ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS THROUGH INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CBMS

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Abstract

Background:
The lack of appropriate local information about the poor hinders development planning and programs, and constrains efforts to monitor change in Zambia. The Zambia Research and Development Centre (ZRDC) has developed, tested, and implemented the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS); and is now in the process of institutionalizing CBMS in all Councils. The main objectives of CBMS to be addressed in this project are: To diagnose the extent of poverty at the local level (particularly at ward level), Formulate appropriate plans and programs to address problems, Provide the basis for rational allocation of resources, Identify eligible beneficiaries for targeted programs, Monitor and assess the impact of programs and projects.

Design/methodology/approach:
The distinctive features of CBMS are that: It is a census of households and not a sample survey, it is rooted in local government and promotes community participation, it uses local personnel and community volunteers as monitors, it has a core set of simple, well-established indicators and that it establishes data-bank at all geo-political levels within the country. CBMS implementation is an Eight-Step Process: Step 1: Advocacy/organization, Step 2: Community Capacity Building, Step 3: Data collection and field editing, Step 4: Data encoding and map digitization, Step 5: Processing and mapping, Step 6: Data validation and community consultation, Step 7: Knowledge (database) management, Step 8: Dissemination. This project was carried out in line with this methodology in about thirty five Local Administrative Units (councils) across Zambia and set of indicators were formulated for the data collection tools (household questionnaires). Focus group discussions were also used in order to authenticate data which was collected using questionnaires.

Findings:
CBMS has showed that good public policy choices for empowering and uplifting the poor are best made when local authorities and communities work together and are guided by sound data and evidence-based analysis. This is vital for ensuring effective public spending and greater public accountability. Enabling Conditions for CBMS implementation are: Decentralization which facilitates the adoption of CBMS, Political commitment is key to sustainability, Public participation is important, CBMS is cost-effective. CBMS empowers the community by building its capacity to participate in diagnosing the problem and offering solutions, CBMS improves the

allocation of resources by making it easier to prioritize interventions, CBMS increases equity in resource allocation, CBMS helps to monitor the impact of projects and programs, thus contributing to poverty-reduction efforts.

Originality/Value:
The institutionalization of CBMS is designed to enable Local Administrative Units (councils) accurately determine the magnitude of poverty and other prevailing socio-economic problems and to formulate programs and policies based on regular up-to date information in order to provide practical solutions, increase transparency and accountability of local governments in resource allocation, thereby improving governance. This project has demonstrated that CBMS data can be used for: Monitoring public expenditures and donor programs, enabling gender-responsive budgeting, tracking progress toward the MDGs, Better targeting of program beneficiaries, sounding an early warning.

Key words: Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS), Institutionalization, enhancing, effectiveness, Local Government Administrative Units.

1.0 Introduction
The development of Community Based Monitoring System started in the Philippines with a design proposed by Florentino and Pedro under the Micro Impact of Macroeconomic Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) phase ii project in 1992. Reyes and Alba modified the proposed system in 1994, initially designed to be established in sentinel areas and they recommended for it to be Local Government Unit-based to ensure its sustainability. Afterwards, the proposed system was pilot-tested in barangays and pandi, Bulacan in 1995 and 1996 and was further refined and documented in a paper by Reyes and Ilarde in 1996. CBMS was implemented in Puerto Princesa City in November 2001. The system was further simplified to enable all types of local government units (LGUs) to implement the system (MIMAP-Philippines, 2003).

CBMS evolved in the Philippines starting with the province of Palawan, one of the hurdles provincial officers faced when they began to plan the 1999 budget was lack of detailed municipal, village, household, and individual level information. This led officials to the CBMS development through the IDRC funded MIMAP-Philippines project. Therefore, the provincial governor issued an executive order for the creation of CBMS technical working groups within local governments, setting the stage for its institutionalization throughout the province (Celia Reyes and Evan Due, 2009). It was then noted in the 2004 review of the MIMAP program commissioned by IDRC that "Local officials acknowledged that the community based monitoring system made possible by the MIMAP helped depoliticize and strengthen the local government's budget allocation process by providing an objective basis for budget prioritizing (Saumier, Habito, & Njinkeu, 2004).

Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS) is an organized way of collecting ongoing or recurring information at the local level to be used by local government agencies, NGOs, and civil societies for planning, budgeting and implementing local development programs as well as for monitoring and evaluating their performance. Fundamentally, it is a tool for improved local governance and democratic decision making that promotes greater transparency and accountability in resource allocation (Celia Reyes & Evan Due, 2009).

It is a well-established demographic fact that populations are dynamic in nature, being heavily influenced by the interaction of fertility, mortality and migration which consequently determine its size. It is on this basis that the institutionalization of CBMS becomes vital in order to fill gaps

in data needs for planners and decision makers because unlike the census of population and housing and other surveys which are usually conducted by the Central Statistical Office, CBMS is designed to provide regular and up to date information as well creating a reliable data bank which can be used to perform populations projections during the planning process in order to provide meaningful and sustainable local planning and development.

While scholars have long been used as advisors by politicians and government administrators, it has been on an individual rather than an institutional basis (Charles Hirschman, 1981). The institutionalization of CBMS is designed to provide timely and accurate data for good analysis and policy application. Data-supported decision-making which is a continuous process of assessing, prioritizing, planning, implementing, evaluating, and reporting can be easily achieved through CBMS as well as taking into account people, issues, ethics, and broader system effects.

The major distinctive features of CBMS include the following: it is a census and not a sample survey, it is rooted in local government and promotes community participation, it uses local personnel and volunteers as monitors, it has a core set of simple, well established indicators and that it establishes a databank at all geo-political level. Moreover, the data can be disaggregated by region, gender, socio-economic group, age, ethnicity and other variables. Because the monitoring exercises are conducted regularly and the results processed rapidly, data is useful for ongoing local government planning.

The implementation of the community based monitoring system requires strong partnerships between researchers, local government officials, and communities within local administrative units and it is also important to indicate that enlisting and orienting the community determines success from the outset. CBMS is designed to be rooted and institutionalized within local government administrative units, in this regard; it is easier to train local researchers and increase community involvement and participation in local developmental programs. The institutionalization of CBMS creates a link where communities are easily mapped. For example, community assets such as land, water and forestry can be mapped to be improved or developed.
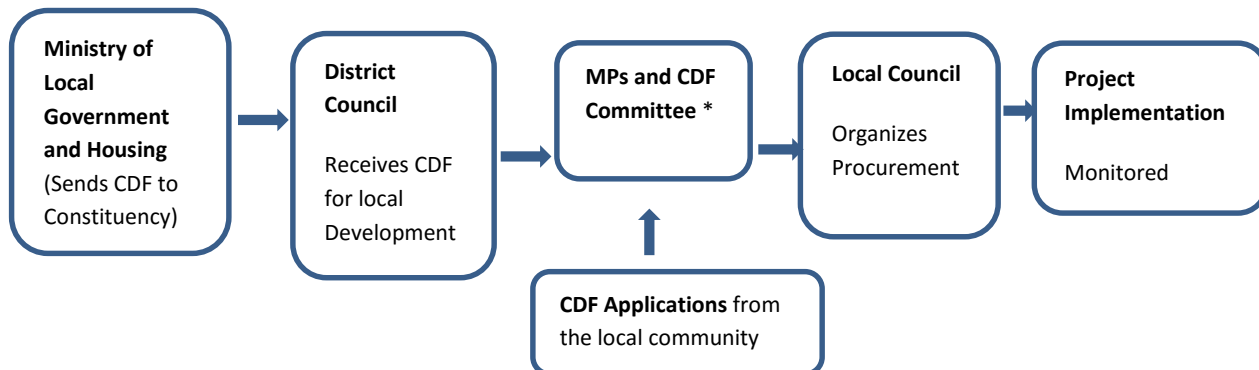
1.2 Statement of the problem

Constituency Development Fund (CDF) schemes are decentralization initiatives which send funds from the central government to each constituency for expenditure on development projects intended to address particular local needs. Civil society groups have formulated a number of proposed reforms to address these implementation issues including proposals to improve the representivity and capacity of the CDF Committee and to improve and strengthen citizen participation and accountability (International Budget Partnership, 2010).

To improve the chances of success, attention needs to be placed on some of the common areas of weakness in programmes and projects and these are: Planning and programme definition, Stakeholder involvement, Communication and Monitoring and evaluation (UNDP, 2009). Development plans, based on an objective, needs driven assessment of future development requirements including the amount of land that needs to be zoned for particular purposes, will help to build public confidence in the preparation of those plans and their implementation (Government of Ireland, 2007).

The Zambian government has consistently provided and increased Constituency Development Fund and other grants to local authorities since its inception. The philosophy behind CDF is to have a fund in which communities can participate in different processes of project identification

and selection. The ultimate goal is to use CDF to speed up development at community level by providing the much needed infrastructure such as markets, schools and clinics, upgrading of existing infrastructure, works on community roads etc. CDF is administered by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing through a municipal or local council.

Figure 1.0 - Constituency Development Fund Process in Zambia

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┌─────────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────┐
│ Ministry of     │     │ District     │     │ MPs and CDF  │     │ Local Council│     │ Project      │
│ Local           │ ──> │ Council      │ ──> │ Committee *  │ ──> │              │ ──> │ Implementation│
│ Government      │     │              │     │              │     │ Organizes    │     │              │
│ and Housing     │     │ Receives CDF │     │              │     │ Procurement  │     │ Monitored    │
│ (Sends CDF to   │     │ for local    │     │              │     │              │     │              │
│ Constituency)   │     │ Development  │     │              │     │              │     │              │
└─────────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘     └──────────────┘
                                                    ↑
                                          ┌──────────────────┐
                                          │ CDF Applications │
                                          │ from the local   │
                                          │ community        │
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* CDF Committee: 9 Members: 1MP, 2 Councilors, 1 Chief representative, 1 Council Officer, 4 Community Members -Selected by MP

Source: (Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, 2013).

The administration of these funds has been characterized by low levels of community participation, lack of transparency and accountability leading to continued underdevelopment in the communities (Forum for Youth Organizations in Zambia, 2012). The CDF committees hardly represent local people because politicians have too much authority and can easily manipulate the process.

The major problems with the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) include the following: lack of transparency, lack of community participation and undue political influence. It is evident that local people hardly participate in their local development plans, in most cases they are not consulted about what needs to be done in their locality in order to improve their living conditions and this makes local administrative units ineffective in performing their mandate. The institutionalization of CBMS is designed to resolve all the current challenges because it is to be rooted within the local administrative units, it calls for wider involvement of local people and it establishes transparency and accountability in the local development process.

1.3 Significance of the study

This study is designed to test the effectiveness of CBMS in enhancing the effectiveness of local government administrative units. It seeks to provide evidence concerning the need to institutionalize CBMS as a tool for good governance and policy decision making. It is intended that the findings generated by this project will contribute significantly to the body of knowledge.

2.0 Objectives of CBMS

The general objective of this project is to test the core CBMS objectives and assess the effectiveness of the system in fighting poverty. Specific objectives of CBMS include the following: To diagnose the extent of poverty at the local level, To formulate appropriate plans and programs to address problems, To provide the basis for rational allocation of resources, To identify eligible beneficiaries for targeted programs and to monitor and assess the impact of programs and projects. To diagnose poverty, this project used the CBMS set of indicators.

3.0 Conceptual/theoretical background or framework
3.1 Community Driven Development Model
As a development strategy, the primary objective of Community Driven Development (CDD) model is to stimulate the types of changes that will promote local development. Over the last 60 years, economic historians have studied the process of economic and social change. No single factor perfectly predicts (economic, social, political) development. However, the institutions that frame how individuals and groups interact economically, socially and politically seem to be important for understanding the capability of some societies to sustain development (North, D, 1981). The primary objective of communities in the CDD strategy is to provide a common base for decision making and action. There is, however, great variation in the conceptual and practical definitions of communities across CDD interventions.

York summarizes the foci of Community Development Theory include the organization of community agencies, the developing of local competences, and political action for change. Paiva calls the theories tenets structural change, socioeconomic integration, institutional development, and renewal Schiele summarizes the work of Community Development as collective problem solving, self-help, and empowerment. Pandey refers to the strategies of Community Development as distributive, participative, and human development. Payne refers to developing social capital, social inclusion and exclusion, and capacity building (York, Paiva, Sochile, Panday & Panay, cited in Alison, 2009). The community driven development model is the most suitable framework under which the institutionalization can flourish because it is consistent with the philosophy of CBMS and can easily be contextualized easily in Zambia.

3.2 CBMS case studies
CBMS research work has been undertaken in Burkina Faso, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. However, the extent of CBMS work varies across these countries in terms of level of research development and implementation, methodology, and indicators being monitored (CBMS Network Coordinating team, 2003). Focusing on basic needs in communities, identifying the poor for socio-economic programs and evaluating their progress and success require reliable information (Vu, 2007). In a commune Lam Dong province, researchers found that only half of the poor households were receiving the credit to which they were entitled under the poverty-alleviation program, and that they were using it to meet basic consumption and not for longer term production-oriented poverty reduction activities as intended (Asselin and Vu, 2005).

The lessons from Bangladesh were consistent with those from Philippines and Vietnam and these included, support and training need to be provided to local people in collecting and tabulating data, the systems' sustainability rests on the involvement of governments. The researchers also found that information dissemination by the local government officials was instrumental in mobilizing people. Local authorities also noted that the information gathered helped to identify those who should benefit from the public programs such as government issued vulnerable group feeding cards (Guha, 2006). In Cambodia it was found that, Commune councils need adequate information gathered in a systematic and reliable way in order to effectively conduct needs assessments, planning, monitoring and evaluation of developmental projects (Sothearith, et al, 2006).

In Indonesia, subsequent efforts by the local government proved costly and unsatisfactory largely because of weak methodology and training of personnel (Suryadama et al, 2005). In Sri Lanka, the project yielded a detailed picture of the communities and confirmed the importance of locally

relevant multi-dimensional indicators. The researchers concluded that although CBMS could become a vital tool in Sri Lanka, it can materialize only if a concerted effort is made to change the status quo with respect to lack of capacity and empowerment within local governments (Hettige, 2005). The persisting marginalization of local government institutions within the Sri Lankan political system had been a hindrance to institutionalizing CBMS within the local government framework in Sri Lanka" (Hettige, 2007). In Benin, it was noted that the census highlighted great disparities in the communities. This Cotonou's municipal council took to heart "This survey made it possible for the town council to give this district a real face" said Mayor Nicephore Dieudonne Soglo (CBMS, 2008).

4.0 Research Design/Methods/Approach

The Zambia Research and Development Centre has developed, tested, and implemented the Community-Based Monitoring System. On account of the fact that CBMS is a census of households and not a population survey, and that it has its established core set of indicators, CBMS has its distinctive methodology as highlighted in the introduction which does not in any way violets reliability and validity. Below is the summary of the CBMS methodology and its implementation

Advocacy and organization: Firstly, data requirements were identified and it was clear that there were gaps in information intended for planning and decision making based on the challenges of census and surveys. Then a work plan was developed which detailed the commitments of all parties and involvement of key human resources at all levels, as well as financial and physical for training, data collection, processing, validation, database management and dissemination. Local government units were highly committed and ensured to use the data generated, they provides directives and approved ethical clearance letters for the enumerators.

Data collection: Questionnaires consistent with the core CBMS indicators were developed for households and enumerators were identified and trained to collect data in 35 wards randomly generated, targeting 100 households in each ward. Data was collected through household interviews and focus group discussions were also used for field data validation and verification.

Data encoding and map digitization: Maps and photographs of an area or specific location were generated and used to illustrate how people view their area: what they like or dislike or improvements they would like to see. Data from the questionnaires was also encoded and excel data files built for analysis in statistical tools. *Processing and mapping*: processing is very vital since the results form the basis for local planning and program implementation. Before processing the results, CBMS data was checked for its consistency, accuracy and completeness. Thereafter, results obtained were digitalized on local maps to show variations among regions.

Data validation and community consultation: the results were presented in a community forum where the extent of poverty in its different dimensions was assessed and discussed, the cause of poverty were diagnosed and discussed and explained, and appropriate interventions were also identified. *Knowledge (database) management*: Based on the fact that CBMS regularly collects data unlike census and surveys, it therefore collected so much information and this leads to creation of a databank at all geo-political levels. ZRDC is in the process of setting up a CBMS databank. *Formulation of plans*: based on the information established through CBMS, it was easier to set up development plan for each local community. CBMS makes decision making more logical because it is based on empirical evidence, it calls for community involvement, rational allocation of resources and greater transparency and accountability in the development

process. *Dissemination, implementation and monitoring*: CBMS reported back to the local community through forums and some reports were generated and shared with the councils. As pointed out in the introduction, ZRDC is currently in the process of institutionalizing CBMS in all local government administrative units.

5.0 Results/findings

5.1 Sample demographics: This project collected data from a total of 3,478 households, sample population in these households was 15,957 and based on these facts, the average household size was found to be 4.59; meaning in each household interviewed, there was an average of about 5 members. Average household size was low because over 82.28% of the wards were based in urban areas. This project found that the majority of the head of households were male making 71.1% while females made up 28.9% of the sample. It was also evident also that there were slightly more females than males making 50.89% and 49.11% in the households respectively.

5.2 Background characteristics: below is the summary of the background characteristics:

Highest level of education of the head of households	Preschool	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Never been to school
Percent (%) distribution	1.5%	21.5%	38%	32.5%	6.5%

Table 1.1   ~ 29.5% of the head of households reported having less than secondary education

Main Profession of the head of households	Farmer	Trader	Civil Servants	Private sector employee	Other
Percent (%) distribution	15%	21.5%	15%	31.5%	17%

Table 1.2 ~ the majority of head of households reported that they were private sector employees.

5.3 Poverty diagnosis: this section presents a summary of the results for poverty diagnosis

Monthly budgetary allocation for food	K100-300	K300-500	K500-1000	Above K1000
Percent (%) distribution of HHs	28%	34%	29%	9%

Table: 1.3 ~ 9% of the households reported allocating above K1000 for food on monthly basis

Average number of meals per day reported by households	One meal	Two meals	Three meals	Four meals
Percent (%) distribution of HHs	1.7%	26%	70.1%	2.3%

Table 1.4   ~ 70.1% of the head of households reported that they had three meals per day

Main Sources of water for the households	River / Stream	Borehole	Well	Tap water
Percent (%) distribution	3.6%	18%	15.3%	63.2%

Table   ~ the majority of households had tap water making 63.2% while 18% had boreholes.

Main Sources energy for the households	Hydro-electricity	Solar	Charcoal	Firewood
Percent (%) distribution	57.2%	2.4%	33.3%	7.15%

Table 1.5   ~57.2% of the households reported having hydro-electricity as their main source of energy, 33.3% reported charcoal, 7.15% reported firewood and 2.4% reported solar energy. It is evident that charcoal consumption is very high hence the need for a policy to address it.

Methods of garbage disposal reported by households	Pit	Burning	Dumping into drainages	Road side dumping	Collected by cobs
Percent (%) distribution	64.5%	11.5%	1%	3%	20%

Table 1.6 ~ the majority of households (64.5%) buried their garbage in a pit, 20% reported that their garbage was collected by cobs, 11.5% burned their garbage, 3% dumped into drainages.

HIV preventive methods used of households	Abstinence	Regular VCT	Correct and consistent use of condoms	Faithfulness to one partner
Percent (%) distribution	25.50%	17.50%	21%	36%

Table 1.7 ~ to prevent HIV, 17.5% reported regular VCT while 21% reported correct and consistent use of condoms

Methods used by households to prevent diseases	Better hygiene	Boiling water	Sleeping under a treated mosquito net	Spraying of mosquitoes
	44.00%	18%	24%	14.00%

Table 1.8 ~ 24% of the members of households slept under a treated mosquito net, 14% sprayed mosquitoes, 44% applied better hygiene and 18% boiled their water before consumption.

6.0 Discussion and Implication of Findings

It was documented that there were slightly more females than males in Zambia making 50.98% and 49.01% (CSO, 2011). The malaria survey of 2012 also confirmed the same fact in 2012 stating that females made up 52.4% and males 47.6% (Ministry of Health, 2012). This fact has been verified by this project, the average household size was found to be 5.1 (LCMS, 2011) while this project found it to be 4.59. The majority of the head of households were found to be in the age group 30-34 making 17%, while this CBMS project found that the majority of the head of households were still in that same age group however, making 18.17%. Therefore, CBMS findings generated by this project were very consistent with other data sources such as census and surveys. Therefore, the CBMS methodology has a high degree to validity and reliability.

Facts brought to light through this CBMS project include the following findings: 70.1% of the households reported having three meals per day, 63.2% had tap water, 57.2% had access to hydro-electricity, 34% allocated K300-500 for food on monthly basis, 32.5% of the head households had tertiary education and 15% were employed by the government. As an HIV preventive measure, 17.5% regularly visited VCT while 21% reported correct and consistent use of condoms. Therefore, it is undoubtedly clear that the institutionalization of CBMS in local administrative units provides a more responsive basis for sound planning and decision making in dealing with local developmental issues. Based on the findings, decision makers can formulate plans and design appropriate and sound policies in order to improve the livelihood of local people. This results have demonstrated the real face of the thirty five wards investigated.

In the statement of the problem, this project has demonstrated that CBMS is a tool for improved governance and greater transparency and accountability in resource allocation and because it collects up-to date data, its institutionalization aims to fill information gaps in diagnosing the extent of poverty at the local level, determining the causes of poverty, formulating policies and programs, identifying eligible program beneficiaries, and assessing the impact of policies and programs. Rational planning and policies can be designed to address the issues raised in the

CBMS findings. The benefits of institutionalization of CBMS include the empowerment of the local population, improved performance in local government administration, build team work and increase expertise, coordinated future developments, protection of resources, celebrate tradition and culture, promote healing and reconciliation and creation of economic opportunity.

In theory, the role of the central government and other outside agents should be to inspire local initiatives that improve community welfare (Passmore, 1972). In the Zambian context the local administrative units are not effective in delivering local development as pointed out in the statement of the problem hence the need to institutionalize CBMS.

7.0 Conclusion
This project has clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of CBMS in diagnosing poverty; it has provided the basis for accurately measuring the magnitude of poverty as well as generating regular information for sustainable local development planning and decision making. The institutionalization of CBMS will therefore enable the creation of databank at all geo-political levels which is vital because it forms the basis for monitoring and evaluating community development programs and assess their viability. It is undoubtedly clear that the institutionalization of CBMS provides a rational basis for setting priorities, and allocation of resources because of its potential to collect regular data and creating a database. In this regard, the institutionalization of CBMS is the only option left for revamping the local government administrative system; build its integrity and credibility by providing transparency and accountability in local developmental process through increased involvement of local community members, which consequently improves the effectiveness of local government administrative units throughout the country.

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