

**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEMOCRACY FUND  
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10**



**UDF-KEN-11-420: Enhancing Public Participation and Oversight in County  
Planning and Procurement in Kenya**



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## I. Executive Summary

### (i) Project Data

County Planning and Procurement in  
implemented by Ufadhili Trust between August 2013 and July 2015; extended to January 2016. Implementation was supported by the Ujamaa Center. The original project budget was \$202,500. As part of the extension agreement, the grantee only received \$137,000. Ajibika had the objective to enhance the participation of CSOs and citizens in county planning and procurement. Activities and outputs were expected to lead to the following two outcomes:

- Increased participation of citizens and CSOs in generating reliable data, monitoring, oversight and advocacy concerning county planning and procurement
- Increased public awareness, publicity and data sharing on county planning and procurement

Beneficiaries were CSOs and citizens in Kwale, Machakos and Siaya counties. Main activities and expected outputs were the development of an ICT portal (website and mobile application); recruitment of community monitors; training of community monitors and CSOs/CBOs on the ICT portal and aspects around county governance and community mobilization; use of social media; introduction of a system for vetting county suppliers; provision of small grants for participating CSOs/CBOs; and organization of outreach/advocacy/publicity events. County officials were included in public awareness and information-sharing activities.

### (ii) Evaluation Findings

In the recent context of devolved government in Kenya, the project was very **relevant** to the rights and responsibilities of citizens, including women and people living with disabilities, and to civil society needs. Interviewees particularly appreciated the creation of new virtual spaces: especially WhatsApp groups for sharing information on county governance and public projects and the mobile application for universal access to such information. Those voicing an opinion agreed that Ajibika should continue to be rolled out to other counties.

Risks lack of cooperation

application under time pressure and with a limited budget; and time organising and producing content before going online. The website has been stable for the most part. The mobile application was more challenging and until recently experienced technical bugs. In addition, Ajibika posted video clips on YouTube. It informed and provided space for interaction with a wider audience through tweets and Facebook. For those without smartphones, the project sent out mass SMSs. The website explicitly acknowledges generous support from UNDEF. Tweets and Facebook posts are signed with Ufadihili Trust and UNDEF.

Care has been taken to generate reliable information for publication, including identifying community monitors with integrity and without political ambitions and a two-prong approach









The official unemployment rate is about 12%, which is high for a country with large informal and traditional sectors. Annual entrants to the workforce at approximately 800,000 far outstrip formal job creation at approximately 50,000.

The development perspective in Kenya is manifested by various complex challenges -



### III. Project strategy

**(i) Project approach and strategy**

Ajibika was born in anticipation of devolution in Kenya, which was officially launched in 2013 after the election of 47 new county governors and county assemblies. Although not explicit in the project document, the project should also be considered in light of expected general elections in 2017. It is anchored within civil society organizations and self-help groups at county and community levels and its implementation on the ground depends largely on volunteers. The approach was to set up informal, civil society-owned and participatory, grassroots-based county-level information gathering and monitoring mechanisms; to provide a central web-portal as a repository for sorely-lacking information around county governance<sup>4</sup>; and to profit from social media as a virtual space for inter-active real-time dialogue on the same.

The uniqueness of the project lies in the digital platform and use of social media i.e., the Ajibika website ([www.ajibika.org](http://www.ajibika.org)), a free mobile phone application with the same name and contents, a Facebook page, a Twitter account, YouTube clips, and local-level Ajibika WhatsApp groups. For those without smartphones, the project also created the possibility for Ajibika bulk SMSs. \$16,000 (7.9%) were budgeted for the website and mobile application.

At the county-level, the project set-up was informal and for the major part dependent on volunteerism and goodwill. 30 trained community monitors from each county were to play a central role in the project. The evaluation team was able to meet four of them in Kwale County and eight in Machakos, including the community monitor leaders. \$19,200 (9.5%) was budgeted for community monitor allowances. The project also trained CSOs and CBOs on the ICT platform and on public planning, procurement, advocacy and citizen mobilization

capacities, network and publicize Ajibika. The budget envisaged for this, \$61,500 (30.4%), was the largest individual budget line. The table in annex 5 provides an overview of trainings and meetings organized according to information provided in the final report. They are far less than planned. Meetings and events were also the place where the project reached out to and engaged county officials. K K N K project and its objectives varied according to civil society interviewees.

The project was managed by U(p)23(l)22(23(d)23( )-23(s)-32(.))TJis an75 465.43 288.25 Tm[[254(5)2



A study of the final narrative report suggests that just over half of the expected outputs (6 out of 10) were accomplished under outcome 1 (

## IV. Evaluation findings

**Increased participation of citizens and CSOs in generating reliable data, monitoring, oversight and advocacy concerning county planning and procurement**

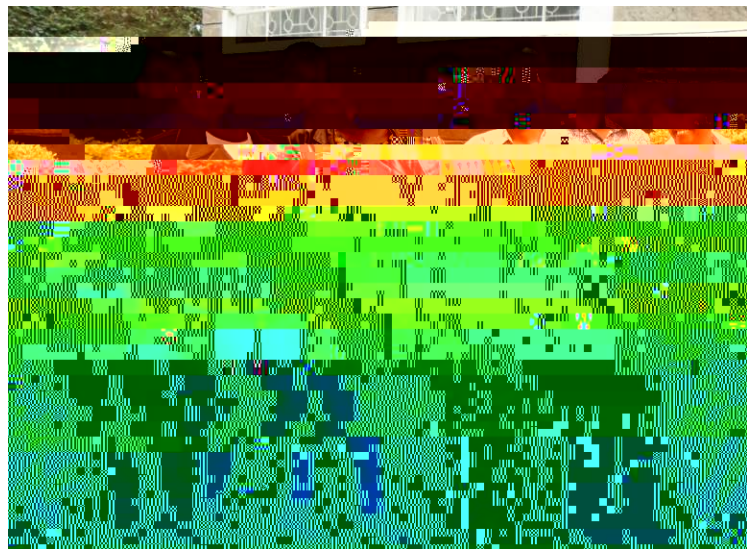
Under this outcome, 30 community volunteers were identified to work as community monitors for the duration of the project. Those met by the evaluation team were associated with local CSOs/CBOs. They were trained on social auditing and the use of the Ajibika ICT platform. Moreover, between September 2013 and October 2014, selected CSO/CBO representatives were trained on aspects related to county governance. Interviewees voicing an opinion

On numerous occasions, interviewed community monitors in Kwale and Machakos counties had physically shared their information and knowledge with and sensitized and mobilized communities to become interested in and be more active citizens in county governance and public participation mechanisms. Some of these citizens, in turn, also volunteered to become community monitors. Therefore, in both counties, the number of active community monitors in

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K K K N

K - organically grew beyond the initial core group.



**A group of Machakos community monitors**

Through participatory social auditing, community monitors took and followed up on concrete issues of concern to the public, including through making use of the expertise and networks of the involved CSOs/CBOs and engaging with county officials. There was generally a feeling of satisfaction that public participation and accountability was being taken more seriously by both rights holders and duty bearers, and that it was more inclusive. However, the community mobilizers also faced challenges. These included (1) an engrained handout mentality of many citizens; (2) suspicion, resistance and misconceptions on the part of some county officials but also citizens; (3) limited resources for reaching remote villages; and (4) being singled out and even threatened.

“Civil society is more vibrant now...  
K LK celebrate  
what is right and address what is  
**Civil society member in  
Kwale County**

It is worth noting that th

K K N K KL K

publicize and act on. Ways to achieve this were several. In Machakos County, care was taken to identify community monitors with integrity and without political ambitions. In Kwale County, a code of conduct was apparently developed.<sup>12</sup> Generally speaking, the project applied a two-pronged approach to vetting information before publishing it at the community monitor level and at the level of project management and implementation. At

<sup>12</sup> The evaluators were unable to get hold of a copy.









mobilization around a collapsed bridge impeding transport and movement of goods in Machakos; (6) access to blocked funds managed by the Machakos Social Welfare and Empowerment Board to empower youth, women, the disabled and the elderly; and (7) the Machakos referral hospital is now disabled-friendly.

**(v) Sustainability**

Sustainability is an issue. The sustainability of Ajibika is unpredictable, although willingness to continue, and even upscale, is there all round. At the time of the evaluation, the Ajibika website, mobile application and social media communication instruments continued to exist, were up-to-date and even covered additional counties. Whether this stays this way depends on Ufadhili Trust. The organization intends to submit a proposal for a next phase to UNDEF and to approach other potential donors.



Being embedded in local organizations at county level is important for sustainability. All the same, in the absence of formalized/institutionalized data gathering and monitoring mechanisms, Ajibika relies on individuals and CSOs/CBOs to first - continue the work within their respective counties and second - for them to continue sharing information for uploading on the central Ajibika web portal. It also depends on how Ufadhili integrates Ajibika into its other projects, which it intends to do.

The project came to an end in January 2016. In actual fact, civil society interviewees in Machakos County felt that the discontinuation of the Ajibika project had per se weakened the Ajibika brand. Interviewees in both Kwale and Machakos noted that some crucial activities were no longer possible (at least not to the same extent), such as community sensitization and mobilization, organizing platforms for dialogue on sensitive issues among rights holders and duty bearers, and refresher trainings.

**(vi) UNDEF added value**

UNDEF is for sure not the only donor supporting public participation in democratic decision-making processes at county level. It is part of a broader movement. Interviewees were asked what they knew about UNDEF and whether there were advantages and/or disadvantages to being UNDEF-funded.

At the project management level, interviewees were grateful for ? 0 They appreciated its patience and contrary to many donors - hands-off support, relying on the K N K N Interviewees at county level lacked knowledge about UNDEF.

## V. Conclusions

**(i)** In the context of introducing devolved government and strengthening public participation in Kenya, and in view of preparing for forthcoming general elections, the project was very relevant. **Its support for monitoring, information dissemination and social mobilization is consistent with civil society needs.**

**(ii)** The strategy to use ICT to support monitoring by civil society is innovative and promising. It has the potential to reach a much wider audience than conventional projects.

**(iii)** The project did not deliver all planned outputs. Known reasons are delays designing and developing the Ajibika website and mobile application, unavailability of information for contractor vetting, and a change in approach to strengthening CSO advocacy. In particular, far less meetings were organized than expected





## Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

### Project documents and websites UDF-KEN-11-420:

Project document  
2nd Milestone Verification Report 31.7.2014  
Mid-term Narrative Report 5.5.2015  
Milestone Financial Utilization Report (M2) 27.5.2015  
Project extension request 15.7.2015  
3rd Milestone Verification Report 28.8.2015  
Milestone Financial Utilization Report (M3) 27.10.2015  
Final Narrative Report 27.2.2016  
Draft Final Financial Report 1.6.2016  
<http://www.ufadhilitrust.org/>  
<http://www.ujamaakenya.org/>

### External documents and websites:

The Constitution of Kenya 2010  
Jane Murutu, 2014; Enhancing Public Participation in County Governance. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Nairobi  
Institute of Economic Affairs, 2015; Review of status of Public Participation and County Information Dissemination Frameworks: A Case Study of Isiolo Kisumu Makueni and Turkana  
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## **Annex 4: Acronyms**

CBO	Community-Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
MCA	Member of County Assembly
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme





Nairobi			
When?	Who?	What?	