must be represented, e.g., the CDF Act 2003, it is the urban and well connected women who have benefited and not the needy women.

#### **4.4.8 Family**

The moment a woman starts a family her life style automatically changes. She has less time to engage in other activities. Taking care of a family can be time consuming and very engaging. Some women are forced to resign from their jobs in order to take care of their families. This means that their time to engage in the public sphere becomes less. Naturally women tend to give first priority to their families and thus they become more engaged in taking care of their children and spouses.

#### **4.4.9 Cultural attitudes and beliefs**

Various reasons have been identified for gender imbalance in governance. The most common argument is that the division between 'public and private' spaces has created a barrier to women's participation in governance. Politics has traditionally been considered a male arena because it operates in the public domain. Women are socialized to operate in the private sphere. This means as they grow up they tend to shy away from public operations. The society expects women to operate in private and thus a woman who tends to operate in the public is seen as "a bad woman". Socialization is a major factor in determining one's way of thinking. The traditional roles prohibit women from participating in decision-making in the society.

#### **4.4.10 Lack of skills for lobbying**

The fact that the CDF Act gives the MP a lot of powers, e.g., to nominate the Constituency Development Committee, a lot of women felt that one must be able to lobby in order to get to such a committee or to simply get your proposal approved. It is tough for women when it comes to lobbying men. The chairlady of the Uwezo group said, "when you are old like some of us the men tend to dismiss you. I have personally been told that my vote is old and therefore not needed. This is very demoralizing and very offensive."

#### **4.4.11 Permission from husband**

Fifty per cent of the respondents felt that for married women to participate in the public sphere, they may require permission from their husbands. This is due to the cultural beliefs that insubordinate women to men. They felt that it is a common norm to account to a male relative for his movements. They felt that not informing their husbands about their intentions to participate in the CDF activities could lead to a conflict. A discussant from Kangemi said that, "we have to accept the reality, it is a man's world." A husband would ask his wife questions like: "what are the financial gains from your involvement in those projects? And why you?" This has greatly discouraged women.

#### **4.4.12 Lack of time**

Women spend a lot of time performing household chores such as cooking, fetching water, taking care of the family, etc. These activities are time consuming and they can keep the women busy throughout the day; thus, women experience tension as they seek to balance domestic and public responsibilities. Their reproductive role thus deters them from participating in the CDF activities. The FGDs expressed their frustrations saying they were not able to meet their full potential. This is especially a serious problem that women in the slums face. They do not have enough money to hire house-helpers to assist them and therefore have to take care of their families themselves.

### **4.5 Effects of low participation of women in the management of the CDF**

#### **4.5.1 Lack of ownership**

By not involving women or other vulnerable groups such as the youth, from the word go has led to lack of ownership by the community. Women are mostly left behind while the men and the youth go out to fend for paying jobs. Women and the youth need to be involved right from the identification and implementation of the projects.

#### **4.5.2 Gender disparities in access to the CDF**

Women have more limited access to the CDF. This is caused by several factors, the main one being lack of information and awareness. Another is lack of or low education. These disparities constrain women from participating effectively. According to Sarah Longwe's women's empowerment framework, equal access to factors of production is one of the five levels of equality that can be achieved to empower women. The other four are equal control, equal participation, conscientisation and welfare.

There is only one project in Westlands constituency that is managed by women. This is the public toilet at the Westlands Bus Park. Initially it was managed by the youth. The contractor was an unknown person to the constituents. After its completion, the youth took over the management. However, the women felt they can run it better. With the help of the MP's wife, they managed to wrestle it from the youth. The women have now introduced an M-Pesa point and are thus making money from both the toilet and the M-pesa. They charge 5/= for public members to access it. They in turn maintain cleanliness. This has not gone down well with the youth and there is a lot of tension between the two vulnerable groups. The youth are threatening to get it back and are scheming strategies of how to go about it. Meanwhile, the women are saying they will stay put. This has resulted in unhealthy competition.

#### **4.5.3 Gender empowerment**

By leaving women out of development programmes such as the CDF, we might not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal number three by 2015 as anticipated. Millennium Development goal number three sets out to bridge the gender disparities that occur between men and women in terms of access to and control of resources. Women have all along been marginalized when it comes to accessing credit, jobs, education, etc. Women have thus been associated with poverty. They have also been associated with the rural areas and the grassroots. By introducing the devolved funds the government was targeting the vulnerable groups in rural areas and at the grassroots. The need to empower women responds to the growing recognition that women in developing countries lack control over resources and self confidence and opportunity to participate in decision-making processes (<http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk>).

#### **4.5.4 Low-self esteem for the women**

The lack of recognition for women has led them to not having confidence to participate in the public sector. In the FGDs, women's feelings of hopelessness and lack of ability to make their own decision was expressed. Women are intentionally left out and the fact that most of them lack education or the skills to compete with the men has led them to feel inferior. They say that they have ideas but do not have the capacity to execute them. This can be confirmed by their poor participation in the CDF activities.

#### **4.6 Ways of enhancing participation of women in the CDF Management**

##### **4.6.1 Increase the number of women in the CDC**

There was a mixed feeling about whether increasing the number of women in the CDF management would enhance the participation of women. Seventy per cent gave the view that if the number of women in the CDC is increased, the participation of women in the grassroots will be increased. If the number of women is increased it will give them a voice when it comes to lobbying and voting.

However, 30% felt that increasing the number of women just for the sake of it, will not increase the participation of women. They felt that increasing the number would only make an impact if the women are elected by the people to represent their interests. At the moment the number of women in the CDC is three out of fifteen. Two women were nominated by the MP while one is a councillor.

#### **4.6.2 Empowerment**

Empowerment is a process. The outcome of the empowerment process should manifest itself as a re-distribution of power between individuals, groups, genders, classes, ethnic groups and nations. Women need to be empowered in terms of how to identify opportunities. They also need empowerment on how they can lobby for opportunities. Women need to have their skills sharpened. By empowering women, they will be able to participate effectively in the governance of the CDF. This in turn will result in higher achievement of the desired results.

#### **4.6.3 Education and Training**

By educating and training women, their skills will be sharpened. The women will be able to come out and participate in the CDF management confidently and assertively. Women need to be taught skills how they can tap opportunities. Education is key to eliminating the poverty that women find themselves in. We must embrace equality or equity in terms of education and training.

#### **4.6.4 Information dissemination**

Information regarding the CDF should be made public. It was discouraging to learn that 70% of the respondents did not know how to participate in CDF activities. Efforts should be made to enhance women's awareness. Strategies and programmes such as barazas, seminars and workshops for women need to be implemented.

## **CHAPER FIVE : DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The research had two specific objectives. First, it sought to investigate the extent to which women are involved in the management of the CDF in Westlands Constituency. Secondly, it sought to identify and discuss the factors that might work against women's participation in the management of the CDF in this constituency. This chapter presents the discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

### **5.2 Discussion**

From the data analysis, it was established that women's participation is very poor in the CDF management. Women continue to be marginalized even with the devolved funds. Men continue to dominate the decision-making role in terms of accessing, identifying and implementing the CDF projects. There is need to bridge this gap. In accessing the CD1 education bursary, men seem to benefit more than women. The men seem to justify their cases to receive more cash than the women.

In terms of the factors that hinder women from participating, lack of information and awareness, education and training, lack of capacity building, corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency, lack of quality representation, family, cultural attitudes and beliefs, nepotism, lack of skills to lobby, inadequate representation and lack of time were identified as the causes for poor participation of women in the management of the CDF in Westlands Constituency.

The research established that there exist gender disparities in the access and management of the CDF in Westlands constituency. This is mainly evident in the implementation and representation. The CDFC is male dominated and thus has an impact when it comes to voting and allocating of resources. Inadequate representation of women is seen as one of the major contributors of women's low participation.

The research established that lack of information and awareness was the key factor identified by respondents as determining their level of participation. The respondents feel that if they had the knowledge of how to access the CDF , they would participate effectively. Seventy per cent of the respondents had no idea how they could participate in the CDF activities. Education and training will empower women to access the opportunities available competitively. Education and training will also aide in capacity building that women need in order to register their women groups, open bank accounts and apply for the CDF.

The CDF has always been rocked with cases of corruption. There has been hue and cry from the public. The CDF Act of 2003 gives the MP the power to nominate the CDFC and since most MPs are partisan, they end up picking their relatives and friends whom they can manipulate. This has resulted to most of them abusing the fund and running it like a private affair. It has also led to lack of transparency and accountability on how the fund is managed. A lot of constituencies do not share out the information on tenders, who won them, the criteria they used to pick the winners and how much the project cost. The CDF has become a cash cow for many MPs.

The women who are nominated to the CDFC are accused of being there for the MP's interests. The women at the grassroots do not feel that they are well represented. Much as women representatives are few, they are not seen to be the right representatives of the grassroots women.



The women representatives in the CDFC felt that they are normally intimidated by the men when it comes to voting. They feel that if the number is increased they could come out strong and fight for women as a marginalized lot.

Mothers who are caring for small children tend to be challenged in terms of time. They hardly have time to spare for public activities. Caring for children can end up being a full time job especially for the poor mothers who cannot afford to employ house-helpers. Cultural attitudes have been blamed for most of the women's problems. In our patriarchal society women are seen to be less important and thus expected to operate in the private sphere. Prestigious positions such as those of decision makers are a man's prerogative.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The CDF has been heralded as the initiative that will alleviate poverty at the grassroots. This will go a long way in reducing poverty especially at the grassroots where poverty levels are high. However, dissemination of CDF information, enhanced awareness, transparency, capacity building, increasing the number of women in the CDFC and adoption of best practices are essential to ensure that women have the equal opportunity to participate in the governance of the CDF. It is clear most women do not have knowledge of the fund operations and procedures.

Given the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the participation of women in the CDF needs to be enhanced. It is vital that we discard our retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes and beliefs that confine women to the private sphere. Information dissemination on the CDF, capacity building and deliberate measures for gender equity are some of the actions that must be stepped up.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

- There is need for the Government of Kenya to review Section 23 of the CDF Act There 2003. Section 23 (8) gives the MP power to constitute the CDFC and section 23 (1) which stipulates the composition of the CDFC to conform to the Affirmative Action Act.
- The government should think seriously about creating an environment that enables women at the grassroots to participate in CDF activities.
- The civil society and government should disseminate information on the CDF. Seminars and workshops to build women's capacity should be held for the grassroots women.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Introductory letter

My name is Evelyne Majale Ofwona. I am a postgraduate student at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, University of Nairobi. I am undertaking research on the role of women in the management of the Constituency Development Fund in Westlands Constituency, Nairobi. The study is purely academic. All your responses will be treated highly confidential and will not be divulged without your authority.

Your participation will be highly appreciated and thank you in advance.

Evelyne M. Ofwona  
Master of Arts Student  
Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Affairs  
University of Nairobi

## APPENDIX II

### In-depth interview guide

1. What is the highest level of education/training attained

None

Primary level

Secondary level

Degree level

Postgraduate level

2. What is your occupation?

3. Has the introduction of the CDF been of benefit to you and your community?

4. How do you view the participation of women in the CDF activities?

5. Please give factors which you consider work against women's involvement in the CDF activities.

6. Do you think women should operate in the public sphere?

*?t*

## APPENDIX III

### Key informant guide

1. What is your occupation?
2. Do you have children? If yes, how much time do you spend taking care of them?
3. How much time do you spend per day caring for other members of your family?
4. How much time do you spend per day doing housework?





Do you think women should operate in the public sphere?



In what ways do you think the participation of women in the management of the CDF can be enhanced?

Should women operate in the public sphere?

## Appendix V

### Key informant interview guide for CDFC

1. How many CDF management members are there in total in the Westlands Constituency?
2. How many are women?
3. In your view, do you think this number is sufficient?
4. How do you view the participation of women in the CDF management?