

# The Effectiveness Of The National Decentralisation Policy In Empowering Local Communities To Participate In Decision Making For Services Provided:

A Case Study Of David Lunda Ward. Mufulira District.

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## **Abstract**

*The report targeted at evaluating the effectiveness of the National Decentralization Policy in empowering the local communities' participation in decision making in the process of service provision by the local council focusing specifically in David lunda ward, Mufulira district.*

*The problem of the research was that while there had been in place a decentralization policy in Zambia, its effects were not clearly known. This research study involved both qualitative and quantitative research design in order to acquire the needed information for the study. With regard to this research, the sample size was 50 residents from David lunda ward and 2 key informants from the department. The research observed that a number of people had problems in participating in decision making in the course of service provision, 80% had problems against 20% who did not have challenges in participating in decision-making.*

*The recommendations of the study were that Central government should implement the decentralization policy effectively by transferring certain functions and powers to local government and to the local people, where and by whom the problem concerning the well-being of the people is deeply felt.*

**Keywords— decentralization, empowerment, citizen, decision-making, council**

## 1.0 Introduction

The paper aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the national decentralisation policy in empowering local communities to participate in decision making for services provided David lunda ward mufulira district.

Decentralization means the transfer of power, responsibilities and all necessary processes and procedures to subordinate sections of governance. Decentralization is often used to refer not only to political devolution but also as a blanket term to cover both political devolution and the deconcentration of administrative authority (Naraanya and Rettesch, 2002). These include provincial and district governing committees that have to spear head development and decision making at lower levels so that local people can have a stronger voice and effectively participate in public affairs, projects and programs in their communities.

Zambia's decentralization process started as far back as 1964 when it had just gained its political independence. Zambia's effort to decentralize its structures can be traced as far back as independence. The effort in decentralizing can be divided into five phases." These are 1964 to 70 being the first phase. The second phase was from 1971 to 79, the third one was from 1980 to 90. With the coming of the Second Republican President, the efforts to decentralize continued. Thus, the fourth phase was from 1991 to 2000. The fifth one is from 2000 to the present 2002(revised 2013), (Cabinet Office, 2002).

In terms of institutional frameworks the first phase comprised of the National Development Committees (NDC) at national level and it comprised of all line ministers. At provincial District Committee (PDC)

was headed by the Provincial Minister and the District Development Committee (DDC) was headed

by the District Secretary. The scrutiny of development projects started with the lower level committees up to the highest. However, the centralization of authority led to inefficiency in service delivery. From 1971 to 1979, the experiences were not different from the former.

In 1980 to 1990, which was the third phase, there was the merging of the UNIP Party and Local Government and District Administration which largely led to the supremacy of the party and development facilitation was not prioritized. The appointment of the District Governor as the chair of district development led to undemocratic practices and without the marching of resources to this meant nothing. The fourth phase was from 1991 to 2000. It was a period marking the reign of the late Dr FTJ Chiluba, there a number of changes made. Indeed this marked the drift from one party state to multi-party democracy. There were changes in the administration structures.

However, what is important to note is that the experiences during phase included the centralisation of power and it continued to be a hindrance to effective administration and participation of the local people at lower levels such as districts even further. From 2000 to the present, the structures at both the national and provincial levels remained almost the same. The functions and reports systems have changed narrowly. The district administrators could report directly to the present but the council secretaries could report to the ministry of local government. In terms of experiences they are the same with the previous stages.

It was due to lack of community participation in decision making for service delivery at local levels. This resulted in the adoption of the decentralisation policy in 2002 and subsequently launched in 2004. The policy provides vision of effective community participation in decision-making, development and administration of their local affairs while maintain sufficient linkages between the central and the local authorities.

The policy intends to achieve the following objectives: Empower local communities by devolving decision making authority, functions and resources from the Centre to the lowest level with matching resources in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services; design and implement mechanism to ensure a bottom up flow of integrated development planning and budgeting from the district to the central government; enhance local political and administrative authority in order to effectively and efficiently deliver services; promote accountability and transparency in the management and utilisation of resources; develop the capacity of councils and communities in development planning, financing, coordinating, and managing the delivery of services in their areas; build capacity for development and maintenance of infrastructure at local level; introduce an integrated budget for district development and management and province a legal and institutional framework to promote autonomy in decision-making at local level.

## 1.1 Statement of the problem

Zambia conceived and adopted a decentralization policy in 2002(revised 2013). The policy is aimed at decentralizing governance to the level of devolution, thereby, promoting good governance, empowerment of the local people and social economic

development. It is a framework within which decentralization is to be conducted in the country for national development, NDP (2002).

The problem of the research was that while there is a decentralization policy in place, its effects are not clearly known. The decentralization policy according to the 1996 constitution of the Republic of Zambia was meant to take into consideration the need for gender equality with respect to their rights to take part in public affairs and decision-making processes so that as a country, it could collectively achieve socio-economic and political growth based on people's aspirations and desires.

There had been strides made under the National Capacity Building Programme for Good Governance in view of the need to decentralize some selected functions and responsibilities to provinces and districts and in the end to facilitate democratic governance and public participation. The devolvement was expected to bring forth good results but up to now, the effectiveness of this policy in involving local people in decision-making processes for services made available to them is still not clear.

## 1.2 significane of the study

The study aimed at giving information on the effectiveness of the national decentralization policy in empowering local communities to participate in decision making for services provided in their communities. The participation of the community in the provision of various services to the community in any country is fundamental, and therefore there is need to pay thorough attention to empowering local communities as they participate in decision making to enhance the provision of services that are an answer to social, economic and political progress and growth.

## 1.3 General objective

The general objective of the study was To evaluate the effectiveness of the national decentralization policy in empowering local communities to participate in decision making for services provided in their communities.

### 1.3.1 specific objective

The objectives of the study were to;

1. To examine the institutional framework put in place to promote community participation in decision making for services provided in David lunda ward.
2. To investigate challenges faced by Mufulira municipal Council and partner organizations in the process of promoting community participation.
3. To assess the extent to which residents of David lunda participate in decision making.
4. To investigate challenges faced by residents of David lunda ward in the process of participating in decision making.

### 1.4 research questions

1. What institutional framework has being put in place?

2. What are the challenges faced by Mufulira municipal council and partner organizations in the process of promoting community participation?

3. To what extent do local people participate in decision making process?

5. What challenges do the local people face in the process of decision making?

## 1.5 Research Variables

Independent variable	Dependents variables
Community participation	empowerment
Community participation	Decentralization policy
Community participation	Decision making

## 1.6 conceptual framework

The conceptual framework has been constructed in order to show how the independent and dependent variables influence each other. Community participation is shown to be effective when the local population is involved in decision making. Empowerment is shown to take place when community participation is effective. Empowerment is also influenced by the effectiveness of the decentralization policy

## Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that has been adopted in the analysis is the decision space model (Bossert, 1998). The decision space represents the functional

areas including finance, human resource, access rules, service organisation and delivery and governance. For each of these functional areas, the decision space available is defined in terms of it being narrow, moderate or wide. The determination of the functional areas in terms of this classification is indicative of the degree of autonomy that is represented within the decentralized system. It is a representation of the autonomy that exists within the decentralised system.

Decentralisation has traditionally been defined to comprise four forms: delegation is the restructuring of the organisation of governance through the formation of quasi-governmental organs, for example deconcentration transfers powers, functions and responsibilities to new institutions within the public health, education sectors, devolution creates responsibilities under completely different institutions such as local government.

This approach acknowledges that local agents often have their own preferences for the mix of activities and expenditures to be undertaken, and respond to a local set of stakeholders and constituents that may have different priorities than the national-level principal. Local institutions, therefore, may have incentives to evade the mandates established by the central government. Moreover, because local agents have better information about their own activities than does the principal, they have some margin within which to “shirk” centrally defined responsibilities and pursue their own agendas.

The cost to the principal of overcoming this information “asymmetry” is often prohibitively high. Within this context, the central government seeks to achieve its objectives through the establishment of incentives and sanctions that effectively guide agent behaviour without imposing unacceptable losses in

efficiency and innovation. Diverse mechanisms are employed to this end, including communicating programme rationale and benefits, involving local parties in planning, oversight bodies, monitoring, reporting, soliciting feedback and making improvements, inspections, performance reviews, contracts, grants. One of the major mechanisms that the principal may use to influence the agents is to selectively broaden the formal “decision-space” or range of choice of local agents, within the various functions of finance service organisation, human resources, targeting and governance (Bossert, 1998).

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This paper presents the literature review. The literature reviewed is from a Zambian perspective, regional perspective and world perspective.

### **2.1 Zambian perspective**

Mukwena (1992) in his study on decentralization in Zambia contends that the political milieu within which decentralization occurs is not unraveled and understood it becomes problematic to fully account for some of the reasons for the failure of certain decentralization reforms. This to him is especially the case with those reforms that are driven more by unstated political considerations than administrative concerns, as was the case with Zambia’s Local Administration Act of 1980.

Due to these overriding political considerations, it was not surprising that the 1980 Act resulted in the collapse of the local government system following the ensuing over politicization of the system; under this Act, political interference in the day-to-day operations of local authorities became the order of the day. Devolution has also occurred through the development of provincial and district government.

Ideally, provincial and district government in Zambia has been maintained for the purpose of coordinating government work at district and provincial levels. This study basically reviewed that Zambia has been making efforts to decentralize its operations but the implementation of such has remained rhetoric to a greater extent. This study is limited in its findings because it has taken time since it was undertaken. It is also too general in its scope. To bring out detail, it needed to focus on specific local government while highlighting on the big picture countrywide.

Madimutsa (2006) conducted a research on the nature and level of popular participation in poverty alleviation activities and strategies in a decentralized system of Government targeting Mumbwa district. In his research, his major expectation was on the aspect of effective and popular participation in development and poverty alleviation activities and strategies. He noted and stressed the importance of citizen participation in order to improve service delivery particularly poverty mitigation. His study brought to light the characteristics of people's perception of local authorities and their willingness to participate on issues that concern them in order to improve service delivery. The findings indicate that decentralization of the Zambian government has enabled various categories of institutions to be established for local people to participate in poverty alleviation activities. These institutions have established community organs to attract local peoples' participation. The findings further show that the popular participation for poverty alleviation takes two forms; direct and indirect.

In relation to his findings, it can therefore be learnt that the participation of local people in local government activities is important in order to ensure the delivery of services in an efficient and effective

manner. It can further be indicated that community organs such as Community Based Organization (CBO) also play a vital role in attracting the people to participate in poverty alleviation. Keen to his study, is the role of the local people.

Another study on decentralization in Zambia although in the health sector which of course provides services in local was concerned with decentralisation in the health. The University of Zambia's Institute of Social Economic Research (INESOR) undertook this study in 2004. The overall objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of health governance structures in enhancing equity of access and community participation in the delivery of health care services in Zambia. A cross-sectional study design was used. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using various techniques; interviews, focus group discussion and review of records.

The research sampled districts (two rural and two urban) were covered in two provinces. This study was a cross-sectional survey, which used qualitative and quantitative). Triangulation of research methods was required for eliciting the necessary data. Data was gathered from both secondary and primary sources through record review at the provincial health office and interviews with members of District Health management Team. Focus group discussions were also held. Seven tools were employed in this study: three structured questionnaires, two checklists and two focus group guidelines. Two provinces (Lusaka and Southern) were selected and two districts per province randomly selected. The districts are Lusaka and Luangwa for Lusaka province while Livingstone and Monze were for Southern Province.

## 2.2 Regional perspective

Another study conducted by Macwan'gi and Ngwengwe (2004) in Zimbabwe (Bulawayo) on the challenges faced by the community in decision making in the process of service delivery by the local council. The major findings of the research reviews that although health governance structures were established the community is not aware of their existence and roles, the community's unwillingness to participate in health issues is due to lack of knowledge and this limits their participation. Further, the research indicates the decentralized structures at district, community and neighborhood levels were not effective in carrying there functions mainly due to a weak link between the community and the governance structures.

And most importantly, the research also brought to light the fact that gender issues are not adequately addressed in terms of composition membership to the structures and participation. It recommends that making recommendations to make the structures more responsive to community needs and interest as well as revitalize community participation by actively involving people in these activities (Macwan'gi, and Ngwengwe, 2004). While this is quite a recent research and comprehensive in its scope, that is to say it put to use many research instruments to use and both embraced both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data analysis, it limited in a way because it focused only on two areas in two provinces and as such the generalizability of the findings is rather limited.

According to a study done by Hoffman (2006), done in Zambia and Tanzania based on development policy, it shows that there is need to involve local

people even in the area of budgeting especially at local government levels. The research used district level government budget data which is a methodological advantage over most quantitative studies of revenue's effect on policy choices that use cross national data and rely on control variables to account for the differences in political institutions. Further, because local level political institutions of not vary within either country but local level political institutions vary widely between the two countries, for example local governments in Tanzania are dominated by the centre while Zambia's district governments enjoy some greater powers an aspect of Zambia being ahead of Tanzania in the area of devolution.

The research found out that Tanzania and Zambia's local governments produce more public services as a share of total local government expenditure as local revenue increases. Alternatively, as central government transfers and foreign aid increase, public services as a share of the local government budget falls.

This study furthers our understanding of the politics of development and governance in several important ways. The main thrust of the political institutional approach is to tie policy outcomes to political institutions; our approach demonstrates that there is another source of political accountability independent of formal political institutions: the fiscal link between the government and the governed. Understanding these fiscal links, it argues, is central to comprehending development in general and the political effect of foreign aid in particular.

Decentralisation, it reviews has a great deal of benefits but as is the case with most developing nations most local governments and community based services being provided by the government are not effective in helping the local people. Local people do not take part in the decision making processes because of a number of reasons. One of the reason was political interference from the political elite such as the members of parliament who think that they know it all. External people assume what the beneficiaries of the services would wish to have but such thinking is erroneous. This study further argues that although there can be external finding that can be given to governments for purposes of developing rural areas, it is likely that the intended groups may not benefit because of centralization or power. It argues that devolution of resources is vital in bringing about active public affairs participation by all the people especially in those places where social services are a problem (Hoffman, 2006). This research has been criticized on grounds that its sources of information were restricted to secondary data and the comparison made between two nation states makes difficult to bring details especially as it relates to development policy, devolution and citizen participation.

In a study of the evolution of decentralisation in Uganda and its impact on rural community Cassels (1997) notes a number of admirable outcomes. He argues that in ethnically divided countries like Uganda, peace and development crucially depend on the presence of effective local authority structures. Since Ugandan authorities have been persistent in their devolution efforts, this has resulted in number of people taking part in decision-making in the process of service delivery by the local council. About 86% of the community members are mostly

involved in decision-making. Brett further argued that there was a possibility of getting the diverse groups in the country to start feeling that 'they are getting a fair deal' in terms of access to resources.

Furthermore, the study reviews that the new decentralization system, by involving hundreds of thousands of people, hitherto totally ignored, into the political process at the local level has stimulated a rapid growth in social responsibility and political creativity. The local council system has also increased the involvement of women in local politics. Women are reserved a certain number of seats on the councils, while a gender committee focus on their special interests. However, analysts feel that impediments to women development in Uganda, especially in matters related to property ownership, remain formidable (Hutchinson, 1998). This study is has brought important issues relating to local government, women's participation among others in communities. However, it does not indicate the methodology used and the models and/or theoretical frames that guided the work.

### 2.3 World perspective

Another study by the USAID (2000) conducted in Central America shows that a decentralized government is effective in delivering services to the communities and involving the local people to participate in public affairs affecting them in the area of policy and implementation. After local elections in 1997, for instance Honduras the programme mounted a massive training and technical assistance effort to assist newly elected officials. Technical staff assisted 38 municipalities. Training included an initial course for the mayor and all city council members on the municipal law and basic

administration. The programme also funded training of 2,289 municipal officials and employees in five areas; municipal strengthening and leadership, municipal law, strategic planning, budget administration, and municipal management.

The onset of Hurricane Mitch in late 1998 dealt a terrible blow to these communities. In spite of its impact on municipal infrastructure and finance, however, USAID-supported municipalities demonstrated a tremendous amount of resilience. Municipal governments moved quickly to obtain food and emergency supplies, arrange for repairs of critical infrastructure, and consult with communities on priorities for the reconstruction process. Perversely, Hurricane Mitch seems to have provided an opportunity for local governments to demonstrate their commitment and ability to respond to citizen needs in their own local areas effectively and efficiently without making out cries to the central government. This research was a follow up on the trainings done on the effectiveness of decentralization in the area of disaster management by the local communities themselves. The research, however, did not bring about theoretical works or methodologies used. Further, its time of inquiry was limited and this leaves though for further work.

Naraayan and Pettesch (2002) in their study of public participation and development, a research work done in India argue that the decentralization of authority, functions and resources is vital. The study used the decision space model and used qualitative and quantitative approaches in its inquiry and data analysis. Drawing from a sample of 400 people in isolated communities, the study reviewed that when every citizen is given an opportunity or chance to the nation's financial statements of that nation and an

explanation is rendered to him or her on certain concerns, for example through the office of the public liaisons, it will create in them a sense of trust in the government financial operation but more so if they participated in coming up with areas in their communities that need to be addressed and be availed chance to participate in financial planning in their communities which they contend is absent in most developing nations even in local governments.

The study argues that such will also be a stop-gap measure or tool designed to facilitate independent tracking of debt relief resources at the point of receipt, allocation, disbursement, utilization, outcome and finally impact the results it had on society or on the community. This adds to the spirit of democratic governance, transparency and accountability. The need for community-based monitoring, a principle which represents a significant departure from centralized systems usually carried out by government to the communities themselves is needed.

They further write that this practice has the added benefit of enhancing the participation of communities in the management and usage of public resources (Naraayan and Pettesch, 2002).

The all idea is to promote citizens participation not only in matters to do with education, but also in matters to do with other services provided in their communities, financial empowerment of communities so that they are able to develop themselves economically. Their development needs and priorities ought to be voiced through a sustained monitoring mechanism from planning, implementation and evaluation of financial

dispensation programmes right from the local communities. This may not only offer opportunity for tracking and monitoring government and priorities but that it can involve also the citizens in capacity building projects that can bring about significant social change in the quality of life in the community as a whole in a manner that is profound (Naraayan and Pettesch, 2002).

## 2.4 Establishment of gap and Personal critique summary

The studies revealed above indicate a number of gaps as regards to decentralization particularly the effectiveness of the local community' participation in decision making in the course of service delivery by the local councils. For instance, studies conducted in Zambia as highlighted above show that most researchers focused on one or two factors thereby ignoring other major factors affecting community participation in service delivery. Further, some studies could not provide the basis for generalization as they lacked the characteristics required for generalization. These could either focus on rural or urban, municipal or city councils. This was the picture which was also painted in the studies revealed from other countries such as central America

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

This research adopted descriptive research design, in order to describe the effects of the national decentralization policy in empowering local communities to participate in decision making for

services provided. This research involved both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to acquire the needed information for the study. As such, open and closed ended questions were used through a questionnaire that was administered to various respondents. Using such a design will ensure that the weaknesses of qualitative data will be minimized as it will be supplemented by quantitative data.

### 3.2 Target population

Mufulira district has a population of 161,601 according to the central statistics office (2010). Mufulira district is divided into three constituencies namely Mufulira, kanstashi and kankoyo constituency. Mufulira constituency has 10 wards. David lunda has a population of 4, 669. David lunda is divided into two sections namely Eastlea and Ndeke village. The study population involved all the residents of David lunda ward. David Lunda ward was chosen because is one of the communities in Mufulira district implementing the national decentralization policy. Besides, it is the home for the researcher thus making the research easy to be carried out.

### 3.3 Sample size

The sample size was 50 residents from David lunda ward and the sample size comprised both males and females. It also included one key informant from the council. Hence, this sample size allowed the researcher to apply generalization since it is was far much above the sample of 30. The justification for this sample size is that it is less costly, manageable, less time consuming and effective. The degree of accuracy was high and reliable since it was adequately large (above 30 according to the central limit theorem) to be generalized. This provided an

opportunity for the data to be analyzed more quickly than it would have been possible with the whole population.

### 3.4 Sampling method

In order to have a random selection, this study adopted random sampling method for respondents. In order to achieve this end. In statistics, a simple random sample is a subset of individuals a sample chosen from a larger set a population. Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process, and each subset of k individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subsets of k individuals. Each individual in Mufulira district had an equal chance of being picked when this method is adopted. For key informants the study adopted purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling was used to gather data from the key informant from the department with regards to community participation in service delivery. Purposive sampling will be used for key informants because the researcher thought they had the necessary information for the study.

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

In terms of data collection, it involved the use of self-administered questionnaires since they are user-friendly. These instruments involved both closed and open-ended questions for different purposes. The reason to use these instruments is because they tend to be cheap to construct and that questionnaires save both resources and time. Questionnaires makes it easy for the computation of responses. Interviews helped the respondents understand the questions easily since there might be cases of individuals with

low levels of literacy. This helped the respondents to respond accordingly and as expected to the demands of the questionnaires.

### 3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

At the end of the whole research study, the questionnaires were consistently checked with a view to ensure completeness of the entire process. In this respect, a computer package called Stata analysis & statistical software was used to facilitate the process of analysis of data. Stata is a complete, integrated statistical software package that provides everything you need for data analysis, data management and graphics. It is preferred because it is user friendly hence its selection as a data analysis tool. The intention for the use of the package is because it is more valid in coming up with the findings and thus it will enhance easy analysis easy interpretations of the results.

## 4. Presentation of the findings

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzed the institutional framework that has been put in place to promote community participation in decision making in the process of service delivery in Mufulira district. The Chapter also examines the challenges faced by the Mufulira municipal Council. Firstly, the Chapter will look at the Institutional Framework put in place as well as the services provided by the Mufulira Council. Secondly, the Chapter will look at the challenges faced by the Mufulira municipal Council in enabling the local community participation in the process of service delivery to their local community.

## 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample

Title of respondents	Number
Key informants	2
Household respondents	50
Total	52

## 4.3 Institutional Framework Put in Place to promote participation of local community in the process of service delivery by the local council.

According to an interview held on 9<sup>TH</sup> May with Mufulira municipal council socioeconomic planner, the Council provides a lot of services to the Local Community which among others include Garbage Collection, issuing of business permits, maintenance of refuse dump sites, cemetery and sport and recreation facilities, burial of destitute and issuing of burial permits, registration of societies, provision of fire services, street lighting, infrastructure development such a roads, drainages and market shelter, and land surveying and allocation.

In order to enable local community participation in the process of providing these services Mufulira municipal Council had put in place various mechanisms. Among them are Ward Development Committee (WDC) located in each and every ward, local councils and other formal mechanisms .There are other helping institutions through which the community participates in decision-making: such as faith based organizations, network of Zambian people living with HIV/AIDS, Debs and Agriculture. This involves various stakeholders taking part based on the mechanism in order to enhance community participation in decision-making. At ward level, the ward development committees are the ones involved in ensuring that the communities participate in

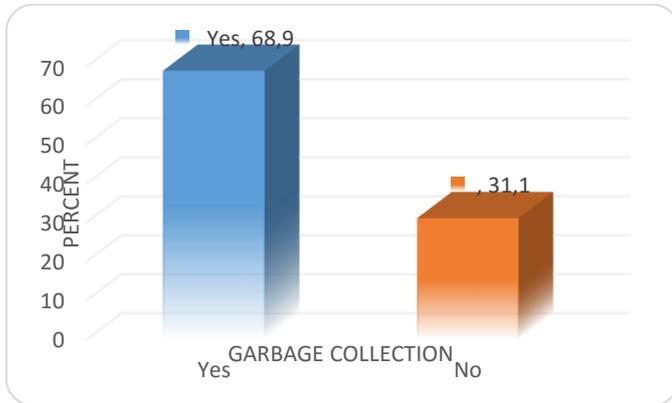
decision-making, whilst at community level the Community Based Organization are the ones involved in ensuring community participation in the provision of the needed services through partaking in decision-making.

## 4.4 Challenges Faced by the Mufulira municipal Council and Partner Organizations in the Process of Promoting Local Community Participation in Decision-Making.

In order to ensure adequate and active participation in decision-making by the community in the process of service provision by the local council there is need change the negative perception of the general public about the roles and generally the operations of the council. These include negative perception that the local council officials are corrupt and are not competent enough to adequately address the needs of the community. The attitude of vandalism amongst people in the community and not maintaining order in their communities are another areas which needs change. The attitude of being busy for council meeting in preference for other social gathering such as drinking beer, kitchen parties and watching soccer should also be changed amongst the community members. Ms thandiwe also said that community members do not know their boundaries in terms of their functions.

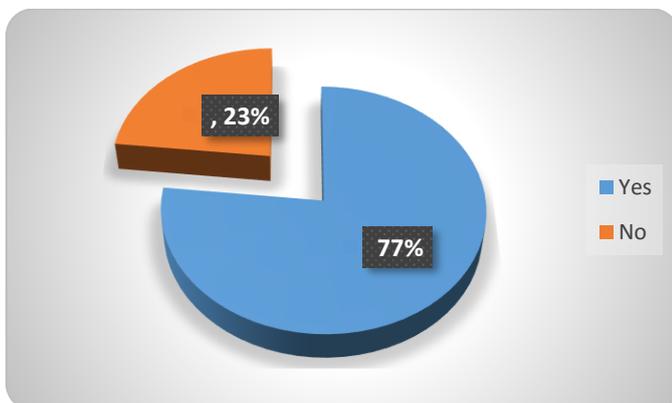
## 5.1 The Extent to Which Local Communities participate in decision making

### Garbage collection



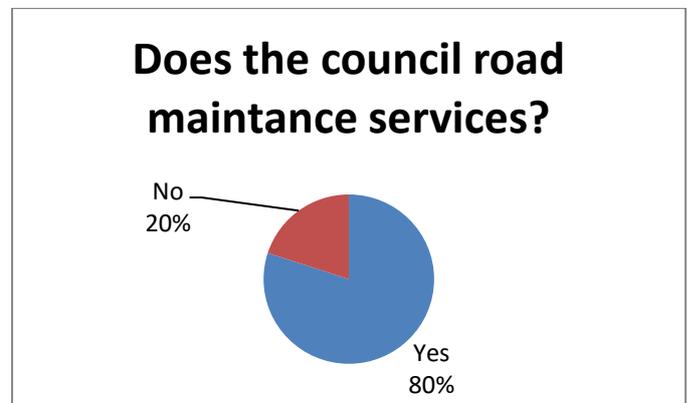
The above graph shows respondents' perception as to whether or not the local councils do provide garbage collection services in their community. The graph shows that out of the total 50 respondents representing 68.9% said that the council provided the garbage collection as opposed to 31.1% who said that the council did not provide the garbage collection service in their community. This means that a significantly high proportion of the local people knew that the council did provide garbage collection service.

### Does the council provide water and sanitation service in your community?



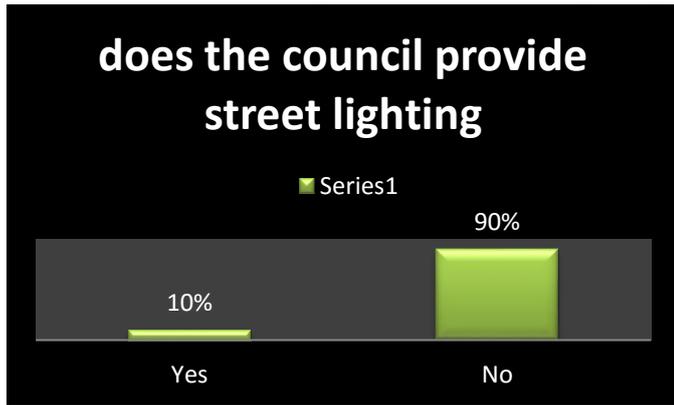
The pie chart above shows respondents' views as to whether or not the local councils do provide the water and sanitation services in their community. 76.7% said that the council provided the water and sanitation services as opposed to 23.3% said that the council did not provide the water and sanitation services in their community. This means that a significantly high proportion of the local people knew that the council do provide water and sanitation service.

### Does the council provide road maintenance services?



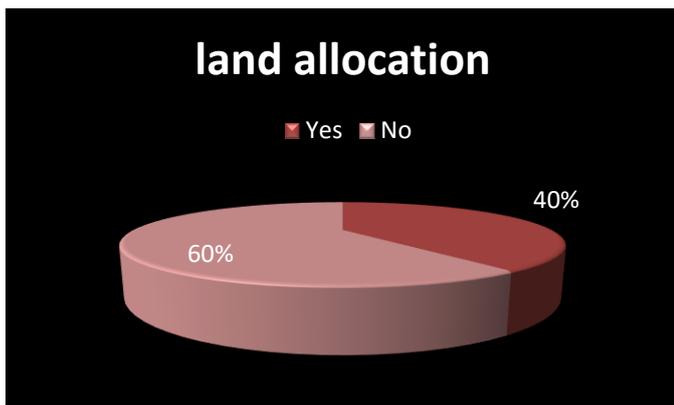
The above chart shows respondents' views as to whether the local councils do provide the road maintenance services in their community. According to the statistics 80% of the respondents said the council provides road maintenance services opposed to 20% who said the council does not provide these services in the community.

## Does the council provide street lighting?



According to the findings the majority of the respondents said that the council did not provide street lighting in their communities as opposed to 10% of the respondents who said that the council provided street lighting in David lunda ward.

## Land allocation



The pie chart above indicates respondents' views as to whether the local councils do provide the land allocation services in their community. 60% of the respondent said that the council does not provide land allocation services in their communities as

opposed to 40% of the respondents who said that the council provides land allocation services in their communities.

## Have you participated in decision making in any of the services provided by the council?



The above chart demonstrates the level of participation in decision making of the community in the process of service provision by the council in their community. The results show that 80% of the respondents do not participate in decision making in any of the services provided by the council while 20% of the respondents said that they do participate in decision making. This goes to show that a significantly large proportion of the respondents have not taken part in decision making in the course of service provision by the local council.

## Challenges faced when participating in decision making



The above chart shows the statistics on the number of respondents facing challenges in participating in decision making in the process of service provision by the local council. 80% of the respondents said that they had challenges when participating in decision making as opposed to 20% of the respondents who said that they never faced challenges in participating in decision making.

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The need for the community to participate in decision making in the process of the service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the services provided by the local council affect the community more than any other member of society. The numerous services, which are supposed to be provided by the local council, indicate how important the services are and the need to engage the community. The local council had put up a number of mechanisms to ensure that the community is engaged in decision-making in the process of the service delivery. This discussion will maximally utilize the research objectives to establish the

discrepancy and similarities between our research findings and the literature revealed.

There were a number of institutional frameworks put in place to promote community participation in decision making for services provided in David lunda ward. The mechanisms were WDC local councils including non-governmental organizations, churches and community based organization. These mechanisms play a vital role in ensuring community participation in decision-making. These were in tandem with the research conducted by Madimutsa (2006) on the nature and level of popular participation in poverty alleviation activities and strategies in a decentralized system of Government targeting Mumbwa district. It was observed that the literature revealed that a number of institutions were established such as community based organization and ward development committees to promote community participation. This was largely because the researches were conducted in the same country (Zambia).

On the challenges faced by the local council that hinder community participation in decision making in the process of service delivery. The research findings indicate that the attitude of the local people hampered their participation in decision-making. The local community perceives the local council officials as corrupt, irresponsible and not responsive to the needs of the community. However, this was not the case from the study conducted by Hoffman (2006) in Tanzania. In his research, he pointed out that one of the reason for non-participation of the community in decision-making in the process of service delivery is political interference from the political elite such as the members of parliament who think that they know it all. These interfere with the councilors and the general operations of the local council. It can be concluded that this is due to by and large over centralization and the desire for the

politicians to have control over the council. The discrepancy could be attributed to the angle at which the different researches were focusing. The other contributing factor could be the milieu Zambia and Tanzania respectively.

The extent to which local people participate in decision making can be reflected by the research findings which revealed that 20% participated in decision-making in the process of service delivery by the local council. This is contrary to 80% who had not participated in decision-making in the course of service delivery. Conversely, there is a sharp contrast according to the study conducted by Cassels (1997) in Uganda on the evolution of decentralisation in Uganda. The findings revealed that 86% of the community engaged themselves in decision making in the process of service delivery by the local council. This is largely due to the Ugandan authorities who have been persistent in their devolution efforts. This has resulted in number of people taking part in decision-making in the process of service delivery by the local council. This indicates that devolution has taken route in Uganda unlike in Zambia due to the commitment of the local authorities and the government at large.

The research observed that a number of people had problems in participating in decision making in the course of service provision, 80% had problems against 20% who did not have challenges in participating in decision-making.

The major challenge encountered by the community was absence of streamlined and well-coordinated program when to meet this representing (60%). The lack of transparency (20%) was also cited as one of the challenge to the community in taking part in decision making. The other challenge faced by the community was decision made by those not authority are not taken into consideration.

However, the study conducted by Macwan'gi and Ngwengwe (2004) in Zimbabwe (Bulawayo) revealed that 84% had problems in participating in decision making. Although health governance structures were established the community was not aware of their existence and roles, the community's unwillingness to participate in health issues is due to lack of knowledge and this limits their participation. Further, the research indicated that the decentralized structures at district, community and neighborhood levels were not effective in carrying there functions mainly due to a weak link between the community and the governance structures resulting in 94% having problems in participating in decision-making. The discussion reveals some similarities as far as challenges are concerned. However, there were varying challenges that these communities face to hamper their participation in decision-making in the process of service delivery. This could be because these countries are among the developing countries.

Generally, this report has generated the understanding that there are number of mechanisms put in place to promote the community to participate in decision-making in the process of service delivery. This is at international level because a number of countries are striving to devolve the functions and services to the local council and to empower the community to participate in decision-making. Despite these mechanisms, there are number of challenges faced by both the service provider and the recipient of the service. This has resulted in limited participation of the community in decision making in the process of service delivery. The report reviews that the performance of the NDP was not success because the level of participation in decision making by the community still needs much to be desired.

## Recommendations

- Central government should implement the decentralization policy effectively by transferring certain functions and powers to local government and to the local people, where and by whom the problem concerning the well-being of the people is deeply felt.
- The council should increase sensitization programmes and incorporate the local people in developmental programmes for instance through radio and television programmes in both local and foreign languages
- Council members should be transparent in the process of decision making to ensure effective service delivery and this can be made possible by incorporating the local people in decision making though the improved flow of information between people and council coupled with a bottom-up approach.
- Councils should employ more competent employees who will understand and employ the principle of inclusiveness in decision-making.
- The local council should establish designated places for meeting.
- The local council should establish well-defined programmes for the local people to know and have an opportunity to meet the local officials for instance once every after three months (quarterly meeting).
- The local council should set up clear and distinct channels of communication to improve predictability. These channels of communication will enhance community participation because the people will know when and where to go to have there need attended to.

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