Revolutionising Devolution in Kenya through Public Policy Actions

Samples of Micro Small Enterprises (MSEs) products collected from different counties: The Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), developed the County Business Environment for MSEs (CBEM) Index, to provide framework for improvement of business environment for growth of MSEs in counties.

KIPPRA, RISA Funded Project Milestones

- Through the RISA grant, the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) developed a County Business Environment for Micro and Small Enterprises (CBEM) framework, a tool for monitoring progress in improving the business environment for growth and survival of MSEs.

- A Public Affairs Index (PAI) framework was developed to monitor the delivery of public services at the county level.

- The PAI and CBEM policy briefs and manuals were disseminated to key stakeholders at county level, ministries, research institutions, think tanks, and universities.

About the RISA Fund

The Research and Innovation Systems for Africa (RISA) Fund is a programme to support and strengthen research and innovation systems in six countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Ethiopia. The programme runs from 2021 to 2024 and is funded by UKAid.

Background to this Research

In 2019, Kenyans voted to decentralise government, ushering in a new era of leadership with forty-seven governors and their teams taking up the reins of power in newly created counties.

In the devolution, the delivery of public goods and services is the mandate of the national government as well as the forty-seven county governments. Unfortunately, counties lack the capacity, knowledge, and resources to effectively deliver the devolution dividends of shared prosperity.

To improve the delivery of public goods and services and to ensure MSEs operate in a stable and conducive environment, there is need to develop effective policies and frameworks that are guided by research.

About KIPPRA and the RISA Funded Project

The Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) is mandated to conduct objective research and analysis on public policy with the goal of providing advisory and technical services to the government, government agencies, and other stakeholders.

KIPPRA, in collaboration with the RISA Fund, implemented the project *Strengthening Research to Support the Devolved System of Government in Kenya*. Through the project, two indices were developed; Public Affairs Index (PAI) and County Business Environment for Micro and Small Enterprise (CBEM).

"The development of these documents demonstrates the role of KIPPRA as a think tank and research intermediary in strengthening frameworks and tools for coordinating key stakeholders in the research ecosystem in Kenya to dialogue, network, and enhance research uptake to inform the implementation of the devolved system of government," says Dr. Rose Ngugi, executive director, KIPPRA.

The Public Affairs Index (PAI)

The Public Affairs Index (PAI) is a multi-dimensional, data-driven measurement of government performance and citizen satisfaction in the provision of key public services at the county level, focusing on nine major pillars. These pillars include the following: fiscal management, economic performance, human capital, essential infrastructure, environmental management, transparency and accountability, crime and justice, water sanitation and hygiene, and social welfare.

"For PAI we were basically picking out pillars that are devolved and scrutinise to see how far the counties have implemented their requirements. It was checking how far a county is ahead of another," explains Dr. Judith Nguli, senior policy analyst, KIPPRA.

"We needed to understand problems and their origin in each county. For example, we wanted to know why a pillar like 'justice' would score low in Kitui County and high in Kakamega County. We computed all the relevant data for each county in PAI for easier accessibility of county data," she adds.

Understanding these pillars will revolutionise cooperation frameworks, collaboration, research and, most importantly, will improve service delivery in the counties.

County Business Environment for Micro and Small Enterprises (CBEM)

The County Business Environment for Micro and Small Enterprises (CBEM) study focused on six major pillars including access to worksite, market environment, technical capacity, governance and regulatory framework, risk preparedness, management, and financial inclusion.

The researchers noted that the national government through Micro and Small Enterprise Authority (MSEA) has improved MSEs work sites significantly over the past few years, even though financing, capacity building, and lack of skilled manpower remain the greatest obstacles that hinder the growth of business in the counties.

Extracts from the main PAI report were used to develop PAI county policy briefs, while extracts from the main CBEM report were used to develop CBEM policy briefs. These briefs were disseminated to counties and other key stakeholders including government departments, research institutions, universities, and think tanks in Kenya to coordinate and work as a linked-up ecosystem.

> *"The research will impact the generations to come, once all the recommendations are incorporated into the existing policies or new policies are developed, then somebody's life will change. We strengthened our relationship with the counties and understood things from a different perspective. KIPPRA can now comfortably conduct research in other areas and aspects that are lacking from the counties," confirms Dr. Nguli.*

The PAI index is the first of its kind to be developed in Kenya and many counties have expressed interest in utilising both the PAI and the CBEM tools in their 2022-2027 County Integrated Development Plans to provide improved services to their citizens.

> *"This is the first time in Kenya we have conducted research to determine the Public Affairs Index, it may not be the best, but we will improve in the coming years. As KIPPRA, we intend to produce PAI after every two years," says Paul Lutta, policy analyst, KIPPRA.*

Indices are an integral part of economics and governance to measure, monitor, and evaluate progress in the delivery of public goods and services. Additionally, indices help measure citizen satisfaction with provision of essential services.

Both the PAI and the CBEM indices were published in the *Daily Nation* newspaper to providing clarity to the policy makers when making crucial county decisions.