EXPERIENCES FROM THE AFRICAN CONTINENT TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING:

PARTICIPATORY PLANNING APPROACHES IN DIVERSE POLITICO-ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXTS

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2013 Khanya- African Institute of Community-Driven Development (Khanya-aicdd) and South African Cities Network (SACN) entered into a partnership to conduct an evaluative and comparative study on the role Community-Based Planning (CBP) has had in strengthening citizen participation in cities across the African continent.

This paper concludes the initial phase of a comparative analysis of participatory planning approaches from across the African continent. This is done through the lens of Community Based Planning (CBP), which had initially emerged in South African planning processes before spreading to other regions, in order to make development more relevant to local priorities, empowering local communities in the development process, and deepening democracy.

Through an analysis of the diverse approaches to participatory planning in diverse politico-administrative contexts, we examine some experiences from the African continent to improve and innovate CBP, and develop it further as a best practice tool for participatory planning. We examine experiences in South Africa, Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya.

CBP is a very useful, innovative and responsive tool that has the ability to involve local populations in local planning processes, beyond simply identification of development needs. Participatory planning tools rely heavily on the politico-administrative structures to incorporate and implement community priorities, as well as the ability of communities to drive development processes.

We examine the role of such processes in the decentralization discourse, as they focus on transforming governance systems to allow for active engagement with citizens and strengthen the accountability, efficiency and responsiveness of government to the citizens. Across the continent, with the proliferation of decentralized governance systems, we see decentralization models being adopted in a variety of ways, and that public participation is not necessarily dependent on political or administrative decentralization.

A key factor for participatory planning is an appropriate enabling environment. While legislation and statutes exist in almost all countries above, they have contributed to variable extents to meaningful public participation. In some instances (as in Ghana) the translation of policy commitments, with
regard to decentralization and public participation, into real and meaningful engagements has been inhibited by incoherence, duplication and uncertainty. In other instances (as in Zimbabwe), it would appear that political will is lacking and efforts have remained at very embryonic levels.

The existence of institutionalized and clear planning frameworks and processes is a determining factor in levels of public participation. Where these exist as obligatory and defined (as in Uganda and Nigeria) public participation is potentially enhanced, while where they remain undefined (Ghana and Zimbabwe) significant engagement of citizens remains limited. The degree of citizen engagement ranges from basic consultation on externally derived plans (as in Ghana) to on-going monitoring and evaluation of plans developed in participatory processes (as in Nigeria).

A conducive environment for public participation also needs capacity development of civil servants to understand and implement the appropriate policies and operationalize frameworks and tools. There is no clear evidence that there are systematic ways of doing this in any of the countries examined here. In South Africa, efforts have been made to orient and capacitate frontline staff and planners in CBP, but there is no national capacity development plan. Instead municipalities and line departments have run training programmes in isolation, and often in parallel, with each other. There are no standards or compliance provisions in this regard.

The financial elements associated with public participation are also a determinant of how successfully processes have unfolded. Involvement of local people in budget development is provided for in some instances (Ethiopia, and Nigeria) while the lack of budgetary commitment to community plans (as in South Africa) have also frustrated community engagement processes. Reliance on external finance (as with Social Accountability funded by the World Bank in Ethiopia) means that the process itself is often unsustainable, as it requires regular external input to be implemented. Sustainability is also affected by cost and time commitments required as with CBP in South Africa, where public participation informs the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The effort involved militates against this process being undertaken annually when the IDPs are reviewed.

Unintended consequences could accrue from lack of funding, however. In Uganda, where funding was unavailable, local people mobilized to get funds through various means to implement their development priorities. This is an indication of the power of people to drive such processes.

Central to this initial research phase is using experiences and lessons to continue to improve and innovate how participatory planning processes are conducted, to ensure more relevant, sustainable and empowering processes. CBP, which has emerged as a best practice for participatory planning,
provides a well-established base to continue imagining how to create relevant approaches in diverse politico-administrative governance systems.

In order to have adequate participatory processes in governance, a legitimate development process which integrates CBPs, is required. Although CBP in itself is unable to transform the structure of Government, there remains the need for CBP processes to strengthen vertical and horizontal linkages in the government. Despite the variability of political and administrative structures across diverse nations, CBP offers a tool to efforts towards greater decentralization by providing an avenue to create these linkages, across levels and sectors within Government. This requires a systematic approach to how CBP is embedded within the planning process. In the South African case, CBP has become part of the IDP process, to ensure that such processes are conducted and followed through.

The notion of citizens as passive recipients of service delivery by governments is one that has been questioned from the very genesis of CBP. The linkage of CBP with SLA, which promotes empowering local actions through use of available local skills and resources, creates opportunities for citizens to be actively engaged in providing their own local services, with support from others if needed. The strengthening of the linkages between service delivery and livelihoods is an aspect that could be explored more through the Expanded Public Works Programmes and Community Works Programmes in South Africa, for example.

The issue of resource allocation and service delivery is of great concern. Priorities raised through the CBP process, if done in a timely manner, could feed into the IDP which outlines budgets and resource allocation. Although Ian Goldman (2014) suggests that CBP is a better method than the participatory budgeting methods used in Brazil, where these were innovated, there is no meaningful engagement in CBP with how decisions on budgets are made. Therefore the local community tends to be restricted in participation in decisions on development, and this remains the role of the municipality. In fact, the projects identified are also implemented by the relevant Departments.

This highlights issues around available financial resources for implementing projects identified by geographical communities. In a number of interviews the need for follow-up funding and supervision support was a main reason for failed outcomes of CBPs.

“Other countries e.g. Kenya are nowhere close to the amount of resources and institutional support (both perceived and actual) that are available for Community planning processes in South Africa” (Otieno, 2014)
Where there has been government, donor, or community funding, projects have been more successful. Therefore it is vital that for all CBP processes some degree of committed funding be made available for the identified projects, as in the case of the proposed Community Development Grants in SA. There is also the need to build in the need for “local resources to solve local problems” (Mlalazi, 2014) to facilitate local communities to be able to respond to local service delivery needs.

“There is a general trend to decentralize. However, accompanying this move is the call for greater transparency and accountability. Current CBP practice has indicated that locally managed funds are critical, and that decision-making about these funds should be at community level if this is to be empowering. However, there are insignificant community structures that can take funds. CBP should seek to promote the creation of legitimate structures that can take funds. After they are created they should be trained so that they are accountable.” (Mlalazi, 2014)

The manner in which the CBP is done is crucial to having relevant, meaningful and doable projects to take forward. There is a need for CBP to become more a process than just an event, as the current format is a 5 day “event”. The entire approach to CBP needs to be rethought to ensure that all people are able to participate (as currently often the employed and students are excluded due to the time restrictions) and often people are invited due to political affiliations, and that local people are capacitated to take the process forward.

There is a need for CBP to include follow-ups and participatory monitoring and evaluation to find out what real impacts accrue to development and service delivery in the area. Goldman (2014) suggested integrating a service delivery scorecard as a method to achieve this.

The CBP process is also something that needs to be reflected on and innovated. There is a need to reflect on the tools that are used, and how to develop new participatory tools, particularly around participatory budgeting.

CBP requires creative and flexible facilitation. The current use of rigid and regimental methods may prevent rich outcomes emerging. Therefore the training of the development practitioner on the ground needs to be done by well-trained facilitators.
It is also clear that working with those at higher levels of the decision-making ladder are aware of the developmental principles, which guide their work, and that leadership training is integrated into the process. They are able to transform the manner in which development is conducted and therefore they need to be conscientized of their role, and their potential to make real impact and transformation on the ground, through ethical, empowering, and participatory processes.

Khanya-aicdd has been instrumental in developing and innovating methods for active citizen engagement in governance, to deepen democracy and make meaningful impact on the ground. Community Based Planning, as a participatory planning tool is one of Khanya-aicdd’s most significant contribution to the development processes in South Africa and across the continent, creating avenues for communities to be able to define, prioritize, implement and monitor development.

Although CBP has transformed the planning landscape, there is still much work to be done to ensure that such participatory processes are taken-up, and have outcomes. In this paper we examine how participatory planning has been conducted in diverse politico-administrative contexts in a variety of African countries, with varying degrees of decentralized decision-making.

There are many lessons we can take from the experiences from these countries, as well as where CBP has been integrated into national planning processes, to develop a tool which is able to respond and reflect local priorities, and be able to implement and monitor the outcomes, as well as facilitate local empowerment to be able to locally solve local problems.

The next research phase will dig deeper into the real outcome of participatory planning processes, through a number of case studies to examine what attempts have been made, and the outcomes of such activities, as well as what would enable for more effective and efficient participatory planning processes

We need to look towards the African continent to develop tools, which are able to respond to the diverse contexts we found in Africa, as much of the methods and approaches are still being adopted from elsewhere. This paper seeks to begin tackling this challenge.
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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2013 Khanya- African Institute of Community-Driven Development (Khanya-aicdd) and South African Cities Network (SACN) entered into a partnership to conduct an evaluative and comparative study on the role Community-Based Planning (CBP) has had in strengthening citizen participation in cities across the African continent.

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Through an analysis of the diverse approaches to participatory planning in diverse politico-administrative contexts, we seek to examine some experiences from the African continent to improve and innovate CBP, and develop it further as a best practice tool for participatory planning.

CBP is a very useful, innovative and responsive tool that has the ability to involve local populations in local planning processes, beyond simply identification of development needs. Participatory planning tools rely heavily on the politico-administrative structures to incorporate and implement community priorities, as well as the ability of communities to drive development processes.

We examine the role of such processes in the decentralization discourse, as they focus on transforming governance systems to allow for active engagement with citizens and strengthen the accountability, efficiency and responsiveness of government to the citizens. Across the continent, with the proliferation of decentralized governance systems, we see decentralization models being adopted in a variety of ways, and that public participation is not necessarily dependent on political or administrative decentralization.

Despite the challenges faced to effectively integrate participation in the planning, implementing and monitoring of community identified projects, CBP is a tool that can be used to strengthen the relations between local government and citizenry, and create meaningful development that responds to local realities.
Khanya-aicdd has been instrumental in the development, utilization and adoption of CBP in South Africa and across the African continent. It is opportune that the originator and often sole service provider of CBP trainings and implementations reflects and innovates through such an evaluative study on CBP and participatory planning, to ensure it remains current, relevant, and responsive to the priorities of the poor and marginalized in development processes.

This paper begins by introducing CBP, exploring its origins and driving objectives, then discusses CBP in the context of decentralization and as a tool towards good governance, followed by a discussion on participatory planning in policy and practice. In section 4 we detail the experiences and lessons of seven African countries: South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Kenya, focusing on how these diverse historico-politico-administrative systems of governments have approached participatory planning, and CBP where they have utilized this tool, and examined their urban policies where these exist. The lessons from these countries have been captured towards improving CBP practices in the final section, as CBP has been identified as a best practice tool by the innovators of this tool. Further investigation of the real outcomes of such participatory planning tools, and in comparison with CBP, requires primary research, which will be conducted through a case study approach in the following phases of this evaluation study.

1.1. Research Methodology

In order to gain an understanding of how CBP has influenced participatory planning processes, i.e. decentralizing decision-making around national and local development, we used a variety of methods to initiate this research process. This first phase of the evaluative research engaged with a review of relevant literature on decentralization, participatory planning, and community based planning. Interviews were also conducted with a variety of informants including present and past Khanya-aicdd staff who have been involved in CBP processes, government officials, and partners from a variety of countries where Khanya-aicdd has worked. This stage of the research aimed to outline the experiences of CBP in the countries where Khanya-aicdd has been present, while also examining other examples of participatory planning from other African countries. Therefore a variety of qualitative, desktop methodologies were utilized to ensure accurate information was used to inform an initial evaluation of CBP and participatory planning across the African continent.

The next phase of this research will involve case studies to deepen the evaluation of CBP and other participatory planning processes.
2. AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING

Community Based Planning (CBP) is a participatory methodology that was developed in order to involve local communities in planning processes by prioritizing local development interests and influence resource allocation. (Goldman, 2002 and Tonner, 2003). The CBP methodology was developed with an interest to explore institutional support for sustainable livelihoods in Southern Africa (ODI, 2003 and Goldman et al., 2005). CBP was brought to respond to two challenges:

1. Sustainable livelihoods analysis, and
2. Decentralization, particularly linkages between local government and citizens (Goldman et al., 2005).

An understanding made during the early CBP processes suggested that strengthening the links between communities and local government would have ripple effects and improve people’s livelihoods, service delivery and good governance (Chimbuya et al., 2004 and ODI, 2003). The four main objectives driving CBP are to:

1. Improve quality of government and especially the municipalities Integrated Development Plan (IDP)
2. Improve quality of services of government and especially at municipal level
3. Increase community control over their lives
4. Stimulate community action and reduce dependency on government, especially the municipality

2.1 ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING

CBP was developed due to a dissatisfaction with traditional approaches to planning and the need to reform institutional planning processes to link local and national government with citizens (Goldman, 2002). Therefore, the methodology was developed to make plans more relevant to local needs and conditions, and to increase community involvement in provision of public services. As a result a series of principles were developed and implemented. This was done to ensure that the system could be holistic, realistic, sustainable and would look at the needs of the poor, who are often those directly
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effectected by development (Goldman, 2002). This process was also conducted to expose realistic plans developed in each country for influencing policy formulation, implementation or piloting of community based planning systems and reveal the participatory institutions committed to take forward these processes (Goldman, Carnegie and Abbot, 2004).

Khanya- African Institute of Community Driven Development (Khanya-aicdd)(previously known as Khanya-Managing Rural Change, Khanya-MRC) was pivotal in developing and designing the methodology as a best practice for getting local priorities into development planning processes. (Goldman, 2014 and Chimbuya, 2014). This stemmed from Khanya-aicdd’s experience in participatory development processes, incorporating Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques and the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. Together with the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), Khanya-aicdd worked towards embedding this approach into the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process in South Africa. The intention was to legislate CBP into the IDP process, yet due to the fact that policy needs to be all encompassing, legislating a methodology was not optimized and this process was halted around 2006 (Goldman, 2014, Mohan, 2014 ).

2.2 WHAT IS COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING?

The core methodology used to facilitate Community Based Plans includes a variety of Participatory Learning Action (PLA) tools, combined into a three to five day strategic planning process (Goldman, Carnegie and Abbot, 2004). This was done at the lowest administrative unit of governance (in South Africa known as a Ward). Some of the CBP steps that were established included Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools such as Venn diagrams, seasonal calendars, mapping, and timelines, amongst others.

The methodology was developed, tested, refined and adopted to suit municipalities and community-based organizations. The main themes of CBP according to Tonner (2003) were based on the promotion of decentralized approaches to services, and for planning; the promotion of empowerment, involving use of participatory methodologies; and the promotion of livelihood approaches. The research was carried from 1998 to 2000 and CBP was implemented from 2001 to 2004 piloted in South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Ghana (Tonner, 2003). The implementation included the review of in-country experience, sharing among partners in four countries, the development of common models, adaptation in each country, piloting, and evaluations and mainstreaming (Chimbuya et al., 2004). The CBP project team aimed that by 2005 the CBP systems would be developed and operational
in four African countries and that CBP would also be integrated into the local government planning and resource allocation (Tonner, 2003).

The CBP process emerged through the experiences of various development practitioners in the planning profession as a best practice for civic engagement in the planning, prioritizing, budgeting, implementing and monitoring of local development (Goldman, 2014). Since its conception the CBP methodology has been adopted by a variety of planning processes and institutions, but an evaluation of the process has yet to be done. Through this paper we examine how the driving objectives of CBP have or have not been realized, what challenges and successes have emerged from CBP practice, and where improvements can be made to ensure citizens are active participants in processes that affect their lives.

2.3. KHANYA-AICDD AND CBP

As mentioned above, Khanya-aicdd played a central role during the development, testing and implementation of CBP in different countries. The organization began its CBP work in 1998 after considerable interest to explore its institutional support for sustainable livelihoods in South Africa (ODI, 2003 and Goldman, Carnegie and Abbot, 2004). CBP was developed in response to the need to improve the linkages between communities and local governments (ODI, 2003). Therefore CBP emerges directly out of decentralization processes promoted globally as integral towards achieving good governance.

Khanya-aicdd facilitated CBP work in a variety of contexts and areas with a number of different partners. Since CBP’s inception, Khanya-aicdd has facilitated a number of trainings on CBP and developed various manuals and toolkits toward embedding CBP into IDP processes in South Africa (Khanya-aicdd Annual Report, 2008-9). The earliest work of the organization in using CBP began in 1998 when the organization took a study visit to India on decentralization and participatory planning. That later (2001) translated into the CBP process that was designed for Mangaung Local Municipality in South Africa (Khanya-aicdd Annual Report, 2009). Figure 1 outlines the major CBP work conducted by Khanya-aicdd. Graph 1 represents the history of Khanya-aicdd’s work with CBP.

Throughout these experiences, Khanya-aicdd has engaged with various partners such as policy implementers in government, civil society and international funders to ensure that the CBP process is promoted as a powerful tool in development processes, and embedded in institutional planning processes.
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Khanya - African Institute of Community Driven Development
3. Making All Voices Count: The Role of CBP in Decentralizing Decision-Making

Many countries in Africa have pursued decentralization as a policy of transferring and transforming powers and services from central government to the local government (Wittenberg, 2003). Therefore, these countries have adopted decentralization with the aims of improving governance efficiency and making policies more responsive to the needs of local people (Cabral, 2011). The element of decision-making is one of the very important components of decentralization. However, the levels of decision-making power vary with different types of decentralization. For instance de-concentration or administrative decentralization, which indicates the allocation of administrative responsibilities to local branches of the central government, while decision-making power rests with the central government (Cabral, 2011). On the other hand devolution, or political decentralization gives direct control of decision-making power to local government, giving legislative functions to regional and local bodies of the government, and being directly accountable to local citizens (Wittenberg, 2003).

Decentralizing decision-making is a key component of CBP since this tool allows for local voices to influence development priorities. In Uganda, CBP was used as one of the methods to implement decentralization projects (Blomley, 2004). As a result of that process, CBP is now implemented at the local government level, which is the level where devolved responsibilities for local planning, resource allocation and budgeting and investment management to local government takes place. By its nature CBP methodology promotes maximization of participatory planning and good governance to ensure representation and a platform to provide feedback to communities (Goldman, 2002).

3.1. Good Governance

The importance and promotion of good governance has been emphasized in international literature as the way to go for development practitioners. The promotion of good governance is based on the principles of democracy, that define it as the responsibility of governing bodies to meet the needs of the masses as opposed to selected groups of people in society (Chowdbury and Skarstedt, 2005). Among some of the components linked with the concept of good governance are participation, transparency, and accountability (UNDP, 2007). Through participation people who are directly affected by development are afforded opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, hold
decision-makers and implementers accountable, and the process is inclusive, fair and facilitates social interaction. Good governance aims to create responsive economic and social policies in order to meet people’s needs and aspirations. This also permits for broad consensus in society and the voices of everyone particularly the marginalized and vulnerable, to be heard (UNDP 2007).

In the State of The Cities Report (2011) Good Governance is defined as:

The capacity of city officials and their partners to formulate and implement sound policies and systems that reflect the interests of local citizens, and do so in a way that is transparent and inclusive of those with least power and resources.

CBP was developed in order to create more accountable governance, relevant and responsive planning, and provide adequate service delivery. It is therefore vital to reflect and evaluate how have such transformative processes have been integrated, what the major challenges and successes have been, and how has this supported good governance.

3.2. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Participatory planning is an approach that involves local people in decisions that will affect them, the desire to support locally-led development and citizen empowerment (Rietberger-McCracken, 2003 and Southhall, 2003). There is abundant literature detailing participatory planning. Gomes (2010) describes participatory planning as providing stakeholders, including community members, with a voice in the processes that will affect them, making planning and design process a collaborative, grassroots production. Participatory planning enhances public participation in local government planning while people's priorities are taken into account (Goldman et al, 2005). Through participatory planning methodologies, participants become more than mere “beneficiaries” of development, but active participants.

The CBP methodology promotes maximization of participatory planning to ensure representation, capacity-building, stakeholder involvement, relations between national plans and local priorities, and a platform to provide feedback to communities (Goldman, 2002). This enhances public participation in municipal planning while the priorities of the people are taken into account. On the other hand CBP allows for involvement of citizens in implementing and managing their own development (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, n.d). CBP deliberately uses participatory tools
and structures them into a systematic process that allow for wards and government to undertake participatory planning (Goldman et al., 2005).

The original CBP process involves a 3 day process of planning with ward committees and opinion leaders, a 2 day meeting with communities, where all outcomes are identified by different social groups after visioning and a vision statement drawn-up by for the ward (ODI, 2003). CBP workshop design has evolved into a more balanced training process, between theoretical, classroom learning and practical learning.

3.3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

This paper focuses on the link between the system of governance and the extent of citizen participation. Therefore by analyzing the different forms and types of decentralization which exist within diverse government structures, we review how citizen participation, particularly in planning processes has occurred. By examining this linkage, we seek to understand what may be an enabling politico-administrative environment for participatory planning to flourish.

It is important to note that public participation tends to take place at the local level of government. It is therefore vital to understand the prerequisites of democratic decentralization, which allows for citizen involvement in local governance (Parker, 2003). In a devolved state one will argue that there is or aught to be a link between lower structures of government and citizen participation, which differs sometimes in meaning and understanding. But the question is how this link can be identified? This section intends to examine the linkage between local government structures and citizen participation in the context of good governance.

Decentralization plays a huge role in creating opportunities for citizen-state interaction (Gittel, n.d). This is because citizen participation is usually considered a valuable element of democratic citizenship and democratic decision-making. Even so there are two structures of decision-making that are usually observed. There is the technocratic approach and the democratic approach (Parker, 2003). The technocratic approach involves the application of technical knowledge, expertise, techniques and methods to a problem/issue, whereas the democratic approach refers to citizen’s involvement in activities that have a relationship to government planning and policy making (Parker, 2003).
3.3.A. STRUCTURES OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The structures that permit citizen participation are primarily situated at the lowest level of governance (Mohammad et al, 2011). The emphasis on local government is based on the fact that it is the closest form of government to the people and has the potential to enhance citizen participation. At the same time, citizen participation can also take place through other structures such as the Civil Society Organizations, Traditional Authorities, Community Development Workers (which serve as the foot soldiers in South Africa) and other community structures that allow for it (i.e. Imbizos, Round Tables etc.) (Nyalunga, 2006).

3.3.B. PLATFORMS OF PARTICIPATION

Citizen involvement occurs through different platforms and it is driven by different approaches. These platforms include deliberative forums, surveys, referendums, and participation policy-making projects (Michels, 2011). According to Michels (2011), deliberative forums are used to better promote the exchange of arguments and willingness to change preferences. They consist of facilitated, democratic conversations during evaluative inquiry (i.e. Imbizo’s in South Africa) (MacNeil, 2005). Surveys, also focus on the exchange of arguments but can be done by individuals. On the other hand, referendums give citizens influence on policy making through involvement of more people than the technocrats (i.e. voting processes). Participatory policy-making allows for inclusive, consultative or participatory policy-design, towards achieving accountability, transparency, and active citizenship (Rietberge-McCracken, n.d). So the influence is made on decision-making, inclusion, skills and virtues, deliberation and legitimacy (Michels, 2011).

Each different method used for participation varies in extent and ability for citizen’s priorities to be included in the process. This resembles Arnstein’s “A Ladder of Citizen’s Participation” (1969), which suggests that participation can take a variety of approaches, ranging from manipulation to citizen control. Many of the platforms mentioned above are consultative approaches, which is situated in the middle of the ladder of citizen participation, and inform the citizenry rather than include them into the design process.
3.3.C. APPROACHES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The theories of citizen participation have two main focuses: social participation and political participation (Gaventa and Valderram, 1999). Social participation is the approach, which focuses on direct participation of primary stakeholders. It is the social involvement in a variety of activities such as volunteering, sport, donation, amongst others. (World Health Organization, 2008). Its measures include participation in political and social activities (HRSDC, 2014).

Another form of participation is political. This is about the interaction of the individuals or organized groups with the state (Gaventa et al., 1999). It is often more indirect. Even though this form had always been based on using traditional forms of participation such as voting, campaigning, group action and protests, currently it is moving towards the engagement with the state due to the pressure for local governments to comply with good governance conducts. This is done in order to open spaces within government to create new relationships with citizens (Gaventa et al., 1999). As a result, governance creates a broader interaction of public and private social actors and government. The local government is assumed to call for the participation of civil society in activities that traditionally formed part of the public sphere. Citizen participation creates links between the political, community and social sphere (Gaventa et al., 1999).

3.3.D. LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

The advocates of good governance have always emphasized the need for participatory governance. However, governments continue to be criticized for being distant from the people, not listening, and not seeking participation (Caddy, 2014). What makes good governance and participation to be important? Local government’s responsibility is not only to provide and deliver local services but to also support the rights of the citizens by providing a democratic space for people’s participation and facilitation for the benefits of the quality of life of people (Mohammadi et al., 2011). Effective citizen participation in local government plays a very important in promoting the quality of local governance because it improve the efficiency of public services and make government more accountable while deepening democracy (Gaventa et al., 1999). Beyond that citizen participation builds public relation, create support of agency plans, create interaction among groups, resolve conflict improve community relations, distribute information, identify attitudes and meet government requirements (Foutz, n.d.).
4. Decentralized Decision Making and Service Delivery

4.1 Rhetoric Versus Reality

A recurring debate is around the real impact participatory planning processes have on the lives of people on the ground. Decentralization aims to bring governance structures closer to the population, making development plans more relevant and responsive to local realities, and making those in power more accountable to the citizenry.

Decentralization takes place in two forms, either as administrative decentralization or as political decentralization. (Kauzya, 2007) In the context of CBP, it is primarily political decentralization, which is of concern, of how decisions are made and prioritized at the local level, and how they are then integrated at various levels of governance.

CBP has two main avenues to effect development outcomes: where local priorities are integrated in the local, provincial and national development agenda; and development of community action plans, which promote the community’s implementation of projects they have identified (Goldman, 2014). Both these angles are crucial to ensure relevant and responsive development is exercised, as well as going one step further by empowering the local citizenry directly. Despite the commitment, policy, and intention, in practice, participation in planning processes has seldom gone beyond a simple listing of problems and priorities. The participation rhetoric of public participation in development plans, resource allocation and decentralized decision-making, rarely plays out in reality. That is why it is crucial to understand the limitations of such processes, and what steps need to be taken in order to ensure more representative and meaningful participation take place and that this translates into real impact on citizens’ lives.

Interestingly, at the same time as the development of CBP, another initiative called Community Based Services was being developed by Khanya-aicdd, which was meant to be a local solution to service delivery inefficiencies. Although this was not followed through to the extent of CBP, it remains a vital component to address the service delivery concerns that emerge throughout the community-developed plans, providing a clear and direct connection between local livelihoods and services.
In the context of local governance, decisions are made after all actors are consulted (Helling, Serrano and Warren, 2005). For effective decision-making, it is crucial that planning and policies are inclusive, transparent and open to all actors and the community at large. The benefits of participatory decision-making are that it contributes to more equitable and dynamic local development (Helling et al., 2005).

Although different countries have opted for decentralization for different reasons, improving service delivery has been an implicit motivation for these efforts (Ahmad et al., 2005). This is in response to the inability of the state to meet basic needs. Although decentralization can substantially improve service delivery, it often falls short, for a variety of reasons. Ahmad et al. (2005) suggest that this relates to relationships of accountability, which are expanded and transformed under decentralization. These relationships of accountability include that between citizens and politicians, between central and local tiers or government, and between politicians and service providers. Due to various political and fiscal reasons, service delivery outcomes have been mixed under decentralization.
5. EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND ACROSS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Khanya-aicdd, other organisations and government departments, have worked with the CBP methodology in a variety of contexts. We will examine some of the successes and challenges based on the ability of the CBP process to integrate community interests in formal planning processes, as well as facilitating local development initiatives.

The paper looks towards the African continent to gain a better understanding of how decentralization and public participation may be supported or limited in varying African politico-administrative contexts. We also look at the CBP methodology, how it can be improved through reflecting on African experiences and approaches to public participation, including urban contexts where urban policy exists.

Since decentralization policies have been pushed primarily from the developed world’s governments and institutions such as the World Bank, which brought decentralization policy during the Structural Adjustments Programmes (Olowu, 2001) during the 1980s, it is important to consider how these policies have been incorporated in such differing systems of Governance, and how they may be adapted and refined to suit a democratic and developmental African continent.

Although Khanya-aicdd has worked in a number of countries across the region and greater continent, there are many examples where public participation in planning processes have taken place, towards strengthening decentralized decision-making and service delivery.

The authors of CBP developed it as a Best Practice participatory planning toolkit after working with a number of other methods. Despite this, various other approaches are historically and currently being used to capture local priorities, and integrate them into various scales of governance. It is therefore vital to reflect not only on what the outcomes of CBP have been, but also on what lessons can be gathered from other experiences.
In order to begin this process, an extensive literature review was conducted to understand what governance systems and mechanisms for participation exist within these diverse politico-administrative systems in order to improve the way participatory planning processes may be conducted. In this section we discuss governance, decentralization and public participation in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Ghana, as well as three African countries where Khanya-aicdd has not worked: Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya.

5.1. SOUTH AFRICA

5.1.A. BACKGROUND TO GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is a constitutional democracy with a three-tier system of government and an independent judiciary. The national, provincial and local levels of government all have legislative and executive authority in their own spheres, and are defined in the Constitution as "distinctive, interdependent and interrelated". It is a stated intention in the Constitution that the country be run on a system of cooperative governance. The importance of constitutionally providing for these tiers is that central government cannot simply abolish any of them, nor can it unilaterally change or interfere with the affairs of a particular province or municipality.

The outcomes-based approach adopted in 2010 identifies five priority areas: decent work and sustainable livelihoods; education; health; rural development; food security and land reform; and the fight against crime and corruption (South African Government, 2014). There are a number of policies and legislation surrounding decentralization, and public participation.

The Municipal Structures Act (1998) states that municipalities must develop an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) every 5 years, with yearly reviews (Nhlapo, 2009). This defines the resource allocations towards development projects across the country. CBP was developed through a partnership between Khanya-aicdd, the department of Local and Provincial Government (DPLG) to allow local priorities to be integrated into the municipal plans, and inform development decisions. The White Paper on Local Government defines the Integrated Development Plan as a planning method to help municipalities develop coherent, long-term plans for the co-ordination of all development and delivery in their area. The IDP offers a suitable, formal planning structure where such a participatory approach can be directly embedded. There was the intention to legally embed CBP into the IDP process, and is often assumed to be, but has yet to be legislated.
CBP in South Africa operates at the ward level, the smallest administrative unit of government. The Municipal System Act 117 of 1998 in section 72 states the objects of ward committees to enhance participatory democracy in local government.

There were some components of the CBP projects that highlighted some key successes throughout the years CBP was implemented in South Africa and elsewhere. In some instances the planning methodology process was a success whereas the preplanning process encountered challenges (Chimbuya et al., 2004). In South Africa, emphasis was based on the strengths approach to build on local context and avoid impossible planning (i.e. planning based on traditional infrastructure projects). Some emphasis was around supporting the community-action-oriented plans (Chimbuya et al., 2004).

Concurrently, CBPs mandates were to be integrated into ward plans or local government, which would become part of the municipal Integrated Development Plan. Ward plans developed were through CBP processes which fed into municipal IDPs at least during the initial stages of CBP in South Africa when there was support funding of R50 000 provided per each ward for the implementation of CBP in Mangaung (Goldman, 2014).

Urban areas are subject to the same policies and law as already described. Currently there are no regulatory frameworks beyond the above-mentioned policies to guide development in urban areas, as the Integrated urban development framework is still being developed (CoGTA, 2014).

Urban areas are starkly different from rural areas, across the developing world and particularly in South Africa, with the rapid urbanization that is a global phenomenon met with the highly stratified urban landscape due to Apartheid urban planning.

There is a need to effect inclusive approaches in development processes to ensure that development plans respond to local realities, and contribute to transforming the embedded inequalities in the South African urban landscape, and that quality services are delivered to the public.

**5.1.B. LESSONS FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE**

Although CBP had the opportunity to be able to make planning processes more decentralized, responsive, and relevant, it did not always have that outcome. In order to be integrated into existing governance structures and calendars, CBPs needed to be done timely, so that they could be incorporated and budgeted for accordingly in order to be implemented (Singh, 2014). This was the
case in KwaZulu Natal, when the ward plans developed were unable to be integrated into the various IDPs, which made the provincial rollout quite ineffective (Singh, 2014).

In relation to the ability of CBP to facilitate local implementation, this has had various outcomes. Much of the success of this lies in the ability of local populations to access funds to be able to implement projects identified during the planning phase. Where there has been funding for community based projects, whether from government, donors or community members, there seems to have been positive outcomes.

In some cases, such as Ekurhuleni, Gauteng, South Africa, where CBP was conducted in 88 wards and where there have been funds allocated specifically to community-identified projects, there were serious limitations and challenges. This was due to legal restrictions and government’s supply chain regulations, in the Municipal Finance Management Act (Sithebe, 2014), which resulted in government being unable to provide money directly to individuals or communities (Sithebe, 2014). This resulted in government departments having to lead projects identified by communities. There were, in addition, a variety of associated problems, such as the political affiliations that decide which projects get implemented, as well as restrictions of decision-making ability of local people, as they need to fit in with the Department’s interests and resources.

The involvement of citizens in identification of development priorities has empowering outcomes (Mlalazi, 2014), but being able to also be involved in budgeting, implementing, maintaining and monitoring would strengthen citizen empowerment. In the South African case, CBP has also strengthened the wards and ward committees themselves (Goldman, 2014). Although there is much debate on the effectiveness of ward committees, due to the high political and economic interests, they are an important linkage between local government and the public (Singh and Binswanger, 2014).

There is a dire need to sensitize local government officials to the role of citizens in the development process. Goldman (2014) suggests officials need to become agents of the developmental agenda, which unfortunately tends to be lost in the red tape inside Government.

In the current CBP projects conducted by Khanya-aicdd, it is pointed out that there are some issues that have emerged with the CBP tool. This involves issues, particularly at the local tier of government, of capacity, political challenges, funding challenges and lack of current evidence that reveal real impact of CBP in local context. In South Africa, where most of recent projects have taken place with
government officials the importance of CBP is recognized but challenges occur when it comes to implementation (Khanya-aicdd Reflection Report KZN CoGTA CBP, 2013). This is because CBP in its current format is more of an end in itself, rather than as a means. Which means it more focused on determining the priorities of projects and less on increasing empowerment of communities. However, while CBP is intended for municipal planning process, it is sufficiently integrated into sectoral or departmental planning frameworks. In some instances the form and output did not adequately align with the respective department’s expectations (Khanya-aicdd, 2012).

During an internal CBP reflection, Khanya-aicdd identified core issues, and offered ways to change and decrease their occurrence. These include: a lack of community ownership of the processes; weak/negligible input into municipal IDPs; over-emphasis on service delivery over autonomous/self directed developed by communities; CBP as an isolated event; lack of involvement of other relevant role players; targeting in communities; inconvenient structures (ie 5 full days straight); clumsy and repetitive steps; regimental application of participatory methodologies; and accreditation based on methodology (Singh, 2014). Some of the changes required included: increased engagement of interest groups in setting up of the CBP training, emphasis on community’s own self-directed efforts; having on-going accountability mechanisms for ward plan by ward committees and councilors; changing ward plan template; the need for local languages; institutionalizing CBP in on-going planning processes; timing CBP interventions to sync with other planning cycles; include IDP managers throughout the process; include local leadership throughout the process; include IDP development sessions in the CBP workshops; increase awareness and value of the CBP to IDP managers; present CBP as a community development tool, for local livelihood and economic development, going beyond a municipal planning tool; include mechanisms for community to use ward plan for other purposes; develop plans and budgets for CBP and ward plans; include other role players including local service providers to develop line development plans and budgets; abandoning the notion of social group representation and seek innovative ways to work with interest groups; adjust CBP programme to suit local timings (such as mothers, employed, entrepreneurs, students, etc.); change training materials and facilitation to promote creativity and innovation; change assessment criteria (Singh, 2014). Many of these proposed methods to address these concerns have been experimented, with varying degrees of success.

5.2. UGANDA

5.2.A. BACKGROUND TO GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN UGANDA
Uganda is a presidential republic, in which the President of Uganda is both head of state and head of government. Executive power is exercised by the government and legislative power is vested in both the government and the National Assembly.

Local Government in Uganda is based on the local council system with the 163 Districts as the primary units, spread across four administrative regions: Northern, Eastern, Central and Western. Under the District are Lower Local Governments, which include Sub-counties and Town Councils. In urban areas local governments comprise the City Council, Municipal Councils, and municipal divisions. Below local governments are administrative units comprising countries, parishes, wards and villages.

The Council is the supreme political authority in Local Governments and has legislative and executive powers. (Kasumba, UCLG Country Profiles)

Uganda embarked on its ambitious decentralization path in the early 1990s, and a key policy objective of Uganda’s decentralization policy has been named as “empowerment of local populations via democratization, participation, accountability, responsibility, efficiency and effectiveness” for the long-term goal of improving conditions of life for the population.

Unlike South Africa, when CBP was introduced in Uganda, the country had gone through an advanced attempt at decentralization, which then handed over and managed all development services to local government, lower level local government and sub-counties (Chimbuya et al., 2004). The role of the central government was to design policy and oversee responsibilities for the structures below. The functioning of local government in Uganda is governed by the decentralization policy framework, which is rooted in the Constitution of the country (Onyach-Olaa, 2003).

The local tier of government, referred to as the parish or the LC2, is required to prepare a three year development plan incorporating plans of lower local councils (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). The planning and budgeting also take three years and are highly participatory and bottom-up. The adoption of CBP was conducted at the parish or LC2 level, which is the local administrative level of the government besides the village (LC1) and the sub-county levels (LC 3) (Chimbuya et al., 2004).

The introduction of CBP in Uganda, led to formation of the Harmonized Participatory Planning Guides (HPPG) for lower level government. As a result of the HPPG, two planning manuals for local government were developed as well as a training manual (Chimbuya et al., 2004 and Chimbuya et al., 2004). The HPPG was made national policy in Uganda after a revision of the guide was conducted.
In the current state, the citizen’s participation in decision-making on development matters in Uganda has been passive (Kayuza, n.d). According to Kayuza there is observed failure of governments, whether central or local, to deliver expected services to the citizens. The major cause for this is that government’s involvement of the people is a once-off process and when it happens it is conducted for the purpose of local authorities exercising their rights to be heard not for the community’s benefits. As a result of this the government had introduced the Participatory Development Management programme (PDM) to deliberately build mutual trust between the local authorities and the communities (Kayuza, n.d).

The programme’s objectives were to strengthen local government institutions to deepen decentralization, promote and facilitate participatory development management and capacitate local government to implement village and parish priorities (Republic of Uganda, 2014). The programme was guided by principles of knowledge and awareness of the Government’s policies and priorities by the citizens, self-reliance, openness, inclusiveness, transparency and both upward and downward accountability. These principles correlate to that of CBP.

PDM was initiated in 8 Lower Level Governments (LLGs) between 2001 and 2005. Two LLGs were selected from two districts in each of the four traditional geographical regions of the Country. Two of the selected LLGs were in urban settings. The programme was then replicated in ten Districts from 2006 to 2010. The implementer of the programme included technical committees of Head Departments.

Challenges emerged during the PDM including a lack of political will, logistical constraints, inappropriate and institutional systems at grassroots level. There was a lack of both human and financial resources, which led to inadequate logistical support for government technical staff to reach communities (Kayuza, n.d).

Despite these constraints, on the ground communities were able to support their own development. Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCOs) were able to receive funding to continue to implement community initiatives (Bitwayiki, 2014). Many projects were also supported by community members themselves which helped them be realized. The disparity in the literature between the ability of community members to actualize their own development, and the inability of officials to recognize the capacity of communities needs to be investigated further.
One of the challenges recognized based on that is in the case of Uganda, where the original HPPG guideline were deemed too long and complicated and the revised versions were then simplified (Blomley, 2004).

5.2.B. Lessons from the Uganda Experience

There are very clear lessons and emerging issues for discussion from the Uganda experience. The creation of administrative structures right down to the village level, have created a clear sense of autonomy and ownership of projects by communities. This has encouraged local people to look for solutions from within themselves first so that where government has been unable to offer financial support for instance, communities have mobilized resources locally to address their development agenda.

The importance of continuous reflection and revision of existing planning tools cannot be gainsaid. It is this revision, which enabled the people of Uganda to identify and in some cases simplify their planning tool i.e. the HPPG, to a point where it was then adopted as National Policy.

The PDM process clearly spells out the steps to be followed through the planning cycle. It goes further to include a participatory budgeting process, ensuring that planning outcomes are not only measurable and actionable, but also achievable, by ensuring there is a discussion on budgets for projects. However, the impact of the latter might be debatable because the decentralized structures have little or no control over resources and their subsequent allocation. Related to this would be the 3-year project planning and implementation cycle, which might not be enough time to effectively plan and execute a development plan. This can be mirrored against the South African IDP time line, which gives 5 years for the entire cycle.

Perhaps there could also be a capacity gap related to technical support for project planning and management, across local levels of government, and this needs to be investigated further. Related to this would be the existence of political will, in supporting participatory processes, because while existing legislation and policy support it exists, the real situation on the ground in most cases, does not reflect this.

5.3. Zimbabwe

5.3.A. Background to Governance and Participation in Zimbabwe
The government of Zimbabwe is a Parliamentary Democracy but an inclusive one. This means that the president, and the cabinet share the executive powers. Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament.

Political power in Zimbabwe is split between three branches, the executive, the legislative and the judicial branches, with President as the head of the executive branch, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe the head of the judicial branch.

Zimbabwe is a unitary state that has devolved power to its ten provinces. Devolution of power was inserted as a compromise into the new Zimbabwe constitution by popular demand, especially through relentless advocacy of civil society organizations and residents' associations, who lobbied for the separation / devolution of power, to enable effective citizens participation.

While the constitutional provision for devolution of power to the provinces is salutary and a major victory for all progressive democratic forces advocating for equal access and distribution of national resources, transparency and sustainable people centered development; the victory could turn out to be of little or no benefit. This is because the actual provisions of devolution of power remain undefined and subject to an Act of Parliament yet to be crafted and passed.

The Act will either grant effective power to the provinces thus enabling the success of devolution or curtail it hence consigning devolution of power to a stillbirth in Zimbabwe. The latter possibility may be avoided because the political structures of the provincial councils are already in place and would be instrumental in framing legislative and executive powers to be bestowed on them by the Act of Parliament. (Kubatana.net 2014)

According to Jonga (2014) "at independence in 1980 Zimbabwe inherited a local government system that was decentralized and specifically devolved. " As a result, three types of local governments were developed. Those include Urban, Rural and District Councils. However these were reduced in 1984 to two, which are namely Urban Councils and the Rural District Councils (Jonga, 2014). In as much as Zimbabwe adopted devolution as a method of decentralization, the local government function, has not been enshrined within the Constitution of the country until last year Zimbabwe (Sims, 2013). This had been a challenge as the local government continues to lack meaningful decision-making authority, effective control over local and economic activities and little input into policy-making. Since decision-making is crucial when it comes to service delivery, as a result, a number of challenges such as resistance from public servants, lack of political will, lack of resources and capacity challenges, it has
been impossible to implement devolution in Zimbabwe (Jonga, 2014). And on the other hand, the function of the local government was not enshrined in the Constitution of the country until last year (Sims, 2013). However, since the introduction of the new Constitution, it is believed that this presents an opportunity to reform the broken systems that reduced the quality of democracy of the Zimbabwean people (Sims, 2013).

CBP was introduced in Zimbabwe as a method of enhancing devolution of government services in local context. CBP implementation in Zimbabwe was done through drawing experiences from the past community-based development initiatives done through NGO’s within the country (Masendeke et al., 2004). The Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing took the lead in the implementation of CBP in Zimbabwe (Chimbuya et al., 2004). The process of piloting CBP in the country was planned to take place later in Gwanda and Chimanimani Districts and this became the local governments partners in the programme. A manual was developed and it was used as a base for the five day process. Later a District Training Team (DTT) was set up in each District Level plus a Core Facilitating Team (CFT), which was at the ward level (Masendeke et al., 2004). After the ward development plans were developed, they were submitted to Gwanda and Chimanimani Rural District Councils to inform budgeting and increased access to various stakeholders.

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The use of community based planning in Zimbabwe had been used in numerous projects, including disaster risk reduction work, agriculture, sustainable development works and others (Bongo, n.d and Zigomo, n.d).

5.3.B Lesson from Zimbabwe
The lack of supporting legislation and policy to guide citizen's participation in planning has made it very difficult to realize meaningful engagement by citizens at local level. This has left decision-making at local and national level, a preserve of the political establishment and its sympathizers.

Statistics show that, there have been failures in the urban councils to provide effective and efficient support to local communities (Jonga, 2014). As a result, the urban areas are witnessing a decline in service provision. The literature available provides little information on lessons that have emerged based on the experiences of practitioners using CBP as a planning tool, besides that it had been adopted in different contexts (Bongo, n.d and Zigomo, n.d).

The lack of clarity and direction from central government in Zimbabwe, leads to various deficiencies and creates the need for a blue print of minimums for government at local and provincial level including the need for:

- Effective Intergovernmental Arrangements covering political, administrative and financial support to local governments on a sustainable basis and the related guiding framework.
- Support for Capacity Building—human and institutional incentives, structures and processes
- Constitutional Protection of Local Government

5.4. GHANA

5.4.A. BACKGROUND TO GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN GHANA

The Republic of Ghana is governed by a constitutional democracy that is comprised of an Executive branch and a Council of Ministers, who are appointed by the President. The government exercises executive Power. Legislative power is vested in both the government and Parliament. The Judiciary is independent of the Executive and the Legislature.

Ghana is a unitary state, with a decentralized government, and is divided into ten administrative regions. A Regional Minister appointed by the President heads each of the regions. The principle units of local government are the Districts.

Local government is provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992, which provides that a District Assembly is the highest political authority in the district, and that the District Assembly has deliberative, legislative and executive powers. The Constitution prescribes that Ghana shall have a
system of local government and administration, which shall, as far as practicable, be decentralized. (Constitution of Republic of Ghana 1992)

Kuusi argues that there is substantial divergence between Government intentions for decentralization – including the intentions as stated in the Constitution - and the actual practices in the country. The variety of laws results in the divergent practices, especially in the choices made by sectors that tend to define decentralisation as "deconcentration" (Kuusi 2009). The divergence can be in part explained by lack of clarity of the Local Government Act No. 462 of 1993. It does not assign functions to different levels of government clearly enough, pays very limited attention to sub-district levels, and does not adequately define the extent to which the region level should be considered a fully fledged local government unit. (Joint Government of Ghana and Development Partner Decentralisation Policy Review,)

This case has been supported by various schools of thought, which have clearly stated that the decentralization programme within the country have been disjointed and incomplete

Prior the introduction of CBP in Ghana in early 2000, there was an application of CBP type approaches by civil society organizations (Awoosah, 2004). After a successful piloting of CBP in one area council in each District, there was an interest by the Technical Committee to extend CBP to some other town areas, in two districts but this was delayed until the government had developed its 3-year development plan based on the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (Awoosah, 2004). The existence of Area Councils made it possible to develop effective long-terms plans where local facilitators could be trained to do this.

The current participatory planning process practiced in Ghana involves an approach where things first get discussed by District Assembly (Municipal) officials, and then get taken to the members of the community for endorsement (Wandera et al., 2013). So as a result, the community gives additional inputs to what has been decided. Then process is thus more of a consultation than a full engagement. This undermines the capability of the community to take charge of their development and have a sense of ownership in the processes of community development. At the same time the process goes against everything the principles of decentralization advocates for such as accountability, good governance, and responsiveness. Therefore this process as it exists, contravenes the very definition of participatory planning and democratic governance.

Ghana launched its first National Urban Policy (NUP) and Action Plan. Linked to this the Government is initiated the Ghana Urban Forum to bring various stakeholders together in Ghana's urban sector to discuss challenges and opportunities of rapid urbanization. This recent policy gives light to the need
to orientate development plans towards urban areas, particularly with high rates of urbanization, and the need to create systems which facilitate service delivery in such conditions.

5.4.B. Lessons from Ghana

In Ghana, the latest and overall guiding programming document is the National Decentralisation Action Plan (NDAP), which was endorsed by the Cabinet in 2004 (Joint Government of Ghana and Development Partners Policy Review).

There have been subsequent revisions to the number of districts in Ghana, and related assemblies, thus, at the moment there are all together 216 assemblies in Ghana.

The lack of an operational framework, with clear roles and responsibilities of the various structures operating from the District level downwards, has created confusion, and undermined key principles of democracy and people’s participation. One of the key enhancements of CBP as it currently exists has been the additional of a Module on leadership and governance – as key principles without with participation and democracy remains a mirage in the hearts and minds of citizens and their leaders.

It can also be argued that there could be a perceived lack of autonomy and independence, especially in the leadership of the administrative regions, with the leadership being appointed by the President, the risk being that citizens then do not get a chance to elect the leadership of the decentralized units.

Further analysis of the decentralization in Ghana reveals that there is a huge resource control and dependency on Central Government, leaving District Assemblies with very limited authority to set local expenditure priorities – and this could result in development plans at local level, being nothing but “wish lists”.

The Government of Ghana and relevant stakeholders and planning practitioners recognise that real progress of the decentralisation reform will require a more comprehensive policy strategy, and are currently developing initiatives aiming at achieving this.

5.5. Ethiopia

5.5.A. Background to Governance and Participation in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a federal republic, with an executive branch, which includes a President, Council of State, and Council of Ministers. Executive power resides with the prime minister. The Ethiopian government has promoted a policy of ethnic federalism, devolving significant powers to regional, ethnically based
authorities. Prior to 1994, Ethiopia was divided into 13 provinces, many derived from historical regions. The new constitution, introduced in 1994 created a federal government structure and Ethiopia now has a tiered government system consisting of a federal government overseeing ethnically-based regional states, zones, districts (woredas), and neighbourhoods (kebeles).

The councils implement their mandate through an executive committee and regional sectoral bureaux. Such elaborate structure of council, executive, and sectoral public institutions is replicated to the next level (woreda). The constitution assigns extensive power to regional states that can establish their own government and democracy according to the federal government’s constitution. Each region has its apex regional council where members are directly elected to represent the districts and the council has legislative and executive power to direct internal affairs of the regions.

The constitution assigns extensive power to regional states that can establish their own government and democracy according to the federal government’s constitution. Each region has its apex regional council where members are directly elected to represent the districts and the council has legislative and executive power to direct internal affairs of the regions. Article 39 of the Ethiopian Constitution further gives every regional state the right to secede from Ethiopia.

Since 1991 the ethno-linguistic based federal state structure of Ethiopia, has been promoting decentralization through a regionalization policy, which devolved political power through nine-ethnic based regional state governments and two administrative areas through zonal wereda and kebele levels of government. The policy aimed to enable different ethnic groups to, “Develop their culture and language, manage socio-economic development, exercise self-rule, and bring about an equitable share of national resources among the regions” ([Ayenew, 2002, pp 130). The wereda is a multipurpose local government unit, with a vast list of formal political and economic responsibilities. In practice there are significant limitations to fiscal and administrative autonomy from the state.

The reality on the ground suggests that there has been limited devolution of decision-making power and functional capacity from the regional government to lower government tiers. This has been due to lack of sufficient human capital and trained personnel at these lower levels, the continued top-down institutional behavior inherited from previous centralized governments in Ethiopia, poor participation and representation of diverse group in society and organizations and, poor revenue base at wereda level ([Ayenew, 2002).
The Ethiopian Social Accountability Pilot Project (ESAP), component 4 of the Provision of Basic Services Project (PBS-I) supported by the Ethiopian Government, World Bank, and other development partners, aims to "Strengthen use of social accountability tools, approaches and mechanisms by (a) citizens, (b) civil society organisations (CSOs), (c) local government officials and (d) service providers as a means to make basic service delivery more effective, efficient, responsive and accountable" (Tadesse et al, 2010). This responds to the need to ensure more accountability and responsiveness of government officials to citizen interests (Ayenew, 2002).

Social Accountability has been defined by the World Bank as:

"The broad range of actions and mechanisms beyond voting that citizens can use to hold the state to account, as well as actions on the part of government, civil society, media and other societal actors that promote or facilitate these efforts." (World Bank, 2006)

The ESAP pilot has shown positive results within Ethiopia, using simple tools including Community Score Cards (CSC), Citizen Report Cards (CRC) and participatory budgeting, Joint Service Improvement Action Plans are developed. There are indications from the pilot that socio-economic conditions were improved, individuals, organisations and public departments were empowered and capacitated, and local livelihoods were supported (Tadesse et al, 2010).

The dynamic link of joint planning, implementation and monitoring are required for establishing accountability mechanisms in development and provision of basic services. Figure 2 outlines the various stages of participatory budgeting and expenditure tracking (Tadesse et al, 2010, pg 12). Individuals, organisations, and government officials, need to gain understanding of Good Governance, social accountability and participation, to ensure such processes are sustained and effective. This is particularly relevant for traditional and political leaders to ensure representation of citizen groups, and build capacity within lower levels of government to drive a good participatory process.
5.5.B. Lessons from the Experience in Ethiopia

There are many lessons here, which may be incorporated into Community Based Planning, particularly: training in leadership and good governance; local and participatory budgets; and developing and implementing an implementation action plan. Enhancing CBP to integrate accountability support and mechanisms are crucial for the plans developed to have any meaning beyond an event.

It is also clear that budgeting needs to become part of the planning processes, to ensure priorities of communities are integrated with local governments’, as well as enabling local level decision-making. Due to the current CBP framework in South Africa, CBPs are developed to integrate into municipal development plans, participatory budgets are said to be “unconstitutional” (Singh, 2014), illustrating the lack of fiscal and administrative devolution.

The emphasis on service delivery across the diverse socio-political contexts requires further analysis, as although development is tied closely to effective and quality service delivery particularly in less developed countries such as in Africa, the question remains of where the responsibility lies, and how to activate such development. When vocabulary such as “autonomy”, “self-rule”, etc. are used, there is
little emphasis on how people are responding to service delivery challenges in local, unserviced areas, and how local community should drive development processes. This resonates a waiting, dependent citizenship.

5.6. NIGERIA:

5.6.A. BACKGROUND TO URBAN GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is a federal republic with a presidential system. Nigeria's current constitution provides for a separation of powers among a strong executive, an elected legislature, and an independent judiciary.

Nigeria is divided administratively into the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) and 36 states, each with an elected governor and a House of Assembly. The governor is elected to a maximum of two four-year terms. Nigeria's states are subdivided into 774 local government areas, each of which is governed by a council that is responsible for supplying basic needs. The local government councils, which are regarded as the third tier of government below the federal and state levels, receive monthly subsidies from a national "federation account."

Critics contend that the division of the country into so many districts is a vestige of military rule that is arbitrary, wasteful, and inefficient.

In Nigeria, decentralization dates back to the early 1960s. Currently, central government allocates a percentage of gross revenue to state and local government respectively, regardless of power distribution among federal, state and local government. However Federal government remains a dominant force in the decision making for budgetary allocations to state and local government, although each level of government also collects its own revenue.

The current state of development in Nigeria is seen as an outcome most notably from the "governance crisis", characterized by economic mismanagement, and misappropriation of public funds (Adesopo, A.A., 2011). This has led to a lack of basic services for the majority of the population, and a lack of trust by the public towards the government. In the Nigerian case, Adesopo (2011) suggests that the governance failure has been primarily related to social inclusion and accountability. These are both essential towards achieving good governance.
The Nigerian experience has a large urban focus, due to the rapid and expanding urbanization within Nigeria, with cities growing amongst the fastest in the world (Jiboye, A.D, 2011). Nigeria provides a forward look into how we might imagine urban governance in Africa, as it is one of the only countries on the continent to have an urban development policy, and having many of the same developmental challenges as much of the developing world. The high urbanization rate, met with an ineffective urban governance mechanism, has resulted in an inability to keep up with demands by the growing population with living conditions and citizen well being consistently deteriorating (Jiboye, 2011b).

This example highlights the issue of good governance in an urban context. The UN-inter-Agency meeting in 2001 adopted five principles of good urban governance, which include: effectiveness of governance; participation; equity; accountability; and Security to form the framework to developing indicators for the Urban Governance Index (UN-Habitat, 2004).

With an urbanization rate between 6-12% per annum, with its associated decline in socio-economic, environmental and infrastructural conditions in Nigerian urban areas, it is vital that mechanisms are put in place to improve the situation for the growing urban population and for sustainable urban development (Jiboye, 2011). Nigeria developed the National Urban Development Policy in 2012, in order to tackle some of these growing problems.

The national policy on Urban Development and Housing is a core policy when understanding urban development and governance in Nigeria, which emerged through the National Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the development framework of Nigeria, and a variety of initiatives from international development actors.

Despite the participatory vocabulary used by donors who drive the process towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Good Governance, etc., policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria is primarily top-down. Therefore Jiboye (2011) argues that a participatory, multi-stakeholder and collaborative approach, which bases interventions of the realities, real needs, and priorities of the people, is required to tackle the planning and managing of urban socio-ecological systems.

The NEEDS was launched in 2004, as a new approach to development planning, developed in Nigeria. Due to the federal structure in Nigeria, a State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) was developed, to adopt NEEDS provisions at state level (UNDP, 2006). NEEDS and SEEDS
have four goals: wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value reorientation. The three strategic pillars stated in order to achieve these goals include:

1. Empowering people through health and other services including safety nets and pension schemes
2. Promoting private enterprise through the rule of law, investment in infrastructure, financial reforms, privatization and deregulation and sectoral strategies and
3. Changing the way government works through public sector reforms, budget and expenditure reforms, transparency and anti-corruption and good governance.

In order to monitor and assess the performance of these processes adequate policies need to be developed (particularly regarding participation), effective and transparent financial and budget management, adequate and obtainable service delivery are developed and implemented, and accountability and transparent communication.

Following the successful launch of NEEDS and SEEDS there was a need to establish similar strategies for local governments, within the same framework in local governing areas (LGAs) The Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) aims to focus local economic development planning on locally defined priorities, using participatory methodologies to support collaborate decision making; local capacity building; local ownership and participatory monitoring; create a process for future stakeholder engagement; establish guidelines for local development planning; participatory research and policy formulation; and establish a system which ensures accountability, transparency, and promotes good and effective governance (UNDP, 2006).

Major challenges for the LEEDS process are that despite the decentralization rhetoric, the responsibilities of federal, state and local governments in Nigeria are not clearly delineated, lack of capacity in local government, in particular regarding participatory planning approaches, and the lack of trust between project beneficiaries and government, which limits public engagement in such processes.

Adesopo (2011) argues that participatory budgeting (PB) is a powerful tool, which should be integrated into the development process. By devolving decisions regarding resource allocation, good governance is promoted particularly regarding service delivery, accountability social justice, and building a meaningful democracy.
5.6.B. Lessons from Nigeria’s experience

The LEEDS process in Nigeria is in many ways very similar to the CBP process adopted in South Africa, with very similar challenges being faced. Many challenges are exacerbated within a Nigerian context (and even more so in an urban context), due to its large population, high urbanization rate, and political and socio-economic insecurity and instability. LEEDS adds an element of the need to ensure that what has been developed within the participatory planning and design process is implemented and monitored, which goes a step beyond CBP, which focuses on the planning process, and does not necessarily integrate the processes downstream.

Although CBP does integrate PB to some extent (Goldman, 2014), it is suggested that PB should become more explicit in the process, particularly as a form of accountability around resource allocation and distribution. In CBP processes, budgeting is primarily done as a planning tool, i.e. identifying local development priorities, yet decisions regarding financial resource allocation remain the domain of government officials. The linking of planning and budgeting should be made more explicit. Where there are possibilities for local groups to decide on how to use budget for developing services based on local priorities, there is the possibility to empower the local decision-making capability, have real devolution of power, deepening democracy beyond the rhetoric (Adesopo, 2011, Binswanger, 2014).

5.7. Kenya

5.7.A. Background to Governance and participation in Kenya

The Republic of Kenya is unitary state, with a multi party political system, whose hallmark is a parliamentary democracy. Kenya’s central government is structured through the constitution, with administrative and policy-making powers, distributed to the three arms of government – Executive, Judiciary and Legislature.

The quest for a devolved system of governance in Kenya popularly referred to, as ‘ugatuzi’ has been a longstanding one. The promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 in August 2010, paved way for realization of the “dream” system of governance.

The 47 County Governments is Kenya, represent the original independence districts, and each one of them forms a County Government. Every County Government further decentralizes its services and
coordinates it’s functions in order to serve the interests of the people at local level. In an effort to take
government services closer to the people, each county is considered distinct and inter -dependent; each with a government consisting of a County Assembly (parliament) and a County Executive (cabinet). The County Assembly is the small Parliament that holds its sittings at the headquarters and makes laws for the county. The county executive exercises executive power at the county level and is headed by a governor.

This is therefore a form devolution not based on the principle of absolute autonomy but instead, on that of inter-dependence and cooperation. In form therefore, it is a system that combines a certain measure of autonomy and inter-dependence. The end result of this combination is what may be called a cooperative system of devolved government. Cooperative devolved government may be said to be founded upon three relational principles; namely, the principle of distinctness; the principle of inter-dependence; and the principle of oversight.\(^1\)

The Kenyan experience is current and ongoing. The politico-administrative history of Kenya has been influenced largely by the British Westminster model from the colonial period. Following independence, attempts at decentralization have taken place, and these have been interrupted by centralized, unitary state approaches familiar to that of the colonial past (Muriu, 2010).

The shift in governance structures from regional government, to provincial government and then to local government and wards over the years since independence has affected the manner in which decision making and service delivery has been planned, implemented and monitored. With the resulting confused overlapping units of government, service delivery had become ineffective, duplicated and expensive (Menon et al, 2008, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) and Social and Public Accountability Network (SPAN), 2010). In 1995 the Kenya Local Government Reform Programme (KLGRP) was launched towards “restructuring of the local public sector, improving local public expenditure management, and to strengthen local level accountability mechanisms” (Oyugi and Kubua, 2008:199).

The framework adopted for citizen participation through Local Authorities (LAs) was established in 2001 as the Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan (LASDAP), and guidelines published in 2005 (MoLG, 2009). LASDAP was to embed a “participatory planning system, which would directly engage the citizenry in planning, implementing and monitoring service delivery projects in their communities

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\(^1\) Interim Report of the Taskforce on Devolved Government - Kenya
through LA funding" to “improve governance through greater accountability, empowerment and responsiveness to the citizenry” (Solomon Boit, cited by Lubaale et al, 2007:1).

LASDAP provides three opportunities for citizen engagements: through annual consultative meetings, through consensus meetings that bring the LA technical team and local representatives to identify projects and associated budgets, and project committees that volunteer on individual projects.

With the transforming politico-administrative structures occurring in 2013, whereby new devolution structures have been established, there is a big question mark as to what approach will be taken to activate civic engagement in planning and decision-making, and holding state structure to be accountable to these processes.

Oyugi and Kibua found in their study in 2006 that the primary participatory outcome was in the identification of projects, ie project “wish lists” (p 227), which was reinforced by the Study on the impact of LASDAP (Lubaale et al, 2007), where participation was found to be limited to consultation. The existence of The Constituency Fund (CDF) provides an opportunity to support real locally driven development projects, but the multiple and seemingly parallel processes, roles and responsibilities also become unclear (Mwalulu and Irungu, 2004).

It remains evident that participation has primarily been “a commitment in rhetoric as there is little effort to institutionalize and act on the preferences of citizens (Muriu, 2010: pp 52)” with few avenues for involvement and limited ability to influence decision-making spheres. This said, LASDAP does provide the platform to integrate citizen interests in local decision-making.

5.7.B. LESSONS FROM THE KENYAN EXPERIENCE

The history and experience of devolution approaches in Kenya is an interesting case to study and learn from. Despite a variety of strategies being attempted, participation has primarily been consultative, with limited meaningful engagement in development projects beyond simple project identification. Where citizens have developed proposals, there is often insufficient budget allocated, which limits the ability of the locally driven project to be sustainable (Lubaale et al, 2007). It has also become apparent that resources that are available are primarily given to those with political affiliations (Lubaale et al, 2007).
These issues are not unique to Kenya, but present important lessons for how to adequately respond to issues around devolution of political and administrative powers in an African context.

With the current geopolitical, and administrative transformation taking place in Kenya, which has reorganized both political and administrative structures, this case presents an ideal study site. The approach taken and how this differs from previous approaches needs to be researched in great detail, in order to gain from the Kenyan experience. Planning processes can now happen with the knowledge that there are now resources that have been directly earmarked and set aside to ensure operationalization and delivery through decentralized structures of governance e.g. Marginalization and Equalization funds, that exists besides set percentage of the National GDP that is also earmarked to support development at local level. One of the proposals that Khanya – aicdd can make as we enhance and review CBP, is that perhaps governments should explore and create similar funding mechanisms to ensure planning processes are well supported.
5.8 Learning from these experiences: Opportunities and risks to public participation in Africa

This section aims to consolidate the findings above. Table 1 summarizes the sections above, in terms of the efforts in each country to decentralize, mechanisms in place to enable participation in planning processes, and key lessons to take forward.

It is clear from the experiences summarized in the above table that although conditions may differ in the varying contexts, that there are some ingredients which enable or inhibit public participation from having meaningful outcomes. This allows us to consider what conditions might favor meaningful citizen engagement, and what risks may exist.

A key factor is an appropriate enabling environment. While legislation and statutes exist in almost all countries above, they have contributed to variable extents to meaningful public participation. In some instances (as in Ghana) the translation of policy commitments, with regard to decentralization and public participation, into real and meaningful engagements has been inhibited by incoherence, duplication and uncertainty. In other instances (as in Zimbabwe), it would appear that political will is lacking and efforts have remained at very embryonic levels.

The existence of institutionalized and clear planning frameworks and processes is a determining factor in levels of public participation. Where these exist as obligatory and defined (as in Uganda and Nigeria) public participation is potentially enhanced, while where they remain undefined (Ghana and Zimbabwe) significant engagement of citizens remains limited. The degree of citizen engagement ranges from basic consultation on externally derived plans (as in Ghana) to on-going monitoring and evaluation of plans developed in participatory processes (as in Nigeria).

A conducive environment for public participation also needs capacity development of civil servants to understand and implement the appropriate policies and operationalize frameworks and tools. There is no clear evidence that there are systematic ways of doing this in any of the countries examined here. In South Africa, efforts have been made to orient and capacitate frontline staff and planners in CBP, but there is no national capacity development plan. Instead municipalities and line departments have run training programmes in isolation, and often in parallel, with each other. There are no standards or compliance provisions in this regard.
Table 1: Experiences across Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Decentralization Efforts</th>
<th>Participation Mechanisms</th>
<th>Key Lessons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>- The national, provincial and local levels of government all have legislative and executive authority in their own spheres, and are defined in the Constitution as “distinctive, interdependent and interrelated”. It is a stated intention in the Constitution that the country be run on a system of cooperative governance.</td>
<td>- Municipalities obligated to develop Integrated Development Plan (IDP) every 5 years, with direct inputs by local people (including through CBP)</td>
<td>- Emphasis in planning on the strengths-based approach to build on local context</td>
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<td>- CBP outputs integrated into ward plans which would become part of the municipal Integrated Development Plan.</td>
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<td>- The involvement of citizens in identification of development priorities has empowering outcomes but involvement in budgeting, implementing, maintaining and monitoring would strengthen citizen empowerment</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Capacity development of civil servants attempted but uncoordinated</td>
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<td>Uganda</td>
<td>- The functioning of local government governed by the decentralization policy framework, which is rooted in the Constitution of the country - development services managed by local government while central government designs policy and oversee responsibilities for the structures below.</td>
<td>- The local tier is required to prepare a three year development plan following Harmonized Participatory Planning Guides (HPPG), which includes CBP</td>
<td>- The creation of administrative structures down to the village level, have created a clear sense of autonomy and ownership of projects by communities.</td>
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<td>- Continuous reflection and revision of existing planning tools</td>
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<td>- Planning cycle includes a participatory budgeting process</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>- Constitutional provision for devolution exists but actual provisions of devolution of power remain undefined and subject to an Act of Parliament yet to be crafted and passed.</td>
<td>- Undefined</td>
<td>- The lack of supporting legislation and policy to guide citizen’s participation in planning has made it very difficult to realize meaningful engagement by citizens at local level.</td>
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<td>Ghana</td>
<td>- The Constitution prescribes a system of local government and administration, which is decentralized. A variety of laws results in divergent sectoral practices due to unclear Local Government Act No. 462 of 1993, which does not assign functions to different levels of government clearly enough.</td>
<td>- Consultations on plans developed by District officials</td>
<td>- The lack of an operational framework, with clear roles and responsibilities has created confusion, and undermined key principles of democracy and people’s participation</td>
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<td>- A key enhancements of CBP has been the additional of a Module on leadership and governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Constitution/Context</td>
<td>Social Accountability Pilot Actions</td>
<td>Lessons Learned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>The constitution assigns extensive power to regional states that can establish their own government and democracy according to the federal constitution.</td>
<td>Social accountability pilots using Joint Service Improvement Action Plans, developed using simple tools including Community Score Cards (CSC), Citizen Report Cards (CRC) and participatory budgeting</td>
<td>There are many lessons here, which may be incorporated into Community Based Planning, particularly: training in leadership and good governance; local and participatory budgets; and developing and implementing an implementation action plan.</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Federal government allocates a percentage of gross revenue to state and local government respectively, but remains a dominant force in the decision making for budgetary allocations to state and local government, while they still have their own revenue collection systems.</td>
<td>The Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) aims to focus local economic development planning on locally defined priorities, using participatory methodologies to support collaborative decision making; local capacity building; local ownership and participatory monitoring; create a process for future stakeholder engagement; establish guidelines for local development planning; participatory research and policy formulation; and establish a system which ensures accountability, transparency, and promotes good and effective governance</td>
<td>LEEDS adds an element of the need to ensure that what has been developed within the participatory planning and design process is implemented and monitored, which goes a step beyond CBP, which focuses on the planning process, and does not necessarily integrate the processes downstream.</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>A form devolution based on the principles of inter-dependence and cooperation with a measure of autonomy and inter-dependence, founded upon three relational principles: the principle of distinctness; the principle of inter-dependence; and the principle of oversight.</td>
<td>Local Authority Service Delivery Action Plan (LASDAP) to embed a &quot;participatory planning system, which would directly engage the citizenry in planning, implementing and monitoring service delivery projects in their communities</td>
<td>Participation has primarily been consultative, with limited meaningful engagement in development projects beyond simple project identification.</td>
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The financial elements associated with public participation are also a determinant of how successfully processes have unfolded. Involvement of local people in budget development is provided for in some instances (Ethiopia, and Nigeria) while the lack of budgetary commitment to community plans (as in South Africa) have also frustrated community engagement processes. Reliance on external finance (as with Social Accountability funded by the World Bank in Ethiopia) means that the process itself is often unsustainable, as it requires regular external input to be implemented. Sustainability is also affected by cost and time commitments required as with CBP in South Africa, where public participation informs the IDP. The effort involved militates against this process being undertaken annually when the IDPs are reviewed.

Unintended consequences could accrue from lack of funding, however. In Uganda, where funding was unavailable, local people mobilized to get funds through various means to implement their development priorities. This is an indication of the power of people to drive such processes.
6. LOOKING FORWARD: CONTINUED REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENTS TO CBP

6.1. IN GOVERNANCE

Central to this initial research phase is using experiences and lessons to continue to improve and innovate how participatory planning processes are conducted, to ensure more relevant, sustainable and empowering processes. CBP, which has emerged as a best practice of participatory planning provides a well-established base to continue imagining how to create relevant approaches for diverse politico-administrative governance systems.

In order to have adequate participatory processes in governance a legitimate development process which integrates CBPs, is required. Although CBP in itself is unable to transform the structure of Government, there remains the need for CBP processes to strengthen vertical and horizontal linkages in the government. Despite the variability of political and administrative structures across diverse nations, CBP offers a tool to efforts towards greater decentralization by providing an avenue to create these linkages, across levels and sectors within Government. This requires a systematic approach to how CBP is embedded within the planning process. In the South African case, CBP has become mandated as part of the IDP process, to ensure that such processes are conducted and followed through.

The notion of citizens as passive recipients of service delivery by governments is one that has been questioned from the very genesis of CBP. The linkage of CBP with SLA, which promotes empowering local actions through use of available local skills and resources, creates opportunities for citizens to be actively engaged in providing their own local services, with support from others if needed. The strengthening of the linkages between service delivery and livelihoods is an aspect that could be explored more through the Expanded Public Works Programmes and Community Works Programmes in South Africa, for example.
The issue of resource allocation and service delivery is of great concern. Priorities raised through the CBP process, if done in a timeous manner, could feed into the IDP which outlines budgets and resource allocation. Although Ian Goldman (2014) suggests that CBP is a better method than the participatory budgeting methods used in Brazil, where these were innovated, there is no meaningful engagement in CBP with how decisions on budgets are made. Therefore the local community tends to be restricted in participation in decisions on development, and this remains the role of the municipality. In fact, the projects identified are also implemented by the relevant Departments.

This highlights issues around available financial resources for implementing projects identified by geographical communities. In a number of interviews the need for follow-up funding and supervision support was a main reason for failed outcomes of CBPs.

“Other countries e.g. Kenya are nowhere close to the amount of resources and institutional support (both perceived and actual) that are available for Community planning processes in South Africa” (Otieno, 2014)

Where there has been government, donor, or community-funding, projects have been more successful. Therefore it is vital that for all CBP processes some degree of committed funding be made available for the identified projects, as in the case of the proposed Community Development Grants in SA. There is also the need to build in the need for “local resources to solve local problems” (Mlazi, 2014) to facilitate local communities to be able to respond to local service delivery needs.

“There is a general trend to decentralize. However, accompanying this move is the call for greater transparency and accountability. Current CBP practice has indicated that locally managed funds are critical, and that decision-making about these funds should be at community level if this is to be empowering. However, there are insignificant community structures that can take funds. CBP should seek to promote the creation of legitimate
structures that can take funds. After they are created they should be trained so that they are accountable.” (Mlalazi, 2014)

6.2. The Process

The manner in which the CBP is done is crucial to having relevant, meaningful and doable projects to take forward. There is a need for CBP to become more a process than just an event, as the current format is a 5 day “event”. The entire approach to CBP needs to be rethought to ensure that all people are able to participate (as currently often the employed and students are excluded due to the time restrictions) and often people are invited due to political affiliations, and that local people are capacitated to take the process forward.

There is a need for CBP to include follow-ups and participatory monitoring and evaluation to find out what real impacts accrue to development and service delivery in the area. Goldman (2014) suggested integrating a service delivery scorecard as a method to achieve this.

The CBP process is also something that needs to be reflected on and innovated. There is a need to reflect on the tools that are used, and how to develop new participatory tools, particularly around participatory budgeting.

6.3. Training

CBP requires creative and flexible facilitation. The current use of rigid and regimental methods may prevent rich outcomes emerging. Therefore the training of the development practitioner on the ground needs to be done by well-trained facilitators.

It is also clear that working with those at higher levels of the decision-making ladder are aware of the developmental principles, which guide their work, and that leadership training is integrated into the process. They are able to transform the manner in which development is conducted and therefore they need to be conscientized of their role, and their potential to
make real impact and transformation on the ground, through ethical, empowering, and participatory processes.
7. STEPS FORWARD: CASE STUDIES

In the next stage of the research we will examine case studies in these diverse politico-administrative contexts in order to deepen the understanding of how Government structures influence the ability of citizens to engage, define, implement and monitor development objectives. Some central lines of interrogation include

1. What is an enabling environment for participation in planning processes?
2. How are the participatory planning policies translated in practice?
3. What tools have been used to support public participation in planning processes?
4. How have participatory planning tools been implemented?
5. What are main outcomes of the participatory planning processes?
6. How could links between policy and practice be improved?
7. What lessons can be taken from diverse participatory planning tools to improve CBP?
8. How could CBP be used to improve participatory planning in these diverse politico-administrative contexts?
9. What other avenues exist for communities to drive development beyond formal government plans?
8. CONCLUSION

This report is an outcome of an initial research phase examining participatory planning approaches across Africa, through the lens of Community Based Planning (CBP)

Khanya-aicdd has been instrumental in developing and innovating methods for active citizen engagement in governance, to deepen democracy and make meaningful impact on the ground. Community Based Planning, as a participatory planning tool is one of Khanya-aicdd’s most significant contribution to the development processes in South Africa and across the continent, creating avenues for communities to be able to define, prioritize, implement and monitor development.

Although CBP has transformed the planning landscape, there is still much work to be done to ensure that such participatory processes are taken-up, and have outcomes. In this paper we have examined how participatory planning has been conducted in diverse politico-administrative contexts in a variety of African countries, with varying degrees of decentralized decision-making.

There are many lessons we can take from the experiences from these countries, as well as where CBP has been integrated into national planning processes, to develop a tool which is able to respond and reflect local priorities, and be able to implement and monitor the outcomes, as well as facilitate local empowerment to be able to locally solve local problems.

The next research phase will dig deeper into the real outcome of participatory planning processes, through a number of case studies to examine what attempts have been made, and the outcomes of such activities, as well as what would enable for more effective and efficient participatory planning processes.

We need to look towards the African continent to develop tools, which are able to respond to the diverse contexts we found in Africa, as much of the methods and approaches are still being adopted from elsewhere. This paper seeks to begin tackling this challenge.
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