

Devolved Revenue Practices: A Case Study of Machakos and Nakuru Counties

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Kenya promulgated a new constitution in which a decentralized system of governance devolves power, resources and representation down to the local level. Four years later, in March 2014, the International Center for Policy and Conflict (ICPC) held a workshop which revealed that there were many gaps in the process of transition from central to devolved government. At the county level, there were few to no obvious means of public participation. County oversight mechanisms were weak and there were substantial gaps in information. Financial systems in particular seemed unclear and lacked transparency. Some of the county government officials present questioned their counties' capacity to take on the responsibilities for economic development, city planning, and healthcare which they are currently assigned (ICPC, 2014).

The project is to study Kenya's devolved system of government in collaboration with the ICPC. The study will be an in-depth examination of revenue streams and methods of accountability and transparency in place for the newly established county governments. The main objective of the project is to collect and analyze data to inform questions such as how county governments can expand their revenue base, what can be done to increase transparency and accountability in the counties, and key factors that influence quality of service delivery.

Our group will examine budgetary needs and whether the current revenue sources are sufficient to address this. In coordination with members of the ICPC staff, we will explore additional options for revenues that may be possible under the most recent Kenyan constitution. Our work will build on ICPC relationships with local government officials and follow up on trainings that ICPC has formerly conducted.

This project is relevant because it will help to create tools for the ICPC to use in educating and advocating for change as they work to promote accountability and transparency in county governments in Kenya.