

# Sub Theme; Economic and Social Dimensions of Sustainability

## Enhancing the contribution of County Governments in achieving the MDGs in Kenya; A Case on Uasin-Gishu County.

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**Abstract-** County governments are a recent introduction in Kenya which was constituted as a result of the new constitution. They were created through the constitution of Kenya leading to 47 county governments. This number is based on the delineation of administrative districts as created under the Provinces and Districts Act of 1992. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is only possible if county governments who are closer to the people are empowered to work towards poverty eradication and sustainable development. Given that decentralization and the devolution of power to local governments is now a reality in Kenya, it is this sphere of government which needs to redouble its efforts. This paper aims to enhance the contribution of county governments in achieving the MDGs, in particular in addressing poverty and sustainable development. The main purpose of this working paper is to describe the major issues of county governance at the local level that are related to realization of MDGs. This assessment is based on data collected from Eldoret region which is in Uasin-gishu County. Content analysis was used for the study. The findings of this study show the potentiality of Uasin-gishu County to be among the best sustainable development sites, if the extents of participation in planning involve the locals, transparency in the planning and implementation of infrastructure projects, and level of efficiency in management of county resources and finance practices are adhered to. It is concluded that focus should be in wealth creation and planning which will have a multiplier effect on the national government.

**Index Terms-** devolution, devolved government, planning, MDGS, sustainable development

### I. INTRODUCTION

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 (GoK 2010) on 27 August 2010 paved way for realization of the "dream" system of governance. Chapter Eleven (Cap 11) of GoK 2010 –devolved government specifically provides for the setting up of the county governments. This chapter spells out the various

principles of devolved government that includes democratic ideals and the separation of powers. County governments will be facilitated reliable with sources of revenue to enable them govern and deliver services effectively and that no more than two-thirds of the members of representative bodies in each county government shall be of the same gender.

This paper therefore, looks at ways of 'Enhancing the contribution of County Governments in achieving the MDGs in Kenya'. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals is only possible if county governments who are closer to the people are empowered to work towards poverty eradication and sustainable development. The immediate attention to this critical issue is required from all relevant government agencies, and partners to collaborate and support implementation through technical, financial, and logistical support. County governments are specifically requested to prioritize the MDGS in their budgets and programmes, (Kenya acceleration network plan, 2014).

Following the introduction in section1, the organization of the paper is as follows: Section2 is Literature review; section 3, Materials and data; section 4 is Results; section 5, discussions and findings; and section 6, concludes the paper.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### The concept of devolution

Devolution is actually a form of decentralization. Decentralization is about transferring of selected functions from a central authority to the lowest feasible structure. Devolution entails the ceding (legal act giving) of power from a Central Authority to Local Authority, the state powers of revenue collection and expenditure among others. In Kenyan case, the current Centralized System Government headquartered in the Capital City of Nairobi will transfer power to the 47 Counties listed on the First Schedule of GoK 2010. Each of these Counties will form the County Governments comprising of the County Assemblies and County Executives with State powers of legislature and Executive.

Muia, 2008, defined devolution as political arrangement where political, administrative, and fiscal power is distributed to the semi-autonomous, territorial and sub- national units. The

basic characteristics that devolved governments should embody are firstly, the local subunits should have autonomy and independence from the center. Secondly the units ought to have clear and legally geographical boundaries over which to exercise authority and perform public functions. Thirdly, they should be accorded corporate status and the power to raise sufficient resources to carry out functions. Lastly, the local government should be perceived by the people belonging to them. This means that in the provision of services, they satisfy the needs and remain the subject to the control, direction, and influence of locals. (Oloo, 2006)

Barret et al (2007), argued that devolution provides a more effective governance framework for advancing pro poor policies. Since the sub-national institutions are likely to be more familiar with the local circumstances and the cost conditions, they are better equipped to distribute resources equitably, in so doing they target poverty more efficiently (CKRC, 2002a) despite the sound arguments for adopting devolution system, it is not without risks. If not properly designed and implemented, devolution leads to diminish of power and value of the national government to redistribute resources which create a drawback to the less developed units. This may lead to interdependency and eventually instability. Barret et al., (2007) Devolution system may also lead to translation of central government bureaucracies, inefficient utilization of resources, and lack of accountability at the sub national level.

#### **Millennium Development Goals Attainment in Kenya**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are universally accepted as the international commitment to sustainable development and poverty reduction. In September, 2000, at the Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed to a set of time bound and measurable goals that address the key elements of human development; and 189 countries including Kenya signed the millennium declaration. The main objective of the Millennium Declaration was to define a common vision for development by setting eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015. The eight MDGs are designed to: (i) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, (ii) achieve universal primary education, (iii) promote gender equality and empower women, (iv)

Reduce child mortality, (v) improve maternal health, (vi) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (vii) ensure environmental sustainability, and (viii) develop a global partnership for development.

#### **General Challenges facing Kenya in attaining the MDGs**

Despite a fairly favourable economic outlook, overall Kenya faces numerous general challenges (not specific to individual MDGs) in meeting the Goals by 2015. One of the major challenges is inadequate financial resources which limit the capacity to sustain efforts and initiatives aimed at achieving the MDG targets. There is a counterargument that Kenya potentially has what it takes to generate adequate resources and probably can do so even quicker with greater political goodwill, reduction of public wage bill and with a serious assault on grand corruption. Another challenge is low absorption capacity of funds on the part of the government. It is ironical that on one

hand there is inadequate funding and on the other, a lack of absorption capacity of the funds that are available.

This inability is mainly attributed to inefficiency and bureaucratic processes for tendering and requisition. A number of other factors exert additional constraints to the process of achieving the MDGs: The withholding of external aid in the last decade has led to increased government borrowing, which has led to higher servicing costs. As more debt matures, the government will have to fork out more money to service it, increases in fuel prices which tend to trigger inflation and high food prices. The volatility of international oil prices has more adverse effects on the poor and vulnerable, limiting successes of social protection, and poverty reduction initiatives by the government. Rapid population increase especially in urban areas the 2009 Census shows the population has grown by 10 million since the last census in 1999. HIV/AIDS figures show that prevalence rates have gone down slightly the absolute numbers of those infected remain high, putting great strain on medical services.

#### **The MDGs and Vision 2030**

The Vision 2030, which is a long-term plan to transform Kenya into a globally competitive economy at par with the Asian Tigers by the year 2030, is anchored on three main pillars i.e. economic, social, and political pillars. The Vision 2030 is being implemented on five years Medium Term Planning Framework. Economic Pillar

The key goal of this pillar is to ensure and maintain a sustained economic growth of 10% over a period of 22 years (up to 2030) and has also been linked to the MDGs Long-Term Plan 2007-2025. The economic pillar underpins agriculture, livestock and fisheries, tourism, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, business outsourcing, and financial services as the priority sectors that will provide the impetus for economic growth and development. In UasinGishu County, this has been scaled through investment in infrastructure and agriculture which will achieve the twin objective of food security and market linkage. Upgrading existing roads; carry out routine maintenance of existing roads goes along way increasing returns and poverty reduction.

#### **Social Pillar**

The social pillar focuses more on the social development improvements and investments needed especially in education and health sectors to support a vibrant economy. For education, the target in the first MTP was to raise the primary to secondary transition rates to 75% and the rates from secondary to university to 15% by 2012. The programmes and projects planned under this sector have direct relationship with attainment of MDGs. The counties have to invest in equipping the existing county polytechnics and vocational institutes to prepare citizens for the labour market. Talents such as in the music industry, sports should be fully developed which contributes substantially portion of investment in the county especially in real estate development and agriculture.

#### **iii Political Pillar**

This pillar emphasizes governance, peace building, and conflict management. The Vision envisages the creation of a

peaceful Kenyan society where the rule of law is the cornerstones of individual freedoms with human rights guaranteed for every citizen. The aim is to ensure that the safety and security of Kenyans is guaranteed at all times that Kenyans from all walks of life have access to justice and that all conflicts are resolved through non-violent, amicable, and legally sanctioned mechanisms.

### Linkage of Uasin-Gishu County with Vision 2030

The objectives established under the Uasin Gishu CIDP are directly responsive to the aspirations of Kenya Vision 2030. Regarding agriculture, the CIDP has earmarked the sector as having responsibility for household food security and as a source of income and employment. The CIDP has identified the potentials inherent in the sector for value addition utilizing crop, livestock, and fishery products.

Regarding education, the Kenya Vision 2030 is emphatic on the country's commitment to the attainment of education for all (EFA) and the millennium development goals. The country responded by developing the Kenya Education Support Programme (KESSP) which placed the implementation of FPE at the centre-stage of the sector's development. The CIDP has benchmarked all its educational indicators on the national targets as established in Kenya Vision 2030.

Land issues relating to population pressure and factors, such as growing population densities which are issues in Vision 2030 have been addressed under the CIDP. The unplanned settlement and continued fragmentation of land into uneconomical units have, received due attention in the CIDP as an important phenomenon in Uasin Gishu County. In the same vein, the conversion of wetlands and catchment areas into farm land leading to increased vulnerability and environmental damage has been addressed. Similarly, insecure land ownership is a major issue that has been flagged under Vision 2030 and in this CIDP. According to Vision 2030, land adjudication and registration covers only 30% of the country. The CIDP is equally

sensitive to the need for security of tenure in land ownership in the Uasin Gishu County. It also deals with issues of sustainable land use and the need to automate land information to expedite land transactions and enhance the security of land records.

### III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The approach for the study comprised a number of stages, which were complementary in capturing information required to fulfill the expectations of the terms of reference for the study. These included: literature review which entailed mainly secondary data collection; quantitative data collection to assess progress on targets, proposed interventions and strategies, resources used. Interviews were conducted with government officials in Ministry of Planning, National Development and Vision 2030 and line ministries implementing MDG activities. In addition, selected CBOs and NGOs that support specific interventions provided further information; key informant interviews were held with heads of county organizations/units who by virtue of their positions have specific information and data on particular initiatives, resource allocation and target attainment; semi-structured Millennium Development Goals Assessment 2003, 2005, 2006, and 2008 interviews and focus group discussions were held at county level

#### 3.1 LOCATION OF UASIN GISHU COUNTY

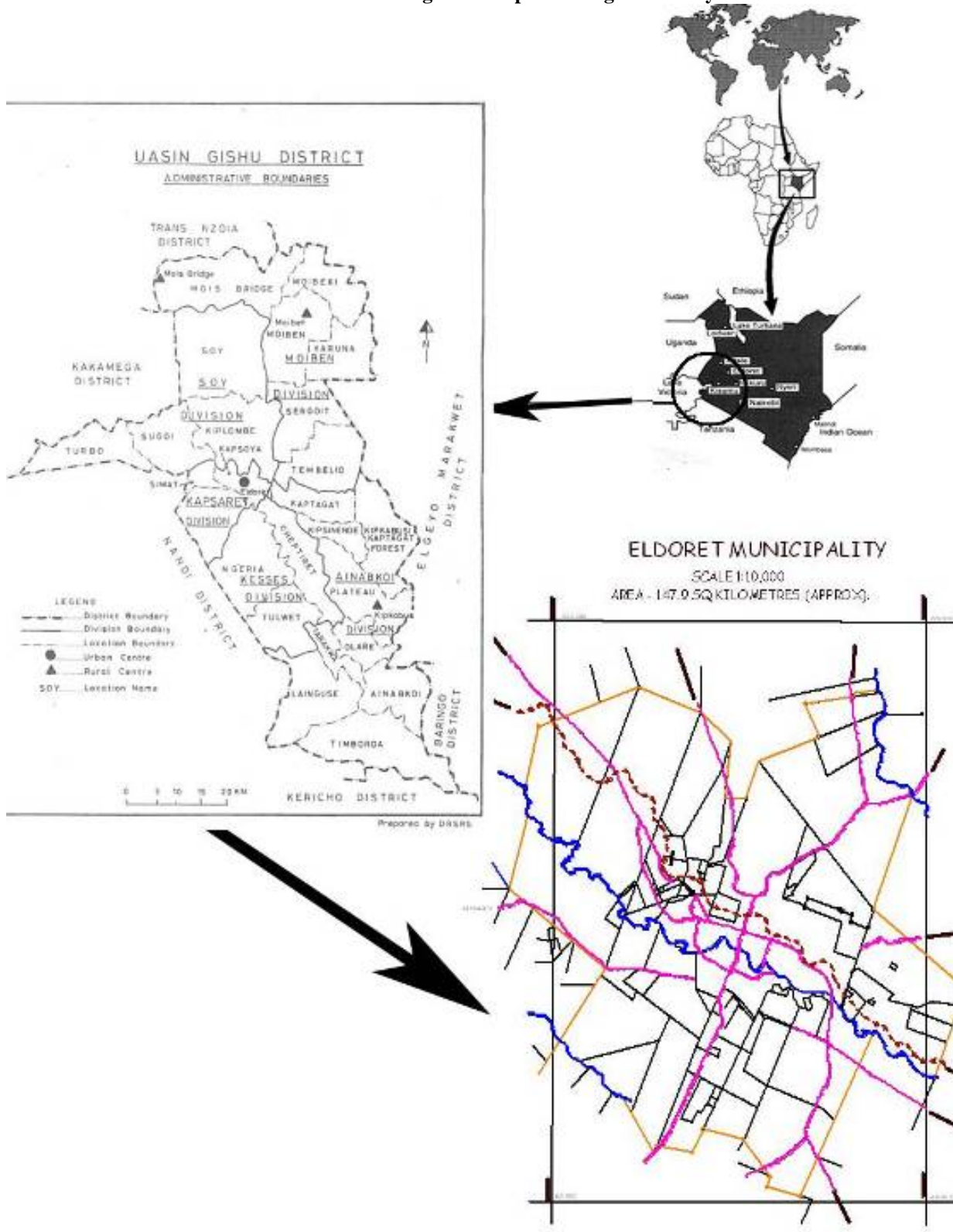
Uasingishu County is one of the 47 counties in Kenya, lies between longitudes 34 degrees 50" east and 35 degrees 37" West and latitudes 0 degrees 03" South and 0 degrees 55" North. The county shares common borders with Trans Nzoia County to the North, Elgeyo

Marakwet County to the East, Baringo County to the South East, Kericho County to the South, Nandi County to the South West, and Kakamega County to the North West

General Information (2009)	Uasin Gishu	Rank	Kenya <sup>b</sup>
Population	894,179	16	821,491
Surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	3,345	24	12,368
Density (people per km <sup>2</sup> )	267	19	66
Poverty rate, based on KIHBS (%)	51.3	27	47.2
Urban population in largest towns			
-Eldoret	289,380	5	
-Moi's Bridge	14,596	106	
-Matunda	10,031	119	
-Burnt Forest	4,925	172	
-Jua Kali	3,427	192	
-Turbo	2,831	201	

Table 1. Source: Commission of Revenue Allocation, 2011

Figure 1: Map of Uasingishu county





#### IV. RESULTS

##### MDG Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger



**Figure 2. Source UNDP Kenya annual report 2009**

Half of all Kenyans, live below the poverty line, large numbers regularly go hungry, drought is a regular event, disease across that must be borne, beggars are an accepted feature of society (many are disabled, lepers, or homeless mothers with children), and glue-sniffing, rapacious street children are just part

of normal life see fig2 above. In the cities, vast markets sell mitumba secondhand clothes imported from the developed world); and the shopping for and wearing of mitumba is a favorite pastime among all levels of society.

An estimated 46% of the Kenyan population lives below the poverty line. There is also widespread unemployment, especially among the youth. Working with the government, partners and the private sector, the poverty reduction unit seeks to enhance and sustain livelihood opportunities and food security. The Agriculture Sector Development Strategy (2010)

aims to ensure food and nutritional security for all Kenyans, the generation of higher incomes as well as employment and to position the agricultural sector as a key driver in achieving the 10% annual economic growth rate anticipated under the economic pillar. The table below shows Status and Trends of Targets in Goal 1 upto the year 2015 in Kenya.

Target 1 A	Indicator	YEAR			
		Baseline(1990)	2000	2005-2011*	2015 Target
Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	Proportion of population living below 1 USD per day	43.3 %	52.3%	45.9%	21.7%
	Poverty gap ratio	-	-	16.2 %	-
	Share of poorest quintile (20%) in national consumption	4.8 %	4.8 %	4.6 %	9.6 %

**Table 2: Targets and trends in poverty reduction Source: WMS 1997, KIHBS 2005/06**

According to the County Household Welfare Monitoring Survey Report, county of Uasin Gishu Absolute poverty will reduce from 49% in 2012 to 23% by 2018. Growth in the agricultural sector is seen as the most viable strategy to reduce poverty as more than three quarters of the poor depend on subsistence agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods. About 80% of the actual spending in the agricultural sector comes from government meaning that there is a high chance of sustainability of development activities in the county level.

Fish is an important and reliable source of protein, employment and income of large a proportion of population in Kenya. To improve on food security and employment, the county of Uasin-Gishu has embarked on fish production in the county; this has improved significantly in the recent past due to increasing demand of white meat. Currently, the county has 1,728 operational fish ponds of 486,900m<sup>2</sup> with annual fish production of 593,000kg worth KShs.285, 900,000. The county also has many public and private dams which are suitable for capture fisheries. Current production from the dams stands at 33,048 kg worth KShs.9, 914,400 per year. Investment in the sector is a back up on livestock production which has been practiced enormously in the county

and is likely to achieve full primary school enrollment by 2015, given its 110.0% primary school gross enrollment rate in 2009 up from 107.6% in 2007/08 compared to 73.7% in 2002. The net enrollment rates rose from 80.4% in 2003 to 92.9% over the same period, while the primary school completion rates improved from 62.8% in 2002 to 83.2% in 2009. The enrollment figures for boys and girls in primary school enrollment also point to a near gender parity. The table below shows the target by 2015.

According to the Uasin gishu county integrated development plan 2013-2018 report, the education facilities are fairly developed with two public universities namely, Moi University and University of Eldoret. It also has two private universities and constituent colleges of major universities. There is a National Polytechnic, a Technical Training Institute, and several private commercial colleges. In terms of basic education, there are 576 ECD centres, 422 primary schools, and 129 secondary schools. Primary school enrolment rate was 89.5%. This high enrolment rate is attributable to the Free Primary Education (FPE) strategy of the government. It is noteworthy that the enrolment rate of girls at 91% is higher than that of boys at 88%. More effort to cushion education in county levels by expanding the number of institutions will hasten the achievement of MDGs targets in the country.

**MDG GOAL 2: Achieve universal primary education**

Kenya has managed to significantly reduce the population below the poverty line from 56% in 2000 to 46.9% in 2008/09

Target 2 A	Indicator	2000	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015 Target
Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls will complete a full course of primary schooling.	2.1 Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education (%)	67.8	80.4	82.8	91.6	92.9	95.6	95.9	100
	2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach the last grade of primary	57.7	68.2	77.6	81.0	83.2	74.6	80.3	100

	(%)								
	2.3 Literacy Rates of 15-24 year olds, women and men (%)	80.3	-	89.3	-	91.3	-		100

**Table 3: The enrollment rates in Uasingishu Source: ministry of education science and technology, 2013**

**MDG GOAL 3: Promote Gender equality and empower women**

Gender issues are being addressed by the new constitution that states women and men have the right to equal treatment including the right to equal opportunities in politics, economic, cultural, and social spheres (section 27:3).T the Women’s Enterprise Development Fund and the entry into force in 2010 of Kenya’s new constitution, which aims to enhance political participation of all genders in development by prescribing a representation of at least one third of either gender in the county assemblies. Supported by a presidential directive to ensure that at least 30 % of all jobs in the civil service are set aside for women,

women now constitute about 30 % of the labour force in the modern sectors as part of the affirmative action to address the gender gap. This has been adhered to at the county assemblies in Kenya.

**MDG GOAL 4: Reduce child mortality**

In 2012 the infant mortality rate was 48 deaths per 1,000 live births while, Neonatal Mortality rate was two deaths per 1,000 live births in 2012.A reduction in child mortality rates can be addressed effectively through improved management of childhood illnesses. This is shown below

Key Health Indicators	population	Total
projection (2012)		1,022,034
Crude Birth Rate (CBR)		49.4/1,000
Crude Death Rate (CDR) -		7/1,000
Women of child bearing age (15 – 49 years)		24%
Neonatal Mortality Rate		52/1,000
Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)		48/1,000
Children under 1 year		3.71%
Children under 5 years		16.9 %
Under 5 Mortality Rate		38/1,000
Children under 5 years attending growth	Monitoring clinic	38%
Pregnant women attending at least four ANC		22%
Deliveries conducted by skilled health staff	in facility	0%
Women receiving family planning commodities		34%
Malaria Prevalence		43.4%
HIV Prevalence Rate		4.5 %
HIV+ women receiving PMTCT		20%
Targeted adult HIV+ patients receiving ART		4.8%

**Table 4: Reduction on child mortality rates**

Source; Uasin Gishu county integrated development plan 2013-2018

The Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) is a strategy initiated by WHO and UNICEF that entails improving the management skills of health workers, the health systems, and Community structures in childhood diseases management. By extension Uasin Gishu County is committed to attaining Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) specifically Goal 4 which targets to reduce under five year mortality by 50% by 2015. The diseases responsible for the high mortality rate in County; but could be addressed through primary health care interventions. The Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2008/2009 shows that the death rate at 74/1000 is way above the national target of 32/1000 deaths as indicated by the table below. The table below showing performance in the health sector in Uasin Gishu county.

**MDG GOAL 5: Improve on maternal health**

MDG	Indicator	Baseline (2000)	2008/9	Target 2015
<b>Goal 5: Improve maternal health</b>				
Target 5A: reduce by three quarters, maternal mortality ratio	Maternal mortality ratio	588	414	147
	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	44	44	90
Target 5 B: achieve by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	Contraceptive prevalence rate	39%	46%	
	Adolescent birth rate	21%		
	Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least 4 visits)	92%	92% 47%	100% 90%

	Unmet need for family planning	26	26	0
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**Table 5: Improvement on maternal health**

**Data source KDHS 2009 and national Road for achieving MDG5**

**MDG GOAL 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**

A major reproductive health concern that has continued to affect a large population of Kenyans in their reproductive ages is Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), HIV, and AIDS. Uasin Gishu County has achieved a steady reduction in HIV and AIDS prevalence from 14 % and 8% in urban and rural areas in 2002 to 7% and 6.5% in urban and rural areas in 2007 respectively. This rate further reduced to 4.5% in 2012 and is less than the national prevalence level of 5.6%. Despite this positive development, the prevalence rate of 4.5% is still high and the county must still aim at achieving the target of 3.5% by 2017. The latest Kenya Aids Indicator Survey (KAIS 2012) reported a HIV prevalence of 5.6 % which is a decrease from 6.3 % reported in KDHS 2003. The number of new infections fragmentation reduced sharply from over 300,000 new infections to an estimated 100,000 new infections in 2013. However, the rate of decline in new infections has stabilized in the last 10 years.

There was a moderate increase in the proportion of young people aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV and AIDS in the 2003 and 2009. Though there was an increase in knowledge for both sexes, women continue to report a lower comprehensive knowledge compared to their men counterparts..

HIV prevalence by age and gender



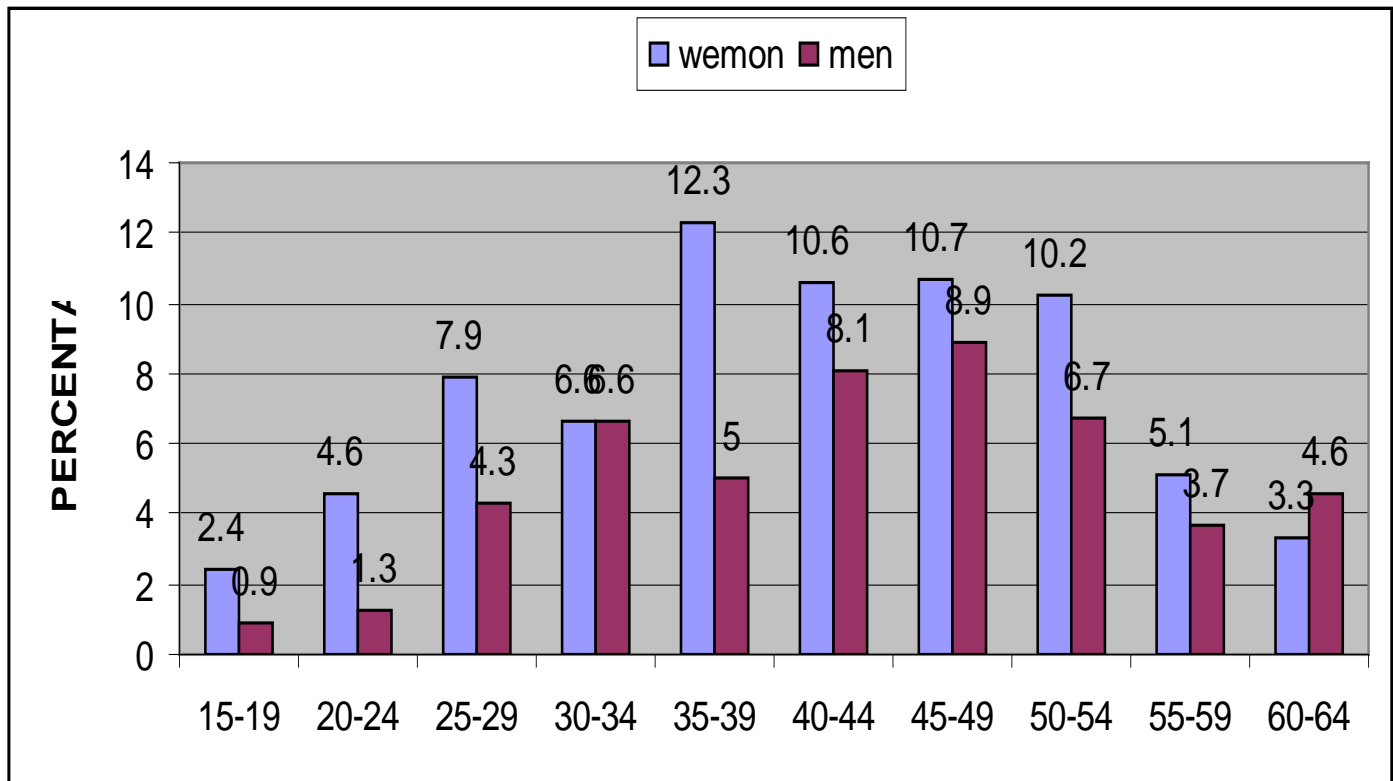


Table 6:HIV prevalence rates

Source: Source:KAIS (2012)

**MDG GOAL 7: Ensure environmental sustainability**

The achievement of Goal number 7 targets reversing rate of deforestation and ensuring environmental sustainability. Land owners are being advised to put at least 10% of land acreage under tree cover. Forest resources are diminishing at a high rate due to population pressure. Forest excisions by the Government for settlement (1993) hived-off some 740 ha of Sangalo forest. The rate at which trees are being filled is higher than the replanting rate. The water supply schemes in Uasin-gishu County include Eldoret Water and sanitation (ELDOWAS), Turbo, Moi’s Bridge, Sosiani, Sambut, Kipkabus, Burnt Forest and Ngeria. Currently, the percentage of population in the County with access to potable water is 42%; although about 90% of the population has access to water within a 2 km radius. The County Intergrated Development Plan also bears a strong linkage with the Strategic Plan of the Municipal Council of Eldoret: 2008 – 2013. The Municipal Plan identified ten pillars that would steer the Council towards the achievement of its Vision. These are: decongestion of CBD; enhancement of disaster management, effective management of solid waste, promotion of environmental conservation and beautification, enhancement of revenue collection, efficient and prudent utilization of resource ensure environmental sustainability hence will go a long way in ensuring environmental sustainability.

**Develop a global partnership for development.**

With regard to Goal number 8, though developed countries had committed themselves to increase their aid to developing countries to 0.7% of GDP the progress in reaching this target has been slow. While Kenya has made good progress towards the

achievement of the MDGs, there are several major challenges and bottlenecks that have slowed down the process thus affecting progress; these should be addressed by the county government in order to achieve the goals by 2015.

According to the integrated plan, Uasin Gishu has an extensive road network comprising of over 300 Kms of Tarmac roads, 549 Kms of marrum, 377 Kms of earth roads. It also boasts 179 KMS of railway line with eight railway stations. In addition, there is an inland container depot. The Moi International Airport and two airstrips are also located in Uasin Gishu easily making it the region’s service hub. The county enjoys about 95% mobile phone coverage which is provided by all the major service providers in Kenya. It also has 16 post offices, four sub-postal offices, and nine licensed service couriers. It is connected to the fibre optic cable thus, giving it access to fast internet connectivity. The availability of these services confirms the county’s potential for fast economic development and an attractive location for investment. With regard to financial services the county has also witnessed significant growth. It has a branch of the Central Bank of Kenya, 21 Commercial banks, 108 urban, and five rural Saccos: five major micro financing institutions. The table below shows data facts about the different MDGs IN Uasin gishu County. All the goals are improving except poverty; this indicates that if count governments are given attention it deserves then MDG goals will be realized within the scheduled period of time. There is a connection between poverty and variables such as social services, urbanization, and infrastructural development.

Health And Education Outcomes	Uasin Gishu	Rank <sup>0</sup>	Kenya <sup>b</sup>
Fully-immunized pop<1yr(% ,2010/11)	76.2	9	64.0
Malaria (as % of all 1 <sup>st</sup> out patient visits)	18.3	18	27.7
TB in every 10,000 people(2009/10)	124	46	39.0
HIV+ antenatal care clients(% ,2010)	3.4	19	5.9
Population with primary education (%)	61.6	43	66.6
Population with secondary education	13.1	15	12.7
Funding per capita in ksh.(2008/2009)	Uasin Gishu	Rank <sup>0</sup>	Kenya <sup>b</sup>
Constituency Development Fund (CDF)	177	41	300
Local authority transfer fund (LATF)	267	9	218
Single Business Permit Revenue by Las	63	12	48
Property Tax Revenues by Las	-	-	70
Rural Electrification Programme Fund	66	31	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>725</b>
Access to infrastructure	Uasin Gishu	Rank <sup>0</sup>	Kenya <sup>b</sup>
Improved water (% households 2009)	88.9	3	66.5
Improved sanitation (% households 2009)	98.0	12	87.8
Electricity (% households 2009)	27.9	6	22.7
Paved roads (as % of total roads)	7.6	14	9.4
Good/fair roads (as 5 of total roads)	50.6	16	43.5
Service Coverage	Uasin Gishu	Rank <sup>0</sup>	Kenya <sup>b</sup>
Delivered in a health centre	30.1	26	37.5
Qualified medical assistant during birth	30.5	26	37.6
Had all vaccinations	72.7	29	75.0
Adequate height for age	74.9	5	59.8
Can read and and write	81.5	12	66.4
Attending school, 15- 18 years	83.0	10	70.9

Table7: Social services, urbanization, and infrastructural development **Source: Commission of Revenue Allocation, 2011.**

Except poverty rate, malaria TB and HIV, all rankings are in descending order i.e highest to lowest. All entries in the 'Kenya' column show county averages.

## V. DISCUSSION

### Enhancing the contribution of County Governments in achieving the MDGs in Kenya

For devolved system to succeed, it must evolve systematically and sequentially. Planning and implementation of decentralized funds is essential. County governments need to identify and enhance their source revenue; focus should be in wealth creation and planning which will have a multiplier effect on the national government. To achieve this, there is a need for Effective County planning commissions suggested as follows by Kurt's "top 10" attributes for the most effective and successful county planning commissions.

#### Membership

The commission's membership is truly representative of formal organizations that are centered on the "important interests" as they exist in the county. That is to say, in Uasingishu County has a great potential to be harnessed Farming, tourism, and business harbor of different groups. The sectors should be well represented by planning commission. Membership also includes a member of the county board, and at large citizen(s). As a result, those sitting around the table at a planning commission meeting have influence and the ability to harness resources (people, time, expertise from various organizations, etc.) in order to achieve the MDG by 2015.

#### Research and proper Records

The county planning commission should have a very detailed and definitive "fact book" or "data book" about the county, which is the information source for all sectors in uasingishu. That becomes the source for grant writing, for the facts for public policy decisions. Policies and interventions will be needed to eliminate the persistent or even increasing inequalities between the rich and the poor, between those living in rural or remote areas or in slums versus better-off urban populations, and those disadvantaged by geographic location, sex, age, disability, or ethnicity: Data collection should be disaggregated to give these variances and fed to the, national MDG Secretariat for use and monitoring progress in the line ministries. Achieving the MDGs will require increased national attention to the welfare of the most vulnerable in the county. In addition, financial support for social safety nets to protect the poor, the unemployed and the socially marginalized should be better targeted and scaled up within the county level.

#### Inclusive Planning Process

The county plan should develop from a very inclusive bottom-up process. The county planning commission should view itself as a facilitator to the planning process, not the author of the county plan. The plan is literally written by stakeholders in the county (interest groups facilitating the MDGs) with a rubber-stamp approval of whatever they wrote as the adopted county master plan. The purpose is to create a sustainable integrated plan that a large number of people believe that they have an investment in, a direct say in the content of, and thus ownership in the plan.

#### Model Documents

The county planning commission regularly (more than one time a year) takes pro-active steps to develop and share sample or model documents (such as, a zoning amendment) to address particular issues (such as, wind energy ordinance sample, medical marijuana, groundwater protection, or new economy-friendly changes to local zoning).

### **Convener**

The county planning commission should recognize different projects to avoid different ministries grappling with a common issue. Next, the commission uses geographic information system resources to define the geographic boundary of that issue. The commission should harmonize budgets and the devolved funds such as CDF, Women enterprise funds, youth fund to avoid duplication of resources. It is necessary for the commission to bring expertise and specialists to that meeting to provide technical assistance in that area of concern (county officials, university resources, public health, and state, federal agency expertise, and so on).

### **Leadership**

The county planning commission set county-wide priorities should be focused and implemented in order of priorities. At this time, that one or two projects may be strategic preparation for the global or new economy. The main priority would be the subject of a county-wide summit (including county board, county department heads, staff/managers and elected and planning officials from each local unit of government), to set the case for, provide education about and facilitate the audience toward future action steps on the issue.

### **Technical Assistance**

The county planning commission needs to provide planning staff technical assistance to local governments in the county (preparing local plans and zoning amendments). This tactic has been among the most effective means of influencing and coordinating planning and zoning in a county. In addition, a county executive committee can establish a Citizens' Service Centre at these levels: (a) the county, (b) the sub-county, (c) the Ward, and any other decentralized level.

The Citizens' Service Centre shall serve as the central office for the provision by the county executive committee in conjunction with the national government of public services to the county citizens. The governor shall ensure the use of appropriate information and communication technologies at a Citizens' Service Centre to aid in the provision of timely and efficient services to the county citizens.

Good initiatives, such as Economic Stimulus Package, Njaa Marufuku Kenya, Kazi KwaVijana, Quick Wins, Women and Youth Enterprise Fund among others, have great potential of impacting directly and effectively the livelihoods of the poor. Focus should be placed on ways of improving targeting, ensuring that the poor are not only included but also involved in protecting the gains that have been made. There is a need for a better communication strategy. Some of these initiatives are still largely unknown to many of the potential beneficiaries. Where gains have been made public communication is necessary so that stakeholders participate in safe guarding these gains and information given on identification of factors and incidences that

indicate a reversal is beginning so that corrective action is taken at the lowest levels of accountability. There is some disconnect between the policy makers and planners on one hand and the poor and vulnerable on the other.

### **Hosts Networking**

The county planning commission requires to organize and hosting regular (monthly or quarterly) meetings of professional planning staff employed by governments in the county and zoning administrators. Emerging issues in the county should be discussed. This gets shared back to the planning commission that uses the information to further implement items; eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development.

This helps set county wide priorities and identifies needed updates or additions to the ultimately may become an amendment to the county plan.

### **Education**

Lack of education is another major obstacle to accessing tools that could improve people's lives. For instance, poverty and unequal access to schooling perpetuates high adolescent birth rates, jeopardizing the health of girls and diminishing their opportunities for social and economic advancement. Contraceptive use is four times higher among women with a secondary education than among those with no education. For women, progress was seen over the last decade. More synergy is necessary between the ministries of health and education to link these benefits in the poorest households and among those with no education is negligible. Considering the high population of youth and knowing that the youth are unlikely to seek reproductive health services as currently provided, it is important to find serving them in a more friendly, caring, welcoming, and youth responsive environment. The county planning commission should work with its ministries planning in order to improve on literacy level in the region,

### **New/Global Economy**

The county planning commission and county board should that in today's world job creation and economic development is a multi-pronged effort. For a county, the two factors (1) traditional economic development with tax incentives, industrial parks, business retention activities that is done by an economic development organization, and (2) efforts to attract and keep skilled, talented and entrepreneurial people through population attraction strategies, place making and asset inventories all of which become the unique quality of life for the region/county. This is best done through a coordinated county or multi-county planning and zoning effort.

## **VI. CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD**

Planning commissions have played an instrumental role in facilitating and implementing activities in the county governments within countries which have had successful devolved system. The projections in this paper assume that

adoption of Kurt's "top 10" attributes for the most effective and successful county planning commissions will enhance the sustainability of county governments. In Kenya adoption of the attributes will facilitate the achievement of MDGs by 2015. Efforts to create a favorable investment climate infrastructure are expected to boost economic growth. Political, institutional, and social economic environment is vital in the development of county governments in Kenya. Political commitment is required from the highest levels of government. This will require lobbying through the ministers in charge of health sector ministries and ideally the commitment of the President himself. The output of this activity is an official declaration that MDGS be given priority in Kenya. This is expected to provide a basis for an increased allocation of funds and the pooling of efforts by other government agencies and development partners in support of achieving the MDGs. Political commitment is also required at the county level. County governments will be key in implementing interventions related to achieving almost all the MDGs in their budget allocations and activities. It is necessary to put in place a measure that ensures effective implementation of the new constitution. It is necessary to ensure equitable distribution of resources and local citizens participatory in county projects. County projects and role of decentralized funds should be harmonized to avoid duplication of projects and improve utilization of funds. Finally, accountability in the county can only be achieved through institutionalizing powerful mechanisms that hold public officials responsible for their actions as servants of the people.

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