



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

County Dialogues: - Build up Towards the 5th Annual Devolution Conference 2018

Concept Note

1. INTRODUCTION

The 5th Annual Devolution Conference shall be held in April 2018. The conference marks an important milestone in the Devolution story in Kenya. The Overriding Conference Theme is **“Sustainable, productive, effective and efficient governments for results delivery”**. The Annual Devolution Conference is considered an important event in the calendar of Kenya because it provides a platform through which all stakeholders in devolution engage in providing feedback to their County Governments on matters of policy, law, accountability, good governance, and service delivery, among others.

For the past five years there has been a concerted effort from the County Governments to educate the public through word and deed of what devolution is achieving. The County Governments have put in place mechanisms to address the concerns that have accompanied the change of governance and continuously sought to reassure the public that devolution is indeed working.

Citizens have expressed displeasure in service delivery from both national and county governments, however, there have been notable achievements and phenomenal changes in all sectors. Significant successes have been realized and county governments have registered milestones in health care, agribusiness and food security, internal and international trade, planning including housing development among others.

As a curtain raiser to the conference, the county dialogues are normally held in each County to get and listen to the views of citizens towards what they expect in the devolution conference. The past five years of Devolution experienced difficulties and often informed with a variety of structural, administrative and policy challenges, as well as political and legislative concerns, currently the Devolved Government has now taken off providing service to the citizens.

County dialogues are expected to settle on the experience of each County with Devolution and specifically for this year on Health, Agriculture, Trade & Manufacturing and Infrastructure, urban planning & development and provide a platform for citizens to share and explain how devolution has transformed their lives.

2. JUSTIFICATION

One of the most critical triggers for the push for Devolution in the Constitution of Kenya (2010) was to bring service and opportunities closer to the people. The County Dialogues will present the citizens with the opportunity to engage in providing feedback to their County Governments

County dialogues are expected to revolve around the foregoing concerns. They will bring together “Wananchi”, County leaders – including the County Executive, Chief Officers, County Assemblies and other elected and nominated County officials, Senate, civil societies, persons with disabilities, private sector and other non-state actors in the spirit of dialogue, to take into account the people’s views on governance. Wider and open forums with other stakeholders in the county are encouraged, in the context of town hall meetings. These should enjoy media coverage, both within the mainstream media and on local media and social media, too. The feedback and outcomes from the County dialogues will be recorded and reported by the Secretariat which are expected to feed into the conversation that will take place on **24 - 27 April 2018**

3. LESSONS LEARNT

1. High citizen expectations
2. Inadequate civic education on the roles of the County Government and the functions of the National Government including concurrent function such as roads. This will help in aligning the expectations of the citizen.
3. Need for regular briefings on the status of County development initiatives on progress and challenges. These briefings will help build community ownership of County projects and remove negative perceptions of the County.
4. Need for dialogue between the County Executive and Members of the County Assembly to improve the relationship between them.

4. CONVENOR AND COLLABORATORS

Planning, strategy and collaboration for the County Dialogues and National Conference will be organized by the following:

- a) **County Governments** will be the main conveners and will provide a platform for advocacy, inter-county liaison, and resource mobilization. It is proposed that CECs in charge of Public Administration in collaboration with the County Assembly will spearhead the process.
- b) **Ministry of Devolution and Planning** will provide leadership/come in as the duty bearer for the coordination of intergovernmental relations
- c) **Community Based Organizations/Civil Society Organizations/ Faith based Organization** will promote engagement and participation of citizens to participate in the forums

5. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Enhanced civic education on High impact County initiatives
- Enhanced compliance with legal provisions on public participation
- Improved county government responsiveness to 'Mwananchi' needs
- Increased alignment of county development priorities to resource endowments
- Enhanced inter-county and intergovernmental collaboration
- Improved Inclusiveness for marginalised and vulnerable groups of Women, Youth and PWDs

6. METHODOLOGY

- Each of the 47 Counties will hold County Dialogue sessions oriented to deliberate how devolution is transforming lives. The Dialogue will be citizen oriented taking into consideration the bottom-up approach. The guidelines to these dialogues will be; Citizens telling/sharing their experiences on devolution under the four identified themes of Health, Agriculture, Trade and Manufacturing; and Infrastructure, Urban planning and Development, the transformation/change brought by devolution and the opportunities created, how do the citizens perceive the governance structures put in place in promoting inclusivity and equity and what the leaders should focus on to ensure they meet the expectations of the citizens.
- It is proposed that each County forms a multi sectoral County Coordination Committee comprising of The CEC Public Administration, CEC Health, CEC Agriculture, CEC Land and Urban development, CEC Trade and Manufacturing, CEC Roads and Infrastructure, The County Secretary, The Director of Communication and The Chiefs of staff. The County Coordination Committees to handle the following: Budget, Structure and composition of participation- The idea is to have an all-inclusive. It will be important to include the civil society, Academia, religious leaders, persons with disabilities and other leaders as you may deem fit.
- Each County Dialogue sessions to be convened and chaired by the Governor or the Deputy Governor and the sector specific breakaway discussions, to be borrowed from the main conference programme, will be moderated by the relevant County Executive Committee members with all representatives of the target participants within the county. Counties recognize the senate position as the custodian of devolution and the meetings will be co-chaired by the senator as well.
- The Sector specific Moderators, through the County Rapporteur, to document all the issues raised and deliberated on. These issues will then be synthesized to generate action plans for the counties and isolate the policy issues that will inform the thematic discussions during the National Conference.
- Using the same model, a tier approach where deliberations and selection of sector specific recommendations should take place at sampled ward and/or sub-county administrative units. A community representative captures and presents recommendations at the next level of deliberations. The idea is to have an all-inclusive approach. It will be important to include other leaders as you may deem fit.

- It is recommended that Counties make use of the existing Regional Blocs to convene the sectoral public consultations.

7. OUTPUTS

The immediate direct results/outputs of the County Dialogues:

- Ward, Sub-County and County level: Identification of needs and possible solutions for the four thematic sectors: Health, Agriculture, Trade and Manufacturing; and Infrastructure, Urban planning and Development
- County level: Documentation of inter-county and intergovernmental/institutional collaboration frameworks (Memorandum of Understanding, Letters of Service Agreements, Letters of Intent, etc)
- County level: Development of **County/Regional Action Plans** with clear deliverables, timelines, actors and indicators to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of devolution process.

8. FUNDING

The County Dialogues will be funded by the County Governments to ensure sustainability. Each county is encouraged to mobilize resources from corporate organizations and Development Partners to support the dialogues.

9. TIME FRAME

The County Dialogues will be held on 26th February – 23rd March 2018 as per the schedule.