

COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP:
STRENGTHENING LINKAGES BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND LOCAL
COMMUNITIES FOR IMPROVED DECISION MAKING & SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

POLICY FRAMEWORK

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADP	-	Area Development Programme
AfDB	-	African Development Bank
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
UN	-	United Nations
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	-	United Nations Office for Project Services
UoN	-	University of Nairobi
USAID	-	United States Aid for International Development

COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP: STRENGTHENING LINKAGES BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR IMPROVED DECISION MAKING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Building a Strategic Vision for Community Engaged Scholarship practice in Makueni County

Community Engaged Scholarship concerns public participation practice in research and decision making. Conducting research *with* communities, as opposed to conducting research *on* communities, is quickly becoming the standard approach to gaining public participation in research. Recognizing and valuing the knowledge of community members and finding meaningful opportunities for their participation in research—including the co-creation of knowledge—is transforming many traditional modes of conducting academic research globally while improving communities participation in development decision making. Community engaged scholarship provides a change for communities to interact with scholars, researchers, research students and the academia in general. As an emerging change in academic practices, community engaged scholarship is a best practice in public participation and links academia to communities hence making results of research available to communities as well as to academic audiences.

1.2 Goal and Objectives

Goal: To provide a framework for community engaged scholarship for effective participation in development, research for improved policy and building communities of practice.

Objective: The overall objective is to improve the counties public participation model through community engaged scholarship. The specific objectives are:

1. bolstering the links between civic and academic achievement and between research and Development;
2. connecting the university to policymakers;
3. building interdisciplinary research capacity for governments, research institutions and communities;
4. building a research community around Makueni County's Model of Participatory development and most challenging policy issues;
5. building social capital among research institutions, scholars and communities;

2.0 FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

2.1 Guiding Principles

The principles underlying the Community Engaged Scholarship;

- **Citizen Control modeling of Public Participation:** Local communities' hold the key to sustainable development. They have the capacity to take charge of their own development and hence their effective participation is indispensable. Participation should be mobilized and concentrated at the lowest operational level e.g. the areas and clusters
- **Common Benefit:** Communities should be driven to identify projects which are productive and beneficial to a larger proposition of the communities (sub ward, ward, sub county) and contributes to the improvement of the lives of the most deprived.
- **Exploitation of local potential:** Communities should first deploy locally available socio-economic and cultural resources, including mobilization of capital and savings to solve their problems and seek external resources to build on these and fill the necessary gaps
- **Enhancing a culture of transparency and accountability:** the community development policy promotes horizontal and vertical accountability between the government and the citizens. It promotes active oversight of all development programs by the communities at all levels.
- **Collaboration between sectors and partners:** this will promote efficient integrated community development approaches, partnerships between communities and departments, donors and development partners.

2.2 Strategies for Community engaged Scholarship Program

2.2.1 Enhancing Participatory Research methodologies in Development Decision Making

Participatory approaches are tools used by development practitioners to facilitate communities' effective participation in decision-making process. The tools are used to promote effective and efficient implementation of projects and programmes. There are a variety of approaches that are used in community development work by different development actors in identification, prioritization and implementation of programmes. Some of these include Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA), Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPOA) and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) among others.

Policy Concerns

Participatory approaches make public participation in development more effective, credible and applicable at the community level. However, where they are applied community's felt needs are not adequately addressed due to minimal community involvement, engagement and capacities of officers responsible for public participation initiatives. Inadequate resources and skills also limit the application of these approaches by the communities and other development actors.

Policy Statement

- The government shall promote and facilitate the application of participatory approaches in community development.

Policy objective

- To strengthen the capacities of communities, departments and participatory development workers for effective participation and implementation of projects and programmes.
- Institutionalize and enhance the application of participatory research approaches and methods in public participation for development
- Enhance the delegation of powers to the various development committees' involvement of communities in championing decision-making processes.
- Mobilize adequate resources for community participation in development processes
- Enforce the application of participatory development approaches by communities and development agents

2.2.2 Enhancing Research in Participatory Development

Research is a systematic way of gathering data, analysing and dissemination of information. Research in community development yields critical knowledge and information necessary for effective decision making in respect of community development interventions as well as their social impact. Innovation is an improvement of an original idea or system to add value or enhance its effectiveness. ICT refers to devices, applications, networks and software used to access, analyse, store and retrieve data and information. Public Participation Practice advocates for the use of radio, television, mobile phone and computer in the collection of community issues, community feedback and timely access of information. Harnessing ICT for community development is critical as it eases the way of doing business, reduces costs, saves on time, fosters good governance and standards as well as enhances communication.

Policy Concern

There is inadequate funding for research and of promoting innovations in community development. Additionally, research and innovation findings by the academia and other institutions has little linkage and coordination in community development. Utilization, promotion and documentation of indigenous technical knowledge is also minimal. Low access to ICT by community members coupled with its very dynamic nature as well as inadequate skills and poor infrastructure especially in the rural areas limits the utilization of ICT in community development.

Policy Statement

- The government shall promote and facilitate research, innovation and use of ICT in community development.

Policy Objectives

- To promote research, innovation and use of ICT for informed decision-making, efficient and effective implementation of community development programmes.
- Facilitate and conduct research on community development including linking researchers to county's community teams
- Disseminate the research findings for improved programming and implementation of CD programmes
- Identify and promote innovations in community development
- Promote and enhance the use of indigenous knowledge in community development

- Establish networks amongst researchers, community development practitioners and communities to exchange knowledge, ideas, skills and best practices in CD
- Conduct training needs assessment for communities and actors in relation to ICT, research and innovation.
- Promote alternative peace building, dispute resolution and management mechanisms in community development.

2.2.3 Linking communities to Research institutions and Academia

Linking communities to research students, research institutions and academia is critical in strengthening the process. This on their side leads to enhancing their advancement and promotion of professional development.

Policy Concern

There is minimal interaction between the academia and the communities of Makueni. Further, Research students studies for their masters and PhDs in the county research on communities and not with communities.

Policy Statement

- The government shall enhance linkages between the academia and the communities for meaningful participation of communities in research and its utilization to improve policy development

Policy Objectives

- To promote linkages with research institutions
- Facilitate and conduct research annual community engaged scholarship forums
- Establish networks amongst researchers, community development practitioners and communities to exchange knowledge, ideas, skills and best practices in CD

2.2.4 Coordinated benchmarking of County governments, development agencies, research institutes and students in Masters and PhDs studying among communities in Makueni

To ensure knowledge management and transfer to communities and the county government the government shall ensure a coordinated mechanism to linking of communities to researchers.

Policy Concern

A lot of research is being done in the county, among the communities but the county does not benefit from the research results.

Policy Statement

- The government shall enhance the coordination of linkages between the academia and the communities for meaningful participation of communities in research and its utilization to improve policy development with a view of harnessing from the research results and learning at the county level

Policy Objectives

- To promote effective coordination of community engaged scholarship initiatives

- To ensure implementation and knowledge transfer of research reports for improved county operations
- Enhancing transformation and results and improvements as advised by research results.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

4.1 Implementation Approach

The Department of devolution, County Administration, Public Service and Youth shall spearhead the mobilization, coordination and implementation of the policy in collaboration with other stakeholders. The policy ensures the strengthening of the community engagement in research and improving the community development practice in the county.

3.1 Establishment of a unit of Research and Development within the County School of Development Studies

3.2 Partnership Development

Development partners including civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector, Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Non-state Actors and development agencies play a critical role in the implementation of the policy. Their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis community development are set out below:

S/no.	Stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
1.	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the capacity building, consultative forums and thematic groups to debate on issues pertaining to local development; • Get involved in all phases of development programs, from the conception to the evaluation phase; • Act as a catalyst of development initiatives and propose appropriate actions to the Government; • Contribute to the construction and promotion of positive values (solidarity, unity, truth etc); • Consult the population in order to represent and protect its interests; • Provide feedback to the population on commitments made, on policies and lessons learnt.
2.	Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a catalyst of development initiatives and propose appropriate actions to the Government; • Complement community projects' implementation • Contribute to the construction and promotion of positive values (solidarity, unity, truth etc); • Consult the population in order to represent and protect its interests; • Advisory to the county Government
3.	The Private Sector (Contractors/Consultancy Firms/SME/Credit Facilities/Economic Interest Groups/Professional Groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces goods and services necessary for the implementation of programs, projects and community actions; • Develop a local infrastructure • Act as a catalyst in the promotion of rural economy and of local investments; • Provide financial support, to community initiatives through the system of micro-finance and build viable microfinance institutions; • Create local employment for people not employed in the public sector; • Increase mutual accountability in implementation of public works by instituting checks and balances ;

S/no.	Stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the broadening of the knowledge base by investing their profits into research and development, innovations and skills development.
3.	Development partners (donors and Local Non-State Actors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial and technical support to targeted interventions in the Clusters Contribute to the financing of programs, projects or any other community development activities; Support and advise the government on improving coordination including the harmonization of interventions; Organize and participate in consultative meetings with all stakeholders through clusters or joint action development fora; Assist development committees in the conception, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development projects; Build capacity of the development committees and communities and provide financial support in form of grants or credits; Assist technically in utilization of proven new technologies.
4.	County Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policies, programs and strategies for effective community development; Mobilize required resources for the implementation of the programs; Build capacity of the staff charged with participatory development programming; Evaluate and monitor implementation of these policies and programs. Harmonize the community-based initiatives with the sectoral strategies, County plans and Budgets, norms and standards.
10	Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively participate in community action planning and implementation of programs for ownership and sustainability. Voice their views in the provision of local solutions to their needs and challenges Sustainably utilize investments made by themselves/donors/private sector/governments for the communities prosperity Contribute material, labor and financial support for the implementation of community development programs Lobby for the implementation of the policy participate in Community based monitoring initiatives/social accountability forums Effectively manage all household and community assets and resources

3.5 Policy Review

The Policy will be reviewed after three years.

Its monitoring and evaluation shall be presented in the implementation guidelines.

The aim of the review will be to take stock of the progress made in implementation and accommodate new and emerging issues in research and community development. This process will be undertaken with the contributions of the county's community development professionals among other stakeholders.