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Hamline University

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Doctoral of Public Administration

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by
Ngulwe Khihebe Alfani

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all aspects,
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2017

Citizen Engagement in Local Government Management in Post-Colonial African Countries: A
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by

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MPA Wichita State University, 2006

B.A. Wichita State University, 2004

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Public Administration

Hamline University
May 2017



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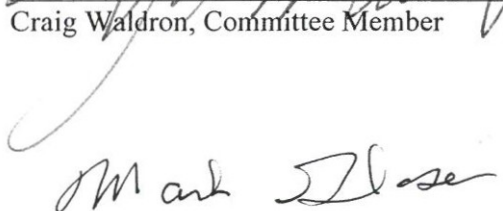
Ngulwe Khihebe Alfani has successfully defended his dissertation, *Citizen Engagement in Local Government Management in Post-Colonial African Countries: A Case Study of the Republic of Burundi*, and should be recommended to the Dean of the School of Business to receive the degree of Doctorate in Public Administration.



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Dedication

In a world of civic engagement, this dissertation is dedicated to my lovely wife, Celine Kihebe, and my sons and daughters: Bourgeois, Buloze, Busara, Aimerite, Esther, and Bonne-Idée Alfani. Thank you for believing and encouraging me. Above all, thank you for allowing me to fulfill my dream. Cheers!

Abstract

Literature on in-depth studies of citizen engagement in local government management in African post-colonial countries is scarce. This qualitative research sought to understand the practice of citizen engagement in four selected African countries, but due to financial constraint, the Republic of Burundi was selected for the study. Data consisted of documentary sources, observational field notes, focus group discussions, and 23 individuals' semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions of Burundian local government, mainly, Marie de Bujumbura and its communes. Data were analyzed through detailed description, categorical aggregation, direct interpretation, and development of naturalistic generalization. The findings from the reading of governmental documents reveal factors that support citizen engagement and participation in the coproduction of public value. These findings also reveal a number of barriers that hinder citizen engagement in Burundi. It was also found that the Burundian populace, civil society actors, government officials, and the groups of interests, including neoliberal players of globalization, were divided in their opinions, views, beliefs, and support for citizen engagement. The implication of this study is that policy debates and service designs of decentralized institutions in Burundi should include and engage citizens in all level of policy making and implementation. The findings are useful for government officials, students, scholars, international organizations, the World Bank Group, and other international organizations operating in developing countries whose policy interventions and production of goods and services require full participation and collaboration with citizens.

Acknowledgements

The Longman Dictionary of American English defines acknowledgment as “admitting or accepting that something is true” and as “expressing appreciation.” Accordingly, let me express my appreciation by admitting that the process of writing this dissertation was solitary and long, but I was not alone in this journey. I want to especially thank those individuals who enabled me to complete this work.

With a heart of gratitude, I want to thank Almighty God for his grace that saw me through my studies. It was not easy to be a single father leaving my teenagers alone while I traveled to Central Africa to do the research for this dissertation. During this journey in Africa came a new life, a woman I met who became a companion to share my life with, a young and loving woman I hope to spend the rest of my life with, Celine Kihebe.

My profound thanks go to Dr. Kristen Norman-Major, my mentor and supervisor, for her assistance and encouragement through my doctoral walk. As one of my first instructors at Hamline University, she birthed in me the ethos of academic writing and supervised this work with fervor and dedication. I am particular grateful to Dr. Craig A. Waldron for his personal interest in my progress and for serving on my committee with great interest and commitment while providing insightful feedback on my draft to enrich this work. Dr. Mark A. Glaser, thank you for your gift of intellectual curiosity and playfulness. I thank you for your understanding of the subject, your input, and your willingness to accommodate your time and work with us while providing your expertise in this area. The class you taught me, Research Methods in Public Administration, birthed in me the value and importance of engaging citizens in the coproduction. Julie M. Bach and Linda O’Malley, thank you so much for your assistance with my dissertation

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I owe a depth of gratitude to the participants in this study for making themselves available to freely share their experiences with me on the subject of factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in their respective collines, zones, communes, and maries. I am indebted to the Harvest Initiatives, in particular to its founder Maitre Onesphore Manirakiza and its current president Donatien Ndagijimana, who encouraged me to meet with the Batwa “Pygmies” community in the Province of Muranyva. Special thanks to Mr. Donatien Ndagijimana, who made himself available all the time and arranged a meeting with the Batwa community. I am grateful to Ferdinand Ndayizigiye, Chef protocole du Maire de Bujumbura, and Kinshasa Christophe, Conseiller Economique de la Mairie de Bujumbura, who helped me acquire all the required paper work and interviews with local leaders to complete this dissertation.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

How can there be peace without people understanding each other, and how can this be if they don't know each other? How can there be cooperative coexistence, which is the only kind that means anything, if men are cut off from each other, if they are not allowed to learn more about each other? So let's throw aside the curtains against contacts and communication. I realize that contact can mean friction as well as friendship, that ignorance can be benevolent and isolation pacific. But I can find nothing to say for keeping one people malevolently misinformed about others. More contact and freer communication can help to correct this situation. To encourage it – or at least to permit it – is an acid test for the sincerity of protestations for better relations between peoples.

~Lester B. Pearson, Acceptance Speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, 1957

On November 28, 2014, a bill amending Law No. 1/02 of January 25, 2010, organizing communal administration in Burundi, was passed (Government of Burundi, 2014). This bill was aimed at political, institutional, and financial decentralization of Burundian institutions, including local government restructuring. In anticipation of the full application of this law, a number of key informants interviewed—officials of local and central government, as well as the World Bank and other non-government organizations operating in Burundi—see the process of decentralization as *the voice of the people* and as a key strategy, offering a real opportunity to engage all stakeholders in a social contract between citizens and power-holders (Gaynor, 2011; World Bank, 2004; World Vision, 2016). The decentralization shows a willingness of the government to bring the administration closer to the administered. The bill gives more power to local power-holders or “Commune Leaders” to decide how administrators will deliver public value. Its applicability, however, seems uncertain (Gaynor, 2011; Pastor Joseph, personal communication, 2016).

In the move from decentralization to citizen engagement in local government management, Gahama (1983) and Hammouda (1995) described a history of mistrust, favoritism,

and discrimination between local administrators and citizens since the 1960s in Burundi. The effect of these types of negative behaviors weakened the environment for civic and citizen engagement. Within this environment of significant and often traumatic events in Burundi, social accountability to citizens became limited. In contrast, in many democracies, especially in the West, citizen engagement and participation in policymaking and service design of local government has been frequently realized (Gibson, 2006).

According to the Western literature, citizen engagement is gaining increasing recognition as an important dimension of democratic reform ideas (Gibson, 2006; Glaser, Samuel & Lee, 2006; Moore, 1995; Svara & Denhardt, 2010). In Burundi, these democratic ideas require deeply held convictions, authenticity, and courage in the face of adversity, alienation, and marginalization. Nabatchi (2012) sees citizen participation as “a space where public concerns, needs, and values are merged into government decision-making” (p. 6). It includes empowering citizens by giving them a voice in the design of public services, full participation in policymaking, and collaborative governance. The 2011 Human Rights Program of Trocaire Burundi, through its defined objectives that rely on the concept of governance and human rights in local government decision and policymaking, aligns with Nabatchi’s (2012) views of increasing the effective participation of citizens, especially women, the poor, and the marginalized (Gaynor, 2011). In pursuit of these goals, Burundians adopted a new form of governance by promulgating a new constitution and installing a democratically elected government since 2005. This form of government aims at strengthening social trust, and improving local administration and service deliveries (Gaynor, 2011; Kinshasa, personal communication, 2016). The issue of how Burundian citizens are themselves equipped to engage in collaborative policymaking and service design is a vexed one. Absent in this form of

governance is the notion of incorporating citizens' input into agencies or local government decision making (Bratton, 2012; World Bank, 2014). This study seeks to understand the barriers affecting citizens' direct involvement in local government management in Burundi.

Background

Historically, citizen engagement and participation before the colonial era existed for centuries in the traditional life of Burundian people. It was part of the norms and customs, and included the selection of community leaders and local traditional kings. In Africa's pre-colonial days, people had an active social, political, and economic life in which all was intertwined (Witte et al., 2009). Colonial administration weakened the traditional kingdoms, oppressed the people, and killed or jailed those who opposed their administrative systems. The practice of participation was reduced to certain traditional ceremonies (Vantemsche, 2012). During the colonial era, absent was the idea of citizens as potential partners in service coproduction. The colonial tradition restricted public life and participation, including voting rights for blacks. Public policy was designed to suit the white population, while other political and administrative policies were restricted for indigenous Africans (Vantemsche, 2012).

Since the colonial era, citizen engagement in Burundi continues to be shaped by the administrative behaviors of power-holders and groups of interests. Indeed, Tréfon (2010) labels the behavior of using top-down methodical approaches as a deliberate hampering of reform by power-holders. The top-down approach allows territorial managers to formulate policy agendas with little or no input from citizens. As John Maynard Keynes remarked in 1937, "There is nothing a government hates more than to be well-informed; for it makes the process of arriving at decisions much more complicated and difficult" (p. 409). This remark goes to the heart of government in Burundi, as Gaynor (2011) observed the top-down administrative approaches

being utilized in Burundi disengage citizens from supporting the government's actions.

Diplomatic efforts started in Arusha/Tanzania in 1993 by the United Nations (UN), the United States, the European Union (EU), and other sub-regional actors resulted in the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement of 2000 (Government of Burundi, 2005). The Arusha Peace emphasized the decentralization of Burundian institutions in response to the failure of the central state and limited the risk of civil conflicts (World Bank Group, 2014). According to the World Bank, decentralization is perceived as a way to ensure political stability, bring public services closer to citizens, and ensure citizens' full participation while improving accountability and responsiveness of local leaders, namely commune administrators. These principles stress giving back citizens the voice and opportunity to be listened to and participate freely in the actions initiated by local leaders (World Bank, 2014). Effective engagement by citizen-centered public services, however, requires political support (Bratton, 2010).

Decentralization, then, is seen as a response to engage citizens in coproduction by moving local power-holders closer to citizens (World Bank, 2014). Political decentralization, as seen by the World Bank Group, aims "to give citizens or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making" (World Bank Group, 2014). By applying this concept, the World Bank and other groups of interests are driven by Oates and Shapiro's (1972) assertion that decentralization improves preference matching by providing greater diversity in public services to a varied population.

Since the Arusha Peace Agreement that emphasized a form of decentralization in Burundi, scholars on decentralization in that country, and the Civil Society Organization (CSO), have confirmed that little progress has been made toward real engagement of citizens in the coproduction of public goods (HI, 2016). Accountability to Burundian citizens at the local level

lags behind (Gaynor, 2011; World Bank Group, 2014). Political incentives to engage citizens in policy making and service design exist through written documents and by “word of mouth” from ruling elites. In action, Burundian citizens continue to suffer from fear of exclusion from direct participation or engagement in local government management (Urvin, 2008). As Gaynor observed, the managerial system applied in Burundi is a top-down model. This system favors top power-holders or elites who continue to allocate resources without input from citizens.

Looking through the lens of informing citizens through the media, both written and broadcasted, the prospect of engaging citizens in coproduction is mixed one. Radio is the main way Burundian citizens are informed, particularly for the majority of the population where literacy is low and access to the internet is nearly absent. In 2015 alone, a number of radio stations were silenced while independent outlets were dismantled (Guardian Africa Network, 2015). Journalists broadcasting opposing information and refusing to align themselves with the administration are facing a campaign of censorship and intimidation (Guardian Africa Network, 2015). The World Bank discovered that “information is the single greatest entry point for fostering social accountability in Burundi” (p.110). An active press operation plays a large role in disseminating information and makes a substantial contribution towards citizen engagement. According to Caro Rolando (2016), many people in Burundi have little to no information about citizen engagement because the press has been squeezed and information controlled. The absence of information allows citizens to feel abandoned (Rolando, 2016). Citizens who feel disconnected from participation in services provided by their local governments remove themselves from participating and are more likely to detract from governmental activities (Glaser, Yeagar & Parker, 2006).

In developing sub-Saharan African countries, including the Republic of Burundi, the

groups of interests, mainly the World Bank and the International Monetary Funds (IMF), opted to promote sustainable reforms through the political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization of governmental institutions. The World Bank (2014), in particular, views this devolution as one of the major achievements to promote social accountability (World Bank, 2014). For the World Bank, participation and decentralization have a symbiotic relationship (p. 92). According to numerous authors, decentralization became a powerful tool to improve governance and bring citizens closer to their local power-holders. As the 2009 Gouvernement of Burundi states:

La décentralisation vise l'objectif de la participation active de l'ensemble de la population à la définition et à la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement économique et social de leur localité. Les résultats attendus d'un processus de Décentralisation sont d'une part le développement local et communautaire, et d'autre part la démocratie locale et la bonne gouvernance (p.10).

Decentralization aims at the active participation of the entire population in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their localities. The expected results from a process of decentralization are, on one hand, local and community development and, on the other, local democracy and good governance. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 10; translation by the author)

In his article, "Normative and Instrumental Perspective on Public Administration," Donald P. Moynihan (2003) points out that,

Participation is a channel for direct democratic voice in decision making, calling for decisions that affect citizens to be made by direct and open involvement of those citizens. A primary goal of this approach to participation is therefore towards greater and direct representation of all citizens. All citizens should be able to provide input, not just those who are qualified by election, position, expertise, influence, or money. Habermas (1989) points to criteria for participation in the public sphere as both including all affected by a decision and disregarding social status of the participants. (p. 169)

In 2011, for instance, Niamh Gaynor observed that active participation and more engagement of citizens in coproduction is what is required in today's local government (communes and zones) in Burundi. Since attaining independence on July 1, 1962, Burundian citizens have suffered

mistrust, fear, ignorance, political manipulation and exclusion, as well as social and economic exclusion at the hands of power-holders (Gaynor, 2011; Urvin 2008, p. 109-110; World Bank, 2014). Harvest International (personal communication, 2016) attests that citizen engagement in policymaking and community participation are marred by fear, intimidation and violence by groups supporting one political party over the other. World Bank's 2014 report on fiscal decentralization and local governance indicated a continued struggle to reach a balance for citizen participation and greater communication. The effect of mistrust over the use of financial revenue collected by the national government became noticeable in the eyes of Burundian citizens (World Bank, 2014). The lack of trust, as observed by Pastor Cankwa Deo (personal communication, 2016), is one of the reasons that detracted citizens from participating in governmental actions, because citizens cannot visibly see the development deriving from the tax funds collected.

According to several authors (Gaynor, Glaser, Urvin, Denhardt, etc.), the predominant interpretation over the years is that when power-holders engage citizens in the coproduction of public value, citizens are more likely to embrace the actions of government and shape attitudes about the openness of the decision-making process (Catlaw & Rawlings, 2010; Glaser et al., 2006). Nowadays, modern governments have become ravenous for information and evidence. Their success depends on much more systematic use of knowledge. This Western approach of providing more evidence for service delivery or engaging citizens in providing better governmental services presents challenges for the practice of local government management in developing countries (Bratton, 2012).

Indeed, the roadblock to achieving civic engagement and participation in policymaking and service design in the Republic of Burundi seems to lie on the three legs of a triangle: power-

holders, groups of interests, and the constituencies. On the power-holders' side, they exercise control and resistance to power redistribution. On the side of citizens, they seem to have a poor knowledge base and difficulty organizing a representative and accountable citizen group in the face of exclusion, ignorance, and distrust. For the groups of interests, they tend to dictate policy agendas and exercise control over policy decisions to be made in either central or local government.

This study uses a combination of methods, including participatory and qualitative, to obtain a well-rounded evaluation of citizen engagement in public service design of local government management. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives of citizen participation in local government management are triangulated whenever possible, and the researcher strives to include as many different perspectives as possible. The study will provide findings and detailed recommendations based on data gathered. The city of Bujumbura (Bujumbura Ville) has been selected for in-depth case study because it has held a posture of political and social antagonism toward its broader community. Continued inter-ethnic violence, lack of access to social services, and massive internal displacement of the population corroded the political and socio-economic conditions needed for citizen engagement (Trefon, 2011). The investigator will try to understand when it is appropriate to use deliberative strategies for involving those outside of government in the policy process and how power-holders think of the public as interacting partners for policy formulation, debate, and implementation.

Statement of the Problem

The conventional predominant interpretation of citizen engagement views decentralization as a way forward toward deep engagement (World Banks, 2014; Caldeira et al., 2012). The World Bank's and other multinational corporations' interpretation, in theory, is that

the system moves local public decision-makers closer to citizens, reduces information asymmetries between governed and governors, increases inter-jurisdictional competition among political powers, and induces a higher degree of accountability (Salmon, 1987; Tiebout, 1956). Even though decentralization has become an important tool for representative governance, in practice, researchers and practitioners alike still have major challenges ahead for its applicability within and outside of local government management.

At a theoretical level, there are two accepted perspectives within the field of public administration about citizen engagement: the normative perspective and the instrumental perspective (Svara & Denhardt, 2010). At a practical level, at a time when there may be many goals and reasons for citizen-state interference, the tendency has been for public administrators and practitioners to focus on both perspectives (Glaser et al., 2006; Moynihan, 2003; Svara et al., 2010). The normative approach focuses exclusively on building citizenship and promoting a sense of community. The instrumental approach has focused exclusively on planning, policymaking, implementation, and service delivery (McNair, Cadwell & Pollane, 1983). Various government texts and Burundian past history on the process of citizen participation point toward normative and instrumental perspectives on public participation, providing citizens with a number of opportunities to participate in coproduction. Moreover, interviews with local officials reveal awareness of the requirement of citizen engagement in local government management. Interviews with local citizens, in turn, reveal that they remain unaware of such opportunities.

In Burundi, the central government uses a strong hierarchical political culture in which people are treated as consumers rather than citizens. At the heart of decentralization in Burundi lies accountability. Accountability to citizens is absent, which creates widespread dissatisfaction with political and public issues. In Crawford's (2009) study on accountability, he argues that

while citizens participate regularly in local policymaking processes, this has not resulted in citizens attaining greater oversight and control over their local government as a mechanism of downward accountability. In the case of Burundi, a significant portion of citizens have been—and continue to be—repeatedly and systematically excluded from active engagement in social and political life even though the text voted for said otherwise.

At an individual level, there is a sense of abandonment, with individuals left alone to fend for or support themselves (Bridges, 1980; Handy, 1996). This creates an increase in the level of cynicism, anger, and a loss of soul to support the government's actions (Moore, 1994). At the neighborhood or community level, there is a feeling of loss of faith (Bridges, 1980), a feeling of unending circles of misery, and lack of hope (Harelimana, personal communication, 2016). Continuing with the experience of dramatic changes in Burundian local administration, Harvest International (HI) described the consequences of a failed communal financial decentralization and lack of transparency and accountability. Within this environment, leaders of relief projects, programs, and policy research initiatives are seeking the voice and versions of poor people themselves to drive change (Lister, 1998, p. 228).

Local governments in Burundi continue to not place citizens at the center of policymakers' considerations, not just as a target but also as an agent of coproduction in pursuit of deep engagement. A Burundian government text on decentralization reads:

*La Décentralisation vise l'objectif de la **participation active de l'ensemble de la population** à la définition et à la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement économique et social de leur localité. Les résultats attendus d'un processus de Décentralisation sont d'une part le développement local et communautaire, et d'autre part la démocratie locale et la bonne gouvernance. (p. 25-26).*

Decentralization is aiming for the active participation of the entire population in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their localities. The expected results of a decentralization process are, on the one hand, local and community

development and, on the other, local democracy and good governance. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 25-26; translation by the author)

In practice, however, the government falls short of meeting its stated vision. Government and local as well as international organizations are failing to develop effective approaches to engage citizens in policymaking and service design (Trefon, 2011). Citizens seem to increasingly perceive local government responsiveness in service delivery and design as weak (Bratton, 2010). This assumption is exacerbated by ineffective institutions, political unrest, governance systems with limited functions, inappropriate allocation of resources, inefficient revenue systems, and weak delivery of vital services. In dealing with these concerns, the groups of interests, including the neo-liberal players of globalization (the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and multinational companies) seem to aggravate the situation by imposing inappropriate programs and agendas to be implemented without input from the primary beneficiaries, the citizens. This notwithstanding, little or no in-depth study has been conducted on citizen engagement in order to explain how, why, and when to use participatory methods and techniques. A need exists in the literature in this regard. This study explores issues or factors that impede citizens' and state actors' coproduction in public sector management in Burundi. A goal of this study is to generate knowledge that will contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of and dynamics around the coproduction of public value. Lessons learned from the experience of the Republic of Burundi are important to determine how, why and when citizen engagement in policymaking and service design is desirable in other developing nations.

Research Questions

1. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local

- government management in Burundi?
- b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?
- 2. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - a. How do these issues or factors encourage, enhance, or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - b. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
 - c. What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy making and service design?

Political Background of Burundi

Before delving into this study, scholars and practitioners in the field of public administration have to understand the contextual development of Burundian society. Burundi is home to three principle ethnic groups, the Batwa (Pygmies), Hutu, and Tutsi. Since gaining their independence from Belgium in 1962, Burundian citizens faced social mistrust that led to several successive waves of ethnic violence. These social, political, and ethnic instabilities have created a climate of distrust within and outside the government sphere (Government of Burundi, 2009). National reconciliation of all ethnic groups and power sharing among them remains one of the key issues of concern to the government of Burundi and its allies.

This qualitative study takes place in the Marie de Bujumbura (Bujumbura Mairie Province) in the Republic of Burundi. This city is one of the 17 provinces that make up the Republic of Burundi. The Marie de Bujumbura consists entirely of the city of Bujumbura, Burundi's capital. Bujumbura Marie is governed by a political appointee, a mayor, who works at the pleasure of the president while delivering services to all urban communes and zones in the

city.

The Republic of Burundi's 17 provinces are further sub-divided into 129 communes. Commune councils are made up of 15 elected members (of which at least five are women) who are elected in a bloc as lists presented by political parties, rather than as individual candidates. Therefore, commune or zone elections tend to be highly politicized, with allegiances to parties rather than a focus on competency or accountability to the electorate (Pasteur Bubala, personal communication, April, 2016).

Bujumbura Mairie province consists of three communes: Commune Muha in the south; Commune Mukaza in the center; and Commune Ntahangwa in the north. These communes can be classified into three categories of neighborhood—upper class, middle class, and poor. Commune Mukaza is located in the heart of the city of Bujumbura. A number of zones located there are considered high-class neighborhoods and the hippest and trendiest neighborhoods in Burundi. This high-priced commune is located at the seat of government administrative agencies, with proximity to downtown market, trade, and finance services. The remaining two communes surround the Commune of Mukaza on the east and west sides of the city. These three communes have at least 13 zones, namely, Buterere, Buyenzi, Bwiza, Cibitoke, Gihosha, Kamenge, Kanyosha, Kinama, Kinindo, Musaga, Ngagara, Nyakabiga, and Rohero (Government of Burundi, 2009).

Analysis of transcripts from the interviews, documents, and observations revealed that citizen engagement in local government management in the Republic of Burundi is in its inception phase. Barriers to citizen engagement and participation in local government management are enormous (Pastor Bulabula, personal communication, March 18, 2016). Citizen shy away from participating or engagement in their municipalities (Zones and Communes) based

on fear, illiteracy, uncertainty, lack of awareness, and political interference as administrators are vested with full and ample power to decide how to administer with or without the voice of citizens. Education is key factor to engagement. According to United Nations Development Programs (UNDP), 7.1 % of adults over the age of 25 have received a secondary education (UNDP, 2013). A large number of adult citizens are illiterate.

Citizens have no power to decide how their local government will be run. All the power is vested to the Administrator who works at the pleasure of their superiors, including governor of the province and the Mayor. The “Manuel de procédures administratives et financières communales Section procédure administratives” reads in part

Les pouvoir de l’Administrateur

L’Administrateur possède des pouvoirs propres dévolus par la loi communale, des pouvoirs exercés au nom de l’Etat et des pouvoirs délégués par le Conseil communal (p. 14).

Dans l’exercice de ses attributions au nom de l’Etat, l’Administrateur communale est soumis à l’autorité hiérarchique du Gouverneur. Le Gouverneur dispose dans ce domaine d’un pouvoir d’annulation des actes de l’administrateur et de substitution.

The Administrator has specific powers conferred by the communal law, the powers exercised on behalf of the state and the powers delegated by the municipal council (p. 14).

In the exercise of its duties on behalf of the state, the municipal administrator is subject to the authority of the Governor. The Governor has in this area of a power of annulment of acts of the administrator and substitution.

The Communal Administrator works at the pleasure of the Governor/Mayor of Bujumbura. The will of the people are neglected. The texts on “Manuel de procédures administratives et financières communales Section procédure administratives” continue to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the hill or district Council.

Within the field of public administration, the need to address the issue of citizen

engagement is supported by many scholars and practitioners, including James H. Svara and Janet Denhardt of Arizona State University. Writing for the Alliance of Innovation, Svara *et al.* (2010) recounted their experience of the problems they encountered when studying issues of citizen engagement in local government management. They wrote:

While we know a great deal about citizen engagement, and it is a growing area of research and action, it is not always clear what the government can and should do in this regard. There is a tradition in community organizing that has focused on pressuring reluctant officials to give politically powerless citizens what they want and deserve. Further, many observers of the current political scene suggest that we are witnessing a rise in “enraged” citizens rather than “engaged” citizens. Experience with town meetings hijacked by partisans seems to indicate that inviting participation is asking for confrontation and discord. As a consequence of these views, a significant amount of the writing about citizen engagement has focused on bringing changes to government from the outside but has not viewed government as a partner or initiator. (p. 1)

Svara & Denhardt (2010) recognized that citizens of a given community are “engaged” when they play an effective role in decision-making. The city of Bujumbura is an inspiring case to study citizen engagement due to its size; its political and administrative system; its ethnic trends in political parties; its diversified problems faced by citizens; and its new law on decentralization that emphasizes the desire of the central government to devolve power to municipalities and their citizens. Thus, as set out in the government of Burundi’s own decentralization philosophy, citizen engagement in Burundi represents a radical transformation from a top-down approach used since the independence to bottom-up management strategies embraced in many developed countries. This strategy includes actions from talking to the citizens and telling them what to do, to talking with them and showing them how to take actions that engage them. In Burundi, many of these attributes are aspirational (what decentralization *should* do to engage citizens) rather than real (what has been observed on the ground). On paper and in promises, the central government provides ways of including citizens’ views in service

design of their local government. The government's own policy requires nothing more than to "strengthen the role of the population in the life of their community" (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 10).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this narrative research on citizen engagement in local government management in the Republic of Burundi is to provide a deeper understanding of how the relations among citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests are shaped for the coproduction of public services. Within the framework and lens of narrative inquiry, the study aims at both understanding and interpreting the factors for and barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management while making meaning of the experiences citizens are facing. The method to be used by the researcher includes a narrative reflection of stories that will be told and retold by participants, in hopes that the results of this study will enable scholars, practitioners, and interested parties to address practical issues that hinder citizen engagement in developing countries. Further purposes of the study are to examine the underlying context that accounts for citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi; examine how citizens in Burundi participate or engage in the coproduction of public value; examine the working relationship among the groups of interests, power-holders and citizens; determine the phenomena and dynamic that deters or encourages the advancement of citizen engagement; and identify theoretical constructs that help to explain these experiences by listening to the stories that participants involved with citizen engagement tell and the images they present to describe their experiences. The research will ask power-holders, the groups of interests, and citizens alike what they believe are the factors contributing toward or barriers preventing people's direct involvement in community or local government affairs in Burundi.

Rationale of the Study

The basic principle of engaging citizens in local government management, as observed by Glaser (2006), requires a long-term commitment to developing relationships and fostering bonds among citizens, power-holders, and groups of interests. Little is known about citizen–state interference at the local level in sub-Saharan Africa (Bratton, 2012). The literature reports no studies on citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. The little existing literature is based on decentralization rather than citizen engagement. Most of the literature on citizen engagement, normative and instrumental, is based on Western/developed countries. According to Bratton (2012), post-colonial African states, including the Republic of Burundi, have fallen short of producing diversified literature on topics of citizen engagement. The political situation in Burundi, especially when citizens’ views and beliefs contradict those of power-holders, is indicative of how citizens may feel about joining the efforts of the government or rejecting them. Some citizens might refrain from participating or engaging for fear of being treated as an enemy of the country (Human Rights Watch Report, 2015). The field of public administration struggles whenever power-holders’ roles fall short of including the voices of citizens in agenda setting, formulation, and service design (Glaser *et al.*, 2006). There is also fear that citizens with different ideas from those of local leaders could likely cause the eruption of chaos and violence in this unstable and already fragmented, fragile and conflict state (Omara & Ackson, 2010).

Moreover, some researchers (e.g. Daan & Bas van, 2012; Glaser *et al.*, 2006; and Moore, 1995) provide convincing preliminary findings that tie citizen engagement to coproduction of public service in the United States and other Western nations. A predominant interpretation over the years is that when power-holders engage citizens in policymaking and service design,

citizens are more likely to embrace the actions of government and shape attitudes about the openness of the decision-making process (Catlaw & Rawlings, 2010; Glaser et al., 2006).

Through citizen engagement, local governments can not only develop a better appreciation of public opinion but also seize the occasion to challenge it while informing and shaping people's preferences (Svara, 2001). Conversely to Western ideas supported by a number of scholars, in promoting social accountability through decentralization, the World Bank cautioned:

Citizen engagement in fragile and conflict states (FCSs) is in particular need of support. Given the weak sociopolitical environment of FCSs, social accountability interventions to support stronger state-citizen relationships need to be explored. Given Burundi's status as an FCS, the critical assumption that low levels of accountability endanger peace is a salient aspect to explore. (pp. 92-93)

In 2009, the Government of Burundi made the political decision to bring public services closer to citizens while involving them in policy debate and decision-making within their localities.

Le Gouvernement de la République du Burundi a, dans son Document de programme 2006-2010, pris l'option politique de rapprocher les services publics de la population et d'impliquer cette dernière dans la prise des décisions et le choix des programmes et projets de développement de leurs collectivités. Celles-ci sont donc désormais appelées à planifier leur développement. Planifier c'est l'action de programmer les interventions dans le temps et dans l'espace avec des moyens correspondants et des interventions articulées les unes aux autres. Le document qui est issu de ce processus c'est le plan, document de référence qui comporte des objectifs et des priorités, des stratégies, des actions ainsi que des moyens à mettre en œuvre pour atteindre les objectifs. Le plan est un outil adéquat qui sert de tableau de bord à l'action.

The government of Republic of Burundi, on her document of 2006-2010 program, has taken the political option of bringing public services closer to the people and involving the people in decision-making and the choice in relation to development programs and projects in their municipalities. They are now called to plan for their development. Planning is the action of programing for interventions in time and space with corresponding means and interventions articulated to each other. The document that comes from this process is the plan, reference document that includes goals and priorities, strategies, actions and the means to be implemented to achieve the objectives. The plan is an adequate tool used as a dashboard to action. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 61; translation by the author)

This research study looks closely at how policy dialogues in Burundi are shaped, including (1) how far politicians are willing to risk real engagement; (2) how public servants are accepting the voices of participants in local government management; (3) how power-holders are willing to face radical transformation from that of the past by accepting the views, inputs, and voices of their citizens; (4) and finally, the capabilities and inclinations of citizens who have been denied access to, or chose to reject, those opportunities for engagement.

The Significance of the Study

The notion of investigating citizen engagement in local government management in developing countries, especially in Burundi, then understanding the factor for and barriers that bar citizens from engaging in their respective local institutions, is emerging in the field and practice of public administration (Bratton, 2012; Gaynor, 2011; Tréfon, 2011). Educating people, especially the marginalized and poor, to understand how crucial their participation is and encouraging them to get involved in the process is the essence of democracy. This study is significant because factors that affect civic or citizen engagement, including things that citizens can control (mobilization, social contacts, group membership, and socialization), things that citizens cannot change (age, race, and community size), and things that citizens can acquire (education and income, involvement in civic life, religion, individual resources, interest and attention to politics, attention to the media), among others, shape engagement in different arenas (Uslaner, 2004). Power-holders or local leaders who are committed to a community's well-being are more willing to include citizens' inputs in the daily management activities of their respective municipalities. This study, which will be conducted in Burundi, a war-torn country in which little is known about the interface of citizens, the state, and groups of interests at the local level

(Bratton, 2012) is significant in understanding the barriers and the interconnection of these factors among these key players.

The significance of this study at a social level seems to be discouraging. There are multiple opportunities for citizens to be socially engaged in their communes, zones, and *collines* (hills). In Burundi, local communities have demonstrated a strong culture of engagement in organizing important social events, including weddings, graduations, and funerals. Families and friends are mobilized to participate, plan, and execute these events. Planning committees are created with detailed calendars and responsibilities, and necessary resources are shared. Extended families and networks of neighbors and friends come together in a collaborative and constructive manner to solve family and community problems. It is now commonplace to discuss the political process when these friends and neighbors gather together; however, when it comes to civic *engagement*, these friends and neighbors feel disinterested, and the level of participation is minimal. In 2014, the World Bank Group observed that social exclusion in Burundi is widespread and part of disengagement (p. 97). Social distance and self-imposed exclusion from local government continue to define Burundian people who are experiencing a loss of faith in the way their local communes and zones are run (World Bank Group, 2014).

Local authorities have been organizing numerous meetings at zones, hills, and communes. Those citizens invited to participate are disappointed by the message. Rather than discussing relevant social issues of engagement, power-holders divert audiences by discussing security issues. This level of participation has been characterized by a number of scholars and organizations, including the World Bank, as nominal rather than substantive because it has yet to yield any change (Harvest International, 2016; World Bank Group, 2014).

As described in the 1969 book by Sherry Arnstein, *The Ladder of Citizen Participation*,

participation in Burundi is characterized as nominal because the groups of interests—the powerful (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and NGOs)—impose their agendas without input from citizens, the less powerful. The voices of participants have no effect on proposed interventions (HI, 2016), leaving little room for citizens to understand the scope and importance of programs being implemented. With no possibilities of transformation, citizens' self-imposed exclusion from the efforts of power-holders and the government become concrete.

Indeed, some types of participation, such as voting, have been a success story in Burundi. Burundian citizens actively vote for the men or women they believe are the right fit to represent them in different levels of local and central government. In 1993, for instance, Burundian citizens massively participated in voting for a first Hutu president (Urvin, 2009), hoping to transform society. This happened, however, because local and central governments involved people in the process through the media and other means of communication. When it comes to programs of economic development funded mostly by international organizations, citizens are being left alone, wondering what power-holders and groups of interests are doing. Decisions are made without citizens being consulted, and if they are told about the program to be implemented, it is only informative in nature. Local officials' awareness and understanding of obstacles to participation or key elements of citizen engagement in governance remain extremely low. Among the majority of officials interviewed, questions on how and when it is appropriate to involve citizens in local government management were answered by blaming citizens for joining efforts with opposing political parties to block all actions taken by their local representatives.

To better understand local context, the investigator has gathered information from citizens, power-holders, and groups of interests, and data has been collected in Bujumbura, for the most part. In the province of Muramvya, a focus group discussion was conducted with Batwa

community groups. The study evaluates the practice of engaging citizens in local government management, including public service designs, by trying to understand when it is appropriate to use them. The study assesses, using the same set of questions, how power-holders interact with the public/citizens in coproduction by engaging them in deliberating the nature of programs to be delivered.

Willingness—or lack of willingness—to participate in this study is significant because it provides insights into impediments to citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. The study will review if lower levels of trust in government translates into citizens' unwillingness to participate or engage in local government management. The findings will provide insights about the working relationships with stakeholders from different arenas of local government.

Definition of Terms

This section defines a number of terms that are important to understanding this research. These terms are *participation*, *citizen engagement*, *groups of interests*, *governance*, *coproduction*, and *public value*.

Participation

Citizen participation can be defined as offering citizens opportunities to take part in governmental decision-making (Glass, 1979). Desirable participation enables citizens to be part of the implementation process while shaping planning decisions and outcomes and at the same time increasing citizens' level of social and political empowerment (Laurian, 2004). Participation, therefore, is the first step toward gathering citizen input, views, and skills; at the same time, it becomes a way of delivering messages while learning from each other. The aim here is to overcome the blockage of local development, taking actions to influence government,

which actively allows citizen groups and communities to design their own futures. Bowman and Kearney (2002) present arguments to emphasize that participation has four potential responses: loyalty, voice, exit, and neglect (p.81). Bowman & Kearney see *loyalty* as a passive but constructive response to government that encompasses speaking well of the community while showing support for community activities. *Voice* is also a constructive response to governmental actions (Bowman et al., 2002, p. 81).

The World Bank Learning Group indicates that participation is a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions, and resources that affect them (World Bank, 2002). From this perspective, participation could be seen at the level of consultation or decision-making in all phases of activities, including needs assessment, appraisal, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The more citizens participate, the more they improve the efficiency of local services, which could be a better model in making local government more accountable, while deepening democracy and providing efficient services to all constituents.

Citizen Engagement

As an important component of democratic reform, citizen engagement encourages persons who work for the government to get more involved in the community as citizens. According to Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer of AmericaSpeaks (2009), citizen engagement is part of a family of democratic reform ideas that includes public participation, public involvement, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, and collaborative governance. When used in relation to the online environment, a new vocabulary is evoked, which includes e-democracy, digital democracy, e-government, and electronic governance (Lukensmeyer, 2009). Citizen engagement in local government management can mean different things to different scholars.

Involving citizens in deciding which services to evaluate, cut, implement and/or assess may be hard to define. I can, however, align myself with Gibson (2006) who sees the word *engagement* as the ability and incentive for ordinary people to come together, deliberate, and take action on problems or issues that they have defined as important. Engagement focuses on revitalizing democracy, building a coalition, and reinforcing a sense of community. Effective governance requires citizens to be involved and participate in all decisions undertaken by their local officials. Blair (as cited in Glaser et al., 2006) found that citizen engagement is an important component in developing community solutions. Engagement then cannot be equated with one-way exchanges between government and citizens.

Groups of Interests

Groups of interests has been a misunderstood phrase, as many scholars and practitioners have confused it with the commonly used term “interest group.” In the case of this research, groups of interests refer to multi-corporation, mainly neoliberal players of globalization, including (1) the World Bank, (2) the International Monetary Fund (IMF), (3) the United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) and other UN agencies, (4) Canada International Development Agencies (CIDA), (5) the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), (6) the Department for International Development (DFID), (7) Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SADC), and (8) other international non-governmental organizations operating in developing countries. These organizations have resources and political power to influence development policies in developing countries.

Governance

Governance uses different means of producing services to citizens and can be defined in different ways. Two approaches may be used: top-down and bottom-up. When analyzing African

governments, the top-down approach is a recognized form and used widely. Since its independence from Belgium in 1962, the Republic of Burundi has used a top-down management system. The system borrowed from the colonial rulers applies command and control to determine what services to distribute to local indigenous people without prioritizing the needs and wants of the governed. The “bottom-up” planning approach is based on the theory of communicative action developed by Jürgen Habermas in 1981. In this model the role of implementers is mostly mediating among key stakeholders, offering necessary information that empowers citizens. The American English dictionary defines the word governance as “the act or activity of looking after and making decisions about something” (Longman Dictionary of American English (2004).

Coproduction

The word coproduction is absent in many English dictionaries. It may be defined as a situation in which “technical experts and other groups in society generate new knowledge and technologies together. It may be seen as the dynamic interaction between technology and society” (Jasanoff, Sheila, 2006). It involves local people in mutual support and the delivery of public services. Coproduction, however, has a long history arising out of radical theories of knowledge of the 1960s. Some scholars, including Elinor Ostrom, define it as where technical expert and other groups in society merge (Clark & Burns, 2006). The term coproduction has emerged to describe the systematic pursuit of sustained collaboration between government agencies, non-government organizations, communities, and individual citizens. In other words, coproduction redefines the relationship between public service professionals and citizens.

Public Value

Public value defines the value that the organization offers to the public. Edward Flentje (2005), Wichita State professor of government, defines public value as providing quality,

reliable, customer-convenient services to citizens. In *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, Mark Moore argues that public managers are explorers who seek to discover, define, and produce public value (p. 17-18). One way out of this dilemma is to reject the customer service orientation outright. This is Moore's solution. As innovators rather than mere implementers, public managers must dispense with the presumption that politics and administration are separate spheres. Moore emphasizes that public managers must orient their role within an integrated strategic framework, the particular elements of which are politics, policy, and administration (pp. 18-23). Moore's arguments are compelling. He sees the solution as involving citizens in all the decision-making in a pure strategy grounded in distinctive public sector environment and public policy goals. According to Moore (1995), public administrators must gear up their operation by focusing their attention in three distinct directions: outward, inward, and upward. Successful strategic managers look outward on the community at large, inward towards internal operations, and upward, focusing on the authorizing process. The task of a public manager is political management: the building of support by political authorities conceived as the customers of public programs. Even though Moore's (1995) arguments may be a successful tool for engaging citizens in the coproduction of public value, it may not hold in the Republic of Burundi as the current local administrative structures seem to impede greater involvement of citizens in assessing services by denying citizens a more central role in the process.

Assumptions

This study is based on six assumptions. Firstly, the study assumes that citizen engagement in the Republic of Burundi is necessary for post-colonial African countries plagued by internal conflict and violence, involving widespread human right violations, political

manipulation, and intimidation. Secondly, it assumes that, following the social, economic, and political exclusion of a wide swath of the population in Burundi, it is desirable for local citizens who have lived the experience of exclusion to tell their stories and that it makes sense for the researcher to study their experiences and understand them. Thirdly, it assumes that the research participants in this study are knowledgeable and able and willing to openly share their experiences when there are deepening divisions between citizens and local government officials. Fourthly, it assumes that data to be collected from key informants' interviews not only reveals the experience of the research participants but also elucidates and explains what it means for persons or individuals living such experiences, and that research participants are able to provide comprehensive descriptions of these experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Fifthly, it assumes that individual and group stories and metaphors reveal a sense of reality leading to an understanding of citizen engagement in developing countries, especially in the Republic of Burundi. Sixthly, it assumes that these narrative and focus group approaches to the study of citizen engagement provide fruitful insights into and understanding of the connectivity of the issues to be studied and that the narrative theory will provide answers to the research question.

Limitations

The study uses qualitative data with the researcher as the main instrument for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The research's subjectivity and bias may be recognized (Creswell, 1998; Goulding, 2002). To minimize such subjectivity and bias, the researcher maintained a level of self-awareness and exercised neutrality throughout the process. The researcher uses the process of "member checking" and peer review to confirm research findings (Creswell, 1998).

In Burundi, due to unknown circumstances and mistrusts, some of the selected key

informants decided, at the last minute, to refrain from participating based upon their position in the community or fear of retaliation from their superiors, as patronage is the dominant form of governing local institutions. Willingness to participate, therefore, became one of the issues that participants in this study were confronted with, since the Republic of Burundi is faced with unending killings of highly ranked military officials. It is noted that there was no guarantee how many would elect to be a part of this study.

At the proposal stage, this researcher proposed that the study would be conducted in four countries, namely, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania. However, traveling from Kinshasa, the capital city of the DRC, to Bujumbura, the capital city of Burundi, and from Bujumbura to Nairobi, and then from Nairobi to Dar-ES-Salaam, the capital city of Tanzania, proved financially impractical. Thus, due to a lack of financial resources, the study was conducted only in the Republic of Burundi.

A further challenge that the researcher encountered involved difficulties in randomly selecting participants for focus group discussions. The logic of random sampling, as per John Creswell (2007), was to ensure that a cross-section of people from different ways of life were involved, not just local leaders with particular experiences, interests, or concerns but also employees from different NGOs. The challenge proved greatest regarding participating members of international NGOs, the United Nations, and the World Bank, who are busy working on assignments. A number of potential respondents (groups of interests) were not available at the time of the focus group discussions, despite efforts made to recruit them. The aim of this research is about listening to and engaging with respondents from different arenas in an effort to comprehend how and when to engage citizens in service coproduction. This point was important

for those involved in delivering services to citizens, to engage with citizens and local governments alike rather than refraining from participating.

Lastly, the researcher faced the limitation of insufficient or unreliable data. Research in the field of public administration in sub-Saharan Africa in general and in Burundi in particular is at a beginning stage. In the future, improving access to demographic and related data will be key for researchers wanting to study these issues. For now, however, access to needed information, including documents, publications, and other research materials in Burundi is rare (Baldwin & Diers, 2009). The documents that are available on the topic of decentralization and citizen engagement are written by relatively few scholars in the field of public administration

Summary

Emerging democracies in post-colonial Africa transitioning from war and internal conflicts to peaceful democratization of their institutions have sought to redress past political instability and exclusion of citizens through the promotion of participatory and sustainable socioeconomic development, which is expressed in the concept of citizen engagement. This practical need to address the research problem of demonstrating and interpreting the barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management is evidenced by the gaps in shared information between citizens and elected or appointed leaders. While citizen engagement, the design of public services, and the management of local government administration continue to be a prime focus of scholars and practitioners, it is imperative that in low-income countries other approaches be examined.

This study explores the barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management in the Republic of Burundi and looks at the nature of experiences facing key players, including citizens, power-holders, and groups of interests. The researcher

focuses on citizen engagement to determine what, how, and when it is appropriate to involve and engage citizens in policymaking and service design of their localities.

Chapter Two (2) reviews the literature on citizen engagement in developing countries. It examines the rubric of citizen engagement through the lens of decentralization, which is a widely used and accepted concept by groups of interests as one of the drivers of citizen participation in local government management. Chapter Two (2) explains and describes the tools used for citizen engagement and determine the socioeconomic advantage of engaging citizens in service coproduction. The literature reveals that the practice of citizen engagement in Burundi has the potential benefits of increasing local government responsibility and accountability to citizens while increasing local government flexibility to address diverse needs of citizens. The literature on decentralization elsewhere, in terms of citizen engagement in local government management, reveals that these benefits are not guaranteed. The practice of citizen engagement has emerged in developed countries, but little or no study has been conducted yet in developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi.

Chapter Three (3) reviews the methods of inquiries used in this study. It identifies a qualitative method as the appropriate methodology for this study. Purposive sampling with interviews, focus group discussions, available data, and research field notes are the methods of data observation. The chapter also describes data analysis procedures to be utilized for this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

As individuals, as public servants, and as a nation, we must have the integrity, the strength, and the commitment to be honest with ourselves and to work continually to be true to our shared values. Whether we express our citizenship by becoming more involved in our community, dialogue, participating directly in democratic processes and institutions, or renewing our commitment or by becoming public servants ourselves- whatever form it takes- an expansion of democratic citizenship will not only benefit citizens in their work together but also help build the spirit of public service throughout society to the benefit of all.

--- Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011 p. 209 ---

Introduction

The goal of this literature review is to examine, analyze, and synthesize the literature on citizen engagement and participation. The chapter will offer a comprehensive review of the theoretical and conceptual basis of citizen engagement in post-colonial African countries, including the Republic of Burundi. It will also analyze the tools used for citizen engagement and determine the socioeconomic and political dynamics that account for the use of citizen engagement in Burundi. The chapter offers a review of conceptual frameworks, theories, and methods. Finally, gaps in the literature are identified for further research.

The chapter is organized as follows: a re-conceptualization of citizen engagement; a review of the conceptual frameworks and methodologies of past studies; an examination and analysis of the tools for citizen engagement in developing countries; an exploration of the theory of communicative action and rationality; a review of critics of and contributions to those theories; and discussion, analysis, and conclusion.

In developing a conceptual framework for this study, relevant literature related to citizen engagement was used. The literature was accessed through libraries of local universities, the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Full Text data base, and the Google search engine. Search terms included “citizen engagement,” “citizen participation,” and “decentralization.”

Re-Conceptualizing Citizen Engagement

Citizen engagement in local administration in Burundi can be viewed through the lens of decentralization. Decentralization is considered an important element of participatory democracy (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006). The term “engagement” has been and continues to be used in survey reports, white papers, and policy statements from the World Bank Group, government agencies, scholars, practitioners, and other international organizations (Glaser et al., 2006; Svara & Denhardt, 2010; Word Bank Group, 2014). Many countries emerging from political turmoil and conflict, including the Republic of Burundi, face challenges in defining the word “engagement.” Countries that are emerging democracies, transitioning from war to peace, may use the word “engagement” as a tool to collect and prioritize ideas through a democratic, transparent, and efficient process.

Citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi and other countries transitioning from war to peace may be conceptualized in different ways, according to the time (peace, prosperity, violence, conflict, or war) and manner in which local citizens live. It can be, from a strategic management perspective, used as a tool aimed at capturing knowledge, increasing ownership of programs, and reducing conflict while facilitating partnership. From an ethical perceptive, Catlaw and Rawlings (2010) pointed out that citizen engagement can be considered to be the “right” thing to do as part of democratic ideas because meaningful citizen engagement would enhance inclusive decision-making, build trust, promote equity, enhance local decision-making, and build social equity. Thus, citizen engagement might be an opportunity for social learning, a process where diverse stakeholders share the same forum and learn from each other (World Bank Group, 2014).

Emerging democracies signify a situation where current or outgoing regimes have

sidelined citizens in policy or program development, from agenda-setting and planning to decision-making, implementation and review. Experiences of James H. Svara and Janet Denhardt (2010) indicate that “inviting participation is asking for confrontation and discord” (p. 4). In the Republic of Burundi, these negative assessments need to be overcome if citizens are to drive local administrative and political changes. According to Michael Bratton of Afro Barometer, “little is known about the citizen-state interface at the local level in sub-Saharan Africa” (p. 2). The study of citizen engagement in developing nations has not attracted the attention of many Western scholars and practitioners of public administration and similar fields, because local government structures in Burundi and similar countries lack formal space and clear mechanisms for citizen-state engagement.

Western literature provides definitions, lists of methods of engagement, and explanations of why people take part or do not participate (Glaser, 2006; Svara et al., 2010). Currently, there are many definitions of citizen engagement. The World Bank Group, for example, defines citizen engagement as “the two-way interaction between citizens and governments or the private sector within the scope of World Bank Group (WBG) interventions—policy dialogue, programs, projects, and advisory services and analytics—that gives citizens a stake in decision-making with the objective of improving the intermediate and final development outcomes of the intervention” (p. 7). Others define it as the extent to which individuals participate in various activities in their community, including voting, volunteering, and participating in community groups.

These definitions are too restrictive and do not fit the context of countries transitioning from internal conflicts and wars to peace, in which “enraged” citizens are observed rather than “engaged” ones. Arguably, a capacity-building role for local government officials, in terms of citizen engagement, has not yet been articulated (Cuthill, 2001; Cuthill 2003b; Gaventa 2001).

Further definitions of citizen engagement are illustrative of the importance of ordinary people to come together to resolve issues that matter to them. In a report on “civic engagement,” Roberts (2010) broadened the definition by noting that,

Public engagement is people’s direct involvement in community affairs rather than reliance on indirect representation mediated by others such as subject-matter experts, elected officials or bureaucracies. Based on what people perceive to be important to them, they engage in problem-solving and decision making in order to make a difference in their world. It is public in the sense that all, not just a select few, can participate if they choose to do so. ... [I]t is engagement in the sense that people do not wait for others to do for them; they take action on their own to do what they believe is important and necessary to do. (Quoted in Svara & Denhardt, 210, p. 5).

Nabatchi (2012) defines citizen participation as the “process by which public concerns, needs, and values are incorporated into decision-making” (p. 6). Citizen participation can take many forms, including information exchange and democratic decision-making. Nabatchi’s (2012) definition lies within Roberts’ definition of engagement in problem solving and decision making. Engagement with citizens is extremely important to power-holders, who emphasize citizens working together with policymakers to define problems and develop solutions. The term “citizen engagement” refers, therefore, to initiatives that enable interaction among citizens, the groups of interests, and local or national government. Citizen engagement can and should be defined as a willingness to act in the best interests of the community.

Citizen engagement occurs when local or national governments increase the level of public impact (Bulabula Joseph, personal communication, April, 2016). The context signifies that citizens are informed, consulted, collaborated with, educated, and empowered to provide their own inputs toward the full functioning of their governments (Lukensmeyer & Torres, 2006, p. 7). To create an economic viability of local government, it becomes important that power-holders work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure public concerns and

aspirations are considered by all members of the community. Bratton (2010) focused his attention on leadership responsiveness. He found that citizens regard local councils as unresponsive, working in a weak institution. This led to a deeper question: What explains the persistence of weak institutions with limited functions that frustrate citizens? It becomes imperative to review the mechanism of accountability to understand how accountable these power-holders are in informing, consulting, and involving citizens in coproduction.

Citizen engagement thus finds expression in the notion of accountability, openness, perception of trust, and interest (Bratton, 2010). The rules and structures of local political representation in Burundi create negative incentives for local elected leaders to be downwardly accountable to all citizens. The World Bank Group (2014) comments that “despite this recent progress, social accountability in Burundi remains weak, with limited opportunities for citizens and communities to engage in the decision-making process and hold local authorities accountable” (p. 91). In Burundi, political devolution may have proceeded apace, but administrative and financial change remained approximately deconcentrated, resulting in weak accountability. Despite this devolution of responsibility, cities, zones, and communal workers remain provincial government employees, accountable therefore to the mayor and government ministers (Pastor Bulabula, personal communication, April 2016). Information provision as a basis for citizen monitoring is short. Public hearings are rarely held. As Gaynor (2011) explained, a large number of citizens have been and continue to be excluded from political life. Further, citizen oversight committees over specific government services do not exist. Tools that were supposed to hold city councils accountable, including multi-stakeholder councils formed by different combinations of users, civil society organizations, government, and private sector representatives, are absent.

In general, the information flow in Burundi's current local administration follows the following schema: Mayors speak to the administrator of communes and municipal councils; the administrator of communes speaks to the chef de zones; the chef de zones to quarter (chef de quartier) and village councilors; and from quarter and village councilors to the population at the base. This is a top-down information system in which citizens hear from their respective leaders in the hierarchical structure. This type of hierarchical structure disenfranchises the citizens at the bottom (Kinshasa, personal communication, April 2016).

Dialogue and deliberation are benchmarks of the process of citizen engagement. In particular, it is a thoughtful public process of inclusiveness in which residents and colleagues learn from each other. Burundian residents share stories and listen to those who have different opinions. Civic reflection as a method to increase dialogue and deliberation for citizen/civic engagement—to stimulate a conversation, clarify residents' thinking, build community, and encourage commitment around an issue—is weak. Local government officials, according to Mark Moore (1995), are to be learners using the three-pronged approach of looking—outward, upward, and inward—all of which gives managers a framework to declare, explain, and account for sources of support for the mission of the organization while looking for safe ways of coproducing public value.

At the basic threshold, citizen engagement in the post-colonial countries, including the Republic of Burundi, has to develop a conceptual framework for understanding what it means to be an engaged citizen and how engagement is distinct from other paradigms. This framework addresses the needs of full engagement by acknowledging the benefits of local or state governments and the groups of interests partnering with citizens in carrying out activities that achieve common objectives (Svara et al., 2010).

In the best possible world, Thomas Catlaw and Kelly Campbell Rawlings (2010) realized, citizens will be incorporated in the work of local government to create sustainable economic development. Many questions remain about the ability of local government to tap into and in some cases contribute to the collective spirit of engaging citizens in policy-making in a way that contributes to the long-term well-being of the community. It becomes important to break the cycle of active exclusion, information asymmetry, dictation of what to do, and disaffection with political life (Gaynor, 2011). Citizens are disempowered when deliberate actions from their closest forms of government diminish their trust. In October 2010, Mark A. Glaser, Misty R. Bruckner, and Corinne Bannon found that “local government leadership is often instrumental in organizing and operating collaborative networks, but members of the community must share leadership” (p. 28). Perceptions of self-interest often cloud visions while offering ways for citizens to retreat from supporting the efforts of the government. Since it is deemed that information asymmetry causes misinformation of adverse parties, citizens are diminished for not interacting with local authorities.

For the foregoing, citizen engagement has been discussed as a tool, a concept, and a process. It is conceptualized in terms of organizational commitment, accountability, and extra-role behaviors, behaviors that promote government effectiveness. It is tool for revealing and securing accountability for providing services to citizens without regard to their race, color, or ethnic background. It is a process for democratization. It provides individuals and families opportunities to influence public decision making. In this study, citizen engagement embraces all the nuances cited in the literature.

Review of Conceptual Frameworks and Past Studies

This section examines and analyzes literature on the conceptual frameworks which

underpin the study of citizen engagement. It highlights the potential areas on which the investigator sought to focus.

Conceptual Framework Overview

The study is grounded broadly in the conceptual framework of citizen engagement in local government management with special focus on post-colonial African nations. In this research, citizen engagement was defined broadly as a contested concept (Day, 1997); it is not surprising that it is plagued with definition problems. A detailed conceptual framework on citizen engagement in local government management in countries that are emerging democracies transitioning from war to peace does not exist in the literature to focus on and interpret the experience of post-colonial countries, including the Republic of Burundi. Potential areas of research include perceptions as to when to involve citizens in the coproduction of public value, how to encourage public officials and constituencies to act, and what barriers to overcome.

In developing a conceptual framework for this study, literature relevant to citizen engagement will be examined then utilized. To remain true to the narrative review of interconnectedness, two key decisions will be made in conducting the literature review. First, a conscious decision will be made to research a variety of interdisciplinary sources. Libraries of local universities, narrative journals, management journals, NGOs working on the subject of citizen engagement and participation, court documents, and other related literature will be examined with the intent of examining how authors, over the ages, explain the experience citizen power-holders have had. Second, a conscious decision will be made to approach the literature, as a whole, as a story or narrative, regarding citizen–power-holder interfaces for coproduction. The intent here follows Habermas’ (1984) suggestion of locating the various points of view within “the context of their life-words” in a manner that describes human beings’ experiences (p. 136).

As the issue of citizen engagement and participation in local government management has always been a top research priority in the United States and other Western nations, we can look through a huge pool of literature. Unfortunately, there are few studies by local and Western authors on citizen engagement in post-colonial, sub-Saharan African states, including the Republic of Burundi. This can be explained by the political sensitivity of the issue, the absence of statistical data, and the unwillingness of power-holders to engage citizens in co-production. Few local authors in the Republic of Burundi, for example, have done any research related to citizen engagement in policymaking and service design in local government management. Special efforts will be made to capture scarce literature carried out by the World Bank, the World Vision, the United Nations, and other international non-government and government organizations working on this issue.

Jean-Paul Faguet (2011) describes how the existing literature in developing countries, rather than focusing on citizen engagement, has turned to decentralization, because the multilateral organizations that sponsor decentralization are motivated by specific governance challenges. More specifically, many of the authors believe decentralization's aim is to involve citizens through their elected representatives in the management of local affairs. For example, Niamh Gaynor's (2011) work in Burundi relies mainly on the approved document of decentralization by the government of Burundi, assessing the opportunities for and challenges to political engagement of Burundian citizens. In 2014, the World Bank Group followed in the footsteps of the research of Niamh Gaynor in drawing lessons on the ground from decentralization experiments in developing countries. The shift from centralized to decentralized governance, as observed by Gaynor (2011), is associated with several expectations, including improved quality of public services, assured citizen participation, and increased accountability.

These works identify the need for research related to citizen engagement, especially in assessing how citizen engagement might affect political dynamics and/or the design of public services in these countries. The literature in Burundi rarely reports on placing citizens at the center of policymakers' consideration when debating agenda-setting and formulation.

The literature already analyzed in the introduction is demonstrated in the work of the World Bank (2014), which states that “[m]ore limited space for civic engagement in fragile states may not lead to required development outcomes” (p. 101). At the same time, many scholars believe engaging citizens in the coproduction of public value allows communities to come together and find collective solutions to concerns that impact their lives (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001). However, the World Bank does not offer specific literature related to the unique aspect of the selected post-colonial African nations that would be the essence of building the author's theory.

In the work of Michael Bratton, titled *Citizen Perceptions of Local Government Responsiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2010), there is evidence related to how citizens in Africa perceive or judge the quality of their local leaders' behaviors toward coproduction. Coproduction, in this case, is challenged as a question of power, and its redistribution lies at the heart of the endeavor. It is obvious that the cultural, psychological, and procedural shifts created by face-to-face contact, which happen when power-holders are expected to engage with ordinary citizens in designing and formulating policies, plays a major role in whether to engage citizens or not. Vyas-Doorgapersad, Tshombe, and Ababio, in *Public Administration in Africa: Performance and Challenge* (2013), examine the complexities of the art of governance from the unique African perspective. Doorgapersad et. al (2013) studied different issues, including colonialism, reform, poverty, economy, decentralization, financing, media, and political structure

while analyzing emerging issues power-holders in Africa must attack, namely “poverty and the denial or lack of resources to keep a dignified human life.” Absent in their studies is the issue of citizen engagement in either policymaking or project design leading to collaborative decisions for alleviating poverty or removing barriers to political reform of their respective government. Doorgapersad et al. (2013) would be the primary source of understanding and making meaning of citizen engagement in Africa. Besides linking citizen engagement and participation to the process of decentralization, these authors fail to describe the role and contribution of local citizens in public service design, development, and implementation. Much of this literature in Africa is excessively optimistic about the impact of citizen engagement in local government actions.

In Deepening Democracy at the Grassroots Levels: Citizen Participation in State Devolved Funds (CDF) in Kenya, Frederic Omondi Otieno (2013) details how democracy at the grassroots level can be deepened and thus contribute to the growth of a nation’s democratic rule. His findings reveal how the Constituency Development Fund in Kenya has taken miniature steps toward engaging citizens in local participatory programs deemed to be the essence of promoting democracy in Africa (Otieno, 2013). The idea applied by the Kenyan government is to stimulate local participation by allocating directly a standardized amount of money (7.5% of annual revenue) to all electoral districts every financial year to boost local development and participation. The program allows citizens to participate directly in the local political process, address their demands, and prioritize their unique development needs. The program has become a success story in how engaged citizens are driving service design in their respective localities.

Western involvement with developing countries, especially in the Republic of Burundi, has left African scholars wondering about the benefits of working with multilateral aid

organizations, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Funds (IMF), and the United Nations Development Agencies. In an effort to unravel this knot, in his book titled *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*, William Easterly (2006) describes how intervention by the groups of interests in poor developing countries—from World Bank development project to military peace building—have failed to involve direct beneficiaries (local citizens) of projects in the planning, design, and implementation of proposed programs. Poor African people live stories of misery, poor governance, and mismanagement of scarce resources. These stories offer both a window into and a reflection of their experience that the groups of interests cannot understand without having such experiences. In the telling of these stories, Easterly's (2006) literature scrutinizes how these organizations failed to engage citizens and their governments in pursuit of their utopian goals, while dictating what to do without input from the primary beneficiaries, the citizens they claim to aid. In contemplating the not so neat, and sometimes selfish, operation of groups of interests, Ndombisa Moyo (2009) describes how the West (groups of interests) has patronized Africa. Rather than creating conditions for civic participation, they have deepened disconnection between citizens and their local leaders through a “planning mentality” and lack of accountability mechanisms (Easterly, 2006).

The issue of governance will always need careful attention. Across the Atlantic Ocean, two American writers, Thomas Catlaw and Kelly Campbell Rawlings, in “Promoting Participation from the Inside-Out: Workplace Democracy and Public Engagement,” acknowledged that citizen engagement is seen as the “right” thing to do. That is, it is part of the democratic ideal: Citizens should have a say in things that affect them, and participation is intrinsically important (cited in Svara & Denhardt, 2010, p. 115). Second, it is the “smart” thing

to do: The public has information and experience that is important for policymaking and effective, legitimate government (Svara & Denhardt, 2010, p. 115). The reward of involving and engaging citizens in policymaking includes enhanced legitimacy and better information to all the stakeholders involved in building sustainable actions.

Similar opinions in the United States are widespread among scholars who were challenged with implementing strategies or ideas to enhance citizen participation but that actually left more people vulnerable and failed to include citizens' views in decision making. Mark Moore is a perfect example. After observing years of administrative failure, he recommended specific, concrete changes in the practice of individual public managers in his book *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government* (Moore, 1995). These changes included putting citizens at the center of service coproduction. According to Moore, successful organizational strategies for the public and nonprofit sectors must focus outwards on the community at large. Moore advocates the use of community-based and problems-oriented approaches that ensure commitment and responsibility of relevant community interests in the joint coordination of management of public resources.

Another facet of the emerging theory of public organizations stems from the idea of increased public participation in the activities undertaken by managers. It is true that managers need to involve their citizens in all level of activities, as we are now living in a 24-hour cycle of media coverage. Cleveland (2002) states that "[b]roader is better. The more people affected by a decision feel they were consulted about it, the more likely it is that the decision will stick" (p. 30). Managers need to be transparent in all the actions and activities they take and develop speaking skills that win over their followers. This approach is also aligned with Brooke's (2008) Underlying Theory of Collective Leadership, in which he describes a vertical and horizontal

distribution of public value and trust (p.10). Managers need to have creative thinking skills that employ a horizontal managerial manner and bring together both public and private institutions to provide solutions to difficult problems.

In Western countries, especially in the United States, managers are asked to be learners and executors using the three-pronged approach of looking: outward, upward, and inward. This approach gives managers a framework to declare, explain, and account for sources of support for the organization's mission while looking for safe ways to coproduce public value. One of the contributors to this idea is Thad W. Allen, who describes the concept of "metaleadership." As Allen (2012) points out, "this concept involves five dimensions of leadership that foster unit of effort: understanding oneself and one's emotions, understanding the event or the challenge correctly, leading upward in space between political leaders and career or subject-matter experts, leading downward to support one's people, and leading across organizational boundaries" (p. 321). Thad Allen (2012) recognizes that the transformation of the traditional organization requires the transformation of traditional leaders who have to involve citizens in the coproduction. Confronted with this reality, leaders in developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi cannot afford to lead in traditional ways as today's nexus of relationship involves a variety of players, among them citizens to sustain economic development.

The impact of a sustained economy on citizen engagement is relative, rather than absolute. An attempt to involve citizens in rulemaking by the neo-liberal players of globalization (the IMF and the World Bank), dealing mainly with the economic sustainability of developing countries, is being developed by the World Bank (World Bank, 2014). The methodology used, however, may disappoint scholars involved in citizen engagement. The World Banks' citizen engagement in rulemaking focuses mainly on government rather than citizens, who have

something to lose or to gain from the implementation of its proposed actions.

Indeed, the World Bank's involvement in drafting and promulgating different codes, loaning governments funds for projects and development programs, and dictating the programs to be implemented, is illustrative of how the groups of interests continue to play major roles in deepening the disconnection between citizens and their power-holders. Is it any wonder, then, that many of the planned activities of local development to engage citizens in coproduction of public value reveals how the World Bank and the IMF share responsibilities for failing to bring institutional modernization in these developing countries (Moyo, 2009)?

One proposed solution in Burundi is its second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP-II), published in August 2012. Other countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Kenya have similar PRSP-IIs (IMF, 2012). This three-year collaborative vision of development, prepared by post-colonial countries in broad consultation, with amendment and approval from the World Bank and the IMF, became a pillar of local and national development (IMF, 2012). This PRSP-II is a road map describing the macroeconomic, structural, and social policies in support of growth and poverty reduction, aiming at correcting macroeconomic imbalance, re-launching growth, improving community dynamics, and addressing urgent needs of readjusting social policies. The paper reads in part:

1.4.2. Participatory consultations

121. Like its predecessor, the second PRSP was prepared using a methodological approach that emphasizes participation. The appropriation of the process by all stakeholders, consistent with the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, represents critical progress toward harmonizing programs and introducing joint mechanisms for programming, management, monitoring, and evaluation. It is based on the principle of inclusiveness, involving all parties,

reflected in the participation of 2,264 delegates representing sector and thematic groups, local communities, the private sector, civil society, Parliament, and the development partners.

122. The community consultations began immediately after the President of the Republic officially launched the process on November 12, 2010. They were conducted in each of the 17 provinces, including Bujumbura Mairie province. All socioeconomic strata took part in the debates: not only the delegates of the provincial and communal community development committees, but also representatives of youth, women, and vulnerable groups. It should be noted here that the provincial governors and members of communal administrations played a key role in mobilizing participants. (p. 41)

Section 1.4.2 falls short of shaping daily practices on the ground. In theory, opportunity for engagement and active participation exist. In practice however, these opportunities are not exercised (World Bank Group, 2014). The practice on the ground for communication follows complicated schemas of top-down communication as a means to gather information at the village level without necessarily engaging citizens in decision-making and service design. In fact, the literature reveals uncertain political dynamics, distrust among local actors, and lack of strategic vision of several actors within and outside the government, which disengages local citizens from embracing the actions proposed by the government, as observed by Gaynor (2011). Though praised by the IMF as inclusive, the paper fails to consider inputs from key stakeholders (citizens) who will be affected by the actual decisions and have something to gain or lose if conditions change or stay the same. Citizens were not asked to contribute ideas as a roadmap for shaping the architecture of their city and county services.

Tools for Citizens Engagement

There is no single approach to citizen engagement. Several tools are used in Western

countries to bring about accountability for coproduction as citizens demand more involvement in decisions that affect their lives (Glaser et al., 2006). There is also no single way to promote citizen engagement. A wide variety of tools are used, including art, dance, theatre, storytelling, and more. These tools have been used in Burundi for years. Selected tools to be used, in this study, however will include inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and educate. These tools derive from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) that identified and defined a range of levels of community engagement (Svara & Denhardt, 2010). The potential benefits of using these tools would be significant for inclusive decision making. The degree to which there are problems in government structures in the Republic of Burundi, especially availability of information, makes it difficult to determine exactly what tool fits best.

1. Inform. One definition of *inform* in the *American Heritage Thesaurus* (2005) Dictionary is “to give incriminating information about others, especially to the authorities” (p. 363). Inform is a one-way approach to citizen engagement. The basic question being raised is whether giving someone incriminating information would promote public engagement. Lukensmeyer and Torres (2006) noted that citizen participation is often used to gain information, assistance, and support from citizens. Information is one of the highest predictors of many forms of social engagement and participation, from voting to association membership to chairing local committees. Informing residents about their rights and obligation to a democratic process, including participating in agenda setting and service design, allows those informed citizens to resist changes being implemented in their localities (Glaser, 2006).

A primary rationale to “inform” citizens and provide them with balanced and objective information is fostering good citizenship while assisting citizens in understanding the problems of their communities and ways to solve them. A sound information process involves exchange in

either direction among citizens, government officials, and groups of interests. When citizens have a platform to voice their opinions, policymakers have the ability to craft policies and programs wanted and needed by the communities. For emerging countries, where outgoing regimes have been involved in sidelining citizens in policymaking and the design of public services, citizens are victims of information asymmetry.

2. Consult. Consult means to “discuss something with someone so that you can make the decision together” (*Longman Dictionary of American English*, 2004). It is a two-way communication designed to obtain public feedback to inform public decision-making (Svara et al., 2010). The power-holders and groups of interests would better consult citizens first before making decisions leading to the implementation of programs of social development. Through public hearings and personal contacts, citizens provide ideas. Citizens feel they own the process, and program implementers are trusted to provide solutions.

Focus group discussions are the best tool for collecting ideas, opinions, experiences, and beliefs from stakeholders about community issues, and they present the best opportunities to clarify ideas. In focus groups, a mix of participants, including women and the young, can generate the best ideas on issues of importance to communities.

3. Involve. The word “involve” is defined by the *Longman Dictionary of American English* (2004) as “to ask someone to take part in something” (p. 488). Citizen involvement in actions taken by their local government, including budgeting, improves government performance, decision legitimacy, and trust in government (Berman, 1997; King, Feltey, & Susel, 1998). The process of involvement is designed to identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are considered.

Countries emerging from internal conflicts and wars, such as the Republic of Burundi,

face a number of challenges. These challenges come from within and outside local government organizations. Thus it is often difficult to know when, how, and to what extent to include citizens in the administrative process. Numerous studies have been conducted in various settings to assess citizen knowledge about policy issues and engagement (Glaser et al., 2006; McComas, 2001; Putnam, 2000; Verba & Nie, 1972). Making additional efforts to engage citizens in the coproduction of public values allow local government to understand citizens' views of the programs being implemented.

4. Collaborate. One definition from the *Longman Dictionary of American English* (2004) of the word “collaborate” is to “work together with another person or group in order to achieve or produce something” (p. 168). Working together to understand all of the issues and interests, Western scholars have used workout alternatives and identified preferred solutions as an innovative approach to coproducing public value. Western governments partner with citizens in a collaborative manner to carry out activities that achieve common objectives. Leighninger (2008) points out that neighborhood organizations, citizen councils, and home owner organizations have emerged in collaborative ways as tools for citizen engagement. Fundamental to any consideration for policymaking is the recognition that citizens in democratic countries are provided with opportunities to participate in collaborative ways in shaping their countries.

5. Educate. *Longman* (2004) has defined “educate” as “to teach someone, especially in a school or college” (p. 284). Teaching citizens how to be involved in making their local governments accountable depends upon the judgment and ethics of professionals. The issue of educating citizens will be discussed as key element to citizen engagement. David E. Campbell and John Cardinal O’Hara (2009) found that education correlated with civic engagement.

Similar opinions are widespread in the United States and other Western countries that

value democratic reform (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996). Educating citizens about a specific issue may lead to increased knowledge, which has the potential to break down barriers to embrace change.

Theories Underpinning Citizen Engagement

To fully examine citizen engagement in local government management, two theories will form the basis of this study: the theory of communicative action as developed by Jürgen Habermas and the theory of communicative planning and consensus building outlined by American pragmatists, including scholars such as Patsy Healey. Western literature emphasizes that communication is a key ingredient that fosters large deliberative decisions and keeps citizens informed about significant issues.

Two models dominate the field of public administration and the process of citizen engagement. The first model is the “top-down” approach or “scientific rationale,” which is still the dominant form applied in developing countries. This form is widely supported by power-holders, multilateral organizations (NGOs), and other groups of interests. The top-down approach is led by national governments and national law and has the disadvantage of inconsistent information sharing. In the top-down approach, decisions are made by a small group of powerful people who have accurate information but provide unbalanced information to citizens. The top-down model creates asymmetric information sharing between power-holders and citizens. Because of this model, the World Bank, the IFM, and other international NGOs have necessary information about programs to be implemented and face the challenge of credibility in revealing this information to governments. The same scenario occurs when governments willfully withhold information from their citizens that would facilitate better understanding of the issues to be debated. As Gugerty (2009) claims, the information asymmetry

between donors and NGOs creates distrusts.

The second model supports a “bottom-up” planning approach and is based on the theory of communicative action developed by Jürgen Habermas. In this model, the role of implementers is mostly mediating among key stakeholders, offering necessary information that empowers citizens. The approach is often organized around collaborative actions and claims the advantage of local knowledge, commitment, and creativity. The bottom-up approach involves the community in strategies and management systems and reveals the inefficiency of the top-down approach. The bottom-up model is based not on scientific justification as a rationale but rather on consensus with stakeholders, NGOs, the government and other interest groups in planning through debate, negotiation, and shared information. In some cases, it is used as a participatory approach to strategic planning. This model is a response to imposing engagement from the experts and power-holders. It argues that hierarchical decision-making by itself is no longer sufficient to resolve community issues.

Theory of Communicative Action and Rationality

The theory of communicative action and rationality appeals to two philosophical approaches. One is American pragmatism, as developed by John Dewey, Richard Rorty, William James and others who hold that both the meaning and the truth of any idea are a function of its practical outcome. These thinkers rejected all forms of absolutism and insisted that all principles be regarded as working hypotheses that must bear fruit in lived experience (Fainstein, 2000). Experience or number of years working on a given subject became the driving factors in American ways of understanding how to produce results. The second philosophical approach is communicative action, which was highly influenced by the work of Jürgen Habermas. Habermas’ (1984) theoretical system is devoted to revealing the possibility of reason and

rational-critical communication. Habermas (1984) discussed his effort to identify the effective practice of communication.

In general, the basis of the theory of communicative rationality as developed by Jürgen Harbermas was to examine the concept of rationality and its relation with actions, intersubjective communication, problems of social actions, social and political changes. Harbermas (1984) argues that the emancipation of modernity project should not be abandoned. He continues to argue that three cultural scopes of the Enlightenment that include science, morality, and art dominated by instrument of rationality are the product of capitalism.

His ideas are outlined in *Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1984), in which actors in a given society seek to reach a common understanding and coordinate actions by reasoned argument, consensus, and cooperation rather than strategic action strictly in pursuit of their own goals (p. 86). Both philosophical approaches lie at the heart of citizen engagement and participation. According to Habermas (1981), *communication rationality* examines the concept of rationality and its relation to actions, intersubjective communication, and social and political change. In his ideal situation for speech, communication is no longer distorted by power-holders and the self-interests of the few. Habermas (1981) recognized three other social actions important for sharing ideas and purposes: teleological action, normatively regulated action, and dramaturgical action. In his view, teleological action occurs when an actor achieves his or her purpose and brings about a desired situation by choosing the appropriate means to deliver the end results. In normatively regulated action, as Durkein and Parsons (1975) describe, members of a social group orient their actions according to their defined social values. The concept of order, solidarity, and integration has certain meaning in Burundian society. This concept helps achieve social solidarity and shared norms and values as observed by Herbarmas (1983).

In 1997, Patsy Healey extended Habermas' work with a review of research entitled *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. Healey's work (1997) draws on a wide range of new thinking in social and political theory to provide a framework for planning, while fostering communication and collaborative action in the institutional realities of our time. Like Healey, Svara and Denhardt (2010) covers crucial aspects of citizen engagement that encompasses the social theory of communication and building consensus. It emphasizes widespread public participation, sharing information with the public, and reaching consensus through public dialogue rather than the exercise of power.

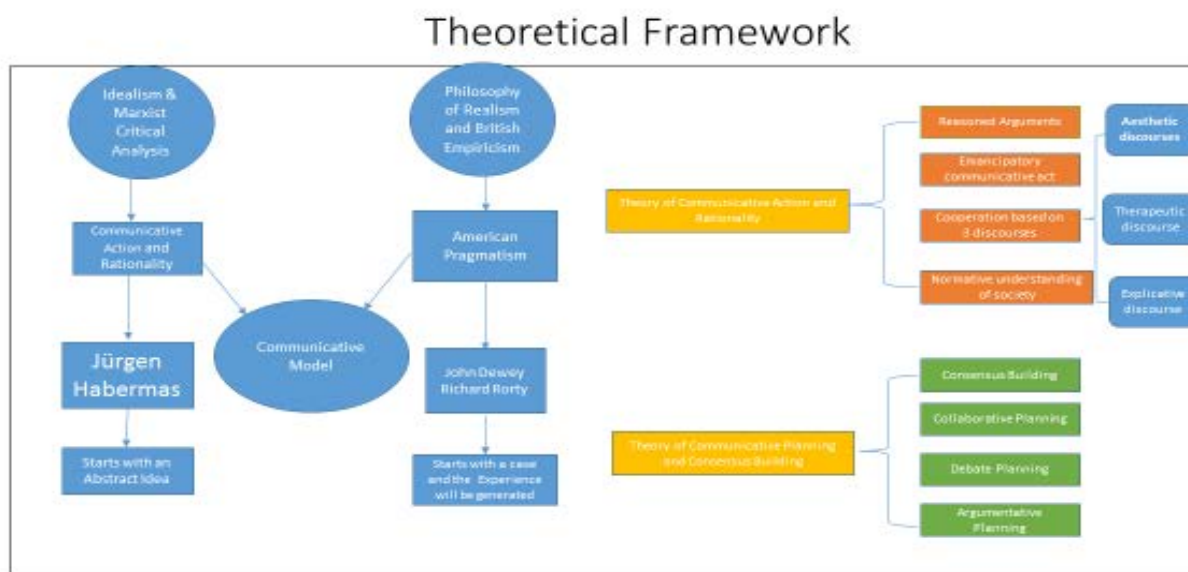


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework. This framework indicates how the researcher selected his theory for this study.

Theory of Communicative Planning and Consensus Building–Community Initiative

In the early 1990s, different terms, including collaborative planning, argumentative planning, communicative pragmatic approach, planning through debate, and consensus building emerged as the theoretical foundations for communication used in public administration. These

terms have a strong relationship with one another and have been extensively used in recent years. In her research on communicative planning, Patsy Healey (1992) emphasizes that communicative planning involves respectful intercultural and interpersonal discussions. As Innes (1995, 185) remarked, what ordinary people know is as relevant as the knowledge of planners, including cities officials. Knowledge gained in collective struggle can be particularly relevant and openly conflicts with planner's knowledge, a position that Healey herself recognizes (1997, 29). This involves recognizing, valuing, listening, and searching for translating possibilities between two individuals. Such interaction will involve arenas in which public discussions occur and where problems are raised, strategies are developed, and tactics and values are identified, discussed, and evaluated. In this case, citizen engagement becomes more central to the process.

According to Healey (1992), communicative acts are inserted in a context of ideological and political practices but nevertheless can modify this context and potentially challenge power structures. Healey (1992) summarized the essential of communicative rational approach to planning. They include:

1. Planning is interactive and interpretive process that focuses on "deciding and acting" within the range of specialized allocative and authoritative systems but drawing on the multidimensionality of "life world" or "practical sense," rather than a single formulized dimension. Formal technic of analysis and design in planning process are but one form of the discourses. Planning process is enriched by discussions of moral dilemmas and esthetic experience.
2. Planning is undertaken among diverse, fluid, and overlapping discourse communities, each with its own meaning, knowledge forms and ways of reasoning and valuing.

Searching for achievable levels of mutual understanding for the purpose in hand is the

focus of communicative action.

3. Respectful intercultural and interpersonal discussions are the necessity of such interaction. It involves organizing, valuing, listening, and searching for connecting possibility among different plays in the community.
4. Such interaction involves working on the “arena of struggle” where public discussions occur, and where problems solving, strategies, tactics, and values are identified, discussed, evaluated, and conflict debated and mediated.
5. In the communicative approach, there are multidimensional forms of knowing, understanding, appreciating, and judging. Nothing is inadmissible, except the claim that something is off-agenda and cannot be discussed.
6. Using the Habermas’ claim of comprehensibility, integrity, legitimacy, and truth, a critical capacity for thinking is developed. This enable participant to evaluate and reevaluate specific actions being implemented through communicative process without criticizing the views of different participants.
7. Interaction involves mutually reconstructing what constitute the interests of various participants where participants not only learn from other participants but also are involved in the process of developing skills.
8. Participants have the potential to change the existing conditions through increasing understanding, make constructive critics, develop good arguments for analysis of the problems and perceptions, and learn new understandings.

In contrast to the communicative action and rationality theory, the theory of communicative planning described by Charles Berger (1997) explains how individuals arrive at an understanding of each other's goal-directed actions and discourse. On the other hand, there is

the tendency to underestimate the role of collective and individual agency, citizen's ideas, and power-holders experience. Healey (1992, 10) speaks of "ideological and political practices ... that confuse the powerless" (10). At the same time, this theory seeks to explain how individuals produce actions and discourse that enable them to attain their everyday goals. Planning theory, therefore, plays a crucial social-cognitive role that identifies and describes the cognitive structures and processes that allow participants to understand (and empathize with) others' actions.

Criticism of the Theories

Generally, theories do not match practice in quite the way theorists expect. Jürgen Habermas' communicative theory in planning has been challenged by numerous scholars (Fainstein, 2000; Flyvbjerg & Richardson, 2002; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger, 1998). Habermas has focused on "what should be done" in his communicative action philosophy rather than "what is actually done" (1996). In the context of this dissertation, I believe that Habermas offers a type of analytic theory that offers a better understanding of what actually is happening in surveyed country, the Republic of Burundi. Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) and Suzan Fainstein criticized the communicative/institutionalist approach based upon theoretical and practical aspects of the theory. Flyvbjerg (1998) looked at power structures. The will to power result in the fragmentation of a society.

As Healey (1992) started in his theory, planning is being considered as a democratic enterprise aiming at promoting social justice and accountability. Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) criticize this views contending that this theory should contain clear prejudices towards a certain views or values. They added that "to accept Habermas' work there has to be a corresponding world view of value. At crude level, communicative rationality is

about undistorted communication, openness and a lack of oppression.” Their assumption contains also prejudice. They believe that participatory democracy cannot be considered without any problem and is not a value acceptable by everyone, even the proponents of communicative rationality acknowledge its limit. This section will discuss two categories of criticism: critics in practice and critics commenting on the relationship between power and planning in public administration.

Critics in Practice

Many thinkers disagree with Jürgen Habermas’ communicative paradigm in terms of practice (Fainstein, 2000 and Healey, 1992). The critiques of communicative rationale, consensus-building, and collaborative governance practice focus on “whether it works in practice.”(p 80). They assume that theories do not always appear in practice (Freidmann, 1997; Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger, 1998). Threaded throughout Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger’s paper is the assertion that “the ideas don’t work in practice” (1998). Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger realized that

. . . so long as there is a possibility that individuals will not wish to build trust, understanding, and new relations of power among participants. . . . Then a truly successfully communicative action process is infeasible [sic], as power and political action will remain dominant determinants.” (p. 198)

Another point that Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger focused on is the ability to reach consensus as one of the basic assumptions of communicative rationality. According to these thinkers, communicative practice—the way ideas are developed, disseminated, and translated through the lens of local government actors—is critical to how politics, planning, and democracy operate. According to these authors, Habermas’ ideas fail to recognize and consider policy impacts on social issues and concerns (Innes, 1995).

Policy analysts are focused not on formal government structure and policy instruments but on interactive practices through which policy ideas are developed and disseminated, policy discourses and social relationships are strengthened, and policies and practices are promoted. These ideas are attracting NGOs' attention in Africa in general, and in Burundi in particular, in the context of breaking the cycle of violence, hunger, and misery (Balducci, 1996). In countries transitioning from war to peace, there is no sign of policy practices that live up to the normative criteria developed for critiquing practices. Thus, the ideas presented by Habermas have no value in the context of Burundian government.

Criticism Regarding Power

Power in relation to coproduction has become an inevitable question for public administrators and practitioners. The question is, "is communication characterized by consensus-building and absence of power?" Power, for many interested in the communicative paradigm, as Healey (1997) explained, cannot be removed from developing public value because it is inherent in social relation. John Friedmann contends that "power" is one of the most difficult outstanding problems in theorizing planning (Friedmann, 1997). Citizen engagement has a political nature, which relates to power structures, either local or national. The effect of centralized power in one entity (public officials) to decide what project to implement and when; how to implement it and in what locality; and how much to spend and how to spend it have been criticized by numerous African authors (Bratton, 2010; Tréfon, 2010). Other non-governmental organizations, including the UN, the World Bank and the IMF, control all or most aspects of both local and state governments with power to decide what to implement and where to implement it, and how resources will be distributed and utilized. Communicative action, in this case, fails to capture the role of power in civic/citizen engagement in local government management. Lack of crucial

socialization, as well as poverty, abuse, and degradation, are barriers to broad decision-making (Habermas, 1990). The balance of power between power-holders and citizens is weak, and the relationship of power between groups of interests and power-holders is dictatorial. The proponents of communicative action, including John Forester (1989) and Patsy Healy (1997), recognize the political and value-laden nature of Habermas (1994), who mentioned that consensus-seeking and freedom from domination are universally inherent as forces in human conversation. Other important philosophers and social thinkers have tended to emphasize the exact opposite. In quoting Healey (1997), Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) wrote

the distribution of power between individual stakeholders is recognized, but communicative rationalists suggest that, by building up trust and confidence across these fissures in interpersonal relations, new relation in collaboration and trust . . . [will] shift the power base (p.1980).

Some of the non-governmental organizations are advocating for a participatory approach in services design, attempting to actively involve stakeholders in the design process to help ensure that the results meet their needs (Pastor Bulabula, personal communication, April 2016).

However, Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1979) continued to criticize other aspect of the communicative planning theory in its practice. They questioned some assumptions of the theory. According to them, “The assumption that all stakeholders within the communicative discourse arenas are striving for enhanced democracy for community is a value judgment and one that does not hold water; the stakeholders present within the arena of discourse will possess different aims of value and professional agenda (p. 1978).” Both Tewdwer-Jones and Allmendinger are not suggesting that the purpose of the purpose of communicative planning is to ensure that participants agree or everyone will accept a shared vision of a given community.

Contribution to Theory

The contribution of Habermas' (1990) theory of communicative rationality to the research lies on the belief that constructive communication may be achieved if all stakeholders in Burundi apply Habermas' theory. This theory is caught up with "practice" identifying its approach as parallel to the consensus building approach used in local government management. The theory establishes a procedural based on an assumption and designed to guarantee the impartiality of the process of judging, which is significant for a "top-down" model. Habermas' (1990) concept concentrates also on a bottom-up approach in supporting participants (citizens) to be part of policymaking and service design by their local governments. Looking at the content of Habermas' (1990) writing, scholars would agree that Habermas is a bottom-up situationalist. According to him, what is right and true in a given communicative process is determined solely by the participant in that process. It allows participants to gain knowledge and understanding of the issues being discussed, while offering them the same capacities of discourse.

In summary, Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action is the basis of the theory and practice of citizen engagement. The top-down approach, however, has been applied for years and continues to play a major role in disenfranchising citizens from engaging with policymaking and local service discussions. Both the top-down and bottom-up communicative approaches face numerous challenges. While top-down methods emphasize asymmetric information systems, bottom-up tactics pay particular attention to local citizens (communities) as main actors of the citizen engagement process.

Discussions, Analysis, and Conclusion

This study was grounded in the conceptual framework of citizen engagement in developing countries in the context of power-holders, citizens, and group of interests. In this

study, citizen engagement means offering citizens opportunities to take part in government decision making process is to increase their influence on public policies and programs.

A critical examination of the literature under review shows that the literature on decentralization in post-colonial countries, including the Republic of Burundi, provides a comprehensive review on the subject of citizen engagement. On the ground, this literature faces numerous questions about the kinds of interventions that may be effective in translating decentralization into citizen engagement and participation in policy making and the design of public services. In this regard, it shows that much of the literature falls short of writing about the barriers affecting citizens' direct involvement in local government management. Critical to democratic stabilization is the need to engage citizens in policy making and the design of public services at all levels of local government. Thus, developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi, face dilemmas with regard to removing self-interested behaviors and embracing community interests.

Absent in this literature is the analysis of barriers to citizen engagement in Burundi; there is no literature related to these issues. The analysis of the selected case of Bujumbura Mairie, however, will reveal these barriers. The research is grounded in the qualitative paradigm because there are no theories on citizen engagement in developing countries out of which variables can be derived to test hypotheses.

The literature on citizen engagement is mostly in narrative form and also is a purely descriptive process. The logic, evidence, and facts presented by the selected articles seem to indicate that citizen engagement, if applied in the context of Burundi, has the potential to contribute to the democratization process elsewhere, but this evidence is yet to be tested. The strength of the literature is in its overview and discussion of the ramifications of the issues

involved in citizen engagement and participation, mainly in communes and zones, specifically in Republic of Burundi. It serves as a compass, showing direction for future research and policy framework on citizen engagement.

Chapter Three offers a detailed discussion of the research design used for this study. This includes the theoretical tradition of inquiry, research sample, and population; the method of data collection and procedures; data management procedures and method of data analysis; issues of quality and ethical considerations; the researcher's role; dealing with the researcher's subjectivity; and participants' protection.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

Chapter Three describes the overall nature of the study, the research design, research sample and population, method of data collection, method of data analysis, and issues of ethical consideration, followed by a chapter summary (Creswell, 2007). The questions that guided the study are as follows:

3. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?
4. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - a. How do these issues or factors encourage and enhance or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - b. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
 - c. What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy-making and service design?

This research on citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi should lead to more understanding and interpreting the factors for and barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management. It is hoped that this research will contribute to an understanding of factors that affect civic or citizen engagement, including things that citizens can control—mobilization, social contacts, group membership, and socialization—things that citizens cannot change—demographics such as age, race, and community size—and things that

citizens can acquire—education and income, involvement in civic life, religion, and the media (Uslaner, 2004). Citizen engagement in local government management refers to a situation where citizens' inputs and views are being considered in the decision-making taken by their power-holders without regard to their economic status and background provenance (Glaser, Yeager & Parker, 2006). The term “co-production” has emerged in public administration to describe the systematic pursuit of sustained collaboration between government agencies, non-government organizations, communities, and individual citizens (Glaser et al., 2006).

Nature of the Study

This study comprises a purposive sample of 23 interviews and three focus group discussions of citizen participants in either state or local government management in Burundi. The design of the study considered several qualitative inquiries to determine the appropriate methodology. Within the context of this study, key informants interviewed were Burundian authorities, Civil Society Actors (CSA), international non-governmental organizations, local non-governmental organizations, and the population at large. The selection of an appropriate design was predicated on the purpose of the study and the type of data to be collected. A question guide was developed for each interview, which lasted 30 to 90 minutes. Responses in languages chosen by each participant, including Kirundi, Swahili, and French, were recorded in detail, then summarized and translated into English. The assumption here was to look for patterns and repeated relationships while grouping the data with the objective of identifying and naming the core category or central occurring phenomenon.

From a methodological point of view, narrative approaches lie between several different yet connected traditions of inquiry (Riccucci, 2010). Qualitative traditions of inquiry, including phenomenology, ethnography, and interpretive sociology, have traditionally been used to

understand the internal perspectives of participants being studied. Bruyn (1996) described how phenomenology, for example, has served as a rationale behind efforts to understand individual actions as these individuals saw them (p. 90).

The field of interpretive sociology formulated the role of the sociologist as participant observant in two critical areas, namely “observant as participant” and “participant as observant” (Bruyn, 1996, p. 16). Another feature of social participation as defined by Habermas (1984) is one that “commits the investigator to hermeneutically connect his own understanding of the phenomenon being studied with that of the participants” (p. 150). Narrative inquirers sometimes find themselves in the middle of hermeneutics as a tradition of inquiry. As Gadamer (1975) observed, hermeneutics is not only a method of understanding but also an attempt to “clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place” (p. 263). Other scholars of public administration cemented this concept by arguing that understanding is always interpretation, and “it means to use one’s own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak to us” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 358).

The challenge of a narrative inquiry, however, is to not choose one tradition of inquiry over the others. The challenge lies in how to compose a story that represents the experience truthfully while acknowledging that in all narrative research, the researcher can never tell the whole story. At the methodological level, the narrative researcher is challenged to actively collaborate between identified traditions of inquiry. The challenge to this study was to demonstrate the capacity and the imagination of shifting from one perspective to the other (Mills, 1959, p. 211).

Empirical materials or field texts were collected according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 80) through participants’ storytelling and interviews. In this study, the researcher used

the analysis of field texts from the standpoint of a “*three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 49; italics in original). The three dimensions are the following: the temporal, the personal/social, and place. The first dimension refers to temporal matters that focus on experience. Indeed, experience, as Dewey (1981) observed, does not occur in a vacuum but within the context of time—past, present, and future. Prior to writing this research paper, interpretation and analysis had already begun. The second dimension refers to the personal and social experiences of individuals as reflected in their stories and interviews. In this research, a requirement for some participants was to be a public official with at least five years of experience in the subject matter. The third dimension focused on what Clandinin and Connelly call “situated within place” (p. 49). Careful examination and exploration of stories are essential in narrative inquiry, and careful selection of place makes meanings of the research acceptable. The city of Bujumbura or Bujumbura Mairie was chosen because of its location, proximity, and diversity of its people and activities.

Research Design

This section describes the research design used for the study. The section addresses the theoretical framework of inquiry that grounds the study and justification of qualitative traditions.

Method of Inquiry/Theoretical Framework of Inquiry

A qualitative research method was used to address the research questions and objectives.

Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as follows:

An inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

Creswell (1998), Singleton and Straits (2005), Strauss and Corbin (1994), and Trochim

(2001) explain that the qualitative tradition of inquiry is recommended for a study where a) the research topic calls for exploration because theories do not exist to explain it; b) variables are not easily identifiable; c) a need exists to present a detailed account of the topic; and d) the researcher needs to learn from key informants in order to provide a narration and the viewpoint of participants. The qualitative method of inquiry was used in this study because citizen engagement in developing countries—especially in the Republic of Burundi, a country engulfed by wars, insecurities and killings—is in its inception stage. It is hoped that the implementation and adaptation of politics of “decentralization” will bring local government services closer to citizens by establishing a development policy focused on the valuation of citizens as actors and first beneficiaries of economic progress (F. Ndabonekewe, Secrétaire Exécutif du Programme d’Education et de la Formation Patriotique, personal communication, April 18, 2016). Strauss and Corbin (1994) state that a study undertaken under such circumstances can be exploratory in nature. The exploratory methods of inquiry enabled the researcher to find out what the local citizens expect and are receiving from the established local institutions, namely communes, zones, and collines (translated as “hills” in English).

Justification of Qualitative Traditions

In the design of the study, several qualitative inquiries were considered. These qualitative traditions included grounded theory, ethnography, and biography. The quantitative survey questionnaire method was also proposed by the researcher’s adviser and considered. The selection of an appropriate design was predicated on the purpose of the study and the type of data to be collected. The following paragraphs describe the reasons why some of the qualitative methods were not applied.

Research based on “grounded theory” seeks to generate a theory from a study. Its essence

lies in utilizing data generated from the study. As Creswell (1998) described it, the emergent theory is to constitute findings. The aim of this study is not to generate a theory but to have an intense detailed account of the phenomenon being studied and make an assertion as to whether or not the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement and participation in local government management in Burundi existed or continue to exist.

The Republic of Burundi is made up with three major ethnic groups: *The Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa* or (Pygmies). Ethnographic research involves studying a group or groups in terms of their cultural behaviors to describe and interpret them. This study is not about the behavior of any particular group. Observation as a major data collection process used for the ethnographic studies would be limited for this study as per Creswell (1998) because other sources of data would be required. Indeed, this study is not a means to understand the culture of any ethnic group but rather is a means to understand the why, when, and how these ethnic groups are to be included in service coproduction.

Ethnographic research involves studying a group or groups in terms of their cultural behaviors to describe and interpret them. In the case of the Republic of Burundi, this would mean studying one or more of the three major ethnic groups: The Hutu, the Tutsi, or the Twa (Pygmies). This study, however, is not about the behavior of any particular group. Observation as a major data collection process would be limited for this study as per Creswell (1998), because other sources of data would be required. Indeed, this study is not a means to understand the culture of any ethnic group but rather is a means to understand why, when, and how these ethnic groups are to be included in service coproduction.

Biographical research was considered by the researcher to determine if this type of qualitative method would benefit the study. Biographical research studies the life of a person. It

is obviously not suitable for this study in terms of scope and purpose. The study is not looking for the quality, effectiveness, family background, or likes and dislikes of the people living in Burundi. It would be difficult to determine whose life would provide the necessary data for the account this study seeks to establish.

A survey questionnaire was also considered as a possible method for data collection but was determined to be improper. Survey questionnaires have the advantages of being devoid for being cost effective as per Singleton and Straits (2005). A questionnaire was developed but not employed because its use would require pre-existing data and an established theory in order to test your hypotheses. But a theory of citizen engagement in developing countries in general, and in the Republic of Burundi in particular, does not exist to make hypothesis testing possible. The use of a questionnaire would not yield the detailed information needed to provide understanding of the phenomenon.

The narrative theoretical approach to an inquiry, as described by Barbara Czarniawska (2004), was utilized as the most suitable method of inquiry. Two field texts—*Storytelling* and *Written Stories*—were employed as methodologies for collecting research materials. In 1992, Harvey Sacks (2004) observed that in organizations, storytelling seems to be the preferred method of human relationship among different stakeholders (p. 38). In this study, individuals' narrations of their stories were recorded (Creswell, 2007, p. 55). Geertz's (1986) belief that "stories matter. So ... do stories about stories" (p. 377) formed the foundation of this study. Geertz (1986) also states that "whatever sense we have of how things stand with someone else's inner life, we gain it through their expressions, not through some magical intrusion into their consciousness" (p. 73). What do stories tell us about the nature of local government as distinct forms of human collectivity in Burundi? What do stories encountered in organizations tell us

about the nature and function of storytelling? Listening to the narrative presentations of individuals in charge of administering local institutions (communes) and understanding how citizens feel about having their voices heard provided insights into the fear, distrust, political instability, or reluctance of citizens to take part in local government decision-making.

For this study, narrative is the best method to capture detailed stories of life experience that local citizens endure on a daily basis. The case study was preferred over ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and biography in terms of data collection and this study's objectives. Moreover, the researcher embraces Clendenin and Connelly's (2000) assumptions about narrative theory in that the researcher collaborated actively with participants while involving them in the research objectives.

Participant observation has been used as a data collection method by scholars in many fields (Bernard, 1998; DeWalt & Dewalt, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Schmuck, 1997). Marshall and Rossman (2011) define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study" (p.79). Russell Bernard (1988) adds to this understanding. He indicates that participant observation requires a certain amount of deception and impression management. Bernard's thinking leads the investigator to understand the reason behind the use of participant observation. His definition that participant observation requires a "process of establishing rapport within a community and learning to act in such a way as to blend into the community" (p. 342) was applied in this case study. Wolcott (2001) lays down detailed information on how to conduct observations. He suggests that, to move around gracefully within the culture, one should 1) practice reciprocity in whatever terms are appropriate for that culture; 2) be tolerant of ambiguity, which includes being adaptable and flexible; 3) and have "personal determination and faith in oneself to help alleviate culture shock" (pp. 96-100).

As detailed above, participant observation was useful in Burundi in a variety of ways. It provided the investigator with ways to check for nonverbal expressions of participants' feelings, grasp how participants communicate with each other about issues, check definitions of terms that participants use to describe their experiences, and observe events that key informants may be unable or unwilling to share, all while observing situations that key informants had described in interviews and comparing them with participants' thoughts and understanding of the issues (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The researcher used direct observation to achieve a clear understanding of the issues being investigated and to use that clear understanding to interpret what local officials and citizens understand about citizen engagement in local government management. The method provided room to get to know participants, become familiar with them, and record their actions and the artifacts around them.

Focus group interviews with a group of civil society organizations, including those led by Batwa (Pygmy) community groups and clergy members, provided a clear understanding of the issues being investigated. These interviews revealed the views of participants on citizen engagement in their local government management. Before the start of the focus group interviews, interviewees selected a team to guide the study. Each team consisted of three people acting as a facilitator, a recorder, and an assistant to the group. Three focus group discussions were carried out, as per Creswell (2007), with 14 participants for the first group in Muramvya Province, nine clergy members in Bujumbura, and three elected council members from three urban zones in Bujumbura.

Key informant interviews were also used for this qualitative inquiry. Interviews with stakeholders, including community members, government representatives, *Chef de Zones*, and local and international NGOs, provided insights into the barriers facing local citizens in engaging

in government management in Burundi. William Miller and Benjamin Crabtree's *Doing Qualitative Research* (1999) describes how individual in-depth interviews inform a wide range of research questions. In line with Miller and Crabtree, Creswell (2007) lays a foundation for the use of a selected number of key informants in qualitative inquiry. Key informants—administrators, decision makers, and leaders of civil society organizations—were interviewed for their first-hand knowledge of citizen engagement. Key informants' interviews helped frame the issues.

A question guide was developed for each interview, which lasted 30 to 90 minutes. Responses, in languages of the participant's choice, including Kirundi, Swahili, and French, were recorded in detail and then summarized and translated into English. The researcher made comparisons within single interviews followed by comparisons between interviews. The assumption here was to look for patterns and repeated relationships while grouping the data to identify and name the core category or central occurring phenomenon.

Due to the complexity of dialects, values, beliefs, and behaviors of ethnic groups in the selected city, the researcher used participant observation, ethnographic interviews, and elite interviews as primary data collection methods. For the narrative piece of this study, two field texts were used as methodologies for collecting research materials: written stories and research interviews. Data analysis was complemented by a secondary data collection including historical and interaction analyses. These selected sources were the primary focus of the study, but they did not preclude the use of other sources of evidence, including physical or cultural artifacts.

Research Sample and Population

This section describes sampling procedures, strategies used to select participants, sample size, sample categories, and procedures used to gain access to participants.

Sampling Procedures

The original study targeted four post-colonial countries: the Republic of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Due to financial constraints, the researcher selected only the Republic of Burundi for the study. The researcher then selected the city of Bujumbura or Bujumbura Mairie as a unique case study because its geographic location, social and demographic structure, and economic and political structures offered a best case study for citizen engagement. Bujumbura Mairie is made up of three communes and 18 zones. Bujumbura is located in western Burundi, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. A map of Bujumbura Mairie shows that the city is surrounded by the rural province of Bujumbura, with the town of Mutimbuzi to the north, Kanyosha and Isale communes to the east, and the Kabezi municipality to the south.

In qualitative methods of inquiry, sampling refers to the selection of participants and documents relevant to the study (Polkinghorne, 2005). For this study, key participants and documents were selected on the basis of their contribution to the understanding of phenomena being studied. As Polkinghorne (2005) described, key participants describe, understand, and clarify the human experience (p. 139). Wertz (2005) enlightened readers by stating that “the basis of this decision is the judgment of those whose experience most fully and authentically manifests or makes accessible what the researcher is interested in” (p. 171). This qualitative research relied on the experiences of participants. Therefore, the sampling was randomly made and representative of the population (Polkinghorne, 2005).

Creswell (1998) also recommended purposive sampling, i.e., when the researcher selects participants who can contribute to the understanding of the phenomena for a qualitative study. In this study of citizen engagement in Burundi, the researcher employed a purposive sampling

technique to select participants as key informants. Key informants interviewed were Burundian authorities, civil society actors, international nongovernmental organizations, local nongovernmental organizations, and the population at large. These groups were targeted because the researcher perceived that they were knowledgeable or possessed necessary experiences regarding citizen engagement in the coproduction of public services.

The World Bank and UN missions were targeted because they fund key governmental programs and provide services to low income residents. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) formulate policies and procedures in line with citizen engagement. Their insights were important to the discussion. World Vision and CARE International were included because they work with both the power-holders and the underprivileged populations that they serve on a daily basis. Local civil society actors were considered critical because they have the upper hand on issues; understand key actors who formulate issues and solutions; advocate for changes; and sometimes try to resist unwise actions of the government and international organizations. It was important to gain their insights about how the processes and practices of citizen engagement are to be shared. These categories of participants provided diverse forms of experience tied to citizen participation as one of the components of democratic institutions.

The researcher created a list of key informants and set dates for possible interviews, relying on two community partners: Pastor Longele Bulabula Joseph of Trinity Church Gitaga and Harvest Initiative (HI), a Burundian non-governmental organization working to support the actions of Batwa (Pygmy) ethnic groups and other underprivileged populations. HI and Pastor Bulabula identified potential participants within and outside of their organizations for the researcher to consider. The list constituted the pool out of which participants were recruited for interviews.

Once all the lists were in place, the researcher then purposely selected participants to be interviewed. Three criteria used for the selection were “maximum variation,” i.e., looking at diverse forms of experiences; homogenous sampling, looking for the same kinds of experiences; and extreme and deviant cases, looking for that which is typical of the phenomenon or deviant from it. The researcher also employed 1) critical sampling—experiences which are significant to the phenomenon; 2) criterion sampling—based on predetermined criteria considered relevant to the study; 3) theory-based sampling—experiences that contribute to theory development; and 4) confirmatory sampling—experiences that confirm or disprove earlier findings (Creswell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher focused on criterion, maximum variation, informant, critical, and confirmatory sampling strategies to recruit participants. Maximum variation was used to obtain diverse descriptions of participants’ experiences with citizen engagement and participation in local government management, thus providing a detailed account and description of the phenomenon. This was very critical to the researcher as per Creswell (2007), since diversity in perspective, interpretation, and problem-solving while predicting future possibilities are tied to informants’ perception of the world. In criterion sampling, participants were selected because they were Burundian residents with knowledge about management of local government. The idea behind criterion sampling was to ensure that participants in this category were native Burundians and could give detailed, factual descriptions of the phenomenon being investigated, as opposed to rumor.

The informant sampling method involved asking participants during interviews to identify other informants who were knowledgeable about the phenomenon being investigated and were considered to have relevant information necessary for the study. This strategy was used to obtain expert knowledge on specific issues that came up during the interviews. Participants

referred the researcher to key informants who have years of experience in engaging citizens in the coproduction of public services. In using a critical sampling strategy, the researcher followed Patton's (2011) concept of selecting a small number of important cases that are likely to "yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge" (p. 236). One of the purposes of the study was to investigate the success or failure of citizen engagement. The characteristic of some of the critical cases, including the level of education of the population, and the level of resistance to government intervention in a given community, was critical to the study's findings. The confirmatory sampling strategy, as per Creswell (1998), enabled the researcher to interview others to confirm or reject initial findings. It was then used as a validation tool.

Sample Size

Upon the researcher's arrival in Bujumbura and after meeting with Harvest International representatives, a sample size of 39 participants was proposed. After 23 interviews and three focus group discussions, the study was saturated with data, rendering additional findings redundant. In a qualitative study, the sample size is determined by the nature of the research question being investigated, as per Wertz (2005), and the "potential to yield of findings" (p. 171). According to Wertz's (2005) suggestion, participants should be recruited for information until the objective of the study is achieved. Creswell (2007) estimated that nine to eleven key informants are sufficient as for a narrative presentation. Creswell (2007) also recommended a large sample size where the outcome of a given study is expected to provide a theory or model. The main goal of this study was not to develop a theory of citizen engagement in a developing country but to derive a conceptual model of citizen engagement. For the four countries initially selected for the study, the sample size for would have been more than 150 participants. Such a

sample size would have made room for the views of diverse categories of participants coming from two colonial powers, the British and the French. Because the researcher had no choice but to focus his work on one country, the Republic of Burundi, 23 interviews and three focus group discussions were deemed sufficient. After these encounters, data collection was discontinued. The researcher believes that, financial constraints aside, including other countries might have provided more information than necessary for scholars and practitioners of public administration, and that information might have complicated the findings. Interviews in the Republic of Kenya, for example, would have provided information on a subject that differs from that in Burundi, as local governments in Nairobi, modeled on the British system, have been operating for years. Diversity of opinions, in this case, would have encompassed the views of people living in different countries. In the case of Burundi, the researcher collected a “widest array” of data (Creswell, 2002). Table 1 shows the total number of participants interviewed, with a breakdown in numbers for each category. This table is complemented by Figure 1, which displays the percentage of participants in the study. In total, the 23 participants interviewed consisted of Burundian power-holders, representatives of international organizations, and the population at large, represented by civil society actors and other local NGOs. The investigator focused mainly on local administrators, i.e., commune and zone leaders. The largest group of participants comprised the focus group in which Batwa-Pygmies and Christian Evangelical pastors sat down and openly discussed the issue that mattered most to them—citizen engagement. The World Bank office in Bujumbura was visited four times, but officials who could have represented the organization were in Washington. In addition, the data sample included a wide array of documents and extensive field observation notes taken by the researcher (Creswell, 1998; Hall & Rist, 1999).

Table 1. Methodologies and quantities of interviews and focus groups

Methodology	Total Number
Interview with donors and international NGOs	4
Interview with Marie de Bujumbura officials	3
Interview with commune officials	3
Interview with zone officials	6
Interview with civil society organizations	3
Interview with citizens	4
Focus group discussions with elected council at commune level	3
Focus group with Batwa ethnic groups and other randomly selected citizens in Muramvya	14
Focus group with clergy in Bujumbura	9
Total	49

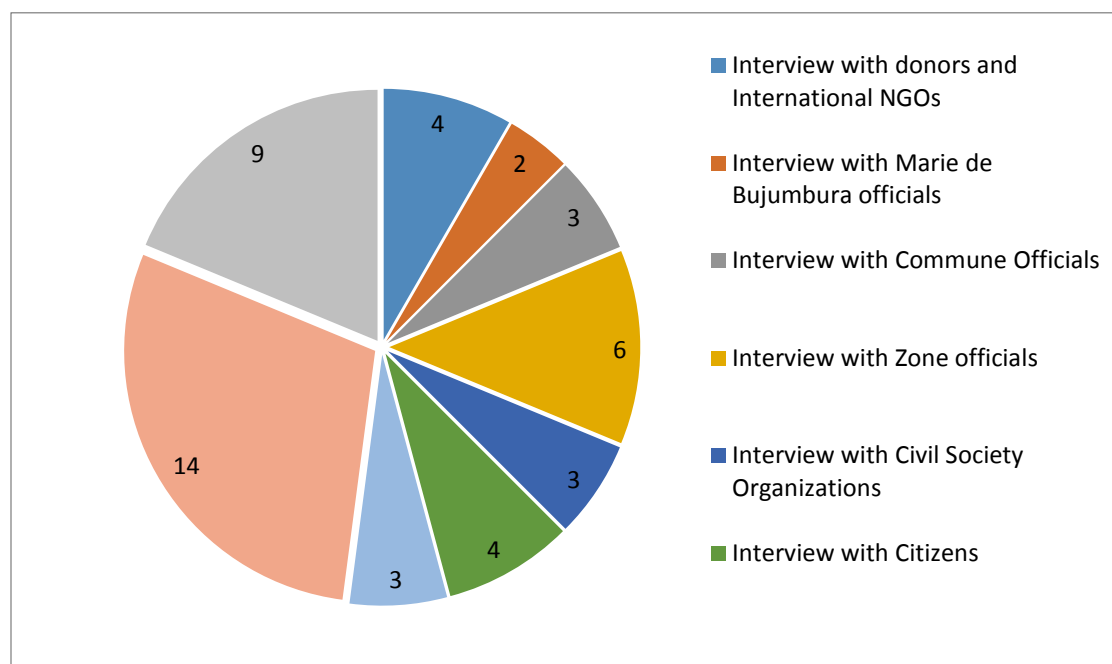


Figure 2. Percentages of participants in the study. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were conducted with groups of interests; other international organizations; local officials, including commune and zone officials; and citizens.

Gaining Access to Participants

The primary concern for the success of this research was the issue of participant

confidentiality. Gaining access to selected participants in countries such as the Republic of Burundi was crucial in understanding citizen engagement under decentralization. At the time of the interviews, key informants did not feel safe, as the city of Bujumbura was experiencing tragic events, mainly the killing of military elites of both Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, on a daily basis. At the beginning of the study, during the focus group discussions and interviews, the researcher shared the nature and purpose of the study. At that time, the researcher was able to determine participants' willingness to participate in the study and measure their opinions for findings and disseminations.

Marshall & Rossman (2011) point out that “respect for person captures the notion that we do not use the people who participate in our studies as a means to an end” (p. 47). In building trust, the researcher communicated with prospective participants face-to-face and through letters, including a Consent Form, a Recruitment Letter, and the Interview Protocol. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to participants and the reason behind their selection for the study. Participants were assured of absolute anonymity and confidentiality throughout the study and thereafter and that their identity would be protected at all times. With participants' permission, the interviews were audio taped. Participants were told that participation was strictly on a voluntary basis, and that they could withdraw at any time. Some participants manifested a desire to be paid for interviews. However, participants were told that there would be no monetary compensation for participation in this study. The researcher then contacted the School of Administration in Bujumbura ENA (*Ecole Nationale d'Administration*) and asked for a room for data gathering and writing reports.

The researcher told participants that their experiences would contribute to the understanding and effective management of citizen engagement in the future. The ongoing

distrust over the current political turmoil was brought to their attention. Participants were informed that the researcher was not involved in Burundian politics but acknowledged the likelihood of the interviews bringing back memories of the killing and massacre of the *Tutsi*, *Hutu*, and *Twa*. In the event participants experienced stress or anxiety during the study, they were assured they could terminate participation at any time with no consequences. All efforts were made to maintain a healthy conversation. Participants' consent was obtained before the interviews were conducted (Creswell, 1998; McReynold, Koch, & Rumrill, 2001). These conversations built trust between the researcher and participants while providing access to required information.

To meet ethical requirements, the researcher reviewed and verified current ethical standard forms and provided, if needed, a critique of the apparent lack of intercultural awareness where one's obligations extend beyond the self. It is important to understand that the study was conducted in Burundi, a country that has a deeply patriarchal society and where giving one's consent by signing a document or making one's mark may jeopardize one's life or risk removal from office if working for the government. For the purpose of this study, and because the study focused on individual life experience, the formal process involving *the human subject* was invoked. Some of the participants, mainly local administrators (zone, commune), felt that they needed permission from their superior, mayor of the city. Some local leaders (chef de zones and staff of international organizations) refused to participate unless their superiors allowed them to speak on behalf of their entities and organizations. The researcher then contacted the mayor's office. The mayor's office drafted an official letter, signed by the mayor, asking for access to information. On April 14, 2016, the researcher sent the said letter to the mayor's office in Bujumbura. On April 20, 2016, the mayor's office granted the researcher's request (see appendix

F). Participants in the study were assured that they could provide information without fear of retaliation.

Method of Data Collection

Four data sets were used for this study—interviews, document reviews, focus group discussions, and observation and field notes.

Interviews

McReynold et al. (2001), Creswell (1998), and Polkinhorne (2005) point out that a survey interview is one source of data collection in a qualitative study. Creswell (1998), for example, recommended the extensive interview for a specific case study. For this study, interviews were used to solicit information from key informants on citizen engagement in Burundi. Cross-sectional interviews were carried out in a short period from March to April 2016.

The researcher utilized in-depth interviews. This means interviews were conducted face-to-face and the subject matters were explored in detail. This technique allowed the researcher to solicit in-depth and detailed information on the phenomenon being investigated. It also allowed the researcher to control the interview process so that questions could be answered in an appropriate manner. Further, it allowed the researcher to control the questions, clarify ambiguities and issues for appropriate responses, and collect supplementary data (Singleton & Straits, 2005). It also allowed the researcher to look for patterns from different participants while understanding more about citizen engagement in coproduction of services in Burundi. Moreover, it allowed the researcher to observe the body language of participants to contextualize the data in ways that would not be possible in telephone interviews (Hall & Rist, 1999).

As per Creswell (1998), the disadvantage of the individual interview is cost and time. In some instances, interviews lasted more than two hours. Because the interviews were mostly

scheduled in participants' offices, there were frequent interruptions from phone calls and visitors. Follow-up interviews became necessary to clarify some issues that arose in analyzing the data. By this time, the researcher had already left Bujumbura for the United States.

The interviews were semi-structured. Questionnaires were prepared and served as a guide (Goulding, 2002; Singleton & Straits, 2005). An interview protocol in the French language was prepared, with open-ended questions for special categories of participants. The main research questions remained the same. However, questions related to international organizations, including the World Bank, were reframed to meet the needs of the researcher. These open-ended questions, as per McReynolds et al. (2001), allowed the researcher to reformulate the questions based on participants' responses and thus solicit more detailed answers. The interviews were recorded, and the researcher took notes in case recordings were inadequate. In two cases, participants refused to be recorded and asked that the researcher take notes. Their hesitation was valid because they feared a negative outcome once someone listened to what they had said about their localities and the people they serve. Using Stake's (1995) concept of "facsimile and interpretive commentary," after these interviews, the researcher went immediately to the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* (ENA) to prepare an extensive account.

Document Reviews

Singleton and Straits (2005) recommended available data as the most credible source of information, since the memory of those who experienced the phenomena may have weakened with time. Unfortunately, in Burundi, little research addresses the issue of citizen engagement and participation in local government management. Some of the documents provided by international organizations about community engagement via decentralization applied mainly to World Vision and the World Bank. Given the nature of the study, more relevant reports were

needed to determine the basis for citizen engagement and participation as well as the relationship among citizens, power holders, and the groups of interests.

Singleton and Straits (2005) identified five main sources of available data: 1) public documents, 2) mass media, 3) personal or private documents, 4) non-verbal, and 5) archival sources. The data gathered for this study included such public documents as the *Guide des Elus Collinaires*, *Le Manuel de Procedures Administratives et Financières Communales*; statutes related to decentralization, including law No. 1/33 of 28 November 2014; press releases by Burundian authorities on issues of decentralization (bringing the government closer to the people); and ordinances and memos from the Interior Ministry and the Cabinet of the President. These documents were analyzed to ascertain the rationale for the employment of citizen engagement in the area of local government management.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups discussions were conducted with a wide range of participants by three separate teams, including the investigator, a team of pastors from protestant churches located in Bujumbura, selected local leaders, and village members (*Twa* and other ethnic groups living in Muramvya Province). Each team consisted of three people, as per Creswell ((1998), acting as facilitator, recorder, and assistant to the group. Focus group method allowed the researcher to collect data from different participants at once. The groups were mixed and representative of all the community, including women. Participants also shared their lived experience, meanings, and beliefs related to factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in their respective cities, hills, counties, and villages. The topic of discussion (citizen engagement) was of particular interests to participants. They gave depth and insights that would produce useful numerical results on how the government will be interacting with them in the near future. Question guides were developed for each group and

discussions were recorded in detail. Each team consisted of three people acting as facilitator, recorder, and assistant to the group. The wide group of participants was selected based on years of experience working with local leaders, citizens, and international organizations operating in Burundi. Other criteria included village of provenance and sex or gender. Group participants were diversified. There were three groups in all, one had 14 people, one had nine, and the last had three. A question guide was developed for each group. All the discussions were recorded in detail.

Observation Field Notes

In addition to the interviews and documentary sources, the researcher kept a daily journal record of field observations. These notes facilitated an analysis of the findings. McReynolds et al. (2001) and Merriam (2009) identified observation field notes as credible sources of data collection. Merriam (2009) stated it very clearly, declaring that field notes “are analogous to the interview transcript” (p.104). Throughout the study, the researcher observed the behaviors of participants, mainly local power-holders and citizens. The demeanor of participants, especially staff of international organizations and power-holders, was noted during the interview and written down in a brief form. The demeanor of angry citizens who came to recoup their documents and find out that it took them more days than expected were documented and recommendations were made in accordance with Merriam’s (1998) assertions. Overall, this section is illustrated in Figure 2.

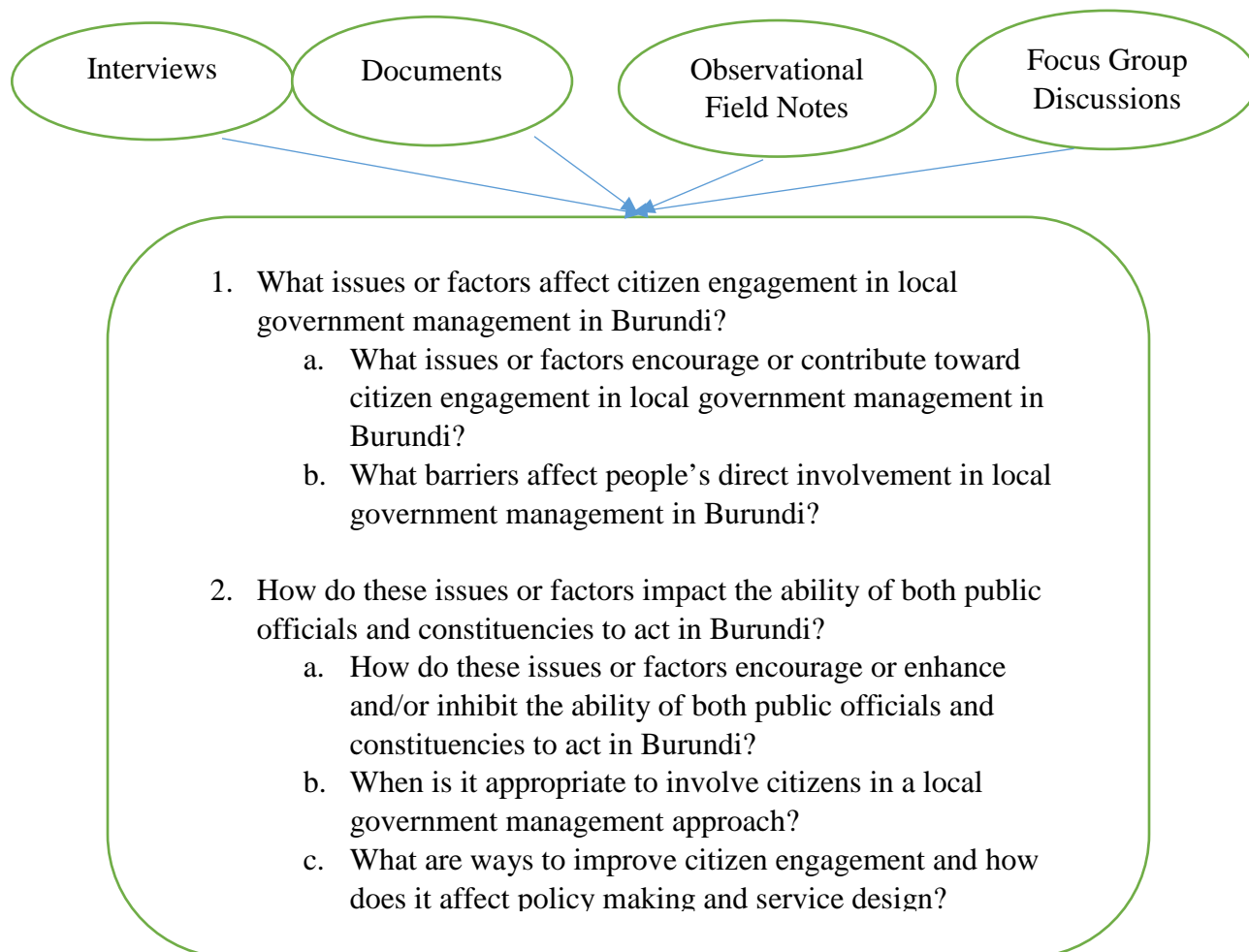


Figure 3. Overall description of nature of data collected. This figure show the method of collection used to collect data, which included observational field note.

Method of Data Analysis

This section discusses methodology used by the investigator to analyze the data. First, the four different stages of data analysis are described. This is followed by a calendar of data collection and analysis. According to Creswell (1998), Yin (1993), and Stake (1995), case study methodology is a reliable methodology when executed with care.

Within the qualitative research paradigm, Goulding (2002) realized that data analysis commences with the start of data collection. This paper followed logical categories used by Stake (1995) and Creswell (1997) and their procedural recommendations for data analysis. To be true to the narrative description of the study, the investigator ensured that the analysis was of

high quality, addressing the most significant aspects of the study. The general analytic strategy used by the investigator included four stages of data analysis:

1. The researcher managed the data. In this investigation, and due to the volume of data gathered through interviews and documents, the investigator developed a list of all data collected. Data were then stored in specified files and organized into folders. Each file was given a name corresponding to the interviewee and his or her position for easy retrieval and analysis as per Creswell (2007).

2. In the second stage, the researcher read all the material, namely transcripts from interviews, documents, and field notes, several times until he became familiar with the content. Creswell (1997) referred to the second stage as “reading and memoing” (143). In the case of reading, the researcher followed Creswell’s (1998) advice and created “short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occurred to the reader” (p. 144). Codes were developed and findings sent to the interviewees for their comments. The researcher read all the data repeatedly for new insights until he was saturated and could derive no further meaning from it. The ideas derived from the data were coded. The codes enabled the researcher to combine similar ideas to form categories. The categories and codes were then compared and contrasted to develop new insights, while additional codes were formed. This exercise was repeated until the data was saturated. In the case of qualitative inquiry, Creswell and Stake (1995) conclude that data analysis should be grounded in detailed description; categorical aggregation, meaning findings from multiple sources; direct interpretation, findings from a single source; “correspondence and pattern,” equivalent categories to establish patterns or a trend; and finally development of “naturalistic generalization,” an assertion and conclusion based on the researcher’s encounter with the data.

In this study, the researcher used the process of “detailed description,” presenting “facts” researched and their contexts, as displayed by the data. The process of “categorical aggregation” was utilized when the researcher identified ideas from different sources and classified them into categories and themes (diverse forms of evidence). Moreover, the researcher utilized “direct interpretation” to identify evidence from a single instance as “meaning.” This allowed the researcher to decorticate what a participant said, or an idea that appeared in a document once, or an observation made by the researcher in a single instance. Categories were also matched to show patterns and repeated patterns. The researcher interpreted the data and made assertions and conclusions based on “insights” to contribute to the understanding of citizen engagement and the application of learned lessons that comes from it (Creswell, 1998).

3. The last stage of data analysis used in this study involved packaging and presenting what was found in the data in the form of a matrix or figure to make the analysis open and easy to understand. Converting data sets into useful formats involved a logical linking of extracted information from the database. Data collection methods were chosen to match the resources available in Burundi at that time. After reviewing the currently available information in Burundi, it was helpful to create an evaluation matrix that matched the data collection and analysis. Furthermore, the data collection methods and the analysis methods were chosen to complement each other’s strengths and weaknesses. This helped with the design of data collection tools, including questionnaires, interview questions, focus group presentations, and data extraction tools for document review and observation.

4. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative findings, it is necessary to make the process of analysis a public event. Presenting a matrix of categories has brought the process into the public domain and enhanced the credibility of findings. This process provided a detailed

account of how the findings on contexts of citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi was performing.

Calendar of Data Collection and Analysis

Interview transcripts, documents, and field notes were analyzed through detailed “description,” “categorical aggregation,” “direct interpretation,” “correspondence and patterns,” and “development of naturalistic generalization.” The calendar of data collection, analysis, and report writing is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Calendar of Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection Analysis	<i>Jan.</i>	<i>Feb.</i>	<i>March-Apr.</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept-March 2017</i>	<i>April</i>
Citizen Interview			X	X					
Local Official Interviews			X	X					
Groups of Interests Interviews			X	X					
Observation			X	X					
Artifact Collection	X		X	X					
Research Journal	X		X						
Recursive Analysis	X		X	X	X	X			
Coding Analysis					X	X	X		
Clustering of Findings						X	X		
Generating Themes				X	X				
Writing of Findings					X	X	X	X	
Final Presentation									X

Notes. This calendar was adapted from Marshall and Rossman (2011).

Ethical Issues

This section describes ethical issues applied to the study. These issues included credibility, researcher bias, and participant protection.

Credibility

As a way of enhancing the credibility of the information collected, a triangulation method was used to improve the results collected from various tools (Bean, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Maxwell, 2005). Triangulation, however, might be misunderstood as a tool of validation. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) emphasized that, “[t]riangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation” (p. 4). In this case, with the qualitative method the researcher used, triangulation was the alternative.

The analyses of field texts and interviews were compared against written stories and documents. Maxwell (1996) suggested that qualitative studies often have “*face generalizability*; there is no reason, in this case, that the results apply more generally” (p. 97). Second, Maxwell argued that “generalizability of qualitative study is based ... on the development of a theory that can be extended to other cases” (p. 115). Third, Hammersley and Weiss (as cited in Maxwell, 1996) listed a number of other features “that lend generalizations from case studies” (p. 97). These features include a) the “similarity of dynamics and constraints to other situations” (p. 97); b) “respondents’ own assessments of generalizability” (p. 97); c) the “presumed depth or universality of the phenomenon studied” (p. 97), and d) “corroboration from other studies” (p. 98).

For the purpose of accuracy, verification, and further input, the researcher collected data through participant verification and feedback (Maxwell, 1996). This researcher’s interpretations of stories told and information gathered from both public officials and citizens through interviews and focus groups were shared with participants in this study. Preliminary findings, as described above, were shared with selected participants for their feedback to ensure that they conformed to the participants’ experiences. The researcher provided a detailed description of the

phenomenon being studied as recommended by Creswell (2007) and Hall and Rist (1999), so that it could be assessed for possible generalization elsewhere.

In general, there is no single acceptable way of validating qualitative findings. However, qualitative inquiry can be authenticated (Fielding, 2004). Creswell (1998) states that establishing quality standards in a qualitative study differs from standard procedures in quantitative research in terms of definition and procedures. Creswell pointed out that some researchers in the qualitative tradition have sought to establish “qualitative equivalents that parallel traditional quantitative approaches to validity” (p. 197) to facilitate acceptable qualitative research. McReynolds et al. (2001) maintained that “reliability” and “validity” within the context of the qualitative tradition do not have the same meaning as they do in quantitative research. They explained that terms like “credibility,” “trustworthiness,” and “authenticity” are used instead of reliability and validity. Creswell (1998) was clear about these terms. He used verification for validity to ground qualitative research as a distinct methodological approach for research.

The requirement of credibility insists that a qualitative researcher establish that the findings arrived at are in consonance with participants’ perceptions and beliefs. Since the essence of a qualitative study is to describe the phenomena being studied from the point of view of those who have experienced it, transferability requires the researcher to provide detailed characteristics of what was studied. This allows external evaluation to be made as to whether the findings could be transferred elsewhere. The researcher does not make that decision but provides information to make such assessment possible. And finally, the process of confirmability requires that the researcher document procedures to corroborate and confirm the findings (Trochim, 2001).

For the case study, Creswell (as cited in Stake, 1995) advocated for detailed verification or quality check. Creswell (1998) insisted on the need to “search for convergence of

information” (p. 213). In this study, the researcher used multiple sources of data, rich thick description, member checking, and peer review to verify the findings as per Creswell (1998).

Figure 4 shows participants used to verify findings. Preliminary findings were shared with selected participants for their feedback to ensure that they conformed to participants’ experiences

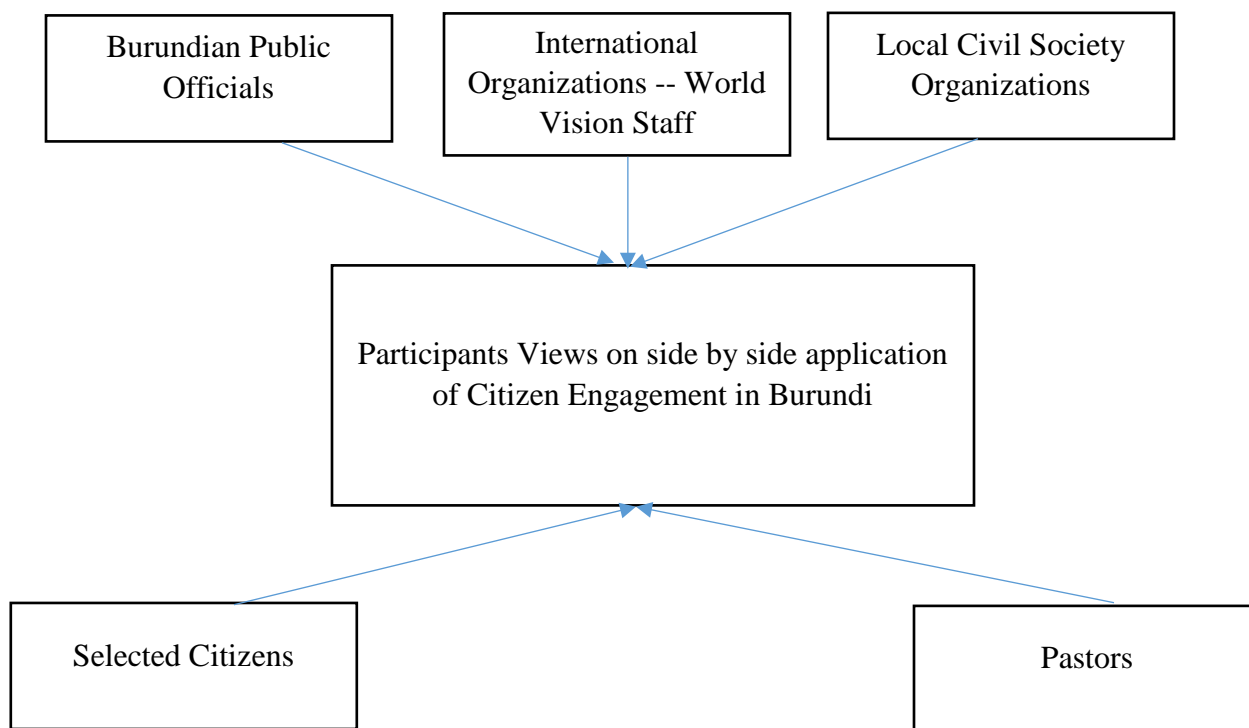


Figure 4. Overall description of findings’ peer reviews.

Researcher Bias

The role of the researcher is to be the main instrument for data collection. In his writing, Goulding (2002) recognizes the likelihood of qualitative research being tainted with bias. In this study, the researcher took several steps to deal with the possibility of prejudice. The researcher maintained a high degree of consciousness about the possibility of bias and exercised objectivity throughout the process. In addition, the research findings have been subjected to member checking and peer review. The aim was to enhance the credibility of the research findings (Goulding, 2002). Initial findings were shared with selected participants, and their comments

were incorporated into the report. Using multiple sources of data to collate findings enhanced the credibility of research outcomes. These measures eliminated the likelihood of subjectivity.

Participant Protection

Participant protection was critical to the success of the study. To ensure participants' protection, they were recruited voluntarily. The intent of the study and the interview protocol were explained to participants. Participants were also given the assurance that their names will not be divulged. The researcher gave participants five to ten days to read the consent letter and ask questions before they agreed to be interviewed. The consent letter informed participants that they could stop the interviews at any time of their choosing. The researcher understood the political climate of Burundi and did not want to risk the lives of participants. Participant privacy was respected, and they were allowed to indicate where and when to meet for their protection (Creswell, 1998; Goulding, 2002).

Summary

Chapter 3 reviewed the theoretical method of inquiry used in this research and the design of the study as well. This qualitative inquiry sought to examine citizen engagement in municipalities in Burundi. At the time of this citizen engagement research in local government management in Burundi, no study existed to explain why, how, and when to engage citizens in the coproduction of public value. This study explored these missing elements of citizen engagement and explained how citizen engagement in local government management is to be established in support of the newly implemented decentralization of governmental entities in Burundi. The method explained in Chapter 3 provided information that contributed to the understanding of citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. Chapter 4 consists of data analysis and findings in answering to the research questions.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the findings in this study. As seen in Chapter 1, citizen engagement in local government management in post-colonial African countries, especially in the Republic of Burundi, within the context of this research aims at understanding and interpreting the factors for and barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management. The purpose of this qualitative study is to provide a deeper understanding of the issues or factors contributing toward people's direct involvement in the design of public services of local government by examining factors that encourage or inhibit the ability of power-holders, citizens, and the group of interests to act in a meaningful way. The following questions guided the study:

1. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?
2. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - a. How do these issues or factors encourage or enhance and/or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - b. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
 - c. What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policymaking and service design?

In relation to the analysis of the empirical evidence collected, and following the insight of Bruner (as cited in Becvar & Becvar, 2000), who suggested that when a researcher attempts "to

understand another person, idea, or concept, he/she creates meaning according to the framework of constructs that use to make sense of the world around (them)” (p. 353). The meaning of participants and their experience matters. In terms of organization, the chapter presents briefly how data was “generated, gathered, and recorded” as well as the process by which the meanings emerged and followed through in the study.

It is important to restate that in addition to an understanding of how participants in this study make meaning of their experience in local government management, the analysis of participants’ stories and metaphors depended on views of the three categories of participants, citizens, power-holders, groups of interests.

Staying within the analytical construct of the process management triangle – Citizens, Power holders, and Groups of Interests identified in Chapter 3—the analysis of empirical materials proceeds from the temporal (first dimension) contexts to the personal and social experiences of individual participants in this study. Recall, for instance, the notion of experience is such that it cannot be talked about in a vacuum. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), “wherever one positions oneself in that continuum – the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future – each point has a past experience base and leads to an experiential future” (p. 2). In developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi, people have lived the experience and have stories to tell about issues of governance and stories of engagement or disengagement in local decision-making. What is inferred is that the notion of learning from one’s experience suggests that experiences grow out of other past experiences and at the same time leads to further experiences in the future. The researcher used a process management triangle to advance the theory and understanding about how citizens react toward their power-

holders as well as how power-holders see the groups of interests' actions toward citizens' engagement in service coproduction of public value.

Context of the Study

In support of personal and social experience, content analysis in the interpretive tradition was utilized as the most suitable method to provide in-depth contextual perspectives on the subject. The findings in this chapter consist of analysis of five sets of data, documents, field notes, observation, focus group discussions, and interviews. In March 2016, the researcher travelled to Bujumbura, the capital city of the Republic of Burundi, to execute the study. The researcher was supposed to work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Due to financial constraints, however, the investigator was unable to travel to those named countries. The researcher then decided to focus his investigation in the Republic of Burundi.

The name of participants were coded in letters and numbers to prevent identification. Zone officials were coded as ZO and the first on the list as ZO1 and so on. Commune officials were coded as CO, i.e. CO1; Mairie Officials were coded as MO, i.e. MO1; Central government officials were coded as PO, i.e. PO1; Civil Society Actors were coded as CO, i.e. CO1. After the coding process, the researcher contacted informants to introduce the study.

Participants: Arrival, Recruitment, and Access

This section describes the arrival, including people the researcher met who collaborated with him, recruitment process and number of people who were willing to participate in this study, and, finally, the access to participants.

Arrival in Bujumbura. Upon arrival in Bujumbura, the researcher contacted the founder and Executive Director of Harvest Initiative (HI), a local non-profit organization

working in Bujumbura with offices all around the country. Harvest Initiative agreed to serve as partners in the study to identify and suggest potential participants both within and outside their organization for the researcher to consider for interviews. The *snowballing strategy*, which asks people for possible names of those who know something about the phenomena, was used to identify participants (Polkinghorne, 2005). The researcher worked with Mr. Bulabula Joseph, a local Senior Pastor at Trinity Church with office in the Province of Gitega, to introduce the researcher and asked for names of possible informants. Based on these contacts, an informants' list was created and participants were purposefully selected based on these criteria: maximum variation, informants, theory-based, and confirmatory sampling strategy (Creswell, 2007).

After the selection process, the researcher contacted informants to introduce the study and sought for the necessary consent for the interviews. This was done by walking from one office to the other in Bujumbura. The researcher visited the office of the Mayor (Mairie) to ask for potential names of Head of Departments who should participate to the interviews. The office of the Mayor asked for a permission letter from Hamline University before they could discuss further with the researcher. The researcher then contacted the school via email for confirmation letter.

Recruitment. Participants in the study were recruited from Bujumbura Mairie. It was necessary to go to the province of Muramvya for one unit of analysis, mainly meeting with the “Pygmies” or indigenous Batwa community to understand their individual experience toward engagement and participation on local government management. People's experience as per Polkinghorne (2005) was the selection criteria of importance to understand the barriers to citizen engagement in Burundi. Interviews were conducted with 23 key informants. The sample size initially proposed was 38 but after 23 interviews, data were saturated and the researcher was

not learning anything new. Interviews was also supported by three focus groups; one organized in Muramvya with Batwa, Tutsi and Hutu communities; the other organized in Bujumbura with Church representatives; and the last organized with three officials who accepted to take part of this study. Participants interviewed were made up of Burundian officials (staff of Mairie, Communes, Zones, and Neighborhoods), International organizations (World Vision, and CARE), Civil Society Actors, Church leaders, and the citizens alike. A detailed description, including the position of key informants cannot be given because it will lead to their identification. Some of the participants, however, manifested the desire to let their names known. The Burundian public officials were twelve, all of whom serve under the Minister of Decentralization: *Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Formation Patriotique* (Interior Minister in Charge of Decentralization), two Communes Administrators, Mayor, and *un Conseil de la Maire Charge des Affaires Economique*, (Council of Mayor in charge of Economic Affairs); Chef des Zones of the three Communes: Commune **Mukaza**, **Muha**, and **Ntahangwa**. World Vision and CARE International staff were consulted for a one-on-one interview. The other International participants contacted were the Catholic Relief Service and Concern Worldwide. At the time of the interview, the World Bank staff that were supposed to be interviewed with the researcher were out of the country working on different assignments in Washington, DC in the United States of America. Concern Worldwide denied our request to interview appointment citing confidential issue. They asked the researcher to contact their main office abroad for approval of the meetings.

There were two Chef des Communes interviewed. One of the three Administrators was busy working on different assignments. The researcher arranged a meeting with his Social and Economic Advisor to get hold of the Administrator, but he denied the meeting noting that the study is about post-colonial African countries while claiming that the colonial era has elapsed.

He argued that if it was the discussion about the decentralization of local institutions, he (the Administrator) was open to sit down and discuss the issue. There were three Chef de Zones interviewed. I regretted the missing interviews of the Chef de Zone de Kinama due to a lack of proper documents, among them the authorizing document from the Mayor and approved by the Chef de Commune, at the time of the scheduled interview. The Interior Ministry offered one key informant in charge of decentralization. There were 11 Civil Society Actors. Interviewees were all Burundians with three working with local civil society organizations and eight religious leaders, mainly evangelical Christians. Due to time constraints, the researcher could not meet with Muslims leaders and Catholic Bishops. For instance, the Catholic doctrine of self-denial, helping others to achieve success may propel them to be actively engaged in the coproduction. The same may be said for Muslims who tend to support other Muslim people because they share the same religion. They also feel comfortable working with people whose religious principles differ from their own. Therefore, other research can be done in this area. Table 1 in Chapter 3 displays the number of participants.

Access to participants. Gaining access to power-holders' key informants were subject to an administrative process that started by getting an approved letter from the Mayor of Bujumbura. It took the researcher seven working days to receive this letter. This letter was useful for getting access to those local government officials who would not speak unless they are authorized by their superiors. For example, some of the Chef des Zones interviewed declined to be recorded at the middle of the interview unless authorized by their superiors. One of the Chef de Zones decided to take the researcher to meet with the Administrator who, in turn, asked the researcher to apply for an "access letter" for information from the Mayor of Bujumbura before any interview action could be conducted in his/her Commune. She (the Chef de Zone) explained

to me that she would be available any time once I receive the approval letter from the Mayor. She was ready to provide other names of staff with years of experiences dealing with issue of citizen engagement to be approached for interviews. Another key official interviewed mentioned another key official in the Ministry of Interior in charge of decentralization. After speaking with the key official in the Ministry of Interior, he suggested the researcher to meet with the *Minister of Decentralization and Communal Development in Burundi*. When the researcher went to meet the Minister, her secretary asked to draft a letter of audience to the Minister. It took the researcher four days to meet him, who in turn asked the researcher to meet with his Director General in charge of Territorial and Decentralization.

The researcher used the first few days in Bujumbura making contacts for approvals and appointment. With appointment letters in place, the researcher received the cellular phone contact of participants and gently scheduled the date time of the interview. In, general, Burundian power-holders and other participants were very receptive and considered the study very necessary and were very cooperative to share their experience. Local officials selected to participate were very busy and those reminder calls helped to keep the appointment in focus. One of the administrators of Commune told the investigator that he may not have 20 minutes reserved solely for the researcher because he had other duties to accomplish. Asked if he (the Administrator) could meet on Saturday or Sunday, he responded by denying the invitation claiming that his workload allow him to work on these days too. Key informants were interested in knowing who the researcher was and the purpose of his study. In one case, a state official approached the researcher and asked if he could work on issues of decentralization rather than citizen engagement.

Observations. During the interviews, the researcher had the opportunity to observe participants' behaviors. Civil Society Actors were adamant in their views on the Group of Interests and power-holders' inability to engage citizens in policy-making and service design. The power-holders were also very passionate and exhibited a great emotion about the lack of participation and full engagement. Some power-holders, especially at the Mayor's Office were very calm and confident of the decentralization process, which they saw as the starting conversation on the issue of citizen engagement and economic viability of their zones and communes. With the exception of one chef des Zones, the Chef de Zones interviewed didn't appear confident with the system and expressed doubt about how the decentralization process is being implemented. The groups of interests were frank on their views, but all of them were diplomatic in expressing their views. The Minister and the heads of divisions were very composed, confident, and expressed their views believing that the program being implemented will bring citizens closer to services provided by their Communes. The citizens interviewed expressed fear, doubt, mistrust, and disbelief about the decentralization process.

Method. Interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions. Prepared questionnaires in French guided the interviews. These questions were adapted depending on the group to be interviewed, the responses and the category of participants being interviewed. All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed, except one Chef de Zone who expressed discomfort of being recorded; then, indicated that she preferred that the researcher to take down notes instead. In this situation, the research decided to take down notes as suggested by the interviewee. The interviewer kept a reflective journal throughout the study to keep track of meanings as they emerged.

Data were analyzed following Stake (1995) through detailed “description,” “categorical aggregation,” “direct interpretation,” “correspondence and patterns,” and “development of naturalistic generalization” as described in Chapter 3. By using a detailed description, the researcher provided narrative description of the data and the meaning that emerged. Through the use of categorical aggregation or impression of ideas, the researcher put together the ideas to form meaning. Thus, the researcher coded the records and similar ideas and impressions were classified in a specific class to make meaning.

In terms of “direct interpretation,” the researcher identified meaning as a finding from a single instance of what participants said, or participants’ ideas that appeared in document once, or an observation that the researcher made in a single instance. For “correspondence and patterns,” the research coded the transcripts and aggregated how often an idea appeared in a particular manner to show and detail patterns in different ways. Different tables were used in support of the analysis. Lastly, for the process of “naturalistic generalization,” the researcher made assertions and conclusions based upon insights recorded from the data. In terms of “correspondence and patterns,” the researcher coded the documents received and reviewed how often an idea appeared in a particular manner to show a pattern. The analysis and finding consists of facts on ground and interpretation of the data to make the case understandable. According to Norma Riccucci (2010), this is a key function of hermeutics, which entails “textual interpretation or analysis to discover the meaning behind the written word” (p. 66). In this case, the researcher provided detailed facts to allow readers to make their own conclusions, assertions, and interpretations. It should be noted that the findings were based on these five qualitative approaches.

Documents. Documents used for the study were provided by the office of Director General of the Territorial Decentralization. They included “*Manuel de Procédures Administratives et Financières Communale*” from the Interior Ministry, « *La Loi N^o1/33 du 28 Novembre 2014 Portant Révision de la Loi No 1/02 du 25 Janvier 2010 Portant Organisation de l’Administration Communale* » and « *Le Guide des Elus Collinaires .*” All of these documents were obtained from the Interior Ministry’s office in Bujumbura. They were supplemented by a copy of Law on Decentralization known in French as “*Loi N^o1/16 du 25 Mai 2015 Portant Modalités de Transfert de Compétences de l’Etat aux Communes,*” and the “*Ordonnance Ministérielle No 530/380/du 14/03/2014 Portant Création et Mise en Place des Structures du Comité de Pilotage du Programme d’Education et de Formation Patriotique.*”

Findings. The finding of the research was validated through the use of multiple sources of data, member checking, and peer review. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality concerning information offered; their names in the study and their privacy were respected as well. Those who manifested the desire to be cited, their names were used in this research.

Two events took place that might have impacted the study’s credibility. At the time of the study, the European Union (EU) suspended financial aid to Burundian administration. The EU funds about half of the annual budget used by the government of Burundi. The EU was concerned by the political turmoil that started in April 2015 after the current president refused to relinquish power and then run for a third term (the Guardian, 2016). The second event was the total lack of security around the project area, the city of Bujumbura, or Bujumbura Mairie. Political upheaval and widespread killing of high ranked soldiers concerned the researcher and

had the potential of undermining the credibility of the study. The researcher feared that some of key informants could refuse or hesitate to provide key information fearing the safety of their lives or a retaliation from opposing political parties once their superiors were aware of it. The changing of events may have probably affected some of the views expressed by participants.

Question 1

1. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?

Introduction

This question sought to find out the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in local government management in the Republic of Burundi. The question had two sub-questions. The first dealt with factors favoring engagement and the other question dealt with barriers to citizen engagement in decision-making and services design in Burundi. These sub-questions are as follow:

- a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
- b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?

Analysis of transcripts from the interviews, documents, observations, and field research notes revealed that the factors contributing toward citizen engagement in local government management in the Republic of Burundi exists through the Law on Decentralization showing a radical shift in state-citizen engagement from consultation to active participation. The most dominant and visible factors that encourage participation include the new Decentralization Policy Document of 2009 that considers citizens as partner in governance as well as different

relative governmental texts, laws, and decrees. Barriers to citizen engagement, as observed by the author, are enormous and they are both internal and external. Citizens shy away from participating in their municipalities (Zones and Communes) based on fear, illiteracy, political manipulation, uncertainty, lack of awareness, and political interference. Other hindrance factors include, but are not limited to, politically imposed development, the ambiguous role played by donor authorities in promoting the development projects, outside development experts, inclination of donor countries in selecting programs and projects of their interests, and lack of accountability in the management of local entities. According to the United Nations Development Programs (UNDP) (2013), 7.1 % of adults over the age of 25 have received a secondary education. The illiteracy rate for Burundians adult is high, and the government interviewees were concerned. Social, economic, and development conditions have been weakened by political turmoil. These political turmoil have created fear, mistrust, and misunderstanding among key political leaders due to a large number of military officials being shot and killed on a daily basis in Bujumbura. Political turmoil at the time of this research, for example, was a key indicator influencing how and when to meet with the elected and appointed officials. A lack of meeting with some of the selected key informants, including those from the World Bank, is indicative of how internal political situations have worsened. This prompted the researcher to rethink the questions and doubt if selected informants would be willing and able to respond truthfully and speak honestly on the questions and issues being discussed.

It is important to restate, in addition to the understanding of how participants in this study make meanings of their experiences in relation to the world around them (ongoing mistrust and unending conflict between conflicting politicians). The analysis of participants' stories proceed with a view to demonstrate the interconnectedness between social integration and its governance

system integration as formulated by Habermas (1975). As the researcher observed, participants' experience followed the ideas emanating from Tocqueville (1840) who saw decentralization as a way toward citizen engagement in local public affairs. He stated:

La décentralisation n'a pas seulement une valeur administrative, elle a une portée civique puisqu'elle multiplie les occasions pour les citoyens de s'intéresser aux affaires publiques ; elle les accoutume à user de la liberté. Et de l'agglomération de ces libertés locales, active et sourcilleuses, naît le plus efficace contrepoids aux prétentions du pouvoir central, fussent-elles étayées par l'anonymat de la volonté collective (p. 4).

Decentralization has not only an administrative value, it has a civic significance as it multiplies the opportunities for citizens to take an interest in public affairs; It accustoms them to the use of liberty. And the agglomeration of these active and leaning local freedoms is born the most effective counterweight to the claims of the central power, even if they are supported by the anonymity of the collective will. (p. 4). (Translation by the Author, August 2016)

While Tocqueville understood that value and significance of decentralization reside in offering opportunities for citizens to engage, in Burundi, the central government has not institutionalized citizen engagement. Most citizen engagement initiative comes from the desire to attain specific policy goal.

Crosscutting Issues: Citizen Engagement

The future of Burundian local government, especially the newly created communes highlights social inclusion as a key pillar for sustainable peace and socio-economic development in Burundi. A key point of departure for citizen engagement is the promotion of inclusive planning practice and a promise that the newly created communes and their entities will fully engage citizens and respond to their needs. A number of cross-cutting issues emerged from the study as critical to engaging citizens in the coproduction.

First, there is a strong linkage between public servants and politicians who have a unique position in that they act within government, granting them a unique opportunity of implementing

citizen initiatives as they may wish. The recent political reforms in Burundi have created opportunities for municipalities to take a more prominent role in building social cohesion at the local level, particularly the direct election of communal councils.

Second, there is a need to improve social accountability and engage the hard-to-reach population. The interview with the central government officials, Communal Administrators, some members of the communal councils, and some members of the community development structures (CCDCs) reveal that institutionalizing citizen engagement would have both structural and cultural components in which accountability and openness would play more of a role in oversight. First, it requires that citizen engagement in Burundi becomes a regular, to-be-expected component of the policy development processes in communes. Second, and equally important, the public and policymakers, both of whom are currently somewhat skeptical about citizen engagement, need to be convinced that citizen engagement processes and their results are of value and are a legitimate part of policy development and democracy. Lastly, the 2009 Nation Policy Document on Decentralization clearly supports the inter-communality which the government of Burundi had manifested its will to promote it by proclaiming clearly in Article 7 of the Communal Law.

In this case, public involvement is to be a core element in the policymaking process. Citizen engagement is to be incorporated in communal policy development while ensuring that accountability mechanism is upheld. Policymakers are to seek public inputs while working in policy development processes. In the case of the Republic of Burundi, due to political mistrust, faith in the current administrative process has largely been eroded because citizens feel like their voices are not heard, that their opinions have not been sought after a decision has been made, or that the consultation process is in place simply to appease public desire for a say. If the goal is

the promotion of economic development, citizen engagement is to renew faith in the political process. It is absolutely essential that this point be given substantive consideration throughout the planning and execution stages so as to not repeat past mistakes of the past.

Third, there should be a commitment to institutionalize public involvement in central and communal governments as opposed to concentrate it in certain departments. Many barriers to the adoption of citizen engagement are the result of false assumptions that citizens are less educated, don't understand the complexity of issues and cannot then provide useful input on complex scientific and social problems, and that they are unconcerned with matters that do not directly affect them. As the findings will reveal, citizens are aware of their civic obligations but there are both cultural and structural issues in achieving and implementing citizen engagement across governments (both communes and central).

Fourth, the poverty level in Burundi is, by far, the most pervasive and crosscutting issue that excludes people from participating in local government management. People from different classes inhabit different spaces in society, and those with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to have experienced civic participation. Furthermore, a large number of people have lived in poverty and women and people with disabilities have been stigmatized, belittled and marginalized, for some, much of their lives. At the communal level, administrators should create a forum where citizens' ideas, regardless of their income or socio-economic status, are welcomed, heard, and engaged in the coproduction.

In 2005, the central government took unprecedented measures, which confirmed the government's commitment to offer opportunities for involvement to municipalities (local government). Decentralization became the most effective way to give people's voice. However, more than seven years has elapsed without implementing the text on decentralization. One of the

participants described this phenomenon in a way that is more specific: “Citizens approved then followed how the Parliament adopted the Law on Decentralization in 2005 and on May 27, 2009, the passage of the *National Policy Document of Decentralization in Burundi* was aimed at reforming its governance. We (the people) waited to have this law implemented for so long. This January 2016, the central government has finally put in practice some of the Law signed in 2005.”

At the social-psychological level, the document on decentralization captures the sentiments, hopes, and feelings of public servants and citizens alike. It is perceived as a starting conversation for citizen to have their voice heard, oversight, accountability, fairness, and government openness. To a large degree, the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization addresses critical issues of political concerns that barred a class of some citizens from taking part in the process of coproduction. Despite the adoption of this document and recent political reform through the direct election of communal and hills councils, accountability mechanisms, as observed, remain weak, coupled with limited opportunities for citizens and communities to engage in the coproduction. Another key message that emerged from the interviews with key informants and focus group discussions was the need to rewrite the communes’ missions, goals, and objectives to include and define how citizens’ ideas in policy debate, formulation, and implementation would be received, used, and applied for sustainability of their communes.

Years of one party rules, mismanagement of scarce government resources, and daily killings of high ranked military officials left a number of citizens confused and wondering if their government works for them. The adoption of the Law on Decentralization backed by the Law known in French as la “*Loi N°1/33 du 28 Novembre 2014 Portant Revision de la Loi N° 1/02*

du 25 Janvier 2010 Portant Organization de l'Administration Communale” shaped the way the government of Burundi views citizens not as objects/subjects but as partners in the coproduction. This law was supported by the Ministerial Decree “*N°530/388/DU 141 03/2014 Portant Création et Mise en Place des Structures du Comité de Pilotage du Programme d'Education et de Formation Patriotique.*” After the promulgation of these laws and decrees, the Burundian government created a Steering Committee for Education Program and Patriotic Training (SCEPPT) to provide the operationalization structures on the ground to train and educate citizens. The aim was to increase the level of understanding of how the process of decentralization and engagement work by educating citizens and policymakers on how local government work.

It was within the institutional structure, accountability mechanisms, and participation mechanisms thought this Law on Decentralization that this research was called upon to work in understanding the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. Since the adoption of the 2009 National Document on Decentralization, changes within the public sector have not stopped.

Factors Encouraging Citizen Engagement

Factors that encourage citizen engagement in Burundi exist. They include accountability, participatory, and institution mechanisms, as well as the Law on Decentralization and various texts and decrees approved by the government and its parliament. Within participatory mechanism lies other factors that encourage citizen participation in decision-making and the design of public services. These factors combine in building awareness of communes and/or municipality’s sustainable development programs and projects. They include, but are not limited to: mobilizing, delegating, partnering, informing, consulting, and controlling factors.

Overview Results in Support of Factors for Citizen Engagement

The question 1a asked “What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?” This question was framed to find out the tenets, evidence, and facts that encourage citizen engagement in policymaking and service designs of their municipalities. The idea that citizen engagement is critical to local development and democratic process was regarded by many interviewees and other participants as a self-evident truth. Analysis of interviews, documents, focus group discussions, and research field notes revealed that increasing citizens’ voices through different forms of engagement/participation would make power-holders more accountable to citizens and responsive to their needs. The newly created structures of communes and zones identified areas bearing the relationship among citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests. During the time of interviews and focus group discussions conducted for this research, it was noted by participants that the implementation of the Law on Decentralization and numerous laws and decrees in line with this law clarify the divisions of responsibility among different key players, including citizens. Much attention was focused on different levels of citizen engagement that the structures, including the institutions and mechanisms deriving from this law, offer to citizens the possibility and ability to be part of the process. Figure 5 below show different levels of citizen engagement in Burundi.

**Figure 5. Opportunities for Citizen Engagement at Different Levels
In Burundi**

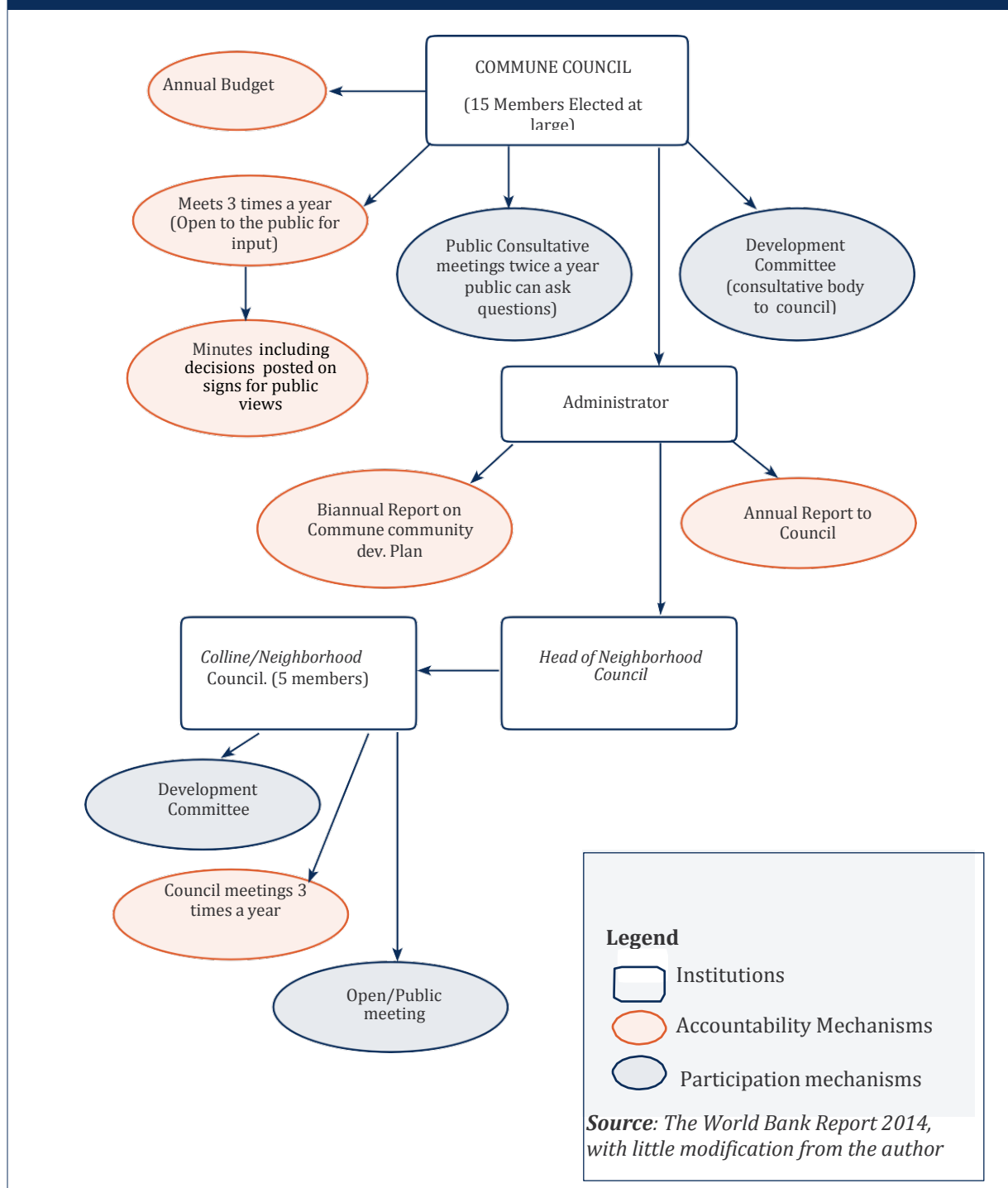


Figure 5. Opportunity for citizen engagement in Burundi that combines institutions and both participation and accountability mechanisms.

Opportunity for citizen engagement. Opportunities for citizen engagement in Burundi exist and come in different forms, including mechanisms for public participation. Local governments provide many opportunities for individuals to directly participate in decisions and in the delivery of programs and services. It is generally assumed that citizen engagement and civic participation is a desired and necessary part of any community based initiative. Citizen engagement in policy-making and service designs is in a unique position in developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi where the voice of citizens would be heard. On one hand, engaging citizens (the user of services) in the coproduction allows power-holders to directly involve their constituencies in the design, planning, and management of their Communes and Zones. On the other hand, Communes Officials are to support community participation by providing their residents with venues for engagement. Participants in this study went further when discussing opportunities for citizen engagement by addressing different elements that link engagement of citizens to a number of programs/projects implemented and to be implemented by their respective governments. Among the program being implemented include the Law on Decentralization adopted in 2005. The passage of this Law allowed the Mayor of Bujumbura Mairie, who oversees all the urban Communes and Zones, to reach beyond the “usual suspects” (most powerful stakeholders and opinion leaders in a given community) to engage the broader general public. Power-holders adopted then a variety of approaches to enhance civic participation while trying to listen to citizens’ voices.

Officials interviewed see the decentralization process as a tool to engage citizens in decision-making that brings the governors closer to the governed. One of these Municipal officials described it well in Kirundi as “kwegereza intwaro abanyagihugu” (bringing closer the government to the people). In this case study, the author does not look at contributing factors

such as “political, institutional, financial, and technical factors at play within the local government setting.” Rather the author looked to key factors believed to be influential and to have impact in engaging citizens in the decision-making and the design of public services. Other factors that lead to the voice of citizens that include the education, socio-economic status, and networking were left purposely.

Post-transition. The 2005 Burundian post-transition Constitution was adopted in the aftermath of more than ten years of civil war. This Constitution allowed reorganization of municipalities and laid out the process of bringing people together, strengthening their relations, and extending their social networks, while fostering trust among different communities and sharing values and thereby enabling further collective or community action. In fact, engagement with governance structures mostly stemmed from a combination of factors, such as the desire shared by the entire political elites, of civil society actors, and of Burundian people as indicated in the March 2005 constitution, which advocates the form of Decentralization as a model of governance. Key issues of this reform include the establishment of grassroots democracies and the promotion of participatory and sustainable socioeconomic development after years of officials being locked in a struggle with each other for dominance and control of government.

Opportunities for citizen oversights were offered by texts and documents produced by the government of Burundi, notably the Law on Decentralization of 2005 and amendments. Procedure for commune councils and neighborhood and/or hill councils are the result of associated texts. Table 3 synthesizes the opportunity for civic participation in different levels in Burundi. Figure 5 summarizes key structures, which support citizen engagement in decision-making and the design of public services. Figure 5 also shows mechanisms for engagement on three different levels described by the 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization.

Level one includes the institutions that support citizen engagement. They include 1) commune councils with 15 elected members, 2) the administrators who worked as a secretary of the Commune Council; the Collines (Hill) Councils that are made up with five elected bodies and the Head of Colline Council to oversee the Collines' operations. 3) Accountability mechanisms. These include provision of an annual budget; council meetings to be held three times a year that are open to the public; the minutes of the councils; the Annual Report on Commune's Community Development Plan; and Annual Reports of Commune Council. And 4) the Participatory Mechanisms. These include public consultative mechanism, which include meeting citizens twice a year and attended by the public; Development Committee, which is a consultative body to council; Development Community at hill level; and open public meetings as shown in Figure 5.

In drafting and promulgating the 2009 policy document on decentralization, the government envisioned to place citizens at the center of local development and democratic principles. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization states:

La promotion d'une citoyenneté responsable, engagée sur un développement communautaire durable et équitable et le transfert du pouvoir de décision vers la communauté. La philosophie basée sur l'implication et la responsabilisation des communautés pour leur propre développement entraîne un transfert des pouvoirs et des obligations aux communautés représentées par leur délégué au niveau de chaque échelon.

The promotion of responsible citizenship, committed to a sustainable and equitable community development and fair transfer of decision-making to the community. Philosophy based on the involvement and empowerment of communities for their own development resulting in a transfer of powers and obligations to the communities represented by their delegates at each level. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 61 – translation by the Author)

Interestingly enough, while the government in Burundi has experienced years of political struggle and mismanagement of people's resources, a shift from governing to governance is

reflected from the national policy document on decentralization. In this case, citizens are put at the center of the central and local government's mission. By focusing outward on the community at large and transferring decision-making to the community, the government is making citizens an integral part of public decision-making. Is it any wonder then that the government needs citizen inputs? This evolution has been described by one participant at a focus group discussion in Muramvya as a "silent revolution" where citizens are being considered as partners in the coproduction but not subjects to be used by elites or power-holders' purposes. Moreover, the government has focused inward on internal operations as to engage and involve citizens in the coproduction. What is more in this environment is that the government recognized that the costs of involving the public in decisions can avoid the most significant costs of continued conflict, botched referendum, and leadership missteps. However, the full benefits associated with including and engaging citizens in the coproduction outweighs the self-imposed leadership that provoked boycotts and strikes that secured chaos and anarchies. The text on decentralization continues to read:

*... la Décentralisation vise l'objectif de la **participation active de l'ensemble de la population** à la définition et à la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement économique et social de leur localité. Les résultats attendus d'un processus de Décentralisation sont d'une part le développement local et communautaire, et d'autre part la démocratie locale et la bonne gouvernance.*

...Decentralization aims at the **active participation of all the population** in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their localities. The expected results from the process of Decentralization are, on the one hand, local and community development and, on the other, local democracy and good governance. (Government of Burundi, 2009:56 – Translation by the Author)

This policy paper, the 2009 National Policy Document of Decentralization in Burundi, was drafted with citizen engagement in mind. Citizen participation lies at the heart of policy agenda described by the 2009 National Policy Document of Decentralization. It brings societal

challenges to the table and provides system solutions to the concerns of the community. It goes beyond consulting local citizens to providing good practice approaches leading to consultation and closing the feedback loophole. This policy document involves shared decision-making between power-holders and citizens in relation to the proposed programs to be implemented. At the level of system integration, the active participation of all the population is translated into “making sure citizens have information needed to fully be valuable contributors to the governance process.” This new law invokes entrepreneurialism, output and metric for engagement, the cutting of red tape, and a view of citizens as “users and consumers” of public services. This approach honors government officials whose power is to be exercised through, and resides in, its citizens. The document continues to read:

Le Gouvernement de la République du Burundi a pris l’option politique de rapprocher les services publics de la population et d’impliquer cette dernière dans la prise des décisions et le choix des programmes et projets de développement de leurs collectivités.

The Government of the Republic of Burundi has taken the political option of bringing public services closer to the people and of **involving citizens in decision-making** and the choice of the programs and projects of developments of their localities. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 61 – translation by the Author)

The government of Burundi was aware of the political situation and change that was occurring within and outside of its sphere. The citizens could not continue feeling the negative effect of bad governance and lack of representation. It was the hope of Burundian officials that these efforts of involving citizens in decision-making would create a culture change in which the relationship between the central government, its communes, and its people was to be enhanced; innovation and ideas encouraged and rewarded; and public policy and program outcomes valued more than inputs. More specifically, effective engagement by citizen-centric public service

required full participation of all members of the community. One of the Administrators who participated in the study described:

Il y a des structures administratives déjà en place. Je suis le secrétaire du Conseil Communal. C'est-à-dire nous somme à la politique d'inculquer à la population que les développements viennent d'eux et retournent à eux. S'ils se mettent à travailler, les fruits du développement retourneront à eux. Par exemple, les infrastructures scolaires à Bujumbura, leur appartiennent.

There are administrative structures already in place. I am the secretary of Communal Council. That is to say, we are instilling the population to understand that the development comes from them and returns to them. If they start working, the fruits of development will return to them. For example, school infrastructures in Bujumbura belong to them. (Translation by the Author)

While this Administrator described how the process of engagement had started to be implemented, he saw the future where local government—Communes and Zones—can innovate, test, and succeed in resolving social-economic problems that Burundian citizens face while those local officials are taking control of their own destinies. To succeed, however, both local and central official's leadership are needed to truly change the future in ways that make the Burundian government and communities better for their children and others who chose to live in Burundi. The question is to understand how do citizens perceive the consequences of decentralization in their respective community? The objectives and purposes articulated in the 2009 policy document and other associated texts produced over the years, notably the decentralization Law of 2005, outline new features of accountability. In support, therefore, the government text continued to read:

*... la Décentralisation vise l'objectif de la **participation active de l'ensemble de la population** à la définition et à la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement économique et social de leur localité. Les résultats attendus d'un processus de Décentralisation sont d'une part le développement local et communautaire, et d'autre part la démocratie locale et la bonne gouvernance.*

...Decentralization aims at the **active participation of the entire population** in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their localities. The expected results from the process of Decentralization are, on the one hand, local and community development and, on the other, local democracy and good governance. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 10, translation by the Author)

The relation between citizens and power-holders as manifested by numerous participants is dependent upon the concept of transparency and collaboration. In theory, the facts and/or the contents outlined in the 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization correlated with greater engagement of citizens in the coproduction and spells out the precise nature of the link between providing basic services and citizen engagement. Active participation is essential and power-holders are to provide incentive, allowing fully participation of citizens and other active civil society actors in their community. One of the participants to the focus groups, Manirakiza, claimed that power-holders should be looking upward toward politics and remove any impediment that may hinder the implementation of program deemed necessary to citizens. This 2009 National Policy Document continues to read:

*Un des enjeux essentiels de la Décentralisation est de faire en sorte que les collectivités locales burundaises **assument davantage et mieux leurs responsabilités dans la fourniture des principaux services de base aux populations** (eau et assainissement, déchets, énergie, et transports, éducation, jeunesse, santé, culture...) dans une dynamique de gestion partagée. Il y va de la lisibilité et de la crédibilité de la Décentralisation aux yeux des populations.*

A key challenge of Decentralization is to ensure that local government in **Burundi assure more and better responsibilities in the provision of key basic services to the population** (water and sanitation, waste, energy and transport, education, youth, health, culture ...) in a shared management dynamic. It is in readability and credibility of Decentralization in the eyes of the people. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 10, translation by the Author)

After suffering “decades of wars” and internal conflicts, participants reported that a true political reform was needed because citizens are tired with unending conflicts. All participants in this study felt that the provision of key basic services, including water, energy and

transportation, once given the opportunity to oversee it, would allow citizens to fully support the actions of commune and its central governments, reducing therefore, internal conflicts. There are opportunities for working relationship with a wide range of local organizations, Manirakiza, explained, including community organizations. In doing so, the government is creating arenas where citizens, power-holders, and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to make agenda together.

Another facet the researcher observed was the use of the media to sensitize and engage citizens. It is worth noting that the media is instrumental to buy-in those citizens who still resisting to embrace the value of change through decentralization. The 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization reads in part:

Dans la stratégie de renforcement des capacités, la sensibilisation va aussi emprunter le canal des médias. A cet égard, des messages au contenu validé par les instances désignées à cet effet seront diffusés à travers les radios et quelques journaux à grand tirage. Dans cette stratégie de sensibilisation sur les rôles et responsabilités des acteurs et les valeurs de la Décentralisation, il convient de moduler et de diversifier les moyens de la diffusion qui peuvent être des débats sur des problématiques de Décentralisation, des activités d'Information éducation et communication (IEC) et de Communication pour un changement de comportement (CCC) conforme aux principes de la Décentralisation et de la gouvernance locale, des émissions radiophoniques, théâtres, sketches et autres, etc.

In the capacity building strategy, awareness will also use the channel of mass media. In that regard, the content of messages validated by designated authorities for this purpose will be broadcasted through radio and some major newspapers. In this awareness strategy on the roles and responsibilities of actors and the values of decentralization, it is right to modulate and diversify the means of dissemination that can be debated on decentralization issues, the Information Education and Communication activities (IEC) and communication for behavior change (CCC) in accordance with the principles of decentralization and local governance, radio programs, theaters, and other sketches, etc. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 59; translation by the Author)

As an element of change, engagement starts by involving the media to convey the needed message, one of the participants claimed. The government has taken the lead to show support in adopting the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization. As Pastor Joseph pointed out,

“people are to be informed and the media is the tool that can spread government’s messages about programs or projects to be implemented.

Another key message that emerge from reading the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization is the need for capacity building. When people are educated enough, they will be able to take charge of their municipalities and improve, herein, their understanding on how to engage their zones and communes in programs and projects deemed necessary for their respective cities. Now in Burundi, citizens elect communal council members to represent them and those elected public officials are responsible for defending the will of the people. When citizens are sensitized, they would be selecting and electing local leaders who have the intellectual capacity to lead them. Participants in this research felt that citizens’ decisions are not being taken seriously because those elected local officials lack capacity to understand the benefits of engaging or including citizens’ inputs in every day decisions taken by officials. The ideas here are to apply the philosophy based upon the implication and responsibility of communities for their own development to facilitate a transfer of responsibilities and obligations to local entities represented by their elected leaders.

The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization emphasizes more concrete action and collaboration with external groups of interests to coproduce expected results. The text reads in part:

La participation des communautés de base, la collaboration avec les services et les partenaires extérieurs : l’élaboration d’un plan de développement participatif ne peut pas se faire de manière efficace si les techniciens ou les experts externes travaillent de manière isolée sans associer les communautés locales rurales ou urbaines. Celles-ci risquent de manifester un désintérêt et d’ignorer l’existence de ce plan. En conséquence, sa réalisation serait compromise. De même, les populations rurales, bien que, disposant d’une expertise en leur sein, ne peuvent pas à elles seules travailler efficacement sans associer ni consulter les techniciens. En effet leur planification risque de souffrir d’un manque de technique et leur plan ne pourra pas se réaliser faute de moyens. En conséquence, l’élaboration d’un plan de développement est une œuvre

collective qui met à contribution les communautés, leurs représentants élus, les services techniques et les acteurs non étatiques.

The participation of grassroots communities, collaboration with services and external partners: the development of a participatory development plan cannot be done effectively if the technicians or external experts work in isolation without involving local rural and urban communities. The latter may manifest a disinterest and ignore the existence of this plan. Consequently, its realization would be compromised. Similarly, rural populations, even though they possess the expertise within them, cannot efficiently work on their own without associating or consulting the technicians. Indeed, their planning may suffer from a lack of technique and their plan will not be possible because of lack of resources. As a result, developing a development plan is a collaborative effort that involves communities, their elected representatives, technical services and non-state actors. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 59; translation by the Author)

The government of Burundi understands the problems its population is facing that are rather complex and require input and commitment from a broad range of constituencies, including the grassroots communities. While experts alone cannot solve these problems, the government is inviting them to join forces with the knowledge of local citizens who lived the experience for years. In fact, interviewees described that the opportunity for citizen engagement are to be viewed through the lens of a vision of government, and the Law on Decentralization provided this vision. The government of Burundi has decided to engage a larger number of participants in the coproduction, including World Vision, World Bank Groups, the IMF and/or any organizations (nationals and internationals) with values and hard-earned reputation for quality, and high standards of democratic leadership. The views of participants who spoke in favor of participation of grassroots communities were expressed as to whether the wishes of the government as detailed in “the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization” – will change the ways those neo-liberal players of globalization in Burundi operate. Thus said, the government of Burundi sees collaboration with citizens, rather than the market, as the central

mechanism of development contrary to a number of those groups of interests stationed in Burundi.

One of the participants, Thierry, a governmental official, noted that the vision of Burundi government is based on the assumption that an elected local administrator if provided with needed resources, including training, would provide basic social services to the population. He elaborated on his theme and considered that it is not by chance but the national government's commitment to bring services closer to the people. Thierry explained:

Irreversible commitment of national authorities to continue the policy of inclusion with the firm intention to devote the necessary financial and human resources; the existence of a crafted legal framework necessary in support of this law will allow smooth transfer of power to low-level institutions, namely urban or rural Communes and Zones; and the existence of an appropriate institutional framework, namely a ministry in charge of decentralization and a financing structure of Communes is already operating; the Communal Investment Fund (FONIC) that will be supporting the communes; an increase level of adult education through the Department in Charge of Education and Civic or Patriotic training, and the existence of the Burundian Association of Local Elected leaders, are steps forward toward full engagement of citizen into the coproduction.

The current level of staff understanding of the Law on Decentralization and its implementation in Communes and Zone level is low. Pastor Deo, a participant to the focus group in Bujumbura pointed out that “the central government willingness to provide training and other necessary mean of educating its citizens about how to improve their knowledge and understanding of key issue, among them commune' fiscal responsibility, is worth/recommendable.” In fact, the issues discussed by Thierry have prompted the researcher to classify decentralization process in local governance's citizen engagement in five factors: 1) decentralization as a mobilizing factor, 2) decentralization as a delegation of power factor, 3) decentralization as a partnering factor, 4) decentralization as an informing factor, 5) decentralization as a consulting factor, and 6) decentralization as a controlling factor.

Participants were asked about what they feel are the most important factors in decentralization, with the result displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Factors for Opportunity for citizen engagement as seen by participants in both focus group discussions and interviews

Opportunities for Citizen Engagement									
	80.00%	70.00%	65.00%	60.00%	50.00%	40.00%	30.00%	20.00%	0.00%
Decentralization as Mobilizing Factor	78	55	62	52	46	36	28	18	0
Decentralization as Delegation of Power	15	12	10	10	10	10	10	10	0
Decentralization as Partnering Factor	45	40	35	36	40	32	22	10	0
Decentralization as Informing Factor	45	65	51	45	30	32	26	15	0
Decentralization as Consulting Factor	72	65	55	50	45	36	28	16	0
Decentralization as Controlling Factors	35	30	22	35	32	29	29	18	0

Note. Table 3 displays the factors for citizen engagement in Burundi. It displays how participants in the study were able to identify the likelihood of citizen support and rate the level of their engagement. 80% to 0% indicate the level of engagement in the coproduction.

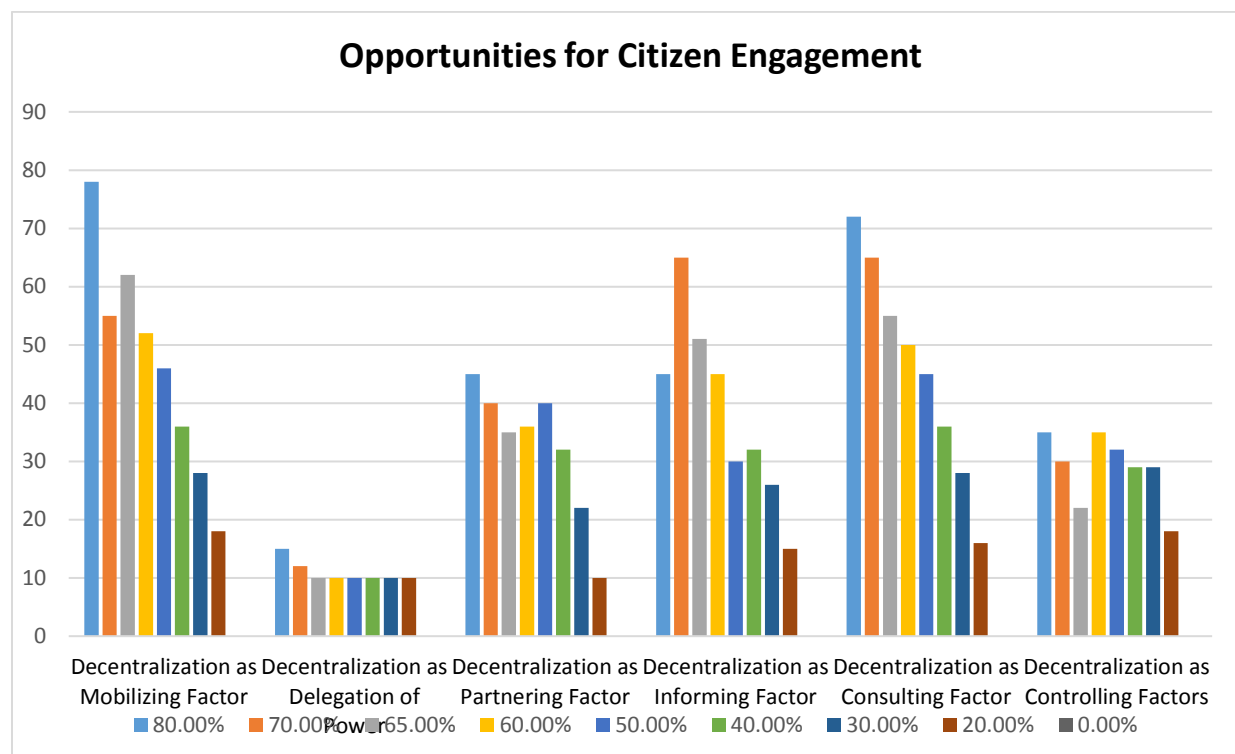


Figure 6. Opportunities for citizen engagement. This figure display how citizens related the factors they believe are factors for engagement. 80%, extremely likely a factor, to 0% not likely to support the decentralization

A major shift in relations between governing institutions and society is evident in the pre- and post-2005 enactment of the Law on Decentralization. The result displayed in this Table 3 is indicative of how citizens perceive the effect of the new Law on Decentralization and the factors it created leading to coproduction. As demonstrated in Figure 6, delegation of power was rated extremely low as well as citizens believing that the federal government, willingly, is reluctant to delegate financial and full administrative power to local entities. Before getting deep in discussing each factor, Shafritz and Hyde (2012) content that “There is a need for improvement of the machinery of our government to meet new conditions and make us ready for the problems of ahead” (Shafritz and Hyde pp91). These factors act support Shafritz and Hyde’s idea. From the aforementioned, it is clear that numerous participants sees Decentralization mechanism as factor for improving Burundian local government.

Decentralization as Mobilizing Factor for Citizen Engagement

Participants in this study noted that the implementation of the Law on Decentralization and its applicability since January 2016 have had the effect of mobilizing people to participate in local government management. The opinions observed in respect to power to mobilize citizens, mobilize resources between governmental officials and people’s representatives, and mobilize resources between governmental officials and groups of interests, including the United Nations’ that supported actions emanating from the process of implementing communes and hills, have a positive outcome. The government official participants in the study believed that the community would learn through the process and mobilize its effort toward supporting the government actions. The goal of the government, Thierry explained, is to engage communities in activities that boost participation in all level of local governments, including understanding the way

decentralization work. Citizens must be cultivated to improve their understanding and benefits of engagement.

The data depicted in Table 3 are indicative. I asked participants the question: *What factors encourage increased engagement in local government management?* Mobilization was given a slight advantage over other discussed elements. Eight to ten participants, including citizens and local officials interviewed, perceive decentralization as mobilizing factors. As Esperance, a participant to the focus groups discussion in Muramvya explained: “When people are mobilized, resources are mobilized, and efforts are put together, nothing would stop the common objectives undertaken by the government.” The more local government efforts to reach and educate citizens about the values of coproduction, the better citizens understand the benefits of supporting the effort of their local governments. Political party mobilization of citizens for local elections, for example, has resulted in a successful engagement of citizens in Burundi. One of the interviewees, CA2, stated: “When officials do mobilization, for example, at the time of election, we the people are ready to support the party of our choices.” He continued: “All the citizens voted our neighborhood councils to represent our interests.” Pastor Joseph claimed that “One of the most important things you can do in the servicing your community is to engage and inspire your fellow citizens to participate in this cause deemed necessary for your community.”

Public involvement ensure that citizens are mobilized to defend their needs and support effort to improve government accountability. Mobilized citizen can successfully pressure and support government accountability through collective mobilization strategies that require capable, autonomous, and representative grassroots movement, said CA1. The 2009 National Policy Document on decentralization mobilized the elites and citizens alike to come together and support political and administrative decentralization. It reads in part:

La promulgation de la Loi communale du 20 avril 2005 et la tenue des élections locales ont assurément jeté les bases de la Décentralisation et confirmé la volonté du Gouvernement de donner une place de choix aux collectivités locales et à leurs populations dans le processus de reconstruction et de développement du pays. Les principales caractéristiques de la loi communale sont : la reconnaissance de la collectivité locale qu'est la Commune ; la mise en place d'une administration communale représentative ; la promotion de la fonction publique communale ainsi que l'établissement des prévisions financières pour les collectivités territoriales.

The enactment of the Municipal Act of April 20, 2005, and the holding of local elections have certainly laid the foundation for Decentralization and confirmed the willingness of the Government to give the place of choice to local authorities and their populations in the process of reconstruction and development of the country. The main features of the communal law are: the recognition of the local municipality, which is the Commune; the establishment of a representative communal administration; the promotion of the municipal public service and the establishment of financial projections for local entities. (Government of Burundi, 2009:5, translated by the Author)

The enactment of the Municipal Act of 2005 implies that the discussion of policy decisions cannot be limited only to those in power but citizens are to be part of the process. The central government mobilized citizens and citizen groups to adopt the Law on Decentralization through the development of cross-local contacts, the schools, the armed forces, the administrative services, and the dominant Catholic Church. In the case of Burundi, officials were committed to integrate engagement and the integration of education, services, programs, and strategies through community-wide initiative programs. Governmental officials mobilized the community, educated stakeholders, and mobilized financial and material supports for the implementation of such law. The Executive Secretary of the Education Program and Patriotic Education explained:

Je dois dire seulement que les différents ateliers sont organisés par le programme d'éducation et de la formation patriotique au sein du Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la formation patriotique. De ses différents ateliers sortent de recommandations de population qui montrent de l'aspiration des citoyens. Et ces dernières sont transmises à l'autorité supérieure pour exploitation en vue d'en tenir compte pour un nombre d'élaborations de politique et la conception de politique publique. Certains modules en viennent. Je peux citer : La citoyenneté ; la connaissance de la partie ; le respect de

biens publics ; connaissance des lois et des armoiries de la république ; l'entreprenariat ; la gestion transparente de biens communs ; et la communication non violente.

I have to say only that the workshops are organized by the program of education and patriotic education within the Ministry of Interior and patriotic training. Of these workshops come the recommendations of the people that show the aspiration of citizens. And these are transmitted to the higher authority for exploitation in order to take account of a number of policy-making and public policy design. Some modules come in. I quote: Citizenship; the knowledge of the party; respect for the public good; knowledge of the laws and the armorial bearings of the republic; entrepreneurship; the transparent management of common good; and nonviolent communication. (Translated by the Author, October 2016)

In addition to educating citizens to be more patriotic, Thierry argued that this approach addresses one area of concerns. It is supported by other elements such as information, communication, and respect of the law. “Community mobilization is resource intensive that requires mastery of diverse skills,” continued Thierry, “and demands intensive saturation.” Meaningful mobilization processes were instrumental in achieving the results observed in Burundi. In this context, citizens provided inputs to be considered for improved decision-making about the design and implementation arrangement of a development program, which layout the structures and mechanisms of engagement and accountability at the local level. One of the administrators added to this understanding. According to him,

Au niveau de la coopération et collaboration avec la commune, il y a des structures administratives qui sont bien verticales. C'est-à-dire de la commune jusqu'au quartier, il y a des instances habilitées qui sont bien organisées au niveau de chaque quartier. Au niveau du quartier il y a une structure administrative, au niveau de la zone, même et au niveau de la Commune il y a déjà une structure déjà organisée.

In the level of the cooperation and collaboration with municipalities, there are administrative structures which are vertical. That is to say, from the Commune to the District (neighborhood), there are relevant authorities that are well organized in each district. At the neighborhood level there is an administrative structure at Zone and at the Commune, there are already organized structures. (November 2016; translated by the Author).

One of the administrators of urban communes, the CO1 and Thierry subsequent reasoning was just as instructive: “Community mobilization is keen to the underlying goal of engaging a wide-range of community members to create and implement a shared vision.” As the CO1 described, “The structure of decentralization came to reorganize the City well. Before there was the neighborhood, la Zone and the town hall (before 2005-2015). Today we have a good structure that is inclusive and complete.” Indeed, Figure 5 shows how the public consultative meetings that are held twice a year have emerged as a tool that mobilizes citizens and engages diverse stakeholders, including community leaders and residents to provide ideas that address community needs.

When local and national government facilitate local mobilization and prepare and assist in the implementation of development plans, as observed by CO1, citizen and community at large become aware of what the government is trying to do. What this mean community awareness thinking confirmed was that CO1’s reflection was focused on the way he chose to see or interpret mobilization in the context of policy document of decentralization in Burundian.

In summary, the network of mobilization created before and after the implementation of the Law on Decentralization is now raising important issue of engagement and consensus. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization contains tools that show structures and policy framework on citizen engagement. Involving and mobilizing stakeholders should happen at both the central government and commune levels, and it should be coordinated. It is important to keep differing interests balanced and focused on the primary purposes, namely those of supporting people’s actions that mobilize a large number of citizen in promoting engagement in decision-making and the design of public services. To a large extent, the design of

decentralization in Burundi supports the administrative and political mobilization of citizens in the coproduction.

Decentralization as Delegation of Power Factor for Citizen Engagement

Participants indicated that there was a popular support for delegating power to municipalities namely, communes and zones. The extent and scope of the authority delegated to communes, zones, and other local governmental entities to address fiscal, administrative, and budgetary issue is of great interest to both citizens and central government officials. Thierry indicated that the central government is preparing to delegate power to local elected officials as indicated by the law. However, these local officials are to be empowered first with knowledge and understanding of how local government functions.

Participants pointed out that the uneasiness in the delegation of power to local entities had something to do with fear of losing the leadership authority by those who have been in power for years. 70 % of participants interviewed agreed that power should be delegated from the central government and Mairie officials to local administrators. They also agreed that the recent political reforms have created opportunities for communes to play an important role in creating their own rules and regulations. Local administrators who participated in this study felt that the government should settle the functional responsibilities of communes, and a slow delegation of power is being felt. One of the Administrator argued that:

La décentralisation c'est un processus et nous avons seulement trois mois de service. La loi est sortie mais la commission de la décentralisation est mise en place et entrée de travailler. Le gouvernement est entré de transférer les compétences. La compétence administrative est celle qui est primordiale

Decentralization is a process and we only have three months of services. The law came out but the decentralization commission was put in place and is working. The government has transferred the competencies. Administrative capability is paramount. (October 2016, translated by the Author)

Interesting enough, his description shows how the central government in Burundi is dedicated to transfer some of responsibilities for decision making and administration of public functions to lower tiers of government not wholly controlled by the central government, but ultimately accountable to it. Such action suggests that even though the process of decentralization is in its inception phase with the transfer of responsibilities for some of specificities are being met.

The CO1 stated that “the commune has appointed staff from the Mairie with years of local government experience. It will depend on how the people will take seriously this policy.” Mrs. Ngendakumana added to this conversation. She claimed that delegation of power to low-level managers is not easy steps to follow. Thierry was of the view that granting powers to local entities are subject to very precise conditions, including training those newly officials to understand their roles and responsibilities. According to him, local leaders need to be educated and have the necessary competencies to select trusted administrators who will run our Communes. Their assertions were supported by the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization. According to this document:

Former une personne dans le domaine de la Décentralisation c'est faire évoluer ses capacités cognitives, ses aptitudes compérencielles, ses attitudes et ses comportements vers les normes de la Décentralisation. Le grand problème de la formation des acteurs de la Décentralisation c'est comment faire pour que la formation ait un impact positif sur les acteurs concernés et la qualité de la mise en œuvre de la politique engagée.

Pour optimiser l'impact de la formation des acteurs burundais en Décentralisation, le Gouvernement a décidé de se doter d'une politique de formation dont la définition doit suivre la démarche suivante : identifier les cibles, identifier les besoins, définir un contenu pertinent et adapte aux besoins des acteurs et avoir une stratégie institutionnelle idoine.

To train a person in the field of decentralization is to evolve his cognitive abilities, his skills, his attitudes and his behaviors toward the standards of decentralization. The great problem of training the actors of decentralization is how to do so that the training hold a

positive impact on the concerned actors and the quality of the implementation of the policy.

To optimize the impact of the training of Burundian actors in decentralization, the Government had decided to adopt a training policy, the definition of which should follow the following steps: identifying the targets, identifying the needs, defining relevant and adapted content based on the needs of the actors and have an appropriate institutional strategy. (Government de Burundi, 2009, p. 56; translated by the Author)

As set out in the Government's own decentralization policy, decentralization within Burundian concept represent a radical transformation in which delegation of power has to be accompanied by skills empowerment to achieve stated goals. The question I asked governmental officials participants in the study was how this policy translates into practice on ground in communes and zones or hills level. Thierry, responded:

....Il faut d'abord former les personnels de la commune, comment gérer, comment chercher les ressources financières, comment investir dans la commune, comment est-ce que ça sera gérer, comment prioriser les programmes, etc... C'est un processus de formation que le gouvernement est entré de réaliser. Je peux vous assurer que la compétence est entrée d'être transférée.

... It is necessary to train the staff of the commune, how to manage, how to look for financial resources, how to invest in the communes, how it will be managed, how to prioritize programs, etc. A process of training that the government has come to do. I can assure you that the competence is being transferred. (October 2016, translated by the Author)

Thierry's reaction to the training and empowerment of local leaders and citizens alike could be viewed as striving for delegating powers to local entities. The country wishes to reverse the increasing trend of divisiveness and political polarization that many Burundian experienced for years while looking inward toward engaging citizens in the coproduction.

In summary, the issue of capacity of local actors is directly linked to delegation of power to local entities, communes, and zones. Policymakers and citizens interviewed all agreed that delegation of power is needed for local authorities to function at their fullest. As Figure 4 detailed, the procedures set out in the government texts provide opportunities for citizens to

engage in the coproduction. The next section looks at Decentralization as an informing factor. It explores the pros and cons of citizen engagement analyzing how information is shared.

Decentralization as Informing Factors for Citizen Engagement

Information was identified as one of the critical linkages that defines the relationship between citizens and power-holders in one hand, citizens and groups of interests, and power-holders and groups of interests on the other hand. Participants of the three focus groups, key informants, power-holders, and the groups of interests attendees agreed that they should be channels of communication destined to inform all the acts on the process of policy implementation, formulation, and debates.

The 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization encourages citizen-state interaction via information sharing among all key actors. In practice, evidence suggests that various factors act as binding on citizens being informed of their rights and responsibility. The 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization reads in part:

*Définition et mise en œuvre d'une politique de communication sur le processus de Décentralisation. Les efforts vont être concentrés sur la **vulgarisation des textes** sur la Décentralisation. Cette vulgarisation consiste d'une part en la traduction des textes en kirundi et d'autre part en la sensibilisation des acteurs sur leurs rôles et responsabilités selon des modalités pédagogiques adaptés aux besoins des acteurs. La finalité est de garantir l'application effective des dispositions prévues par la loi communale et ce, de façon suffisamment claire pour être appliquées.*

Definition and implementation of a communication policy on the decentralization process. Efforts will be concentrated on dissemination of the texts on Decentralization. This vulgarization consists on the one hand in the translation of the texts in Kirundi and on the other hand in the sensitization of the actors on their roles and responsibilities according to pedagogical modalities adapted to the needs of the actors. The aim is to ensure the effective application of the provisions laid down by municipal law, and this is sufficiently clear to be applied. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 25; translated by the Author)

While the researcher expected that citizens in Burundi mistrust what their local leaders do, a communicative approach to citizen engagement as written in the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization in Burundi offered an alternative approach to practitioners. As shown in Table 3, 45% of participants to this study agreed that a variety of complex issues in local government (communes and zones) and other concerns require officials to possess special information skills and negotiation skills to understand how to solve rising communication problems facing their community. Pastor Deo pointed out that collaboration and interaction are increasingly present in today's working life, and the text on decentralization supports broadcasting information by putting accurate information into the system.

Pastor Joseph added to this conversation. According to him, "Holding group meetings in order to build up collective knowledge about policies, procedures, and emerging trends through information sharing would reduce tension and built stronger ties and trust." In this way, the way citizens and state interact emerged as a clear policy objective of informing different stakeholders the process of engaging citizens in the coproduction. Key informants, mainly governmental officials interviewed, were in favor of two-way street information sharing. Those stakeholders felt that information sharing is a constructive way to attack the problems that Burundian citizens are facing on a daily basis. Therefore, the media is to be used to inform all stakeholders.

I asked participants, especially power-holders, simple questions: *What do you do with the information you get from citizens? Do you encourage and enable citizen action as a way to give people a role in the process?* Power-holders recognized that information plays a critical role in public processes, and, therefore, it is a vehicle to be used for engaging citizens in the coproduction.

As participants in the study transcribed and said, there is no information exchange between citizens and power-holders. In this country, Pastor Joseph said, “there has never been an information exchange between citizens and international organizations.” Civil Society Actors and some of the administrators of communes confirmed that they have not shared information that can allow citizens to understand or know what the government is proposing to do. The same has been said for groups of interests. One of the administrators confirmed that “we can only share information with citizens of specific investment projects when the financing is identified. We cannot tell them all the truth as this would be a political suicide as our society cannot be able to keep secret what the government is proposing to do. This is culturally rooted of Burundian people and it will take time for them to understand what we are doing.”

Some participants shared their thoughts on whether both citizens and local government officials should share information. Table 3 shows participants’ views expressed on the matter. Out of 23 participants who identified information sharing as a critical linkage to citizen engagement, 10 of them were not in favor of information sharing. The groups of interests participant in this study saw access to information as a necessary, but not sufficient precondition, for effective citizen engagement. They believe open access to transparent information induces participation. In paper, the groups of interests champion a number of openness initiatives, including capacity building for citizens in the use for relevant information and data sharing. This includes Open Government Partnership that works with the government, Civil Society Actors (CSOs), and governmental officials to develop an action plan, including measures to involve citizens in open government initiatives. Even though these words sound as a way of involving citizens in the coproduction, in practice, however, these written words reach few citizens. Some

of the groups of interests have never dealt directly with communes or zones officials in Burundi or citizen groups to inform them about the process of engagement.

To sum up, informing participants of their rights and responsibilities would have a positive impact on how citizens think or behave about their local government.

Decentralization as Consulting Factor for Citizen Engagement

Our times demand a new definition of leadership - local leadership. They demand a new constellation of international cooperation - governments, civil society and the private sector, working together for a collective global good. (Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a Speech at World Economic Forum Davos, Switzerland, 29 January 2009)

As the former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed, with the implementation of the new governance system in Burundi, Burundian people who participated in the study believed that the time has come for a new leadership style. Good practice approaches to consultation, including regular seeking opinions and views from citizens, citizen groups, and CSOs who have the most to lose or gain with engagement would be telling in maintaining the culture of engaging citizens and other stakeholders in the coproduction.

Participants in the study were asked if local leaders ensure interaction and encourage collective reasoning and deliberation when they came to visit their zones or communes. In responding to this question, participants recalled when their local leaders asked them to participate. In fact, consulting was a significant predictor of community involvement and the level of importance given to citizen engagement. Several participants expressed a willingness to be consulted through appropriate channels, including the Committee on Hilly Development (CDC) and door-to-door. Power-holders believed that state officials are making progress and engaging citizens in the coproduction. One of the administrators described:

La population est consultée parce que les décisions du Conseil Communal émanent de la base. C'est-à-dire les Comités Collinaires qui sont là avec les chefs des quartiers reçoivent les doléances de la population. Ça vient du bas et ça monte du haut. C'est le Conseil Communal qui analyse le besoin de la population. C'est l'inverse, c'est le conseil communal qui répond aux désirs de la population. Je suis seulement consulté.

The population is consulted because decisions of the Municipal Council emanate from the base. That is to say the Hilly Committee that are there with the heads of districts receive the grievances of the people. It comes from the bottom and goes up. It is the Municipal Council that analyzes the needs of the population. It is the opposite; it is the Municipal Council that responds to the desires of the population. I am only consulted. (Translated by the Author, November 2016)

Following the new approach (structure) outlined in the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization, the Commune Administrator works as a Secretary of the Council. Pastor Deo argued that the Administrator is regarded as the one who has to reconcile conflicting arguments while keeping breath of the public concerns and expectations. It seems as if Pastor Deo understood as follow: on the one hand, he consults with his/her chef des zones to visit his/her citizens when there is a proposal of a specific project to be implemented in his/her commune. On the other hand, he consults with the commune councils on matters brought by citizens. The administrator's role here is to appoint a consultative committee that will advise the Communal Council on priorities for the Communal Community Development Plan (PCDC).

To get a deeper understanding of why citizens should be consulted, I asked participants one question: *How does the city government or state officials see citizen consultation?* The answers were mixed with officials claiming support and citizens saying otherwise. "The government of Burundi has difficulty to encourage and maintain participation," said one of the participants, a local citizen who lives in Buyenzi. In contrast, the staff from the Ministry of Decentralization believed otherwise. Thierry pointed out that the government is working in

consultation with different communities, cities leaders, and other commune leaders to provide solutions to engagement problems. He said:

Je dois d'abord parler au niveau du quartier et de la commune, Il y a chaque fois le conseil du quartier ou de la commune. Ces organes consultent la population au début de chaque année où ils doivent confectionner un Plan de Développement Communautaire, Plan Collinaire et du quartier de développement collinaire. Au niveau de la commune, il y a un plan Communal de Développement Communautaire qui consulte aussi la population. Ce plan émane des besoins de la population. C'est-à-dire, les dirigeants des quartiers et les dirigeants de la commune engagent la population et travaillent suivant les besoins de la population et certains besoins se retrouvent dans les plans abattus.

I must first say that at the level of the district and the commune, there is every time the district council or the communal council. These bodies consult the population at the beginning of each year to draw up a community development plan, a hilly plan and a hill development area. At the commune level, there is a Communal Development Plan that also consults the population. This plan emanates from the needs of the population. That is to say, the leaders of the districts and the leaders of the commune engage the population and work according to the needs of the population and certain needs are reflected in the plans executed. (November 2016, translated by the Author)

Thierry felt very connected to the mission and goal of the Interior Ministry because the Interior Ministry's civic education program works as a consultative body to different groups, including newly elected and appointed policymakers, the CSOs, citizen groups, and other stakeholders. Another participant expressed his hope, he called it his "priority" as a city administrator. At the time of the interviews, Thierry was working on a training manual and felt more connected with the love of his country, knowing the good of the country, how to manage it, and how to protect it is the most essential for state-citizen in support of involving citizens in local government management. Therefore, he sees "consultation" as a tool to achieve the success of the program. The structure on decentralization also clearly supports the concept of consultation. According to the government texts:

L'organe consultatif : le Comité de développement collinaire (CDC)

Le Comité de développement collinaire comprend : 5 membres du Conseil collinaire, 7 personnes choisies par l'Assemblée Générale de la Communauté pour leur implication dans les actions de développement.

Le Comité de développement collinaire a pour mission de : 40

- i) élaborer sur base communautaire et participative un plan collinaire de développement communautaire ;*
- ii) prioriser les besoins de la colline ;*
- iii) servir de modèle à la communauté ;*
- iv) faire tout autre travail de développement et de lutte contre la pauvreté qui lui est demandé par le Conseil de colline.*

The advisory body: The Committee on Hilly Development (CDC)

The Hilly Development Committee comprises: five members of the Hills Council, 7 persons chosen by the General Assembly of the Community for their involvement in development actions.

The Hills Development Committee is responsible for: 40

- i) developing a community-based, participatory, community development plan;
- ii) prioritize the needs of the hill;
- iii) serve as a model for the community;
- iv) undertake any other development and poverty reduction work requested of it by the Hill Council.
(government of Burundi, p. 39), translated and emphasis by the researcher).

The CDC provides opportunities for consultation, engagement and participation in a number of ways. First, the consulting meetings, which are held annually in every hills (Collines) or districts in the city of Bujumbura and around the country, is indicative of how well the process is being executed. Second, these meetings provide a local platform of identifying priority projects to be implemented. Lastly, opportunity to participate in voting for local Committee members at the Hill (Collines) allowed citizens to consult each other as well as others in their districts to support a candidate meeting their preferences.

To sum up this section, the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization supports consulting participants to achieve the aim and objectives of the Arusha Peace process based on the concept of coalition-building. To a large extent, the design of communes and zones in Burundi have the potential to address consultation issues. For members of the Hills and

Commune Councils to function effectively, they require a genuine commitment to listening to, analyzing with transparency and reporting on what citizens have to say with the purpose of having their input influence and inform the outcomes. While consultation with and deliberation among different key stakeholders seems to support engagement and participation, the frequency of consultation of citizens in their local government entities is still lacking.

Decentralization as a Voice and Accountability Factor

Four to five participants in Focus Group Discussions with local officials and other governmental officials narrated their experience by looking for accountability mechanisms of the process. Pastor Joseph noted: “It is no secret that there is a disconnect between local and central government officials and us poor citizens. One strategy for overcoming this is to have the voice of citizens heard – no easy task as of today with this government.” My observation reveals that over the years, local and state officials, willingly skirted accountability to services provided. For years, citizens were voiceless without a legal framework to express their opinions. The 2005 Communal Law and Electoral Code created opportunity for participation and opened the way for engaging citizens in the coproduction while making sure that those elected by citizens to represent them are accountable to their actions. The voice of citizens is heard when elected Communal Council members, who in turn will be reporting to those citizens, are making sound policies that matter to them. In theory, citizens have the power to vote them out, at the election time, if their wills and wishes have not been realized. This form represents a real opportunity for citizens to participate, noted Mr. Gaspard, one of the Batwa participants in Focus Group who participated in the Arusha Peace Negotiation in 2005. “*Nibadakora ivyo dushaka ntabwo tuzabatora*, (if they don’t do what we want, we will vote them out)” claimed Habonimana Liberata.

Figure 5 sketches a clear picture for opportunities given to citizens to participate and engage. At the local level, the opportunity for accountability is manifested. They include open public meetings for Council members to be held three times a year and commune councils tasked to ensure public services respond to the needs of the population, therefore, accountable to the will of the people. The Nyumbakumi visited in Bujumbura show to varying degree wisdom and courage in performing an extremely valuable task for resolving disputes and directing citizens to Zones for informal council. In addition, the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization states:

L'Administrateur, ses conseillers et les membres du conseil communal sont comptables devant les populations des réalisations du PCDC. Il s'agit donc, pour permettre une appropriation du plan par l'ensemble de la population de la commune, de faire en sorte que son élaboration, sa mise en œuvre et son suivi évaluation se déroulent selon une approche participative qui implique l'ensemble des forces vives de la commune : les élus locaux, les services déconcentrés, les organisations de la société civile et les populations. Cependant pour réussir l'œuvre de la planification, la commune doit en avoir l'aptitude juridique et technique.

The Administrator, his/her advisors and the members of the communal council are accountable to the populations for the achievements of the PCDC. In order to ensure that the plan is appropriated by the entire population of the municipality, it is necessary to ensure that its design, implementation and follow-up evaluation is carried out according to a participatory approach that involves all the living forces of the commune: local elected representatives, decentralized services, civil society organizations and the population. However, in order to succeed in planning, the municipality must have the legal and technical capacity. (Government du Burundi, p. 63, translated by the author, November 2016)

In this particular scenario, the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization could be viewed as encouraging factors that focuses on issue as they related to both citizen engagement and full participation. In addition to the need of getting people's voices heard and the accountability mechanism that comes from it, officials from the central and local government believe the existence of a legal framework allow civil society and citizens to express openly their

views. Three participants from the study engaged in central and local government management expressed a sense of optimism and importance. For example, one participant said,

Les doléances de la population quelquefois ne sont pas réalisées mais la population en dise toujours. Si les promesses ne sont pas honorées, les dirigeants locaux doivent s'expliquer et proposer des solutions. Nous utilisons des méthodologies qui permettent aux citoyens de nous croire et nous les écoutons.

The complaints of the population sometimes are not realized but the population always speaks about it. If promises are not honored, local leaders must explain and propose solutions. We use methodology that allows citizens to believe in us and we are listening to them. (November 2016, translated by the author)

Another participant expressed similar views about accountability and the voice of citizens. Mrs. Liberata did not think that the process is being accomplished, but she believed that the process is at the beginning stages and once the population is educated enough about their rights and responsibilities, they will be able to voice their concerns and ask for accountability.

As Figure 6 displays, several opportunities exist for citizens to feel welcomed to bring their inputs, oversights, and fully participate in the coproduction. As the Figure 5 displays, citizens elect, by popular vote, trusted Colline(Hills) councils in rural area and/or Chef de Quartiers (Neighborhood) councils in the city of Bujumbura Mairie to represent with mission of administrating the Hills or neighborhoods (quartier). In the councils heard from the population then craft policies that engage citizens into the coproduction. Elected Hill Councils/Neighborhood councils play a very meaningful role of providing more services closer to citizens. They provide space for citizen's participation and strengthen local democracy by listening to the people who elected them, prioritizing their needs, and working in partnership with them to bring trust and confidence among ethnic groups. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization states:

Le Gouvernement de la République du Burundi a, dans son document de programme 2006-2010, pris l'option politique de rapprocher les services publics de la population et d'impliquer cette dernière dans la prise des décisions et le choix des programmes et projets de développement de leurs collectivités. Celles-ci sont donc désormais appelées à planifier leur développement. Planifier c'est l'action de programmer les interventions dans le temps et dans l'espace avec des moyens correspondants et des interventions articulées les unes aux autres.

The Government of the Republic of Burundi, in its program document 2006-2010, has taken a political option of bringing public services closer to the population and of involving the people in decision-making and choice of programs and projects of development of their municipalities. citizens are now called to plan for their development. Planning is the program action of interventions in time and space with corresponding means and interventions articulated to each other. The document is the result of this process is the plan, reference document includes goals and priorities, strategies, actions and means to implement to achieve the objectives. (Government of Burundi 2009: 61, translated by the author, 2016)

Participation mechanisms have been considered, including power transfer from provincial government toward the community. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization spells out clearly and defines the role of citizens in the coproduction and what they expect from their elected leaders as well as external partners. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization continues to state:

***La promotion d'une citoyenneté responsable**, engagée sur un développement communautaire durable et équitable et le transfert du pouvoir de décision vers la communauté. La philosophie basée sur l'implication et la responsabilisation des communautés pour leur propre développement entraîne un transfert des pouvoirs et des obligations aux communautés représentées par leur délégué au niveau de chaque échelon.*

The promotion of responsible citizenship, committed to a sustainable and equitable community development and transfer of decision-making powers toward the community. Philosophical ideas based on the involvement and empowerment of communities to their own development will result in a transfer of powers and obligations to the communities represented by their delegates at each level. (Government of Burundi 2009: 63, translated by the author, 2016)

Interviewees identified number of factors relevant to citizen engagement in their specifics contexts. Key informants explained that in order for equitable community development to occur, power-holders are obligated to change their behaviors and adapt to the current trends of decentralization. As long as the voices of citizens are not heard in the implementation of the programs, we, the citizens, will continue to distrust them, claimed Mrs. Liberata.

As the researcher observed, after being invited by one focus group participant to visit their community in the newly constructed neighborhood, the researcher saw how people come together to achieve a common goal. One of the Nyumbakumi visited explained:

In Bujumbura, residents themselves, rehabilitate a section of their streets; install pipes for safe drinking water, and work collaboratively to impact their neighborhoods, including bring electricity in their neighborhoods. This is a common observation I experienced when visiting one of the neighborhoods in Bujumbura Mairie. One of the Nyumba Kumi, explained that we reached out to neighbors, explained our needs and visions of our neighborhood. We don't have to wait for the government to act or come here and help, we do help ourselves in resolving some of the issues we face. We asked a local expert who is knowledgeable in rehabilitating local streets to come and help us identify needs, services, and evaluate the cost for the proposed work. We asked each of our residents, those home owners to pay only 150,000 Franc Burundi, approximately \$90 for the proposed work. We have collected that money and now the work is underway.

I was first shocked to hearing how those homeowners came together to be part of the solutions that involved their neighborhoods. Then, I understood that all things are possible when people come together to resolve issues that matter to their neighborhoods. Burundian citizens are concerned about their development and they want to live in a safe and prosperous neighborhood.

Institutional Structure of Communes and Neighborhood Councils

Figure 7 identifies the institutional architecture of the newly created communes. This figure also displays communication systems used by agents involved in creating public value. The design of decentralized communes in Burundi encourages state-citizen's interaction for citizen participation and accountability. These institutional promote citizens engagement and

advancement of an open partnership and collaboration among the state, citizens, and other partners in different levels of government in Burundi. For example, locally elected council members by citizens through proportional representation from party block lists of candidates. Civil Society Actors claimed that by creating these institutions, namely communal councils, “the government wanted to ensure public services respond to the needs of the population.”

While several opportunities for accountability at communes, zones, and neighborhood levels exist, citizens have been offered a chance to elect people they feel and think would be able to put self-interests aside while prioritizing community interests for the sake of peace and socio-economic development. A large number of participants to the focus groups manifested the desire to support those commune councils who would be able to restrain themselves from mismanaging the commune’s scarce resources. The texts define division of responsibilities among the commune council, the administrator, the Chef de Zones, and Hill Councils or Neighborhood Councils and balance opportunities for participation into these levels. Figure 7 demonstrates institutional communication level of citizens in Burundi.

Figure 7: Institutional Architecture of Commune in Bujumbura Mairie

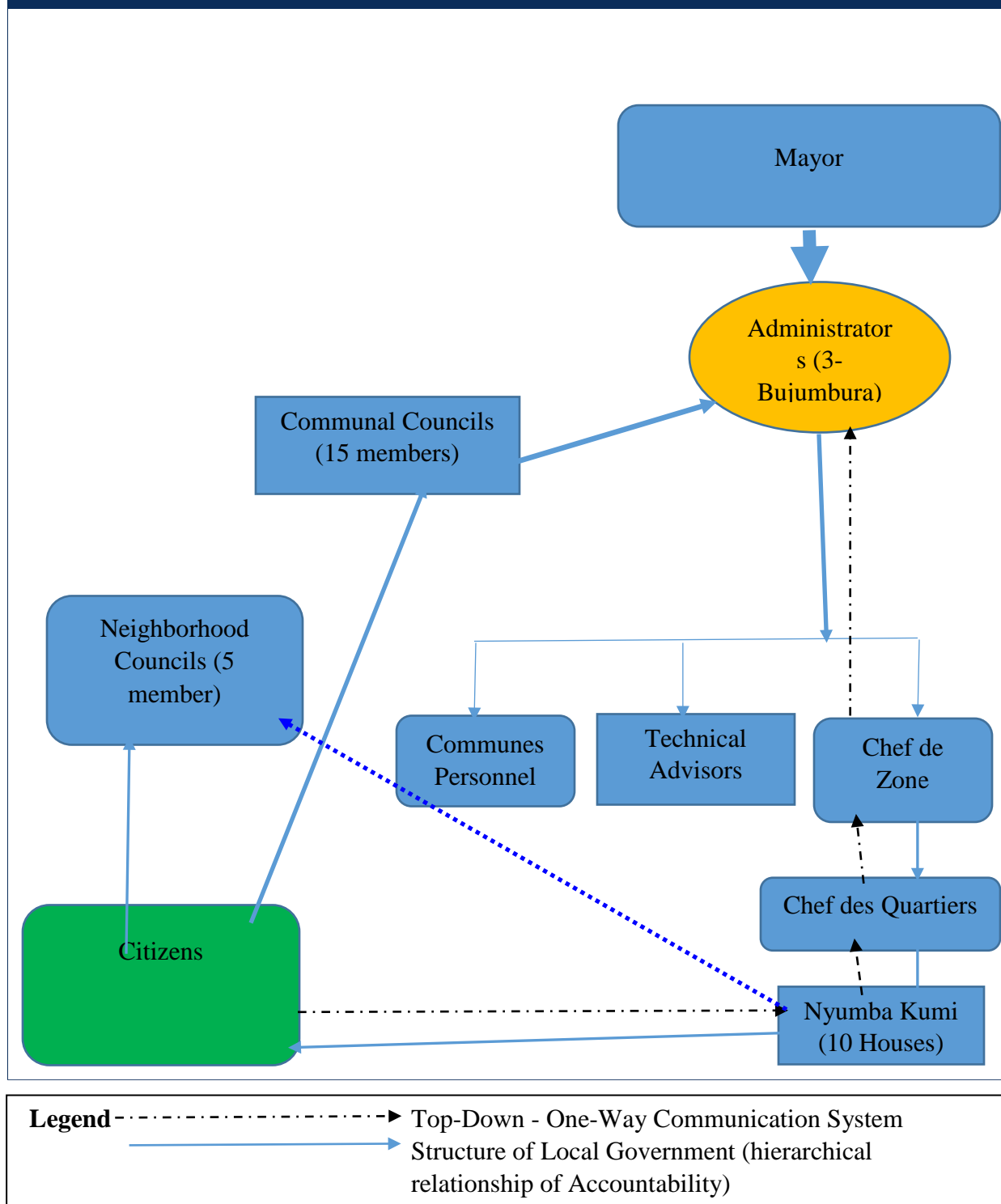


Figure 7. Institutional architecture of Commune in Bujumbura Mairie. The communicate up-down. Nyumbakumi communicate with Neighborhood council members on behalf of citizens.

Figure 7 displays a complete reversal of Burundian tradition used for decades by those in power and authority, imposing what to do as described in the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization as a “*révolution silencieuse*” or “silent revolution” by Burundians. The Arusha Accord for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi indicates (Art.8, al.2 IIème Protocole) that “*La commune forme l’unique collectivité territoriale décentralisée* (communes are the only decentralized entity) while Art. 20, al. 13 of the same *Protocole II* stipulates that communes (municipal entities) and Collines (hills or neighborhood) are administered by councils (*conseils communaux and conseils collinaires*), with both elected by direct voting. A bill amending Law No. 1/02 of January 25, 2010, organizing communal administration in Burundi passed in 2014 in its Chapter II, Article 6 read in part:

La commune constitue la base du développement économique et social de la population établie sur son territoire. Ses organes doivent veiller constamment à promouvoir le développement communautaire sur tous les plans de ses habitants. L’Etat a l’obligation de l’y aider, notamment en suppléant aux carences humaines et matérielles par des transferts et détachements, l’octroi des subventions ainsi que les cessions des biens et services divers.

The Communes constitute the basis of economic and social development of the population located in its territory. Its institutions must constantly seek to promote community development on all levels of its inhabitants.

The government has the obligation to support this law, including substituting human and material deficiencies by transfers needed skills, offering grants and the sale of various goods and services. (Government of Burundi, Law No. 1/02 of January 25, 2010, p. 4; translation by the Author)

This bill was written with the concept of citizen engagement in mind. It has shaped the institutional structures of local government in Burundi in the way that encourage participation. Figure 7 points out how communication system work. For now, the Burundian government uses a top-down information management style. “Making information from the top-down allows leaders to be clear on goals and expectations,” explained CA1. He (the CA1) claimed that, for

the case of this country with war and ongoing conflict, when administrators are in the forefront, they could quickly and effectively take charge. Another governmental official participant in this study believed that there is an irreversible commitment of Burundian authorities to continue decentralization policy, with the firm intention devoted to necessary financial and human resources to local government entities is indicative of how committed citizen engagement and participation has been given a leeway. PO1 also added to this understanding by noting that “the existence of two ministerial institutional—the Ministry in charge of decentralization and financing structures of communes and the Ministry of Interior and Patriotic Education--emerge as a support to the structure of citizen engagement and participation in the management of local government entities.” The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization states that:

Un des enjeux essentiels de la Décentralisation est de faire en sorte que les collectivités locales burundaises assument davantage et mieux leurs responsabilités dans la fourniture des principaux services de base aux populations (eau et assainissement, déchets, énergie, et transports, éducation, jeunesse, santé, culture...) dans une dynamique de gestion partagée. Il y va de la lisibilité et de la crédibilité de la Décentralisation aux yeux des populations. Page 66.

A key challenge of decentralization is to ensure that local Burundian collectivities assume better their responsibilities in the provision of key basic services to the population (water and sanitation, waste, energy and transport, education, youth, health, culture ...) in a shared management dynamic. It is a path in readability and credibility of Decentralization in the eyes of the people. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 66; translation by the Author)

The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization is inspiring and puts communes at the center of product coproduction. Various reasons, as described by PO2, include a closer link between citizens and their local leaders (Nyumbakumi and Neighborhood councils). In this regard, this the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization offers potential benefits. According to the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization document reads in part:

La décentralisation vise l'objectif de la participation active de l'ensemble de la population à la définition et à la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement économique et social de leur localité. Les résultats attendus d'un processus de Décentralisation sont d'une part le développement local et communautaire, et d'autre part la démocratie locale et la bonne gouvernance (p. 10).

Decentralization aims at the active participation of the entire population in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their localities. The expected results from a process of decentralization are, on one hand, local and community development and, on the other, local democracy and good governance. (Government of Burundi, 2009, p. 10; translation by the author)

The long-term vision, as described by the government of Burundi's intentions, is to contribute to the closing of the gap between government and citizens and to allow public servants and politicians to reconnect with citizens' needs, priorities and values. This is a promise on the belief that Burundian people should have a say in every day decisions that affect their lives.

Summary of Finding for Question 1a

The present study finds evidence to suggest that the Government of Burundi, through the process of Decentralization, has laws, decrees, and policy documents that support citizen engagement in the coproduction. Participants agreed that the texts and laws, if applied as written, would remove fear in a large number of the populace, create peace, and socio-economic vitality. Most participants agreed that the restricting of institutions in Burundi and the implementation of new communes in Bujumbura Mairie through the process of decentralization would improve the citizens-state interface.

A few participants reported that they learned more about citizen engagement and developed a greater commitment to citizen participation than before after participating and responding to the questions the researcher asked. They also understand that engagement requires an involved, informed, and active citizens who understand how to voice their concerns, act collaboratively and collectively through policy debate, formulation, and implementation while

holding public officials accountable to their actions. Finally, findings from this study reviewed that participation in civic activities would be beneficial to both the population, state actors, and the groups of interests.

Barriers to Citizen Engagement

The question 1b asked “What barriers affect people’s direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?” This question was framed to discuss barriers that affect people’s direct involvement in policymaking and the design of services provided by their local government. Information was gathered from local authorities, including Mayor’s office, Communal Administrators, Chef de Zones, Nyumbakumi, international organizations, and citizens alike. Three different focus group discussions were held – one with the group of Pygmies (Mixed Batwa and other ethnic groups) in the province of Muramvya, the second with a separate group of church leaders (pastors) from different denominations, and the last with local leaders. I deplore the absence of Catholic Bishops and Islamic leaders in Bujumbura who may have provided different versions to the answers collected to enrich this research. They were not included because I could not get their schedule.

The objective of this section was to show how citizens and other participants construct a definition of their situation with reference to perceived problems, identified the causes, and consolidated a collective and challenging perspective.

Overview of Identified Problems

The barriers to people’s direct involvement in local government management exist, mainly in policymaking and the design of public services. The 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization recognizes numerous problems that the country faces before the implementation of the Law on Decentralization. According to the Government of Burundi:

L'organisation administrative de la capitale connaît beaucoup de faiblesses relevées par des études qui s'y sont penchées. Il s'agit de faiblesses générales remarquables dans toutes les communes du pays et de faiblesses spécifiques à la capitale. Quelques-unes peuvent être évoquées :

- ----
- *Le cumul des fonctions de Gouverneur de Province et de Mairie de la ville de Bujumbura ;*
- *L'absence de système électoral au niveau du Mairie et du Conseil Municipal ;*
- *L'absence d'organes consultatifs de la Mairie, spécialement en ce qui concerne le développement communautaire ;*
- *L'absence de clarté dans la définition des compétences et des moyens transférés par l'Etat à la Mairie.*
-

The administrative organization of the capital has many weaknesses noted by the studies that have addressed them. These are remarkable general weaknesses in all the communes of the country and specific weaknesses in the capital. Some may be mentioned:

- ----
- The accumulation of the functions of Governor of Province and City Council of the city of Bujumbura;
- The absence of an electoral system at the level of the City Council and the Municipal Council;
- The absence of consultative bodies of the City Council, especially as regards community development;
- The lack of clarity in the definition of competences and means transferred by the State to the City Council. (Gouvernement du Burundi, p. 49).

These identified problems are crucial to newly created communes in relation to its citizens. In order to understand the real factors that bar citizens from participating or engaging in policymaking and the design of public services, I looked beyond those problems identified by the Government of Burundi.

Participants in the study were adept in identifying other barriers relevant in the study with deep and pervasive causes, such as political discrimination, apathy, favoritism, injustice, and other similar issues. Some of the participants interpreted, in their own worldviews, the meaning of the world they live in and the consequences referring to them, including deep poverty, unemployment, mismanagement of their scarce resources, wars, rapes, and daily killings of high

ranked officials. In the next section, later in the chapter, I will explore events that led to citizens being reluctant to engage in the coproduction.

The Table 4 and Figure 8 describe problems developed, which show causal links among various problems identified and visualize general problems of lack of citizen engagement in the management of local government.

Table 4: *Table of Case Studies*

Problematic	Goals	Basic Findings
Lack of citizen forum to foster democratic dialogue	Analysis of determinants of the low participation of citizens in local decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of consultancies framework between leaders and the population. • Insufficient collaboration between elected officials and the grassroots population. • Mistrust between local authorities and the grassroots population. • Excessive politicization of local entities. • Lack of communication among citizens at the grassroots levels. • Shift of leadership paradigm.
Lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs	Search for factors explaining the lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication between local authorities and the grassroots population. • Non-transparent management of local public affairs. • Diversion of public resources. • Strong politicization of certain municipal administrations. • Lack of public information mechanism on the management of municipal affairs.
Lack of accountability in the Management of localities	Examine what accountability means to citizens in Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal treatment of citizens. • Lack of commitment • Lack of ownership • Lack of resilience
Internal Organizational of local administration	Examine the factors limiting the ability of local governments to engage citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding • Role of government authorities in promoting these development activities. • Low capacity to implement projects. • No functionality of services and programs. • Strong interference of Mayor's Office in the functions of Communes. • Illiteracy of some municipal councilors and the population as well. • Absence of budget for Communes. • Fear and absenteeism of some local councilors.
Self-Imposed Behaviors of Groups of Interests	Examine how International Organizations operate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ambiguous role played by donor authorities in promoting development projects; • Outside development experts. • Inclination of donor countries in selecting population of their interests. • Biasness in representing their report.

Within the context of this study, the stories and narratives used by participants through interviews and focus groups reveal the experience lived by participants. The negative experience and stories told were interpreted as being linear in nature. Table 4 displays basic findings that are indicative of the experience lived by participants in relation to exclusion from participating in the design of public services. Search for factors explaining the lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs have been identified as officials failing to communicate with clarity to citizens the proposed programs and projects to be implemented. These inhibiting factors are external as well as internal.

Figure 8 displays five of the major problems. It compliments Table 4 and it is intended (a) to capture the relationship between the theme of the spoken stories and narrative presentations contributing to the understanding of how citizens feel about the level of their participation; and b) to demonstrate the interconnectedness between the new system of governance (decentralization) and social behaviors of participants to the programs. Figure 8 shows also the five main issues identified as hindrance factors to citizen engagement in policymaking and the design of public services. They include a lack of citizen forum to foster democratic dialogue, a lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs, a lack of accountability mechanism in the management of localities, internal organization of local administration, and the groups of interest's self-imposed behaviors. The external factors include the vague role played by the groups of interests, outside development experts who believe they have solutions to problems encountered, the inclination of groups of interests in selecting projects and programs of primary interests to them and bias in presenting reports to internal and external agents.



Figure 8. Examined challenges to citizen engagement in the Republic of Burundi. These challenges could inform power-holders and groups of interests to foster inclusion.

Lack of Citizen Forum to Foster Democratic Dialogue

The absence of citizen forums was noted by the numerous participants as one of the barriers hindering them to engage. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization pointed out that, “The absence of consultative bodies of the City Council, especially as regards to community development” is one of the barriers to engagement. Different participants in this study explained that a strong local identity is part of their historical legacy and engagement in support for social, economic and political activities undertaken by the government, a country challenged by war, distrust, and unending conflict. Participants’ opinions were mixed but concurred that *the lack of citizen forum to foster democratic dialogue* had hampered their participation. This challenge (lack of citizen forum) bears three components: the distrust of the population towards their local administrators, absence of consultancy framework, and high rates of uneducated men and women.

Participants in the study believed also that the *distrust of the population toward their local administrators* resulted in three assumptions: insufficient collaboration between local officials and their constituencies, insufficient collaboration between municipal leaders and Civil Society Actors (CSOs), and the top-down system of communication. Participants to this study attributed the problem to the officials and international organizations who showed little interest in creating deliberative forums that engage citizens in the coproduction. Recall, for instance, that citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi has been used since the independence, and it is usually considered as an important asset for achieving peace and social economic development activities. Within the context of participants’ stories, the interconnectedness of issues between lack of citizen forum and citizen participation or engagement is visually displayed in Figure 9. The primary aim of the display of this

interconnectedness is to show that government officials, mainly those who are heading communes and zones have to possess leadership traits that learn continually, listen intently, learn from every experience, and have the ability to see things from other people's perspectives. When these leaders will focus on improving their subordinates, including engaging citizens in activities and programs that matter to them, then, they would be able to create a platform connecting government to citizens and connecting groups of interests to citizens.

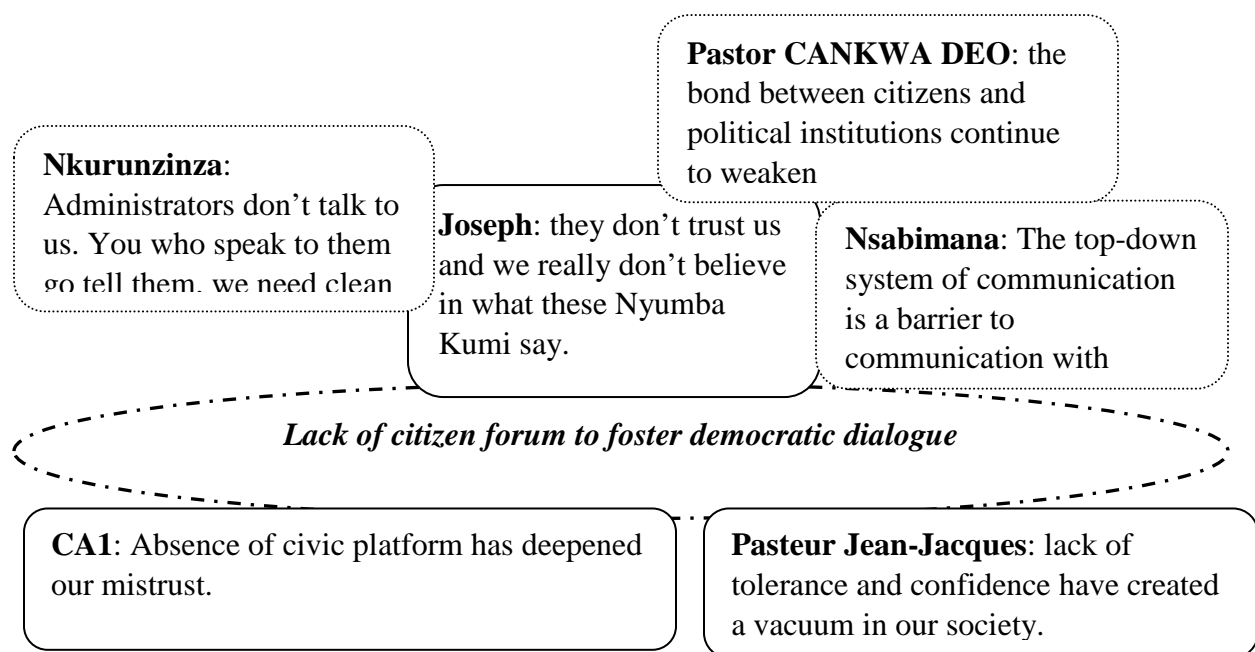


Figure 9. Lower level of participation due to absence of citizen forum where citizens can express themselves hinders engagement.

Curiously, five to six respondents began to narrate their stories and experiences about how they feel when there is an absence of a civic platform that connects the public sector, citizens, partners, and developers to engage, interact, and transact. They started explaining the pros and cons of lack of citizen forum to engage and its consequences. Each of the research participants described their community of memory by referring to specific attributes, which for

them define their cities and villages. In this country, *Ernest* said, “scholars may find a few administrators in local government who recognize the value of involving citizens in their daily governing activities, a number of local administrators we know wants to keep us out of their way and the best way to do it is to disengage citizens. In general, they don’t want us to be part of their system.” He enumerated some of the specific attributes he considers meaningful and representative of his city, including interaction between people.

Analysis of transcripts from interviews revealed that citizens should be involved in the cycle of policymaking and the design of public services. Residents in Bujumbura Mairie alleged that public discussion occurs rarely because of a lack of understanding of its values and unwillingness of both power-holders and the groups of interest to engage truly with citizens in their daily activities. Participants pointed out that a lack of citizen forum in which partners and developers can build and deliver innovative approaches to problems of exclusion of citizens in the coproduction experienced for years.

Absence of consultancy framework. Civil Society Actors, including those known as “Community Development” believed that the absence of consultancy framework at the level of neighborhoods and communes is the essence of lower level participation of citizens in the efforts undertaken by appointed and elected local and national government officials. CA1, a trained lawyer and longtime activist, puts it in terms that indicated the threat he sees as a resident of Burundi being excluded because of a lack of a space for consultation:

Absence des cadres de consultances entre les dirigeants, entre les responsables et la communauté est un des problèmes ici dans mon pays. C’est théorique mais pas pratique. Il y a absence du cadre de consultance. Théoriquement, il y a les Conseils Communaux ou les gens qui représentent les autres dans les communes peuvent amener des doléances mais pratiquement, il est impossible de le réaliser. Il y a des structures théoriques qui ne sont pas très rentables et fructueuses qui amène un autre handicap.

Absence of consultancy frameworks between leaders, between leaders and community is one of the issues here in my country. This is theoretical but not practical. There is an absence of the civic platform. Theoretically, there are the Communal Councils or the

people who represent the others in the communes who can bring about grievances but practically it is impossible to realize it. There are theoretical structures that are not very profitable and fruitfully that brings another handicap. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

Furthermore, he observed that an increasing number of policy and governance challenges such as inclusive growth, poverty reduction, government accountability, business integrity, and innovation demands that citizens, citizen groups and private sectors participate to generate viable solutions to problems facing their municipalities. His assumption of a lack of a mechanism for consultancy is factual. In practice, a framework to discuss this issue does not exist. Even the government of Burundi, in its 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization, recognizes the need of a consultation framework.

Part of unfolding the story was that in the middle of the implementation of new Communes in Bujumbura Mairie, the absence of a consultancy framework was the indicator that allowed citizens to retreat to self-interest behaviors. For years, Pastor Jean Jacques explained, “we have been surviving due to a lack of civic platform... citizen engagement must continually affirm the public as a distinct and legitimate voice calling to account other sites of power of this urban town.” CA1 punctuated it clearly:

Il faut qu'il ait un cadre de consultation où les citoyens donnent des idées ou suggestions sur les problèmes qu'ils confrontent et sur les solutions qui devraient être apportées. Et là, ils s'engagent à donner leurs parts et déterminent ensemble ceux que la communauté ou les représentants du pouvoir devraient donner. En premier lieu, c'est le cadre d'échange qui révèle les défis de la communauté, qui identifie les différentes responsabilités : qui fait quoi. On ne trouve pas ces genres d'échange. C'est un groupe d'experts qui est dans les bureaux, qui conçoivent pour la communauté, soumettent les suggestions pour les comptes de la population.

It must have consultative framework where citizens give ideas or suggestions about the problems they face and the solutions that should be provided. From there they undertake to give their share and determine together those that the community or the representatives of the power should give. In the first place, it is a framework of exchange that reveals the

challenges of the community, which identifies the different responsibilities: who does what? We do not find those kinds of exchanges. It is a group of experts who are in the offices, who design for the community, submit suggestions for on behalf of the population. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

Further, some CSOs claimed that the distrust of the population towards their local administrators is at a high level. CA2 thought that it was the result of a lack of a frank dialogue among citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests. When probed with the question, “What is preventing this leadership paradigm to be adapted by citizens?” CA1 responded by saying:

CA1 – Interview: Lack of a framework for a frank dialogue derives from leadership paradigm shift. Some organizations encourage us to engage citizens in the coproduction of public goods but it is not really in our blood. We are obliged to do it but it is really not in our beliefs. Because one non-government organization (NGO) said that women have to express themselves and they should have a say. I don’t know. Maybe we are in the evolution of things.

The complexity of this leadership paradigm shift is further reflected in different organizations located in Bujumbura Mairie. These organizations, mainly international organizations and their sub-grantees, use Western cultures that believed in equal rights and freedom of expression without knowing how grassroots citizens would react from their views. They mostly want to work with politicians rather than going straight to people who they claim their programs and projects are to help. One of the participants described:

Les citoyens se plaignent que les politiciens sont hors de contact et insensibles à leurs actions. Et ils se plaignent que les politiciens sont injustes, en accordant une attention à certaines parties du public - en particulier, ceux qui ont accès à eux plutôt qu'aux gens ordinaires.

Citizens complain that politicians are out of touch and unresponsive to their actions. And they complain that politicians are unfair, paying attention to some parts of the public—especially, those who have access to them rather than to ordinary people. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

In Burundi, the greatest error committed by officials in engaging citizens is the allusion that it has been accomplished. A CO1, one of the Commune leaders, elaborated on theme and considers that the framework for consultation exists:

Au niveau de la coopération et collaboration avec les communes, il y a des structures administratives qui sont bien verticales. Il existe des cadres autorisés qui sont bien organisés dans chaque district. C'est-à-dire de la commune jusqu' au quartier, il y a des instances habilitées qui sont bien organise au niveau de chaque quartier. Au niveau du quartier il y une structure administrative, au niveau de zones, même et au niveau de la commune il y a déjà une structure déjà organisée.

At the level of cooperation and collaboration with municipalities, there are administrative structures that are vertical. There are authorized frameworks that are well organized in each neighborhood. That is to say, from the commune to the district, there are empowered bodies that are well organized at the level of each neighborhood. At the level of the district there is an administrative structure, at the level of zones, even and at commune level there is already a structure already organized. (Translated by the author, August 2016).

When prompted with a question, “Are these frameworks real, if so how do they work in accordance with the concept of decentralization?” the CO1 asserted that:

Nous avons des structures de développement au niveau des zones, collines, et des communes. Ces cadres sont renforcés par le Plan d'action communautaire (PAC), qui est structuré à la base (quartier). Dans ce plan d'action, il existe des comités de développement collinaires, qui regroupent tous les besoins au niveau des quartiers/collines. Et nous avons un comité de développement municipal au niveau de la Commune qui supervise tout. La structure de la décentralisation est venue réorganiser la ville.

We have the framework of development at hills (neighborhoods), zones, and communes. These frameworks are strengthened with Community Action Plan (CAP), which is structured at the base (neighborhood level). In this Action Plan, there are committees of neighborhoods (hillside) development, which gather all the needs at neighborhoods (Hills) level. And we have a committee of municipal development at Commune level that oversees everything. The structure of decentralization came to reorganize the City. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

CO1 went on to provide different examples he recalled being discussed in different meetings.

“For example, the development of the city of Bujumbura, the streets of the city. We engage the

population by asking them to pay only two (2%) percent of the cost of the street.” He also stated that we invite people to participate in the community work for street cleaning, trash collections, and much more. CO1 explained how he felt and why he believed that the full implementation of the decentralization would bring citizens closer to their elected officials once financial, political, and administrative decentralization is accomplished.

In general, “citizens lacks a forum where they can express their views, ideas, and be able to contribute toward their municipalities,” said Pastor Deo. The World Bank Group and other International Organizations operating have neither a civic platform nor other form of informing either citizens or their administrators about the proposed projects to implement in their country. Those are project based made either in Washington or Brussels in a total absence of key players: the representative of the government and local population. As Figure 7 displays, the standard design of the Law on Decentralization in Burundi supports the top-down system of communication that, in turn, disfranchises citizens and citizen groups from enjoying engagement in service designs and management of their local government.

To sum up this section and with these considerations in mind, municipal leaders need to think creatively and construct a framework that will guide organizations toward a bright future. What is needed today is a conceptual framework for helping the newly created municipalities (zones and communes) to engage in the coproduction. As one of the participant pointed out, “it is important to those organizations operating in our country to partner and engage with communities to achieve socio-economic viability of the newly created communes. Groups of interests and power-holders are to strengthen public participation in planning, debate, and implementation of programs if they are to meet their mission, vision, and objectives.

Distrust of the population towards their local administrators.

“Trust – and its absence – preoccupies and concerns us. Trust knits society together and makes it possible for people to get on with their everyday lives. Without it, society would become impossible.” Will Hutton

In Burundi, years of conflict and mismanagement of governmental resources have created an atmosphere of enmity and mistrust between power-holders and citizens as well as citizens and the groups of interests. It is obvious that distrust of power-holders may be considered a serious problem to citizens as public officials are duty bound to administrators, the public, and the people. Its absence hurts, creates chaos, and heartens conflict expressed one of the participants to the focus group attendees in Bujumbura.

As reflected in narrative presentations below, an everyday understanding that mistrust or distrust of the population is a critical variable in the process of engaging citizens in policy-making and the design of public services was a stumbling block for Ngendakumana. In the middle of implementing, partially, the Law on Decentralization in the City of Bujumbura (Bujumbura Mairie), her experience was that the alternative to trusting is either for us to disengage from a social relationship with our elected and appointed officials or to attempt to use fear, control, and power to force them to behave in a way we find responsible. “Although we are being told constantly that...mmm.... we will be having open meetings with the administrators and commune councils...I don’t think we are hearing the whole truth.” Pastor Deo, for example, was convinced that they “were living a lie” in part because he has already made his decision in terms of the outcome of the new administration of commune. “I know that much of what we hear from these authorities does not matter. But we cannot believe them.” Ngendakumana also shared the same conclusion:

I have seen it on our city. There is a profound distrust between officials that we elected each accusing the other of malpractices or supporting only his party. Here in Nyakabiga citizens don't trust police officers and soldiers, their authorities, and sometimes they don't trust their neighbors. The non-enforcement of the laws that we have in book. People are being taken from their homes because they either belong to a political party that does not share the same views, opinions with those in powers. I have witnessed arbitrary killings of innocent people and arrests of members of the opposing political party.

In the absence of trust, we have little choice but to resort to unflattering arguments that people have less hesitation in offending one who makes himself or herself beloved than one who makes themselves feared. The salient point of trust was vividly manifested in interviews performed at the time when local authorities and high rated officials (military officials) were being targeted and killed on a daily basis. Several people went further when discussing their distrust by addressing other elements of mistrust, including insufficient collaboration between elected officials and their constituencies, insufficient collaboration between municipal leaders and religious authorities, and the top-down system of communication that failed citizens for so long.

Participants attributed the problem of mistrust, primarily to local officials, the Nyumba Kumi, chef des quartiers, and neighborhood councils. Participants seemed to accuse them for failing to collaborate directly with citizens when political situation is going wrong. Joseph on this study commented: *“they don't trust us and we really don't believe in what these Nyumba Kumi (neighborhood leaders) and commune leaders say.”* Joseph used this word to describe how his experience, how he feels, and what it means to be living with authorities one does not trust. Joseph is aware that decisions taken by politicians affect them yet there is much evidence to show that they feel cut off from political participation. The claim Joseph was making is truth of his experience. Joseph asked the researcher to verify his “Definition Tree” of mistrust that I decided to share.

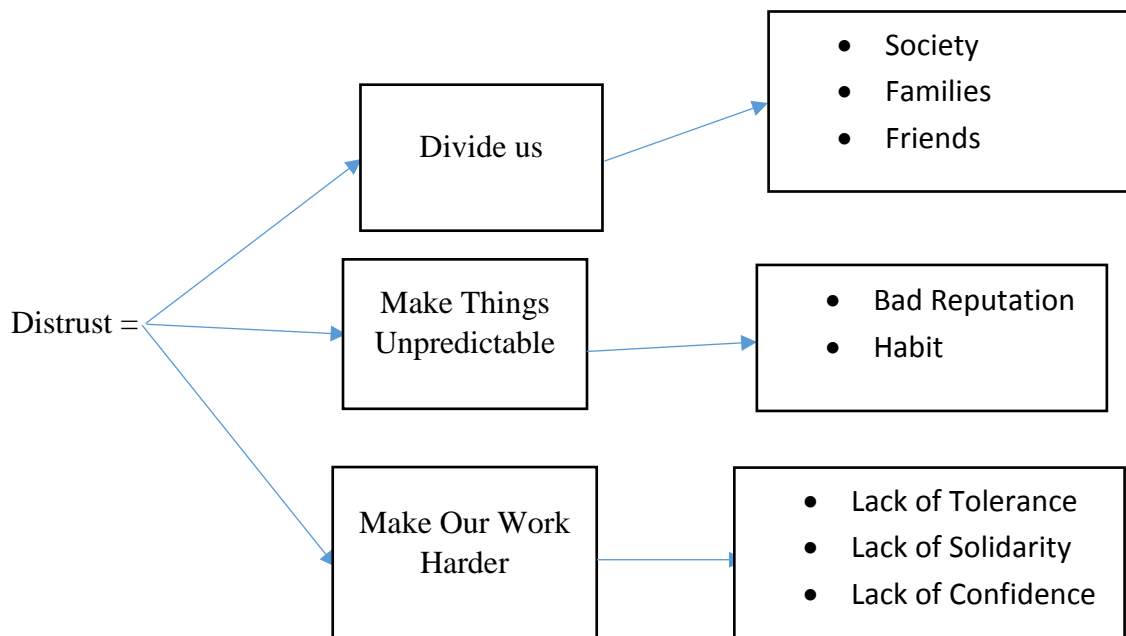


Figure 10. Distrust of the population toward their local and elected officials have created a feeling of lack of confidence, hope, and tolerance.

CA1 pointed out that Burundian citizens have lived and experienced these attributes (divide, unpredictable, and work harder) for years and may continue to experience them today if the government fails to implement fully the Law on Decentralization. He continued to say that the distrust among individuals and between individuals and organizations involved emotional and rational factors. Pastor Joseph added to this conversation. He claimed that the mistrust in Burundi was based on insufficient collaboration between local officials and their constituencies and a lack of collaboration between municipal leaders and religious authorities that were based primarily on a top-down system of communication. According to him, to be engaged in the coproduction “requires two-way communication and interaction and iterative actions between government and citizens, and among citizens and civil society groups. CA1 may be heard as proceeding the following manner: “We understand our country has been divided for years, which have made our society in danger. Interesting enough, their private sensing, which CA1

mentioned, including a lack of collaboration among key players, were verifiable statement on ground in Bujumbura at the time of this research.” CA1 and Joseph’s narrative presentation, in other words, were the result of the bad reputation that their country has lived for years.

A striking element of distrust expressed by interviewees in focus group discussions in Muramvya was perceived as a lack of truthfulness that have made things unpredictable. Focus group attendees believed that power-holders, especially those local leaders, are dishonest people who work for the will of those who put them in positions of power. “They don’t care about us,” continued one of the participants.

When public officials were asked if they mistrust their follow citizens, their responses were mixed. Some of the power-holders, mainly Zos (Zone Officials) claimed, “Due to political situation in our country, some people cannot be trusted because they don’t support the actions of the government.” He continued to say that there are a portion of resistances manifested all around the City of Bujumbura by some bad guys (citizens) who believed that the President was barred from running for office because of the term limits for presidency. Others, such as CA1, claimed a lack of tolerance between power-holders and groups of Civil Society Organization who felt that they are not acting on the best interests of their communes. He also claimed that their superiors (local councils) are not telling the truth and they are withholding information necessary that would inform citizens about the future of their zones and communes. His arguments were supported by other participants. CA2 claimed that a lack of solidarity created a dishonesty. Some citizens felt that their elected leaders have failed them because of their political affiliation.

Similarly, Epimaque Buterere’s of World Vision’s experience with issues of distrust explained, “some members of community can’t express the real needs during planning or

evaluation, fearing to criticize political leaders/local leaders.” The daily killings of high ranked soldiers, both Hutu and Tutsi, and uncertainty of political dynamics observed at the time of this research allowed local authorities (Nyumba Kumi, Chef de Quartiers, and Chef des Zones) to accuse citizens of secrecy, obstruction, and hiding of information crucial to providing peace and stability in the country. Distrust of local authorities, among numerous other factors, seems likely to have played a role in citizens’ reactions towards government proposed peaceful cohabitation programs, employment discrimination, unending killings, and other programs of developments.

As one of the participant narrated:

The truth is we cannot build relationship if we mistrust our local leaders. We cannot follow these leaders because we don’t believe in them. They make decisions that favor themselves and their political parties. They lie to us every time. How can we trust them?

One of the fundamental weaknesses of both Burundian power-holders and their citizens is a lack of clear communication with the grassroots population. Figure 7 is indicative of this weakness. Those who are in powers and supporters of opposition parties are failing to communicate clearly their needs and collaborate with citizens to resolve rising issues they face. In general, they are failing to communicate public values clearly to the community.

Harvest International staff said:

HI Interview: My experience is based on the distrust among a groups of the population that is mainly marked by insufficient collaboration between elected officials and their constituencies; Here in Burundi, the dialogue between citizens and local government officials about areas in which citizens are empowered to act or take on responsibility to drive change exist rarely or not at all.

In concluding this section, distrust of authorities, among numerous other factors, seems likely to have played a role in the ongoing conflict and lack of tolerance with Burundian communities.

Interviewees’ interpretation of citizen engagement reflects underlying and profound distrust between authorities and citizens. To avert the threat of recurring conflicts and wars, Burundian people decided to enact the Law on Decentralization where participation was prioritized. Given

importance of trust in citizen engagement, communication, and participation addressing distrust is critical as an effective response for future researches.

Illiteracy – low education level. Illiteracy in Burundi has been labeled by numerous participants, including the World Vision staff, as one of the impediments to citizen engagement. Lack of education, according to Epimaque *Buterere* of WV, prevents citizens from accessing information and contributing to social inclusions, community platforms, debates, and other processes deemed necessary to engagement. “Behind every fact is a face and behind every statistic is a fact,” said Pastor Joseph, who felt that the public interests in his country would not be defended if citizens do not have a “minimum understanding” of how to strengthen the legitimacy of the system to use participatory planning, budget consultations, and social audits.

The majority of participants to the study recognized the seriousness of the level of education and its contribution toward a prosperous society. This may be attributed to the fact that the current generation—due to years of ongoing conflicts, high rate of unemployment, and a lack of motivation to attend schools—have lost the energy and interest in political and civic engagement and are focusing more on issues deemed important to their daily lives.

CA1, a trained lawyer, was of the views of educating his followers on how to engage in policymaking and the design of public services. According to him, the “government is not doing enough to educate its citizens. Because a large number of citizen cannot read nor write, quite often, citizen initiatives are captured by elites and the so-called special interests which manipulate the process for their benefit.” He also pointed out that “in Burundi we have 80% of people who have not been in school. They cannot pressure their leaders to act on their preference.” What this implies is that the more educated a resident is, the more this citizen would have access to information, read and understand the contents of materials, and contribute

constructively to the discussions. Another interviewee, a staff member of WV, expressed the same concern when asked a question related to the issues that contribute toward citizen engagement. He went further to describe that illiteracy prevents citizens from accessing or contributing toward coproduction.

In contrast to CA1, PO1 argued for the effort made by the central government to educate citizens is enormous. PO1, who lead the Education Program of Patriotic and Civic Education in Burundi, described strategies needed to engage young people in high quality civics education as part of community reorganization. He narrated:

PO1 – Interview: *Je dois dire seulement que les différents ateliers sont organisés par le programme d'éducation et des formations patriotiques au sein du Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la formation Patriotique. De ces différents ateliers sortent de recommandations de la population qui montre de l'aspiration des citoyens... Il faut que la jeunesse aille à l'école massivement pour qu'elle comprenne les droits et devoirs... Il faut que la population ait certaines connaissances afin qu'elle s'approprie de cette décentralisation.*

I must say only that the various workshops are organized by the education program and the patriotic formations within the Interior Ministry and Patriotic Training. From these different workshops come out recommendations of the population that show the aspiration of the citizens. . . . It is necessary that the youth attend school massively to understand the rights and obligations. . . . The population must have certain knowledge so that they can acquire this decentralization. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

Interestingly enough, the government recognizes the illiteracy level of its citizens. What PO1, who is in charge of education, is saying is that citizen participation which lies in the heart of the process of decentralization is not guaranteed unless citizens are educated enough to understand how the game is played. Significant proportion of support to the process has been in the form of training workshops to build capacity building at the local level. Public Officials' were asked how much training and capacity-building workshops are provided to citizens and how many of them are attending these training. Their responses were mixed. POs claimed that the average across Bujumbura Mairie is two training per sessions of between two to four days a month. Illiteracy

was expressed not only for local citizens but also but also for governmental leaders. One participant said that :

Le niveau d’instruction général des élus locaux aussi bien que de leur personnel administratif reste faible.

The general level of education of local elected officials as well as their administrative staff remains low. (Translated by the Author, October 2016)

Like CA1, *Ciza Odette*, a resident of Muramva Province, criticized the government for not doing enough to educate the populace. Asked whether you know someone in a position of authority who is illiterate or has difficulty to write and could be an obstacle to continued strong citizen involvement, *Odette* answered, “Yes, they are many of them.” *Odette* also expressed dismay that many focus group attendees could neither read, write, nor develop good arguments for analysis of the problems. *Odette*, a member of the Mutwa community group, did say:

We are poor and have faced discrimination for years. How can we go to school when we don’t even have money to pay for our foods? How can we run for office when we cannot even read clearly nor write? However, those Hutu and Tutsi they have never accept the Batwa because they say that we are uneducated and those who are educated enough have no chance to be hired. Once the Twa run for an office, they ask him/her if she/he knows how to read and write and the majority of Batwa have little or no education at all.

What *Odette* and other participants to this focus group of Muramvya believed is that a lack of primary education has hampered their lives. What they mean is that illiteracy is a key impediment to civic engagement and its consequences to a given community are harmful. It affects individuals themselves and jeopardizes not only their future but also the future of the entire community as well. *Epimaque* added to this conversation. He remarked that “illiteracy in Burundi prevents citizens from accessing governmental services and products, contributing therefore to these citizens retracting from participating in governmental efforts.”

To sum up this section, the average literacy rate of Burundian population is a better indicator of citizen engagement. Understanding the factors that contributes to a country's citizen engagement has been a long-time objective of public administration. In part because a local sustainable development has the potential to generate prosperity and wellbeing for its citizens, while at the same time, laying the foundation for a more equitable distribution of the benefits to its citizens.

Lack of Transparency in the Management of Local Public Affairs

The views of participants who spoke in this matter were expressed as to whether the issue of transparency suffers from superficial application. For many participants, the issues of misuse of public resources, lack of balanced and objective information, corruption and various malpractices emerged as inhibiting factors that allow power-holders and the groups of interests to bar citizens from participation. According to CA1, these issues are associated with political factors. Pastor Joseph claimed: "there is an ongoing pressure to increase the ability of citizens to access government and international NGOs information." In turn, the groups of interests, including a number of international NGOs, use the word "inclusion" to circumvent the application of transparency in their management and keep citizens and their power-holders in the dark so they misunderstand their role and overreaching purposes of their activities. In other words, efforts to foster transparency in different arenas are quickly giving way to the realization that being transparent in their management is a considerably more complex and uncertain process. This is not surprising, said CA1. CA1 continued to claim: "When state actors and organizations are more transparent, individuals have clear understanding of how they are performing."

Participant in focus groups in Bujumbura noted that “more transparency in their local governance should mean less scope for corruption, increase degree of honesty at all level through an information and sharing more information in designing policies and delivering key public services.” A number of participants to the focus groups lamented of the absence of accountability in their local government management. They claimed that official business of their local government has been conducted without informing the community and its broader citizens what they really are doing. One of the participants added, “I wish they can provide needed information to me and I can put it to use for the sake of our commune.” That may contribute conflict as individuals have a clear picture of the organization.” The issue of lack of transparency can be visualized in Figure 11 as observed in Burundi.

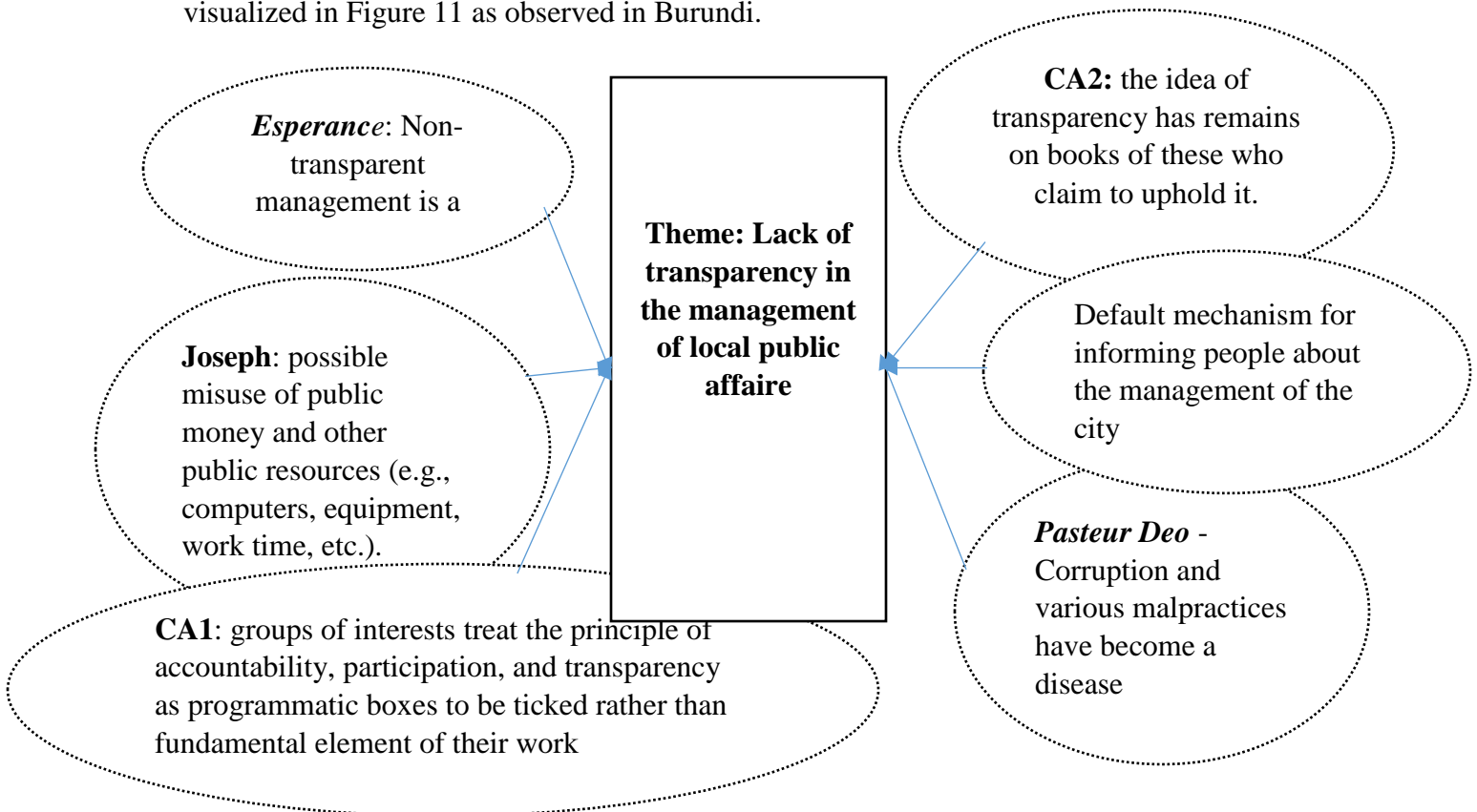


Figure 11. Transparency has become one of the big issues. Lack of a clear, publicly available policy that sets out a regular, sustained dialogue between citizens and government as well as between government and the groups of interests as part of producing a mutual strategy for local development.

One question I asked participants to this study was: “What are factors influencing local government transparency?” Transparency became a critical issue in accountability to control both the government (communes, and central government) and the groups of interests’ activities. The result shows economic and political factors in Burundi are to blame for transparency in local government management. Indeed, participants confirmed that unemployment rate, political turmoil, and political affiliation have significant effect on the level of transparency. In this section, I reviewed some of the topics, including non-transparent management, lack of balanced and objective information to assist citizens, misuse of public resources, and corruption and various malpractice.

Non-transparent management. What is significance of non-transparent management for those who are called to lead and manage our communes and zones? Recall, for instance, the European Union (2011) and the United State Agency for International Development (2011) comments and recommendations that government should adopt responsible practices and provide information about their activities. CA1 added to this understanding by noting that transparency is an important source for people to have a better understanding of public policies, increase trust of the public, reduce corruption, and hold officials accountable for their actions. Unfortunately, participants in this study claimed that both power-holders and the groups of interests have taken the issue of transparency lightly. What then can leaders and the researcher learn from this non-transparent management so that they can win trust and the followership of participants in this? For a large number of participants in focus group discussions, as well as interviews with some key informants, leaders can learn that the impact of non-transparency includes what happens when the truth is discovered. Unresolved issues of a lack of transparency in the management of government entities were reflected in research participants’ narratives, and ranged on complaints

about a lack of trust, negative relationship between leaders and followers, communication via rumors, eroded engagement, and a lack of information. At the level of social inclusion, these issues were inwardly experienced as feelings of abandonment, anger, betrayal, and powerlessness. This has made Pastor Joseph and other participants on focus group in Muramvya's lives a "living nightmare."

While citizens and citizen groups expressed concerns about the non-transparent management, empirical evidence received from governmental official revealed that more-transparent environments are not always better. Privacy is just as essential for performance, especially in the case of Burundi where democracy is at her beginning stage. CO1 explained: "The government is dealing with interpersonal behaviors and how immature people can react. We need to be careful." Within the context of the stories of participants, non-transparent management is visually displayed in Figure 12. The primary objective in the display of this non-transparency figure is to suggest that the work of local and state leaders, insofar as they are challenged "to give the public the ability to access information."

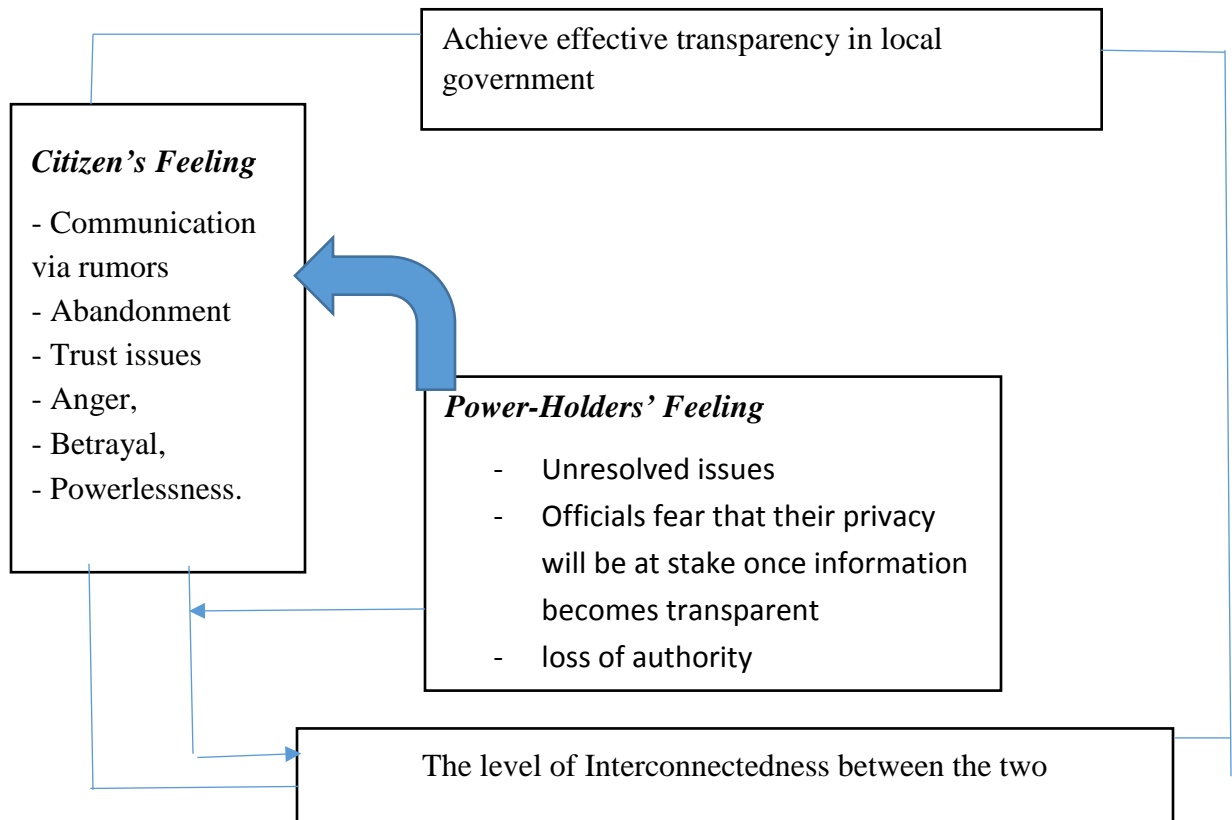


Figure 12. The level of Interconnected between citizens and power-holders' feelings.

Lack of balanced and objective information to assist citizens. Another set of stories and corresponding experiences that participants in focus groups discussed and marked out as barriers to engagement was the feeling of a lack of objective information. Part of unfolding stories was that citizens were not being informed about the issues being discussed in communes or zones. This lack of balanced and objective information was related to the behaviors of power-holders and the groups of interests as well. Numerous participants in focus groups discussions provided different opinions about these issues. They viewed these behaviors in relation to: (a) what officials said toward the progress to encourage discussions and exchange of ideas for social development concerns; (b) the absence of personal contract: "Since I have been living in this communes, our administrator have never been in our village to have a one-to-one discussions; (c) the actions of central government officials to provide on time information as a basis for citizen

monitoring: “Lack of information on key issues, among them financial allocations often leads to the abuse of funds, and corruption.” As one of the participants to the focus group explained: “Making information available to the public is thus often the starting point for community accountability initiatives.” He continued: “I don’t think our best interest is always at the top.” Accumulatively, these experiences could be heard as being voiced frustrations in the eyes of disparate citizens.

Factors explaining the lack of transparency in the management of public services have been identified as officials failing to communicate with clarity to citizens the proposed programs and projects to be implemented. These inhibiting factors, as stated by a larger number of participants to the focus groups, were reinforced by the groups of interests’ self-interest behaviors of keeping citizens as well as power-holders uninformed about issues related to management of the proposed programs to implement in their specific communes and zones. As one of CA2 declared: “There is no willingness and commitment of those in power to inform us.”

Misuse of public resources. One of the issues that emerged from the discussions was the misuse of public resources known here as misuse of public programs/projects and its impact in the population in general. In the scale of 0 to 6, participants were asked to rate their agreements or not with the statement of positive or negative impact on either power-holders, group or interests, or citizens. Table 5 depicts participants’ views as they were expressed. The issues of misuse of scarce resources appeared significantly concerning power-holders working for the central government. Out of 24 participants to the focus groups discussions and interviews, 18 felt that it had a negative impact on local government management and civic participation and three believed otherwise. A large number of participants attributed the negative impact on the groups of interests noting that their external influence have affected negative their lives pushed them

further from supporting the government's actions. Out of 10 participants who spoke about the misuse of public resources and its impact on local population, six were of the view that local leaders benefited from its use and it impacted negatively the socio-economic development activities. Reasons given by participants for their perspectives views are discussed in Table 5.

Table 5: *Categorical Data on Misuse of Public Programs/Projects*

Participants	Impact Power-Holders		Impact on Group of Interests		Impact on Citizens		Total
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	
Citizens	0	6	0	6	0	6	13
Power-Holders	3	3	1	5	2	4	13
Groups of Interests	2	4	6	0	5	1	6
CSOs	1	5	2	4	1	5	12
Total	6	18	9	15	8	16	44

Note. Participants' views on the impact of misuse of public resources from researcher's survey, 2016.

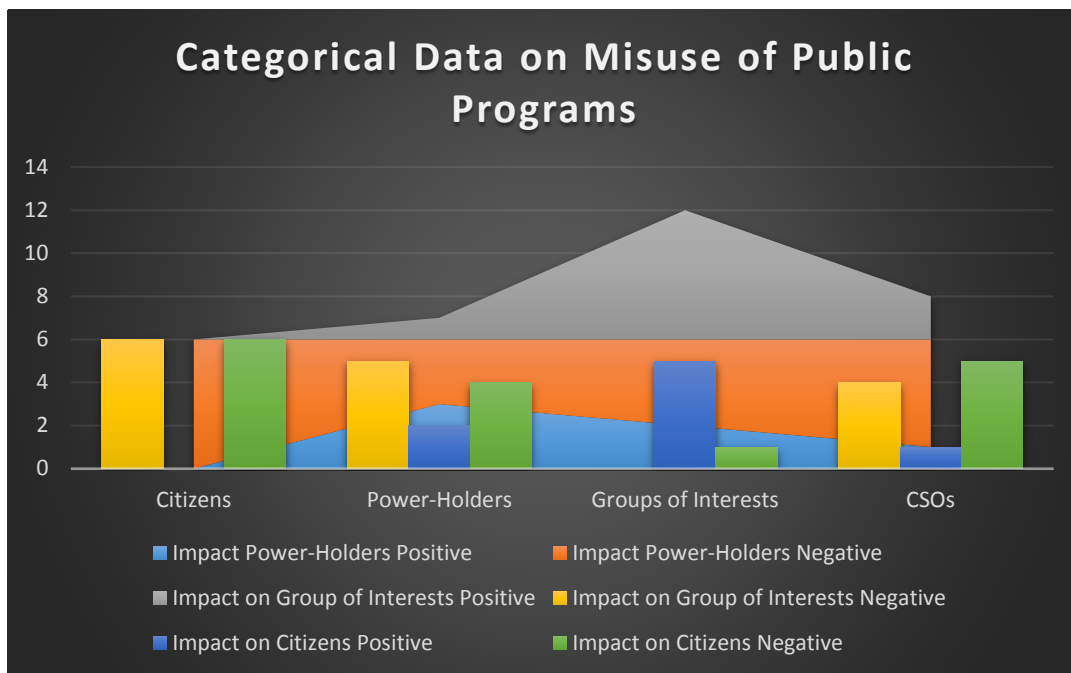


Figure 13. Visualization of participants' views on positive/negative impact of misuse of public programs and projects.

As displayed in the Figure 13, the negative impact attributed by participants to the groups of interests is indicative of how citizens feel about the services and products provided by both the groups of interests and their government. Citizens feel disengaged, disconnected, and excluded from participating as the rate of negative impact on citizens is at the maximum level of 6. The Table 5 indicates that power-holders are supportive and views in positive way the work provided by the groups of interests than citizens do. Perception of ineffectiveness of services coproduction by both power-holders and the groups of interests are hindrance to engagement and willing of citizens to participate. Finally, Table 5 and Figure 13 reveal difference in perception about how services and implemented programs are being delivered. Citizens feel disconnected with those programs and projects funded by international organizations as projects and programs are doomed to a failure.

Corruption and various malpractices. Participants to this study unanimously agreed that corruption is a curse and has created various malpractices in the management of their communes and zones. They attributed corruption to both power-holders and the groups of interests who impose the government to accept programs and projects not needed by citizens even though they know that the proposed programs would not work. They also claimed that this curse came as the result of years of undemocratic, ethnic rules, followed by guerrilla warfare, and general insecurity that prevailed even at the time of this research. Uncertainty of everyday life in Burundian society and fear of the unknown were the driving factors of ordinary people bribing their officials, commented Mpazimaka. A number of participants pointed out that international response to assist in curbing and/or eliminating corruption has been weak and disappointing. Bribing our officials (Burundians) is common and easy.

CA1, a lawyer, pointed out: “These international organizations have disappointed our citizens. Rather than helping to resolve the problems, they use transnational bribery to get their projects and programs approved and implemented.” Participants agreed that the government of Burundi had funding problems to support its social and economic programs through donor communities, including the World Bank and the IMF. This inability to source their funding was a contributing factor for those international organizations to use their influence and bribe these officials for unneeded projects in the country. He continued by saying that:

Many NGOs go straight to the grassroots, which has no influence, and then fund some local organizations with no experience and little impact. The grassroots are ignorant of the program being implemented to them. These people have little capacity to understand what is going on.

NGOs use these kinds of strategies, invest in middle group (grassroots) in order to continue working for them for years. The local citizens are victims of the system (Western system that donates money) and the national government that work with them. NGOs finish by misusing the funds.

The findings revealed that the dissatisfaction of citizens with the government’s corruption record was reflected in the ways participants spoke about it. In Burundi, despite working with OLUCOME (Observatory for Fight Against Corruption and Economic Embezzlements) and the adoption of a few anti-corruption measures including passing different laws, including the right to information – has a long way to go. Participants, both educated and some governmental officials, expressed frustration that even though citizens spoke about it and the OLUCOME effort were not yielding much. One of the participants, Kamwenubusa Joseph, claimed: “We don’t give them a bribe, we only try to get what we need.” He continued saying:

Most of bribe we give are ordinary people who live in town. We only try to get licenses, certificates or seek to resolve land disputes, especially when we struggle to meet our basic necessities.

In Burundi, the word “corruption” has different meaning in different contexts. To the eyes of participants, the actions taken by these ordinary people to get their papers done are not perceived as illegitimate or illicit practices. In their cases, Mr. Kamwenubusa Joseph, participant to the focus was clear. He said: “Public employees or police officers have minor salaries and helping them get something to feed their families by giving them something such as money is not a bribe.” The accusation of corruption in Burundi is prevalent in public sectors where job opportunities reflect political rather than competitive trend. Many participants, however, claimed that this form of corruption is the result of the groups of interests that hire people based upon their connection and political party affiliation, as they are given names by those in power.

In conclusion, the government of Burundi and the groups of interests’ application of transparency into their management has often been superficial and based on simplistic theory. In the case of the Republic of Burundi, the concept of engagement and transparency evoke powerful notions of citizen empowerment, which have been reduced to consultation, if needed, by power-holders, or exercises in information dissemination that fail to seriously challenge structural reform with the absence of transparency management.

Lack of Accountability in the Management of Localities

The first conceptual pillar of the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization, as reflected in various government texts and interviews with key governmental actors, is citizen accountability. The procedures set out in the government’s own documents provide many opportunities for citizens to seek accountability. The 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization reads:

De par ses fonctions, la planification du développement communal est avant tout une œuvre politique. En effet, le Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire (PCDC) est un cadre d’orientation stratégique traduisant la vision, les ambitions, les préférences

et la volonté politique de l'organe chargé de la gestion du développement communal. L'Administrateur, ses conseillers et les membres du conseil communal sont comptables devant les populations des réalisations du PCDC. Il s'agit donc, pour permettre une appropriation du plan par l'ensemble de la population de la commune, de faire en sorte que son élaboration, sa mise en œuvre et son suivi évaluation se déroulent selon une approche participative qui implique l'ensemble des forces vives de la commune : les élus locaux, les services déconcentrés, les organisations de la société civile et les populations. Cependant pour réussir l'œuvre de la planification, la commune doit en avoir l'aptitude juridique et technique.

Through its functions, the planning of communal development is above all a political work. The Communal Community Development Plan (PCDC) is a strategic framework that reflects the vision, ambitions, preferences and political will of the body responsible for the management of communal development. The Administrator, his advisors and members of the communal councils are accountable to the people for the achievements of the PCDC. In order to ensure that the plan is appropriated by the entire population of the municipality, it is necessary to ensure that its design, implementation and follow-up evaluation is carried out according to a participatory approach that involves all of the community's vital forces: local elected representatives, decentralized services, civil society organizations, and the population. However, in order to succeed in planning, the municipality must have the legal and technical capacity. (Gouvernement de Burundi, 2009:62 – Translation by the Author, November 2016)

Despite its importance, accountability mechanism in Burundi represents the weakest link observed in the process of decentralization and/or the implementation of new communes in Bujumbura Mairie. Accountability to citizens remains weak with limited opportunities for citizens and communities to engage in the decision-making and the design of public services processes.

Participants were asked to describe their experience with their local-state and international nongovernmental organizations in relation to the accountability system that reports both the state and the groups of interests' performance. The question I asked participants included "What is the nature of accountability in local level in your Zones and Communes?" To respond to this question, some of participants wanted to know more about the concept of

accountability mechanisms and understand its meaning. In response, I used Kearns' ideas to describe it. According to Kearns (1996), the term accountability means that:

. . . the term accountability generally refers to a broad spectrum of public expectations dealing with organizational performance, responsiveness, and even morality of government and nonprofit organizations. These expectations often include implicit performance criteria—related to obligations and responsibilities—that are subjectively interpreted and sometimes even contradictory (p. 9)

Three critical factors needed to be flagged here. On the one hand, Kearns offers his interpretation of accountability with an organization's performance, responsiveness, and morality. In this case, evaluation of how local government or organizations (NGOs) performed for a given period would be assessed and program improvement reviewed. On the other hand, his writing cleverly informs participants what they expect to receive from the services provided by their commune officials. Pastor Deo interpreted Kearns's definition by noting that: "Implicit performance criteria" is referenced here to the responsibility of officials to show the expected result from the work performed. The implication of his interpretation was that to apply the accountability mechanism was to lose power; it was to lose administrative control. It appears that Pastor Deo's image of accountability in local government settings was such as when officials (both local and state) became accountable to citizens of their actions, they may be facing, if they performed poorly, a chance of being replaced. In expressing his thoughts, Pastor Deo was emphatic in his tone. "You know what I mean." The interviewer, in this instance, listened carefully to Pastor Deo's explanation: "You have studied this stuff more than me," he continued. I would have meant admitting that the researcher did not, in effect, know more than Pastor Deo. However, the researcher stayed silent nodding his head in agreement. The researcher in this instance (a) decided to preserve the interviewee's projected image of the researcher and the question asked; (b) confirmed that the Pastor Deo did not have to say more than he had already said; and (c)

opened the discussion to other participants for more inputs. The response of Pastor Deo became the storyline that was constructed between participants and the researcher. The storyline was developed by adding more problems developed by all participants. They included unequal treatment of citizens, lack of commitment and ownership, and strong interference of state and national authorities in managing localities. These factors were seen as a hindrance to engagement.

Unequal treatment of citizens. Participants to this study claimed that the nature of state-society relationships have greatly improved after the political turmoil experienced since the 1993's killing of the first democratic elected president. They also claimed that this new system of reorganizing the city of Bujumbura (Bujumbura Mairie) is creating a new relationship between communes/zones and citizens. Even though participants acknowledged that the procedure set out in government texts provided many opportunities for equal participation and accountability, there is still a long way to go. Participants to this study claimed that these opportunities are overlooked and voluntarily ignored by state and civil actors.

CA1 pointed out that unequal treatment of citizens is based on the economic status, one's tribes, and background provenance. Those who have the financial and connection means are treated differently from other groups. When prompted with the question of "What does he mean by the word *connection*?" He replied by saying that "it means how many high ranked people in government you have who you can rely on for your business." For those Burundian residents with low and extremely-low incomes, they feel that they have been rejected and/or forgotten. In the word of one of the participants to the study, a Pygmy/Mutwa:

We Batwa are discriminated in the way that we cannot even be part of all the organization. We lack the financial means to open our own organizations. The

government do not listen to us, we still lack the capacity and resources to conduct business and be productive in our society.

Among the citizens interviewed for this researcher, there is a much greater awareness of existence of the process of Decentralization and the role of Hill councils. Interviewees are aware of who their council members are, but for some, it is not easy to access them as their level of education, background provenance, and economic issues bar them from reaching them.

Participants to the focus group in Murumvya—Hutu, Tutsi and Batwa—felt excluded from participating in the management of communes and hills. “It is not possible for me, a Mutwa, to go and see the administrators,” one participant claimed. “Bashobora kunyirukira ku murwango,” / “I will be driven back to the door.” “The only opportunity I have is to go and see the Nyumbakumi who have also many questions to ask before responding to my requests,” explained the same participant. Pastor Deo added to this conversation, “As a Pastor, I can go and meet with the Administrator after asking for permission and the need of my meeting. Other people, with little social economic status, would have difficulty visiting him.” This interpretation means that they also feel others, those who have the means, are in control of the Zones and Communes as they have direct access to the power-holders. Lastly, I observed that citizens in Burundi lack persistence and reliance because they have not been given a chance to work on their own problems. Lack of communication, collaboration, and a safe environment to discuss issues that matter to them due to political uncertainty have created a vacuum of accountability.

Pastor Joseph added to this understanding. He claimed that unequal treatment of individuals has created “injustice, tribalism, and favoritism.” Social injustice and favoritism were manifested, mainly to participants of the focus group discussions in Muramvya where the social and economic condition of a larger number of participants were alarming.

Lack of commitment and ownership. This lack of commitment can be explained as shallow practice used by the groups of interests in providing services to those low-income citizens. The groups of interests have moral obligation to use a complete bridge of accountability, transparency, participation, and inclusion. Nevertheless, its application in Burundi's government remains elusive. Participants to the study claimed that there is a lack of commitment on the part of the groups of interests and governmental officials. CA1 appears to have a sense of logic and a deep understanding of the issue. He first claimed: "Groups of interests treat the principle of accountability, participation, transparency and inclusion as programmatic boxes to be ticked rather than fundamental element of their work." He continued, citing that the groups of interests in Burundi preach these concepts to be applied into their management without a real action. "Their application, however, is deceptive," he closed. CA1's observation was the reminiscence of the effort civil society actors perform to ensure the actions of those in positions of power are being accountable to those they claim serving.

Governmental officials interviewed pointed out that they are accountable to citizens. CO1 claimed: "The concept of accountability is at the heart of all activities taken by this commune." Interviews with CAs disagreed. CA1 said that government officials claimed to be committed to accountability and inclusion. However, the political will to translate such commitment into substantive political reform was lacking. The findings on this research revealed that different agents of the groups of interests have done a tremendous amount of work in the form of capacity buildings and technical guidance. Local administrators who participated in this study appear relatively well aware of their role toward their citizens but need much improvement in how to engage citizens beyond voting.

The second factor observed is a lack of ownership that participants in both focus group discussions and personal interviews revealed. Citizens believed that they lack control of their municipalities as they are left uninformed about the issues that matter most to them. They expressed concerns for not having a direct talk with the Administrators of their commune once they have something to ask. *“Cette commune n’est pas à nous Batwa, ça appartient au Bahutu and Batutsi.”* / *“This commune is not for us Batwa, it belongs to Hutu and Tutsi.”* The sense of not belonging was felt by numerous participants, but the sense of ownership of those programs being implemented was missing. A number of participants felt that their voices are not being heard and that decisions made by elites do not necessarily reflect their values.

Strong interference of state and central government in managing the newly created communes. As stated before and shown in Figure 7, the institutional design of actual local government in Burundi promotes citizens engagement. The decentralization initiative, however, failed to let citizens take control of the commune and put into account their elected leaders, observed the researcher. The current organization structure of communes (See Figure 7) does not have a top communal civil servant that would be the Chief Operation Officer. The communal administrator, who is an elected official serving as a Secretary for Communal Council and the representative of the central government, carries out this function. Two technical advisors were supposed to be selected by the communal council but they were transferred from the Mairie of Bujumbura to the communes. Technically, a number of technical advisers the researcher met and some of the Chief de Zones are local teachers not trained for duties of technical adviser or to run an administrative entity. The central government appoints or transfers loyalist to the communes to serve as advisors in different areas. As one of the POs from the Ministry of Interior described: *« Aujourd’hui nous sommes dans le niveau politique, l’affectation de personnels. Il ya certains*

agents de la mairie qui ont été affectées dans la communes. Les étapes qui suivrons sera pour faire une formation sur la gérance de la localité. » translated as “ Today we are in the political level, assignment of personnel. There are some agents of the Town Hall who have been assigned to the communes. The next steps will be for training on community stewardship.” One of the COs, primarily the CO1, added to this understanding. He stated:

Tous les employés sont payés par la Mairie. On dit que c'est la commune mais c'est toujours centralisé au niveau de la Mairie et c'est elle qui paye. La décentralisation c'est un processus et nous avons seulement trois mois de service. La loi est sortie mais la commission de la décentralisation est mise en place et entre de travailler. Le gouvernement est entré de transférer les compétences. La compétence administrative est celle qui est primordiale. Tu peux avoir toutes les ressources sans la capacité, vous aurez des problèmes pour y implémenter dans votre entité. Et nous suivrons ce processus pour y arrive.

All employees are paid by the Town-Hall. It is said that it is the commune but it is always centralized at the level of the Town Hall and it is she who pays. Decentralization is a process and we only have three months of service. The law came out, but the decentralization commission was set up and went into work. The government is transferring the kills. Administrative jurisdiction is paramount. You can have all the resources without the capacity; you will have problems to implement in your entity. And we will follow this process to get there. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

At that time of this research, the researcher observed that many urban commune governments were newly created and relatively weak. Some participants pointed out that their newly appointed and elected city officials lack skills, experience, and they do not have sufficient funds to self-govern or take care of growing urban demands. The central government thus became an important source of information, administration, and community unity. The three urban communes visited had not a good deal of control over their own internal affairs even though many residents wanted their communes to have control over taxing and how the funds should be

used. Accountability to citizens became absent as those officials believe they are accountable to those they report to, central government officials.

This stranglehold of the central government in local affairs is indicative of how the central government in Burundi found it difficult to give power to local entities. Second, at the time of this research, the researcher learned that the central government had dismissed the first elected administrators of the city of Bujumbura by communal councils. One of the participants, CA2, claimed that they have just been thanked after only four months in their posts due to the mismanagement and internal divisions of the ruling CNDD-FDD party, which led to one of them to take refuge in another country.

To sum up this section, the government has shown little interest to relinquish power to local government entities. Even though the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization offers communes and their citizens a chance to govern themselves, the interference of state and central government in managing local entities still is visible.

Political discrimination. Participants to this study claimed that enthusiasm for politicization, as a method of executive control in all levels of government, is everyday business within the government of Burundi. Numerous participants have also claimed political discrimination as a barrier to citizen engagement and a curse that Burundians lived for years from different administrations. Historically, narrated one of the participants, our local leaders, even the Nyumbakumi, have been the product of those who were in power and based on ethnic background. The public perceived neighborhood councils and commune councils as heavily politicized and responsive to the political party in power. Participants pointed out that efforts to assert tighter political control of local bureaucracy were pursued to an extreme under previously

presidents (Buyoya and others). Participants agreed that loyalty triumphed over competence in selection, and political goals displaced rationality in decision-making.

To understand how political discrimination has taken root in Burundi's government, one of the participants, Mr. Kassa Pierre, pointed out about the history of Burundian government. To him, people have been discriminated since the colonial era and he thanked the contribution of Arusha Peace's deal. He noted that:

In the early years of our country's independence (1960s), the Mwami Mwambutsa IV presided over a government combining Hutu and Tutsi. However, the divisions came in the year 1965-1966 when the Hutu Premiere Minister, Pierre Ngendandumwe, was assassinated by Tutsi. In 1966, after a failed attempt of Hutu rebels to overdraw the kingdom in Burundi, the Tutsi dominated government held the power with ruthless brutality. With an almost exclusively Tutsi civil service, discrimination against the Hutus becomes commonplace. Those who run communes, zones, and other governmental entities were at 90% Tutsi.

Political discrimination has shifted with the Arusha Peace Accord. Now candidates who have to run zones or communes are elected through a "blocked list of candidates approved by political parties as a mean of showing loyalty to the national party leadership." Party leadership in turn reward party supporters by offering them a chance to fill out civil service positions at the provincial or communal level. In other words, party politics dominate national politics. As the researcher and other participants observed, these actions have created a delay on approving the draft laws on the transfer of competencies and resources to communes. As one of the participants pointed out, "those who disagree are removed from office."

To sum up this section, citizen engagement and participation in decision-making and the design of public services at the time of this research remain limited. Political discrimination has been used for years. This action undermines the potential benefits of the accountability mechanisms of state actors.

Internal Organization of Local Administration

The internal organization of local administration in Burundi presents impediments to citizen engagement in local decision-making and the design of public services. “The enormity of the task to promote active engagement in local government in Burundi should not be underestimated, claimed CA1.” CA1 continued to state that it means more than an active contribution toward supporting the government’s programs and agenda. It means reorganizing the internal organization of local entities. The challenges posed by the internal organization of local administrations are enormous. The organizational structure of Communes observed in Burundi reflect a weak administrative capacity to engage citizens in the coproduction. As observed after interviews with key commune officials, there is a lack of key departments, including public works, budgeting, planning, community development, human resources, finance, public safety, and other departments deemed necessary to provide programs and activities for the wellbeing of communes’ economic development prospect. This section will discuss the following items deemed necessary by the researcher: Lack of detail in legal framework, influence of political parties, and excessive polarization of municipal administration. Figure 7 described earlier is indicative of how the chain of responsibilities are distributed. Figure 14 shows how the system has been manipulated, ridged, and used as the backbone of political parties’ interests.

The “Guide des Elus Collinnaires” states that the “Hill Council is under the control of the Commune in which he carries out the decisions on the territory of the hill.” Neither Hill Councils nor Chef de Zone have real power to engage citizens in policy-making and the service design.

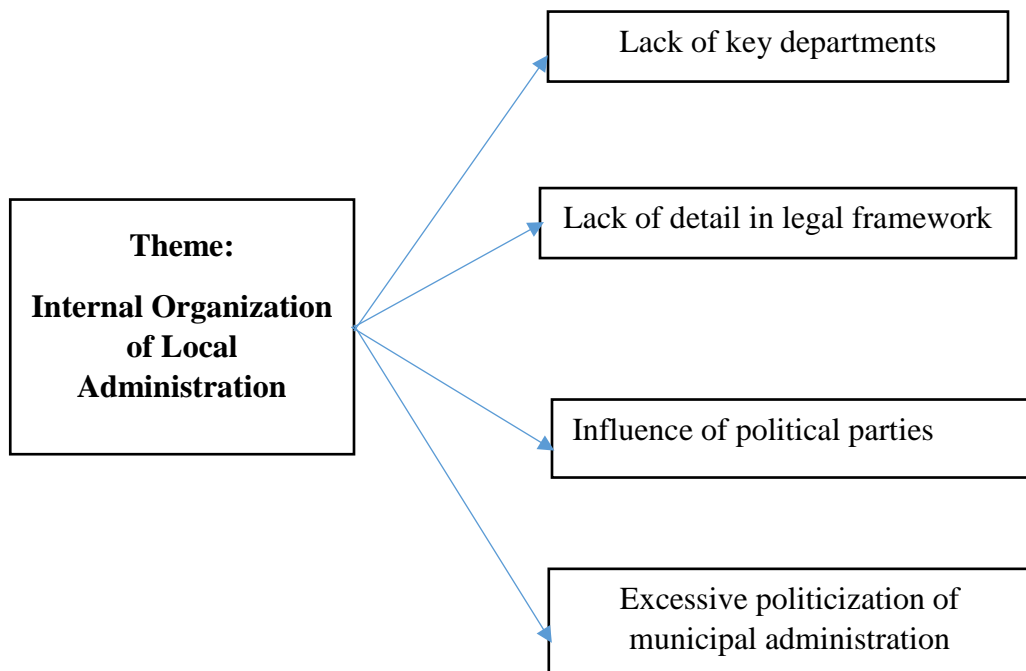


Figure 14. Detail the internal organization of local administration and how it lacks details on how to implement specific programs of primary necessity to citizens.

Lack of detail in legal framework. The functional responsibility of communes in Burundi is detailed in the Law on Communal Administration (Law 1/02 2010). This Law, however, lacks details on different departments to be assigned to communes. The Article 76 of Communal Administration, for example, enumerates specific items to be covered by communes. These items, however, dealt with the spending side of management, including but not limited to, salaries, development plans, maintenance cost of infrastructure belonging to communes, help to the poor. Article 51 tasks commune officials with preparing official documents, including birth certificates, whereas, Article 52 and 53 describe the preparation of communal development plan (PCDC), promote sport, cultural activities, and play a role in education, health, and social services.

Another participant, a lawyer, disbelieved how the central government is weakening their local institutions. He claimed that “the Law 1/02 2010 has no meaning at all as it does not give specific mandates to commune officials. As a result, it reduces their scope of responsibility.” As I observed, his observation was proven true as many commune and zone officials visited do not know the scope of their works and have to deal with duplicate functions. Some zones officials feeling that they should be signing and offering Identification Card (ID) directly to their residents rather than sending their citizens to communes for the same purposes. In general, a lack of detail in legal framework has allowed the central government to play a leading role in the provision of many local services and activities while limiting the role of communes in public service delivery.

Influence of Political Parties. Participants generally had the view that the influence of political parties has influenced how hill (neighborhoods) councils and commune councils are elected. To understand why a political party comes to play in Burundi’s local government management and participation, CA1 told the research that he should first understand the history (past and present) of this country. According to him, mass violence that occurred in 1972 and 1993 has engendered a political mobilization process by drawing people into political life and encouraging the emergence of bottom-up democratic claims. The four political parties involved—FRODEBU, UPRONA, CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL— have engendered administrative mobilization in which party loyalty became a norm for political and administrative leaderships. They have one way or the other of engaging or disengaging citizens in the coproduction. The ruling CNDD-FDD (Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces de défense de la démocratie) and other parties from both Hutu and Tutsi share responsibility and key positions in central and local government.

Political reforms after the enactment of the Arusha Peace have created some opportunity for communes to play an important role in building social cohesion at the local level. Participants to this study pointed out that the influence of CNDD-FDD has been manifested and it is overwhelming. As Habonimana Liberata, one of the participants to the focus group in Muramvya narrated: “Regular meetings are held, attendance sheets signed, minutes taken, reports written and archived, small- or large-scale activities organized.” She continued noting: “I wish they can do the same in our cities and hills and provide jobs to those party members.” Participant expressed a sense of camaraderie and loyalty.

Participants pointed out that a political party follower, “Expressed solidarity with fellow activists and the parties' leadership and they strongly identified with their parties' cause.” In summary, the influence of political party in Burundi has encouraged, in some extent, the emergence of bottom-up democratic claims in which party ideologies drive the outcome.

Excessive politicization of municipal administration. Excessive politicization of local government, as observed by the researcher, shed away citizens from engagement. This is one way of a failure to engage citizens in the coproduction. Politicized local elections and other factors seems to reflect the predominant dimensions of conflict in Burundi. Some of the trend observed in the communes is about rewarding political party supporters with local government jobs. As I observed, in Burundi, the decentralization policy is transversal and involves two main ministries, namely, the ministry of Interior and the Communal Development. Political motivation to establish control and power at the local level played a major role in the politicization of the decentralized entities. The first elected Communal Administrators, for example, have been sacked without a convincing or compelling reasons and the newly appointed Administrators are reluctant to support the actions that contradict the will of their appointers. National power-

holders, rather than perceiving decentralization as a tool for citizen engagement, perceive it as an opportunity to establish control and maintain power at the local level. One of the Chef de Zones who participated in this interview describes it well. She said: « *Les autorités locales travaillent avec une crainte d'être licenciée* » local authorities work with fear of being sacked (translation by the author). One of the participants in focus group, Mrs. Pandaleo, notated:

Human resources management have been politicized. Political loyalty has been favored over competency and merit. You have to belong to a political party or be a party loyalist to be awarded a secure job. National political party consider that local elected officials, such as myself, and other like teachers, principals and inspectors of primary schools, nurses, and other, are to be more effective in mobilizing voters for their political interests. Political supporters are being rewarded with lucrative municipal jobs with or without local government skills.

Hazikizima Esperance described this situation:

Partis politiques discriminent les autres qui ne partagent pas le même sentiment. Nous sommes dans les partis politiques et c'est tellement difficile d'y opérer. Si vous avez un chef de quartiers qui ne partage pas le même parti politique ou opinion comme la vôtre.

Political parties discriminate others who do not share the same views. We are in the political parties, and it is so difficult to operate there. If you have a head of districts that do not share the same political party or opinion like yours.
(Translation by the Author, November 2016)

In response to these development pressures, power-holders disregard the will of the people and try to appease their political supporters. This effect is exacerbated by a strong hierarchical political structure where loyalty to power-holders has created a widespread dissatisfaction with political and public interests.

Groups of Interests Self-Interest Behaviors

In this section, I discuss the findings on the groups of interests' behaviors toward engaging both the citizens and the power-holders in the coproduction. The focus of this analysis is based on the multinational corporations, including the International Non-Governmental

Organizations (INGOs), and the Bretton Woods Institutions (the World Bank Groups and the International Monetary Fund). These institutions have a mandate of providing basic services efficiently and effectively to the citizens they serve. The multinational corporations, for instance, are comprised by administrators, who should work cooperatively and mutually with local residents towards the promotion of common good for all citizens. Many of the groups of interests' goals and missions are indicative of their moral behaviors and ways of engaging citizens in service coproduction. The World Bank Group, for instance, has two ambitious goals: *“End extreme poverty within a generation and boost shared prosperity.”* As I observed, in paper, the World Bank's goal is sound. In practice, as indicated by a number of key informants, the World Bank's work in Burundi has created misery, deepened poverty, sustained division, and created suffering to millions of Burundian people who believed and supported the bank's stated goals.

Concerns about the Role Played by the Groups of Interests

Some of the critics of the groups of interests, including Jean Ziegler along with Eric Toussaint, attribute the failure to engage citizens in the coproduction to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) ways of doing business. They view the groups of interests and other multinational organizations as an instrument and the puppet of the Western countries, mainly the United States. Both Jean Ziegler along with Eric Toussaint indicate the programs proposed by the World Bank and the IMF led to death as the consequence of policy adopted by these institutions. According to them:

On the whole, the policies and programs of the World Bank Group have been consistent with U.S. interests. This is particularly true in terms of general country allocation questions and sensitivities policy issues. The international character of the World Bank, its corporate structure, the strength of the management team, and the Bank's weighted

voting structure have ensured broad consistency between its policies and practices and the long term economic and political objectives of the United States.

Participants to this study shared the same concerns. They expressed wider concerns over the groups of interest's behaviors, namely those that deal directly with the central government and call themselves "experts" in dealing with issues of governance and poverty alleviation.

Interviewees, however, had conflicting views about the groups of interests. Those participants with a high level of education (lawyers, teachers, pastors, students) had negative views toward the groups of interest's ways of acting in the coproduction. Participants asked the researcher to thoroughly read and analyze the World Bank Groups' documents on citizen participation and other related documents in Burundi. The least educated citizens had no clue about the work of the groups of interests and were disinterested about knowing how they work. "Ivyo ntabwo ari vyacu, tabwo bituraba, translated as that is not for us, it does not interest us," explained one of the focus group participants with Batwa community in Muramvya.

The influence of the Bank of Development World Bank, the IMF, and different offices of the United Nations were cited by numerous participants as contributing factors to poor governance and ill management of governmental resources. As CA1 explained, the waning participation and engagement in civic activities and the perceived "apathy" in citizen engagement is a sign of disappearance of public trust to those international organizations. To CA1's credit, defining civic and political engagement is paramount if these organizations are to sustain citizen engagement. His testimony is based on a rigorous demonstration supported by facts and figures since the arrival of these institutions in Burundi.

As a lawyer, CA1 asked the research to read Jean Ziegler's book known in French as "L'Empire de la Honte » translated as « The Empire of Shame. His experience with these

institutions show how citizens have been forgotten and how the World Bank Groups forced the Burundian government to accept loans that were costly with high interest rate that included a management commission, and a relatively short period of repayment. In analyzing the project funded by these institutions, the World Bank and the IMF, CA1 explained: “they had never supported industrial projects designed to create jobs and satisfy domestic demand of our country.” Therefore, citizens’ interests have been sidelined. According to CA1:

Agent des groupes d'intérêt et du gouvernement qui n'ont pas le cœur du développement, qui n'ont pas la passion des personnes vulnérable et qui veulent seulement gagner du travail et de l'argent. Il est clair que nombre de leurs projets créent de la pauvreté. De nombreux projets de la Banque détruisent la vie des gens. Les prêts de la Banque ne visent pas à lutter contre l'éradication de la pauvreté mais appuient plutôt les comportements hypothécaires des pays riches parce que leurs prêts d'ajustement structurel ont vu leur niveau de revenu plonger au Burundi et la pauvreté augmentée à notre peuple.

Agent of interest groups and government that do not have the heart of development, who do not have the passion of vulnerable people and just want to get an employment and the money. It's clear that many of their projects create poverty. Many of the bank's projects destroy people's lives. The Bank's loans are not intended to address poverty eradication but rather support the mortgage behavior of wealthy countries because their structural adjustment loans have caused income levels to plummet here in Burundi and poverty level to increase in our people. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

CA1's views were reminiscent of a huge bureaucracy filled with the influence of multinational organizations. The director of Harvest Initiative also asked the investigator to read the book written by Emmanuel Katongole's “The sacrifice of Africa” to understand better how the groups of interests impose drastic economic reforms that disengage citizens in the coproduction and make them suffer more from the project implemented. Pastor Joseph also added to this understanding. According to him:

These people enjoy unlimited intrinsic legitimacy to our government, they are protected by immunity in the exercise of their functions and are never called to account beside having committed crime against our people. In this case, citizens' interests have been sidelined to prioritize the interests of the Western and their multi-corporations.

The story of senseless ignorance of Burundian citizens, lamented Pastor Joseph, must be replaced by a new kind of sacrifice, one of working directly and serving those miserable people who are dying from policy imposed by the Western countries through the work of the groups of interests that enjoy working freely in this country. To better understand Pastor Joseph's assertion, I conducted a focus groups with governmental officials. These officials who participated to this study were considered as having providing mind objectives, leading to understanding about how the World Bank and the IMF partner with the government of Burundi. Some of these officials observed:

Africans are deal makers and they understand. Rather than providing solutions to the problems facing Africans, they have added more suffering, miseries, and hungers. No more processes, no more taking advantages of African people from politics of self-interests. African want a different future and different path. If you look at the statistics from the last 50 years, 30 to 40 % increase in aid from the groups of interests resulted to 40 to 50% of increase of poverty, wars, sickness, conflict and other sort of misery. The groups of interests have made the lives of African worse. Yes, Africans have suffered at the hand of the groups of interests.

His observation was supported by the focus group discussions conducted with three public officials in Bujumbura. These officials pointed out that the failure of the groups of interests to engage citizens in their coproduction is largely due to unwillingness of these organizations to help African nations move from dependability to self-sustaining. These officials continued:

La plus grande partie de ce que fait la Banque est préjudiciable, non pas parce que la mise en œuvre de projets est médiocre - bien que ce soit certainement un problème grave -, mais parce que la Banque essaie de faire la mauvaise chose. La Bank n'engage jamais la population burundaise pour tout ce qu'elle fait. Son obsession pour les objectifs multinationaux de la commercialisation, la réduction du gouvernement et l'élimination des contraintes sociales sur l'activité économique du secteur privé ont été un désastre pour les gens que la Banque affirme vouloir aider.

Most of what the Bank is doing is harmful, not because of poor project implementation - though this is surely a serious problem - but because the Bank is trying to do the wrong

thing. The Bank never engages the Burundian population in the planning process in what they do. Its obsession with the multinational corporations' objectives of marketization, shrinking government and removing social restraints on private sector economic activity has been a disaster for the people the Bank says it is trying to help. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

The basic findings reveal several reasons participants in this study believed the self-imposed behaviors of the groups of interests restrain the endorsement of citizens to participatory mechanisms. Participants to the study attributed these hindrance factors as external as they bar community participation and avoid true representation. They include but are not limited to the ambiguous role played by donor authorities in promoting the development projects, outside development experts, inclination of donor countries in selecting programs and projects of their interests, and biasness in representing their report.

The ambiguous role played by donor countries in promoting the development projects and outside development experts. One of the participants in the study explained that the Republic of Burundi suffers from a lack of economic autonomy and reliance to donors to provide long-term vision, planning, and commitment. Almost major developmental projects in Burundi are initiated with the fund provided by donor countries, lamented one of the governmental officials' participating to the focus group discussions. This official continued to state that "in this country there are large numbers of International Organizations and bilateral donors that develop diversified programs deemed by them as necessary for our citizens. The programs implemented for years have failed miserably to meet social-economic standards. Neither citizens nor our central government are being asked to contribute ideas. In other words, projects are being decided in Washington and Brussel to be implemented in Burundi without the support and consent of our citizens. These development agencies see only what they have and decide projects for what they think will work. They never assess the personal needs of

communes and its communities.” When asked about the impact of their programs toward citizens they claim to save and how they engage them toward their actions, this governmental official explained that citizens are asked to accept proposed programs. He continued to explained that the professional expert from these donor countries assume that they know the situation better than citizens who lived the experiences for years and they believe that they main duty is to transfer knowledge to deprived communities.

The negative impact of the role played by donor countries in promoting the development project is not limited to ignoring the views of citizens and not including them in the discussions related to decision-making about programs to be implemented. Their role includes deliberate disenfranchising Burundian citizens from participating and funding programs and projects deemed unnecessary to citizens often bar them (citizens) from embracing these programs or projects. Another impact numerous participants said was that staff of development aid always think that they are the only people who can empower the communities being served and believe they are better equipped than governmental officials. Rather than learning from the people who lived the experience for years and know their terrain, these development practitioners believe they are the sole own of development knowledge undervaluing the stills and capability of local citizens.

Another example of the role played by the groups of interests included bilateral funds provided by the European Union, especially, the Belgium government to Burundi and how they dictate what programs to cut if their wants and demand are not met. During the field research, for example, the researcher learned that the fund used to run the police department in Burundi came from The Kingdom of Belgium. Pastor Joseph asked the researcher to read the — “*Western rebukes of a nation which relies on aid to meet half its budget*.” European countries are the

biggest contributors to the annual budget in Burundi, while the United States provides support to the army. According to the newspaper:

Belgium said in a statement it would also pull out of a 5 million euro police cooperation deal, funded jointly with the Netherlands.

A case in point is that the main tools used by the international community, namely the Belgium government, in this case, to influence the government in Bujumbura to support's action, are vital to understanding where Burundi is headed. Given that the Republic of Burundi relies on Belgium assistance to support its police forces, the consequences of removing aid were potentially devastating for the Republic of Burundi. Consequently, the central government in Burundi retaliated by asking parents of school age students to contribute as little as 150 per child who attend public school to cover these costs. Those citizens who have financial means had no problems to pay for those, those low-income citizens including Batwa community did not understand why they should now be paying that amount of money.

The actions of these donor countries did not end there. The international community targeted, individual travel and financial sanctions to Burundian regime and general economic aid conditionality. International donors attempted to leverage Burundi's dependence on aid to influence the government's behavior. Aid donor countries or groups of interests understood that without foreign assistance, either in the form of financial support or expertise, Burundian regime would be receptive to demands for change in return for assistance. Pastor Bulabula Joseph explained: "Simply put, these countries need the money and will do almost anything asked of them in order to keep the foreign aid flowing in." Burundian authorities responded by asking their citizens to support their government and increase their generosity.

The authoritarian role played by these development experts impeded many communities, citizens, as well as citizen groups to be involved in policy debates. Even though government can

initiate neighborhood based development conditions imposed by these donors and other funding agencies, they restrict citizens to act. As CA1 lamented, they restrain citizen engagement and participation. CA1 pointed out that:

Agent des groupes d'intérêt et du gouvernement qui n'ont pas le cœur du développement, qui n'ont pas la passion des personnes vulnérables et qui veulent seulement gagner du travail et de l'argent.

Agent of the groups of interest and of the government who do not have the heart of development, who do not have the passion of vulnerable people and just want to earn money and a living work. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

Whether we want to believe it or not, political consideration for those groups of interests are significant in preparation for, response to, and mitigation of poverty in Burundi. CA1 continued its conversation, if we really analyze the events and issues surrounding citizen engagement and poverty eradication, we readily see that external influence is an integral that element that create more problems than solutions. The group of interests impose to the citizens the services to be implemented. Due to complexity of the situation on ground, some of the groups of interests, mainly the international non-governmental organizations use the subcontractors to achieve their aims. CA1 continued to explained:

Les groupes d'intérêts étouffent les ONGs locales par le moyen des sous-traitances. Ils donnent de l'argent aux organisations locales pour faire une activité sans visions. La personne intermédiaire est imposée des programmes sans leurs volontés réelles. Les bénéficiaires sont ignorés sans autres. Les ONGs organisent la population pour leurs intérêts. Les groupes d'intérêt ignorent les bénéficiaires, guide par une vision de créer leurs boulots, pas du cœur d'engager la population et disent ce que les gens veulent attendre. Les personnes qui savent collecter l'argent, connaissent la langue des gens, et les ONGs tombent dans la main de commissionnaires qui partage leurs argents au détriment de la population.

The groups of interests stifle local NGOs by means of subcontractors. They give money to local organizations to do activities without visions. The intermediate people are imposed programs without their actual wills. NGOs organize the population for their interests. Interests groups ignore the beneficiaries, guided by a vision of creating their jobs, not the heart to engage the people and say what people want to expect. People who

know how to collect money, know the language of people, and NGOs fall into the hands of commissioners who share their money to the detriments of the population. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

A lack of understanding and knowledge of the motive of hungers and deep misery in Burundi is a frequent problem for the International NGOs operating in Burundi. Many expatriates do not know the true causes behind Burundian poverty. During the field research, I met expatriates without a real understanding of the real situation in Burundi with little knowledge of French Languages, the official language spoken in Burundi. When it came to citizen engagement, they have no clue about how to involve citizens in the coproduction.

The mere presence of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program and other donor agencies promoted decentralization while disregarding the process to engage citizens in policy making and the design of public services is indicative of the role played by donor countries who funded, crafted and supported the implementation of the Law on Decentralization. A number of participants described the services and programs provided by these organizations as “graveyard of development activities” as all development activities undertaken for sixty years lead to failures.

The challenges faced by the central government in Burundi, explained one of the governmental official participants in focus groups discussions, include how the groups of interests: impose, influence, pressure, decide, and ignore the views of the people. Pastor Joseph pointed out that the reason for most of the failure of the projects and programs funded by the groups of interests is externally imposed development projects that are locally managed.

Participants were also asked to describe the relationship between power-holders and the groups of interests. Adjectives used by participants to described their relationship included

imposing, influencing, pressuring, deciding, ignoring, and subject matter of contention.

Below Table 6 and Figure 15 showing participants ‘response to the nature of working relationship between citizens and groups of interests. Participants to this study were 22.

Table 7 and Figure 16 show participants ‘response to the nature of the working relationship between power-holders and the groups of interests. Participants to this study were 22.

Table 6

Repetition of Categorical Data on the Working Relationship between Power-Holders and the Groups of Interests

Participants	Issues or Topics				
	Influencing	Pressuring	Deciding	Ignoring	Subject Matter of Contention
Power-Holders	4	4	6	3	1
Civil Society Actors	3	6	5	5	3
Group Of Interest	0	0	0	1	1
Citizens	1	1	1	0	0
Total	8	11	12	09	5

Note. This table above shows the categorization of participants’ responses in the nature of working relationship between power-holders and the groups of interests.

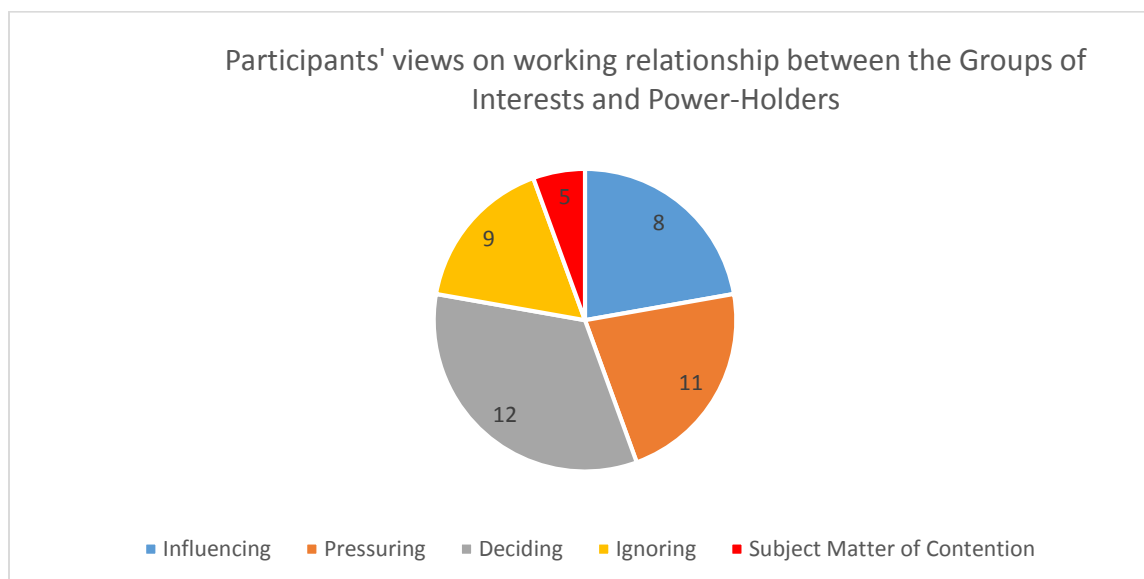


Figure 15. Participants' response to the nature of working relationship between the groups of interests and Power-holders.

Influencing. Participants pointed out that influencing is a challenge to citizen engagement in Burundi. Focus group discussions with governmental officials expressed concerns that the groups of interests, mainly the World Bank Group and the IMF, had a direct influence in the choice of programs and projects to be implemented. This is done without the consent or the want of the people they claim to uplift from poverty. According to these officials:

Les politiques adoptées par le groupe de la Banque mondiale et le FMI, ainsi que l'octroi de prêts, sont directement influencées par les choix politiques des banques....

The policies adopted by the World Bank Group and the IMF as well as the granting of loans are directly influenced by the political choices made by the banks.... (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

The groups of interests understand that the Burundian regime has no real alternative funding available to meet its financial obligations unless they accept the groups of interests' plan for development assistance. The proposed project was approved in March of 2015 but due to a lack of political will on the part of the bank, it had not commenced. These officials were of the view that the World Bank and other institutions influence the government of Burundi to sign or accept

programs that they believe will not work as conceptualized. By this they meant the bank is the sole owner of social and political development and does it at their discretion in influencing how the central government has to operate and behave. In choosing to focus their attention to how the groups of interest influence how their central government and the population have to behave, a number of individual participants to the focus groups agreed that the groups of interests “control the politicians; they control the media; they control the pattern of consumption and the thinking.”

Curiously, Eight out of 45 respondents begun to narrate their stories vis-à-vis the proposed assertions of working relationship between the groups of interests and their power-holders by confirming that these multinational corporations have not only influenced their life or changed the ways citizens interact with their central and local government officials, but also have infiltrated their lives. In relating their stories, participants chose to begin by recalling how a numbers of organizations, including the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) were engaged in “the politics of our life without our involvement and consent.” As reflected in Figure 14, in recalling this event, Pastor Deo bemoaned his interpretation that no one seemed to care that citizens have been forgotten and focus have been in mending tensions between different ethnic groups. Again, as started earlier, Pastor Deo’s interpretation was primarily informed by his work as a pastor who was frustrated about the level of influence that these multi-corporation organizations had toward their central government.

In summary, the influence of the groups of interests toward participants’ views on working relationship between the groups of interests and their public officials are one-way direction. The central government inability to generate sufficient funds to support social and economic activities that engage citizens in the coproduction have left these multinational

corporations using their financial resources to influence Burundian government on what programs or project to fund or implement.

Pressuring. During the interviews, participants were asked to describe the relationship between power-holders and the groups of interests. The basis as presented in the interviews stems from the groups of interests' investment in micromanaging administrative entities by pressuring power-holders to accept programs they think would work. At the level of working relationship, respondents agreed that the groups of interests have pressured the government of Burundi to implement programs and projects not needed by their citizens. One of the participants to the focus group in Bujumbura described: "the groups of interests give instructions to officials to attend different administrative sessions, instructing officials to prepare reports that, when you look at clearly these reports, favor their works, and delineating responsibilities of municipal administrators as they feel knowledgeable than citizens."

A total of 11 participants in this study spoke against the way the groups of interests pressure the central government to accept and implement programs that would not produce results. The views of participants who spoke on this matter were expressed as to whether the groups of interests have different agenda in pressuring the government to accept programs and projects that citizens have not asked for. As shown in Figure 15, 11 participants were on the views that the groups of interests will be pressuring the newly created communes and zones to accept programs they have not conceived nor participate at the inception phase.

Deciding. Participants to this study confirmed that numbers of decisions regarding their life and death are being decided in Washington and Brussels then imposed directly to their leaders for implementation. When asked whether decisions regarding their life and/or projects regarding their healthcare and other related programs are taken in Washington, Brussels, or in

Burundi, 12% of respondents agreed that decisions towards different projects are taken in Washington and Brussels without the involvement of their local leaders. One of the local officials interviewed, for example, retorted, “*Ils viennent nous voir avec les projets déjà conçus et nous demandons à la population d’y soutenir car nous travaillons en partenariat .*” translated as: “They come to see us with projects already designed (made) and we ask the population to support them because we work in partnership.” The significance of the result in Figure 6 is that many participants believed that the international organization operating in Burundi willingly disengage citizens and their power-holders for their sole interests based upon decisions are made in Washington or Brussels before they can bring proposed programs or projects to be implemented. While some participants felt the groups of interests should engage citizens in any decisions they take, others felt that the groups of interests had information they don’t want to disclose to the central government officials they may keep these information themselves.

Pastor Deo added to this conversation. He felt that the relationship was subject matter of contention and not harmonious because the groups of interests, mainly the World Bank Group and the IMF, decide what programs to fund rather than following what the government is proposing. They use to rejects the programs the government have prioritized and funds what they believe work for the people, continued Pastor Deo. Other finding was that the involvement of local leaders in development decisions are insignificants as those providing aids claims either the central government, which they claim to be corrupted, and Burundian community are not capable to implement effectively project themselves. CA1 added also to this understanding. He observed:

I see our government letting the groups of interests do what they want. I encourage the government to be more cooperative and selective. I want to see our government to be more selective and select groups of interests. The groups of interests have to bring what

we want not want they need. There is more work to do to get there. I see the government letting the groups of interests do what they want. He continued in French language :

Je préférerais, personnellement, que tous les Burundais vivent (habitent) dans les maisons à hits (maison à pagne) mais libres de leurs pensées, de leurs agendas et respectueux avec leurs partenaires au lieu de vivre dans des villas avec une crainte et une oppression internationale. Ce n'est pas la paix, c'est le montage.

I personally prefer that all Burundians live in houses with hats but free of their thoughts, agendas and respects with their partners instead of living in villas with a fear and oppression from the international community. It's not peace, it is a lie. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

They tell data-driven stories from the perspective of the creator(s)—the data analysts and designers in particular. Like any story, the end result isn't 'objective' and contains bias.

CA1 strongly believe that if the groups of interests engage the central government to the agenda setting, citizens would be receiving the products they truly needed and wanted for. At the current time where citizens have been at ease and receptive to the programs and projects prepared and presented by the groups of interests, they should be able to involve them in the coproduction.

Ignoring. One of the mistakes that experts of development agencies do, as observed by CA1, is that they always think that they know every aspect of current situation occurring in Burundi. CA1 explained that development agencies (international organizations) never explore the need assessment, they just predict what they think work and implement. They also tend to ignore the culture and people's resistance to the programs to be implements. CA1 continued to state that citizens often had not asked for these programs to be implemented. According to CA1:

Many NGOs go straight to the grassroots, which has no influence, then fund some local organizations with little impact. The grassroots are ignorant of the program being implemented to them. These people have little capacity to understand what is going on. Burundian community is not capable of implementing project themselves. The history of community development shows that Burundian community has very little exposure to implement self-initiated projects.

Many participants shared the same views that there was the need to calm down emotions so the groups of interests as well as the power-holders should have not undermining the capacity and knowhow of local residents. In CA1's views, it is possible to have the ideas of citizens accepted and included in the coproduction as they are living the experience and have some to share in how their cities or villages are to be run. "The more we are ignored, the more we turn to self-interest behaviors, consequently as it has shown for years, it created unending wars and conflicts," explained one of the participants to the focus group discussion in Muramvya. When I asked participants which entity they thought are most ignoring them, the largest percentage of participants named the groups of interests.

Many participants maintained that technically, it is possible for those groups of interests to organize a space where both citizens and groups of interests can meet and have a face-to-face conversation about the issues deemed necessary to them, their cities, and the surroundings. The least entity in respondents' minds was the government of Burundi. Participants felt that the central government do not ignore them but it is hiding some information from them.

Subject matter of contentions. A number of participants to this study felt there is subject matter of contention between power-holders and the groups of interests. Feelings of divergence among power-holders and the groups of interests, development agencies that provide aid-funds directly to the government, had been validated by numerous actions taken by these donor countries on grounds. Pastor Deo pointed out that legally, our central government can be described as creatures of government. Not only this, but, the contention that donor countries had an inherent rights of providing services directly to local people has become a subject matter of discussions. A large number of participants described that aid is shrouded with hidden agenda

from donors who set unbearable conditionality, hard to meet to yield desired results. At one hand, they impose what to do to advance their agenda seen as inherent to its nature of funding and at the other hand, the central government is asked to follow by the book how the programs is to be implemented. At the time of this research, for instance, the Kingdom of Belgium decided to cut external financial and technical support offered to police officers because the central government failed to follow what they asked. The freedom of the central government to decide and act in the best interests of its people and in the sphere of activities and functions allotted to them by the statute under which they operate is marginalized.

One of the participants to the focus group discussions in Bujumbura, a former governmental official, pointed out that “we disliked the way their experts ignored our views and imposed what we should accept and do. Some time we disagreed about their proposed projects.” Then, they threatened to withhold funds. The controversy derived when the World Bank Group imposed its own will on the programs conceived by the central government in Burundi. The direct influence exercised by the Word Bank and the IMF on power-holders and the political choice of programs to be cut strove in to contention. As one of participants read one paragraph from the book of Jean Zigler, the Author of *l’Empire de la Honte* (the Empire of Shame):

Nous assistons aujourd’hui à un formidable mouvement de féodalisation du monde... Pour parvenir à imposer ce régime inédit de soumission des peuples aux intérêts des grandes compagnies privées, il est deux armes de destruction massive dont les maitres de l’empire de la honte savent admirablement jouer : la dette et la faim. Par l’endettement, les Etats abdiquent leur souveraineté, par la faim qui en découle, les peuple agonisent et renoncent à la liberté.

Today we are witnessing a formidable movement of feudalization of the world.... To succeed in imposing this unprecedented regime of submission of peoples to the interests of large private companies, they are two weapons of mass destruction whose masters of the empire of the Shame know admirably play: debt and hunger. By debt, states add to their sovereignty, by the hunger that ensues, the people agonize and renounce freedom. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

This is a source of contention that even citizens have realized and asked their government to resist. Several people went further when discussing subject matter of contention, allowing citizens to distrust and distance themselves from the groups of interests. Five out of 45 participants told the researcher that they believe there are numerous controversies between the central government and the groups of interests that restrain the groups of interests to interact directly with citizens.

In summary, as the researcher noted above, the role played by donor countries or groups of interests in defining what projects to fund or services to provide or citizens to engage has an implication, either negative or positive, about how citizens perceive their actions. In general, citizens' willingness to take supportive actions on the groups of interests sponsored projects and programs have been mild with suspicious. Citizens perceive the groups of interests to be more susceptible than their central government as those donor agencies provided services and projects that citizens have not, even, asked for.

Impending factors to citizen engagement. One of the impending factors to citizen engagement include the ambiguous role played by donor countries in promoting the development projects and outside development experts. As above mentioned, the role played by numerous number of international organizations have left citizens wondering why these organizations operate in their country. As Ngendakumana, a participant to the focus group in Muravya explained, we see them coming and going. We don't really know what they do.

When it comes to the *Outside development experts*, they believe they are capable of providing solutions to social and economic problems faced by numerous communities in Burundi. However, participants to this study believed otherwise. Unless citizens are engaged in the coproduction, claimed one of the participants, the government as well as the groups of interests will continue to suffer from providing inadequate services to citizens being served.

Inclination of donor countries (groups of interests) in selecting project and programs of their interests. In the Republic of Burundi, there is a strong public presence of the International Non-governmental Organizations operating in diversified fields. Two (2) to 5 cars running in the city of Bujumbura belongs to the international organization. As observed by the researcher if the projects selected for financing by donor countries have a high priority in Burundi, there is little chance of being funded and implemented. According to CAI, there is a distortion of priorities over programs prioritized by citizens. Public confidence in donor countries seem to plummet, leading to a catastrophic situation of mistrust. As donors have their preference to the end use of their money, it has not been possible for Burundi to get support for programs they wanted to implement. According to CA1:

Les ONGs, nous font des choses qui sont brillantes qu'on va ouvrir avec solennité mais on ne pense aux bénéficiaires si c'est réellement ceux qui voulaient. Les ONGs finissent par faire la sous-traitante. Ils ne font pas eux-mêmes ce qu'ils ont promis aux bénéficiaires. Manque de passion et il ne faut que le monde d'affaire. La population locale est oubliée. Moins de 50% restent pour la population. L'argent disparaît dans les affaires administratives.

The NGOs do us things that are brilliant that we will open with solemnity but we do not think about the beneficiaries if it is really those who wanted. NGOs eventually end up by subcontracting. They do not do what they promised to do for the beneficiaries. Lack of passion and only the business world. The local population is forgotten. Less than 50% remain for the population. The money disappears in administrative affairs. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

The question came from one of the participants who asked in French “Que doit-il être encore fait pour garantir que les communautés ne souffrent plus des projets et, lorsqu'elles en souffrent, comment peuvent-elles demander des comptes à ceux qui financent ces projets » ? Or in English “What still needs to be done to ensure that communities are no longer suffering from projects and, when they suffer, how can they hold those who fund these projects accountable? This question shows how vulnerable Burundian citizens have been when working with the groups of

interests. Burundian citizens have hard time to get their voice heard by those providing services to them in the absence of accountability mechanism that affect those multinational corporations providing services. Participants gave many of the same reasons as for the selection and programs of their interests.

A larger number of participants argued that the roles of citizens and their local authorities should not be neglected when selecting programs and projects of their interests to be implemented in their respective communes or zones. The beneficiaries are us, we should be in the table to discuss what should be implemented, said Pastor Deo. Pastor Bulabula Joseph added to this conversation. According to him: “Most of time they come with project already made, met with our local leaders, then our local officials come to us asking our support for its implementation.”

A former governmental official participant to the focus group discussions added to this conversation. He provided an example of agriculture: “

L'agriculture est le pilier de notre pays et ils savent que le rendement est faible depuis des années. Ils pensent que cela est dû en partie au fait qu'il existe des inégalités substantielles entre les sexes dans les zones rurales, qui permettent aux femmes rurales d'avoir un accès limité aux ressources, aux intrants, aux services et à l'infrastructure dont elles ont besoin pour être plus productives. Leurs expertises les amènent à croire qu'en donnant aux femmes le même accès que les hommes aux intrants agricoles, comme les engrais et les semences améliorées, ils pourraient accroître substantiellement la production parce qu'ils croient que les femmes rurales sont inextricablement liées au renforcement des systèmes alimentaires pour lutter contre la faim et la malnutrition. Des gains réels pour la vie et les moyens de subsistance des populations rurales.

Agriculture is the mainstay in our country and they believe it is underperforming for years. They think it is partly, due to the fact that there are substantial rural gender inequalities, whereby rural women have limited access to critical resources, inputs, services and infrastructure they need to be more productive. Their expertise leads them to believe that by giving women the same access as men to agricultural inputs like fertilizers and improved seeds could increase production substantially because they believe rural women is inextricably linked to the strengthening of food systems to address hunger,

malnutrition, and to achieve real gains for lives and livelihoods of rural people.
(Translation by the Author, November 2016)

He observed that this kind of project has been poorly implemented based on wrong information because citizens have not been involved in the formulation and discussions before its implementation. The case of agriculture is not about gender inequality or access to resources and input. Those experts forget that rural Burundian women work longer hours and harder than their men.

Donor agencies biasness while presenting data and misrepresentation of facts. Elite participants to this study described major problems, which lead to a failure of citizen engagement or community participation quantification of presented data and biased documentation. Numbers of reports from different organizations (INGOs) use “data visualization” to tell data driven stories from perspective of these INGOs/groups of interests and ensure deep concerns. Interestingly, the end result is not objective and contains bias.

Many participants reported reading these reports with consternation. As CA1 observed: Many of the report of multi-corporation organizations or international organization lack lessons learned during different phases of proposed project implementation. And if these reports have such (lesson learned) section, the people who provided inputs are selected direct beneficiaries and other key informant directly linked to the program/project who have to be contacted by a hired consultant to provide reports that support the organization’s missions without regard to the intended and anticipated outcome. In general, these reports reflect three things: Misrepresented facts, Biased Language, and Biased Data Narrative.

One participant described that “a good presentation of fact collected on ground is vital to policymakers, researchers, and other scholars to provide solutions based on the findings provided

from the programs implemented.” The narratives, rhetoric, and citizens’ beliefs suggest that the groups of interests are generally presumed to be well-intentioned do-gooders. Analysis of data collected, however, shows that the groups of interests working directly with citizens frequently provided inaccurate information. The unique way used is through the reports from consultant who are mostly from western countries and do not speak the language spoken by the majority of the population, the Kirundu, Burundian’s native language.

As observed by the researcher, there is discrepancies between what the International Organizations say and do and what they actually achieve in attempting to conceal the truth. One of the participants, Pastor Joseph observed:

I was reading the report of **2014 ANNUAL REPORT** of World Vision that summarized what they achieved: \$29 million invested; 750,000 children served; 61,918 children screened for malnutrition; 79,835 people supported with Food commodities; 59,886 children benefited from new school constructions.

These numbers are sound and reflect a number of people moved from poverty to a good quality of life. It reflects also the effort done by this organization to help those poor and malnourished children move from worse situation to a good quality of life. However, it misrepresents the real issue (facts) facing Burundian citizens. As Pastor Joseph put described at the World Bank facility in Bujumbura, “World Bank staff are highly educated and relatively well immersed in providing solutions to central government. However, it is interesting to note that while their goals is to end poverty. World Bank professionals have failed to help because their host cognitive biases that influence their social environment while failing to understand the circumstances in which beneficiaries (the poor citizens) of their policies actually live.” Those individual who are asked to provide programs deemed necessary to those poor citizens are more likely influenced by biased and cognitive limitation and social consideration, added the CA1.

Biased Language. At the time of this research, it became actual that language is an important part of human interaction. English language has become a language used by a large number of donors in work, in their reports, and other communication while implementing their specificities. In Burundi, French language is used as the official languages and Kirundi language is the national language spoken by the majority of Burundian population.

A key way to assess the groups of interests is to ask how the language affects the way of providing services and programs. Staff of a number of International NGOs visited in Burundi speak English languages. Numbers of recipients of their programs have never heard, read, nor understand this language. When asked how these staff communicate with the grassroots population or engage them in the coproduction, they responses were mix. A large number of respondents agreed that they have difficulty communicating with these donors. “Even when they come to visit, they speak their language and someone who came with them translate for us. We don’t know if what they are translating is the correct terminology we are hearing,” said one of Batwa community group in Muramvya.

Cordial and Uneasiness in Relationship

Participants were asked to describe the working relationship between citizens and the groups of interests, between citizens and power-holders, and between power-holders and the groups of interests. Analysis of interviews, documents, focus groups discussions, and research field’s notes reveal that the nature of their working relationship is/was conflicting.

Adjectives used by participants to describe the working relationship between citizens and the group of interests as well as citizens and power-holders were varied: In the beginning participants used adjectives such as *checkered, uneasy, difficult, cordial, quite problematic, problematic, separate, good but broke down, cordial and independent, okay*. But later grew sour

and used adjectives such as *not amicable, cordial and suspicious, problematic, faltered, superficially cordial but in reality dysfunctional, challenging, soured, had potential pitfalls, parallel relationship, not cordial, not openly antagonistic, troubled, faltered or soured at interaction, tensed, not a bad one, complimentary of each other, not conspicuously antagonistic to each other but very minimal cooperation.*

Table 7

Categorical Data on the Working Relationship between Citizens and Power-holders

Participants	Issues or Topics				
	Uneasy and conflicting relationship	Good at the beginning but broke down subsequently	Superficially Cordial but in Reality Dysfunctional	Ignore the views of the People	Good, cordial and complementary
Power-Holders	1	4	2	3	7
Civil Society Actors	5	2	4	8	1
Group Of Interest	0	3	1	0	4
Citizens	1	6	6	7	0
Citizen Groups	2	3	3	3	0
Total	9	18	16	21	12

Note. This table above shows the categorization of participants' responses in the nature of working relationship between citizens and power-holders. Compared from focus groups discussions attendees.

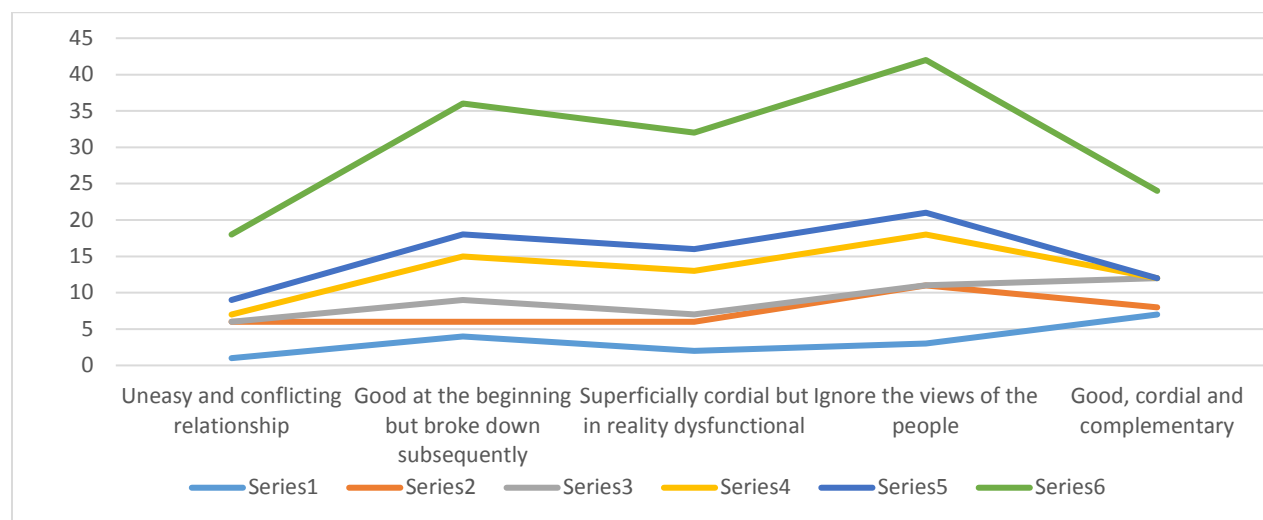


Figure 16. Response of categorical data on the working relationship between citizens and power-holders.

Responses were categorized into five. As shown in Table 7, 22 participants talked about the working relationship between citizens and the power-holders as well as the groups of interests. Out of 22, nine maintained that it was uneasy and conflicting relationship; 18 believed that the relationship was good at the binning but broke down subsequently; 16 considered the relationship as a superficially but in reality dysfunctional; 21 were of the view that power-holders ignored their views; and 12 insisted that their relationship was good, cordial and complementary.

Uneasy and Conflicting Relationship. Participants pointed out that uneasiness in the relationship between citizens and power-holders had something to do with power and authority in one hand, and liberty and freedom of expression on the other hand. Power holders interviewed believed that they have reasonable power and authority to make determination that smooth their operations to advance the state's interests. These beliefs conflict with citizens who demand reasonable liberty for the best development in a country that suffered for years with internal conflicts and mistrust. Burundian citizen depends on the state not only for safety, law and order alone but also for facilities like the post and telegraph, communication, railway, education, etc. However, these services are rarely provided to citizens and create conflict between citizens and power-holders, commented CA1. Participants believed that the tension was at the level of mistrust of citizens toward their leaders who they feel they are representing the political party's interests. Participants also lamented about the uneasy relationship between the groups of interests and the power-holders. Participants pointed out that good governance in Burundi is undermined by the gap between the World Bank/IMF rhetoric about service delivery and reality on ground. According to him:

The big problem is that a lack of trust has creates uneasy and conflicting relationship. People don't trust this government and their backers because they overpromise and under deliver. People pay their taxes as asked but when their government and their backers are failing to provide street lights, electricity and water, or repairing potholes, they have distrusted them and retreated to self-interests mode.

Further, PO3, a former government employee participant to the focus group discussion stated that because the groups of interests impose what services to provide and funds have created an uneasy and conflicting relationship between the state and these international organizations operating in our country. Local civil society actors claimed that another indicator of uneasiness comes as the result of a number of international NGOs that use local civil society organizations are poorly placed to provide services, as a bridge, to influence the real drivers of social change, while implementing their programs. Once services are poorly provided citizens feel disconnected from the actions of these groups of interests and the government as well. The PO3, stated:

De toutes évidences, nous sommes à un point dans le débat des ONG où des questions sérieuses sont posées sur la capacité des ONG internationales à atteindre leurs objectifs à long-terme en matière de justice sociale et de transformation à un moment où le secteur du développement se concentre étroitement sur les résultats à court terme.

Clearly, we are at a point in the NGO debate at which serious questions are being raised about the ability of International NGOs to meet their long-term goals of social justice and transformation at a time when the development sector is narrowly focused on short-term results. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

The PO3 indicated that sometime the central government was opposed on the behaviors of some of the international organizations on how they contract with these local organizations. ZO1, a zone official, was on the view that the relationship between the international organizations providing aid services and the government was dysfunctional and they needed to rethink how to rewind their partnership agreements.

CO1 felt that the relationship was a subject matter of contention and not harmonious because the central government wants to have hands-on on how the aid money should be used. He continued to state that the nature of their relationship is mostly dictated by the groups of interests' behaviors and most of time they could cooperate or refuse to cooperate with the central government. Pastor Deo added to this conversation by stating that their relationship may be seen as problematic because the groups of interests think they have supremacy and experience over the central government on how to deliver public and private goods or projects.

Good at the beginning but broke down subsequently. Some participants said both power-holders and the groups of interests were supportive of each other at the initial phase of the program implementation but their relationship broke down later when the proposed fund fail to accomplish the proposed work. The pressure however came from citizens who believed that the implemented programs would be in their communities for a long period of time but discover that after couple months the projects will be ended. The same have been witnessed with the programs proposed by the government that are welcomed by the citizens at the initial phase. But the relationship grew sour at the end of the projects when citizens realized that the projects and programs will come to an end as the central government lacks funds to complete the project or international NGOs' terms has come to an end. Citizens feel betrayed by the unending business of the government. As participants described, their relationship broke down when the government fail to agree on project deemed necessary by citizens. In turn, citizens took their angers to the streets to vent frustration with their government and these NGOs.

Good, cordial, and complementary. Other participants believed that the relationship between citizens and their officials are good and cordial. Pastor Joseph indicated that they have a deep relationship with those Hill councils and they complement each other. Some of citizens

expressed concerns about the cordiality of their relationships that they believed is only one way. However, when it comes to the matter of their cities and zones, they have a good and complementary relationship. One of the Administrators said:

The population is involved. I make a visit in the neighborhood, people are mobilized, and the population responds. We complement and tell them what the government is doing. we count their presence from ten houses (Nyumbakumi) if there are Eight citizens who are present on 10 identified houses in a specific neighborhood, then we believe that participation, at our end, is better. We tell them frankly what we are doing and they support our actions.

Seven power-holders interviewed believed that beside a portion of the population that still have something to fear, citizens participate and engage in different activities undertaken by their communes and zones. Four participants from the group of interests, including the World Vision, believed that they worked harmoniously with each other in implementing different programs deemed necessary to the community while testifying that they have a cordial relationship with both the citizens and officials. Power-holders said that they had a good working relationship because they were able to agree that their communes and zones support the actions of their citizens and try to remove from politicians who have intoxicated some of their people with negative ideas.

Summary of Findings for Question 1b

Participants to the study confirmed that there are wide range of factors that burden and undeniably restrain the endorsement of engagement and participation in local government management. These observed deterring factors are external as well as internal and sometime they intermixed. Interviewees explained that external factors act as obstacles to citizens and citizen groups' engagement. These external factors identified restrain community/citizen participation and avoid true representation. They include ambiguous role played by donor authorities in

promoting the said development projects and outside development experts, role of government authorities in promoting these development activities, inclination of donor countries in selecting population of their interests, and biasness in representing their report. On the other hand, the internal factors identified include lack of skills, contradictory interests of group members, gate-keeping by community local elites, lack of community interests in participation, and low capacity of members to implement projects.

Participants in the focus groups discussions learned relevant facts from each other, including that citizen engagement has always been an issue because of the level of mistrust was to be maintained and a lack of clear path in addressing it. They used the research to build meanings and gain a better understanding of the topic. By the end of the focus group discussions, attendees (focus group with Batwa community) chose to focus on what they believe would be the relation between them and their power-holders. They identified low-self-esteem, lack of education, and political immaturity as key root causes of many citizens, including Batwa community that exclude them from engagement. In general, participants to this study revealed that the level of civic engagement has been decreasing as policy reforms have failed to meet citizen's demands.

Participants generally were of the view that they do not have an appropriate and approved platform to tell their stories and discuss the issues that matter to them to those elected officials. They feel that there is a lack of awareness in what the government has to propose and how citizens are to support the actions prioritized by the government. The findings revealed that there is very little democratic/participative leadership from the top to lead citizens toward full engagement and participation. Absence of town hall meetings and a lack of citizen inputs were crucial indicators in support of the fear citizens manifested.

In terms of factors encouraging or contributing toward citizen engagement, policy documents derived from the new Law on Decentralization and numerous laws adopted since 2006 consider citizens as “partner” not as “subject” in governance or product coproduction. The new framework on decentralization outlines clear divisions of responsibilities among communal councils, administrators, Chef de Zones, neighborhood councils, and the citizens. To a large extent, the design of decentralization addresses the issue of participation and greater communication, even though its application lies within the top-down approach.

On the issue of barriers affecting people’s direct involvement in local government management, evidence suggests that various factors act as binding constraints on citizens’ effective engagement and participation. Despite ambitious goals, little progress has been made toward effective engagement and participation. When it comes to a time of collecting tax or participating into the election process; for example, citizens are more enthusiastic about taking part of these processes. However, when it comes to the process of taking part on making crucial decisions on budgeting, planning, and economic development, citizens are left in dark. This can be explained, at the time of this research, by a combination of factors, including economic, political, and bureaucratic ones.

Looking at institutional levels, a lack of strategic visions of how to include citizens’ voice and inputs in the coproduction process seem to allowed citizens to be reluctant to support the efforts of local government. This was supported by illiteracy level of citizens that prevents them from accessing information, contributing to social wellbeing, and providing community platforms and debates. Furthermore, a lack of interest by communities about social and community development processes has turned citizens toward retreating to self-interests.

Question 2: Overview Results

2. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?

Introduction

This question was introduced to find out about the outcome derived from the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in policymaking and the design of public services and how it impacts their ability to act in delivering services. Analysis of interviews, documents and research's field notes revealed that there are positive factors as well as negative ones that affect the ability and capability of both officials and citizens to act in support for or restraint from engaging citizens in the coproduction. This question has three more sub-questions: "How do these issues or factors encourage or enhance and/or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?" "When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?" And finally, "What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy making and service design"? The following chart stems from the interviews with all participants in the study.

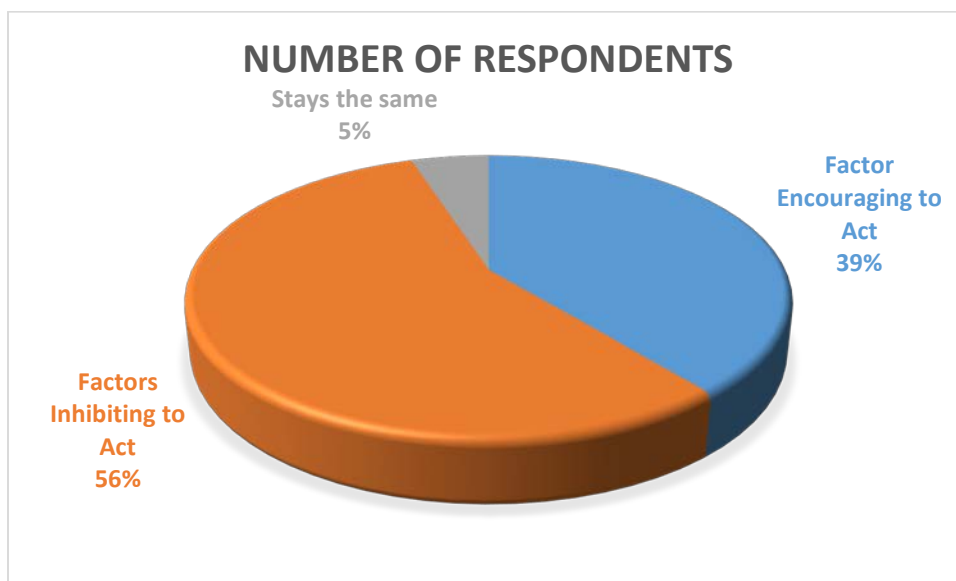


Figure 17. Number of respondents to the factors for and barriers inhibiting citizen engagement.

Discussion of Findings

Question 2a. How do these issues or factors encourage or enhance and/or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?

In response to this question, participants described first how encouraging factors enhanced their ability to act because of their commitment to community wellbeing. The adoption of the Law on Decentralization has stimulated citizen engagement in public and political life. Other respondents reported how other factors inhibited their abilities to act and accepted responsibility while putting self-interests above community interests.

Factors Encouraging Citizens and Power-Holders' Ability to Act

Interviews and focus groups discussions found strong support of factors that encourage citizens to act in the coproduction. The stories and narrative of participants in this study show that there are several ways through which citizens can influence the decisions, in a positive way, made by politicians or power-holders on their behalf. The decisions citizens make about how to

balance the factors that encourage them to act or support community well-being are particular influenced by the actions taken by both local and central government officials. As one of the Administrator described, “When citizen witnesses act they believe to be inconsistent with how their communes or zones (hills) has been run, they often restraint to self-interest behaviors and create chaos. We have witnessed this phenomenon before and don’t want to go there again.” What is significant of participants’ narration in this instance, is the fact that officials believed they have the obligation to engage citizens while answering public demand through the Law on Decentralization.

As Figure 8 displayed, 39% of respondents from both focus group discussions and interviews agreed that citizens now have a role to play in both determining what development priorities should be implemented and overseeing initiatives to address these priorities. What should be in everyone’s best interest is the factors that encourage public officials to act, which are set out in the relevant texts. They include key structures, accountability mechanisms and participation mechanisms (See Figure 3 and 4). The various government texts and memos on the process which set out the procedural requirements of the process of decentralization point toward a number of opportunities that encourage citizens in Burundi to act in support of the well-being of their communes and zones. As described in page above, the Governments’ own National Policy Document on Decentralization narrates that “...Decentralization aims at the active participation of the entire population in defining and implementing economic and social development policies in their own localities.”

Many respondents reported that the procedures for citizen engagement and participation are well known by local officials as they have crafted the text on decentralization. Public officials taking part on this study confirmed this scenario by noting that accountability and

participatory mechanisms are in place and being implemented. What is remaining, according to interviewed officials, is to ensure a continued implementation of the process and encourage citizens and their local councils to act in support of government actions.

Viewed from the adopted system of governance via decentralization perspective on policy-making, participatory mechanisms were cited by numerous participants as crucial for multi-stakeholders and cross-sectoral settings of collaboration to successfully act in support for citizen engagement.

Citizen Control Mechanisms Encourage Action

This term *Citizen Control Mechanism* includes the newly created **institutions** (Colline or hills council, Head of Colline Council, Administrator, and Commune Council); **Accountability mechanisms** (Council meetings, biannual report on communes community development planning, annual report to council, communes number of council meeting every year); and **participation mechanisms** (number of open public meetings a year, development committee, number of public consultative meetings, and consultative body to council-Development Committee). Engagement involves individuals being given opportunities to be a part of the structures that affects their lives. The text on decentralization has improved and encouraged the interaction between state or power-holders and citizens. Interviewed power-holders agreed that this kind of interaction has emerged as a clear policy choice of the new decentralization process assigned by the government. As described by Thierry, a public official, citizens are no longer considered as “subject” but “partners” in development governance. Their views and contributions matter for a well-functioning relationship of their communes and zones. Thus, there is a clear division of responsibilities among the communal council, the administrator, and

hill council. This allows a balance between opportunities for engagement and greater communication, continued Thierry.

The Design of Local Government Encourages Action

To a large extent the design of local government today addresses engagement, particularly with regard to including the voice of citizens in key decision-making in Burundi. After years of political instability under the centralized institutions, the revamping of the local government through Communal Law and Electoral Code confirmed the willingness of power-holders at the central government level to commit to engagement of citizens in the coproduction. Power-holders' actions have opened the way to more direct participation of citizens who for long have been disenfranchised by the centralized patterns and dynamic of Burundian state. By power-holders' decentralized actions, significant elements of authority, responsibility for services, and fiscal and human resources are being transferred to local government entities, mainly communes and zones or Collines (hills). One of the groups of interests operating in Burundi, the World Vision, pointed out that "In recent years, Civil Society Actors (CSOs) have had increased role in planning and implementing national/local programs and projects in different areas as partners; in some cases, in partnership with public institutions." They continue to argue that "when citizens take actions (through advocacy, protests, petitions,), they raise the awareness of the leaders and allow them to decide priorities."

Political Reform Encourages Participation

Another facet in this area includes political reforms that have created opportunities for communes and zones to play an important role in building legitimacy and inclusive society at the local level, in particular via the direct election of hill and communes councils. Interviewed Administrator and Chef des Zones agreed that the central government is making diversified

services, including training citizens and local councils, aiming to involve citizens in the coproduction. Empowering citizens and council members through training and different seminars organized by the central government were seen as a conflict-mitigation strategy. This was confirmed by the national policy paper that emphasized that citizen participation is not only about consulting, rather it is about citizens being involved in shared decision-making:

Le gouvernement de la République du Burundi a pris l'option politique de rapprocher les services publics de la population et d'impliquer cette dernière dans la prise des décisions et le choix des programmes et projets de développement de leurs collectivités.

The Government of the Republic of Burundi has taken the political option of bringing public services closer to the people and of involving the people in decision-making and choice in relation to development programs and projects in their localities. (Government of Burundi 2009: 61—translation by the Author)

Other participants believed that the structures and procedures as they are set out in 2005 and 2010 legislations and different support documents including the Manual of Administrative and Financial Procedures, highlights the design that strengthen citizens-power-holders' engagement at local government management.

In summary, a large number of participants to the study agreed that there is a radical shift in state-citizen engagement from consultation to active participation. As I (the researcher) witnessed while visiting different offices, citizens are actively asking their local officials what services are reserved for them. Local citizens are actively meeting with other citizens at city hall.

Factors Inhibiting Ability of Power-Holders and Citizens' Ability to Act

Participants in this study were adamant in describing the factors that hinder participation and engagement in the coproduction. Citizens interviewed understand that politically imposed development has pushed them away from supporting the actions proposed by their central government.

Interviews with local citizen reveal that they remain unaware of the procedural requirements that allow them to engage in the coproduction. Interviewed chef de Zones members and local citizens remain unaware that neighborhood councils (hill councils) are carrying just one function of their three functions.

The external factors observed and narrated by participants to the study influence not only citizens, or city groups, but all community participation and tend to avoid true representation. These external factors included the vague role played by donor countries known in this study as the groups of interests and outside development experts, the role of central government in promoting and implementing these sad development activities, inclination of groups of interests in selecting projects and programs of primary interests to them and selection of selective groups of population they want. “These factors are killers and dividers of the population,” said Pastor Joseph, participant in this study. “They are the sources of restraining citizens and citizen groups alike from acting in support of government actions.”

In addition, other hindrances include lack of skills and interest of citizens and citizen groups, illiteracy of members, contradictory interests of group memberships, gate-keeping by local elite, and low capacity in contributing ideas and project implementation. I will discuss some of these hindrances.

Vague Role Played by Groups of Interests Hinders Action

Participants to the study reported that programs proposed by the groups of interests often distance them from participating. Thus, the groups of interests have failed to show leadership in the process of engagement, which can reach beyond formulation of governmental development plan. Participants went further to discuss the behaviors of groups of interests by claiming that

they are interested in using their influence to implement programs not just for geo-strategic purposes but in exchange for policy concessions.

In particular, the groups of interests have a greater potential for open and contested policy-making to deliver genuine citizen engagement. They have resources and capability to engage citizens. One of the Administrators pointed out that the majority of the programs are initiated and funded by the groups of interests. These programs run for short terms and those hired by these organizations found themselves voiceless. Participants claimed that there is a risk of disappointment and skepticism amongst citizen engagement. The role played by these agencies is vague and impede many community-based developments to provide services needed by their customers as they (the groups of interests) impose how and what to do. Among the 56 % of participants in the study who agreed that the groups of interests have a vague and detrimental role, 14% percent of them believed that the government's unnecessary projects and programs further drove them away from supporting the government's actions.

Not surprisingly, the outlook for individuals and the groups of interests who should come together and develop a shared definition of the problem and attempt to craft inclusive policies has been disenfranchised.

Excessive Politicization of Municipal Administration Hinders Action

Many respondents voiced concerns over the politicization of structures of the newly created local government. Participants' stories show that there a wide range of tribulations which restrain engagement and/or participation to actions proposed by their central government based upon the behaviors manifested by officials, which includes appointing staff based upon political affiliation. Prejudice of Burundian citizens' ability to handle decision-making responsibilities are at the heart of this mystery.

The hindrance factors that include excessive politicization of municipal administration's services render it difficult for Administrators to make sensible, outcome-driven decisions about resource allocation and program priorities. In his analysis of public officials appointed to the newly created Zones and Communes, Ndagijimana Jean Marie, Harvest Initiative Director, observed that public policymakers have been selected because of their political party affiliation. Those appointees to run the communes and zones are political supporters rather than qualified management agents. Numbers of respondents agreed that political loyalty is favored over competence and merit. Jean Marie continued:

Policymakers gain credibility from engaging citizens in public debates and if they stay away from political advocacy. In this country, communes have been politicized and appointed administrators are invading a sphere reserved for politics. Even elected citizens are more likely to come from a preferred political parties even though the law says otherwise.

Although Jean Marie has indeed focused on the actions of policymakers and the outcomes derived from them, he seems concerned precisely because these actions hinder the ability of citizens to participate in the coproduction.

Managing fiscal decentralization in the context of transfer of funds destined to Communes has been a challenge that hinders citizen engagement. As Ngendakumana, one of the participants, pointed out in focus groups, "an adequate transfer system of fund from central government or Mairie to communes or zones is yet to be defined: At the time of this research, there was no mechanism in place to ensure that communes will be receiving the proposed share of fund approved by the central government." Jean Maries' explanation of how credible policymakers are in engagement of citizens, is shared by other participants who believed that the lack of credibility repels citizens from supporting the government's actions.

Excluding Citizen Ideas from Policy Debates and Formulation Inhibits Action

Many focus group attendees and some key informants lamented the paucity of citizen inputs in policy debates and formulation. Interviewees report that they are absent from these forums (policy debates and formulation) and they cannot support and/or accept policy options deriving from them. In excluding different ideologies, “No one voiced their opinions louder than Burundian citizens in support of Arusha Accord and other peace negotiations said Pastor Deo, participant to the focus group discussion in Bujumbura. We pushed the government’s limit by admitting the outcome of the Arusha Accord that ended the conflict in our country, and by encouraging diversity of opinions in governmental setting.” Unfortunately, power-holders are slow to engage citizens in the coproduction. Limitation or absence of public debates in Burundi is common as policymakers do not trust their citizens, explained one of the participants. He continued to narrate:

The public sphere that allowed citizens to discuss or contribute to political ideas, formulate political identity, and express political will have been diminished by politicians and reduced to nothing. If you look at how the communes are run there is really no channel of communication that allow citizens to participate in policymaking and formulation.

Policymaking that excludes citizens from engaging in the debates of their municipalities not only creates internal conflict but also is the wrong thing to do. “Dismissing citizens’ voices has a negative effect on the entire community’s ability to develop the skills necessary to be active citizens,” lamented one of the participants. One of the researchers on the subject of decentralization in Burundi that looked at the lens of increasing the effective participation of citizens, especially women, the poor and marginalized, in local government decision and policy-making process, Mr. Niamh Gaynor, added to this understanding. According to him:

.... a significant proportion of citizens have been – and continue to be – repeatedly and systematically excluded from political life. Specific groups in this regard include most women (half the population) and the Batwa, although many others have also been systematically excluded from active engagement in public life. Moreover, this exclusion is actively exercised not exclusively by formal political authorities but, most strikingly, by communities, neighbors, individuals and family members themselves.

Those marginalized citizens have ideas that have been excluded from political life capable of boosting economic sustainability of their respective zones and communes. Disengaged citizens retreat from supporting the actions of government and leave room for political conflict and misunderstanding.

Strong Interference of State Authorities in Local Governance Creates Barriers

At the time of this study, the research learned that the first elected commune leaders from the Mairie de Bujumbura were discharged because of political reasons. One of the communal council members who asked to remain anonymous, considers this decision purely political. As remarked in the focus group discussions as well as interviewees in different forum, among the 56% that views the central government interference in communal management hinders their ability to act, 11% of participants said state authorities' interferences in their local affairs hinder their ability to support the efforts of their communes. One of the participants stated:

Le fait que les membres soient élus sur une liste dressée par les partis politiques, des plus souvent sans tenir compte du niveau de formation intellectuelle des membres, constitue un handicap sur le plan des présentations.

The fact that members are elected from a list drawn up by political parties, often without taking into account the level of intellectual training of the members, constitutes a handicap in terms of presentations. (Translation from French to English by the Author)

Many respondents lamented the influence and interference of authority in the management of their communes. The link between the central government and the newly appointed commune leaders is perceptible when one looks closely at the role played by officials from central

government. Clearly traditional top-down hierarchical structures remain priority in Burundi where demands from the top officials (power-holders) always take precedence. One of the administrators confirmed arbitrary suspension and discharge of Administrators who wanted to take the risk and engage their communes in the coproduction. Her assertion was supported by the IWACU Newspaper. According to this newspaper:

Suzanne Ndayisaba, est suspendue par mesure d'ordre dans ses fonctions d'administrateur de la commune urbaine de Mukaza par une ordonnance du ministre de tutelle depuis ce lundi 4 janvier. Selon cette ordonnance, Mme Ndayisaba est accusée de célébrer des mariages en violation de la loi. Il lui est aussi reproché de passer un contrat de location de locaux de la commune en violation de l'interdiction faite par l'autorité de tutelle et de la décision unilatérale de délocaliser le chef-lieu de la commune dans un lieu difficilement accessible au public et à un loyer exorbitant. Le ministre Pascal Barandagiye indexe pour sa « décision unilatérale d'ouvrir des comptes bancaires et de procéder à la perception des impôts et taxes assujettis à des conditionnalités et de manières ambulatoires.

Suzanne Ndayisaba, has been suspended by measure of order in her duties as administrator of urban commune of Mukaza by an order of the Minister in charge since Monday 4 January. According to the order, Mrs. Ndayisaba is accused of celebrating marriages in violation of the law. She is also accused of contracting for the leasing of premises of the municipality in violation of the ban imposed by the supervisory authority and of the unilateral decision to relocate the City Hall of the municipality to a place that is difficult to access to the public and at an exorbitant rent. Minister Pascal Barandagiye accuses her for her "unilateral decision to open bank accounts and proceed to the collection of taxes subject to conditionality and in ambulatory ways. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

Participants to the study lamented that when a “good public official” takes action that are against the will of state authorities to boost its economic well-being of his/her commune, they are accused of working for against the public interests and removed from office. At the time of this investigation, Madame Suzanne Ndayisaba was no longer the Administrator of Commune Mukaza. The actions of the central government reminisce how challenging is to work in the environment in which any action taken by elected or appointed local officials are scrutinized and subjected to reprimand or removal from office.

Another barrier to act by administrator realized at the time of this researcher is the amount of money destined for the newly created communes. The Law provides for a sum of 500 million FBU (Burundian Frank) as operating costs for each new urban commune (Ntahangwa, Mukaza, et Muha). When I asked some of administrators who participated in this research if the transfer of money reserved for the city have been accomplished, the response was political in nature. « *Nous voulons que nous puissions avoir le budget propre qui sera gérée par notre commune.* » translated as “We want us to have our own budget which will be managed by our commune. She continued to state :

Nous voulons avoir le pouvoir de gérer nous-même nos richesses. Parce que quand nous voulons acheter quelques choses, il faut demander le Maire. ... Si nous voulons aider un indigent mort dans la rue, il faut toujours demander à la Maire, même si nous voulons acheter une encre correctrice, stylo, il faut toujours demander à la maire.

We want to have the power to manage our own wealth ourselves. Because when we want to buy a few things, we must ask the Mayor. ... If we want to help a dead man on the street, we must always ask the Mayor, even if we want to buy a corrective ink, pen, always ask the mayor. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

Evidently, as participants to the study noted, urban communes visited are severely short of operating funds and much of the projects and activities that communes should undertake remain unaddressed. In the absence of transfer of resources from central government to the urban commune is indicative of how the central government wants to interfere in the management of those communes.

In conclusion, the findings above reflect a broad range of insights into citizen engagement. Four areas of factor for and barriers to engagement were highlighted in virtually every interview conducted. The hindrances factors as shown by the Figure 6 outweigh encouraging factors to citizen engagement. A coherent vision, however, needs to be developed as

the foundation of trust and a chance of success for citizen engagement in the Republic of Burundi.

Question 2b: When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?

Introduction

The objective of this question was to find out about the circumstance under which the concept of citizen engagement in local government management should be employed and how it should be conceptualized for implementation. Even though the main goal of this study was not intended to develop a theory or model, a conceptual model for developing citizen engagement was expected to be derived from it. Analysis of transcript from interviews revealed that citizens should be involved in the cycle of policymaking, which included formulation, debates, planning of programs, implementation, and evaluation as well. Theoretical framework, in this case, demonstrated that the individual who controls a decision-making process is the central element for consideration during a participation initiative. In this case, power-holders are to be at the center of engaging and involving citizens in the coproduction. Participants noted that power-holders are to design community participation projects based in the making of their respective communities.

Factors Influencing the Appropriateness of Citizen Engagement

Timing is an important factor. In order to determine their desirability, the context of engagement should be analyzed against the backdrop of the political situation in Burundi, the nature and magnitude of acceptability or comprehension, the prevailing socioeconomic and cultural condition of engagement, the timing in respect to the programs to be received and implemented in the communes, and the state of already existing accountability mechanism for

citizen engagement. One of the questions I asked include: How early in the process do you involve the public (before or after the main decisions have been made)? Participants, mainly local officials, agreed that to ensure the success of the communes and zones, citizens must have a role to play at each stage starting with the planning process, to the decision making and implementation phase.

One of the administrators continued to state that “we need to make communes and zones part of decision making process because people will support what they helped to build and create.” This assertion was shared by a number of participants in focus group discussions who thought that time has come for them to fight for their rights even though it will be hard for them to receive them. Perhaps the main criticism of citizen participation and engagement comes from the fact that they are often not representative enough of the broader population. These concerns have been discussed with government officials who would put self-interests away and prioritize community interests as described in the 2005 Law on Decentralization. One of the government officials reminded the researcher noting that:

Dans ce nouveau système d'administration, les citoyens sont à l'honneur. Ils sont associés dans le processus décisionnel. Ainsi, au niveau de chaque commune, toutes les décisions d'intérêt local sont prises par le conseil communal et l'administrateur communal élus par la population locale. Aujourd'hui, ce sont ces autorités locales, en collaboration avec les citoyens, qui conçoivent et mettent en œuvre les programmes de développement socio-économiques répondant aux besoins spécifiques des habitants. Les citoyens deviennent progressivement maîtres de leurs destins.

In this new system of administration, citizens are honored. They are involved in the decision-making process. Thus, at the level of each commune, all decisions of local interest are taken by the communal council and the communal administrator elected by the local population. Today, there are these local authorities, in collaboration with citizens, who design and implement socio-economic development programs that respond to the specific needs of the inhabitants. Citizens gradually become masters of their destinies. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

It is therefore imperative to involve citizens in the coproduction at the beginning phase of the policymaking process. As the Law on Decentralization stipulates, citizen engagement should be considered as a mean to gather information from different stakeholders among them governmental representatives, local SCO, neighborhood organizations, and citizens as well. A key message that emerged from the focus group discussion was that involving citizens at the beginning of policy debate and formulation.

Based on discussions held during the focus group discussion held in Bujumbura and Muramvya, local officials are willing to follow the letter of the Law on Decentralization by communicating more effectively with citizens. Interviewees, mainly local officials, reported that they will be consulting with the public and private sectors before making any decision and/or implementing policy to avoid problems, delay, resistance, and ultimately resources required to implement proposed programs. In the past, a segment of the population faced social and political exclusion. A number of participants, however, declared that this government is removing barriers to participation beside a long tradition of exclusion.

One of the Administration continued by saying that “despite the great promise and effort I have made to engage citizens in what we have started to do, remember we only have three months. “I have realized that some citizens do not want to be part of the process: some of them are cynical and are just incompetent. They still hold the negative views of their political party’s affiliation and are hard to understand.” Interviewed citizens in their turn, tended to point fingers at the system hoping that the newly named Administrators will be able to engage them in the coproduction. One of the participants argued that “we may be witness again administrator who are rude, not inviting us because we don’t have an education and money, and those who will be

invited their view ignored.” Deep mistrust between power-holders and citizens still exist in which some public officials treating public engagement as a “nuisance at worse.”

On the issue of when to involve citizens in the coproduction, response was not mixed. Participants unanimously agreed that they should be involved “now.” 22 over 23 participants believe that communes and zones should involve various community groups, students, faith based groups, and local non-government organizations as early as possible because their private interests are at stake. In order to address the old inadequacy in service coproduction, I realized that the newly elected Administrators are not aware or have no strategy that ensure citizens are informed, involved and engaged. From these considerations, social and economic concepts were considered for when to engage citizens in the coproduction.

Sociocultural and Economic Considerations

According to Pastor Joseph the decision to use citizen engagement in Burundi should be informed by the prevailing social conditions—the emotional state of the people involved. In this regard, Mr. Thierry, the public official also pointed out that the structures used to engage citizens in the coproduction should be considered as a policy option in reference to the emotional status of the populace. He continued to explain “that is to say that we are in the policy of inculcating the population that the developments come from them and benefit them. If they start to work and support the action of the newly created communes, then the development will return to them.” Therefore, the social and cultural barriers should be removed to give a chance to citizens to take part in the process of coproduction.

According to Pastor Joseph, peace was all that Burundian people clamored for and the cessation of hostilities was of utmost importance to them. They therefore did not want anything that disengages them from the process of working in partnership with the government. Citizens

support the Arusha peace and were okay with the passage of the Law on Decentralization and its Decrees. Pastor Deo pointed out that Burundian people had gone through a protracted conflict and were afraid that the absence of a structure, such as those described in the 2009 Policy Documents on Decentralization put citizens closer to their local government (communes and zones).

Madame Ngendakumana Jeanne, and Paster Bulabula Joseph felt that the tradition and culture of the people who were going to experience exclusion and lived with the effects of the exclusion from participating should be taken into consideration when fashioning the framework of citizen engagement. It was felt by Pastor Deo, and other participants in focus group discussion in Bujumbura that both Communes and Zones (Hills) were not fashioned to fit in the culture of Burundi people where economic consideration are the most prevalent effect on decisions taken either by communes or zones. Those who have the mean tend to influence and impose what the commune and zone leaders should do.

Timing, in terms of when to set up the mechanisms of citizen engagement arose. According to CA1, officials should set up immediately a framework to involve citizens as Commune Administrators occupy already their offices and things are fresh on the minds of people so that their effect could be felt. Pastor Joseph pointed out that in the case of Burundi, hostilities had calmed down at the time the Law on Decentralization was promulgated. The violence the country is experiencing today targeting high ranked officials, will end soon.

Madame Ngendakumana was of the view that the international community that supported the Arusha peace effort and funded the implementation of the Law on Decentralization was to help the government craft a meaningful framework aimed at engaging citizens in the coproduction the earliest possible. She continued, stating that if the views of citizens are

underestimated, then the social and economic situation could worsen which would destabilize the country. Pastor Joseph further explained that when the government signed the Law on Decentralization it aimed to increase local accountability and responsiveness of political leaders where citizens have a say in the coproduction. The government is to send its experts who understand how to engage citizens in the process and lead them toward sustainability regardless of their income level or social background.

In Burundi, international politics as seen, played a major role in fashioning out citizen engagement through the concept of decentralization. This seemed to be corroborated by Thierry, the Executive Secretary of Education Programs and Civic Patriotic in the Interior Ministry, who justified the program of training citizens and local leaders in citizenship as the basis of Burundi's international obligation to deal with engagement in the coproduction. He continued and confirmed that what was happening elsewhere in developing countries, mainly with the decentralization of governmental entities influenced the policy framework for implementation of communes and zones in Burundi. Pastor Deo and a number of participants who supported his motion said that in Burundi the process of installing communes seemed to have followed very closely the dictates of the international community without much attention being given to the local contexts within which they had to operate. They recommended that in the future attention should be paid to the local conditions in which the process of engagement should come from them. Pastor Bulabula continued citing that international mechanisms should never replace national or domestic institutions but could complement them.

Neighborhoods, Neighborhoods Based Organizations, and Civil Society Organizations

Citizen engagement is motivated by a longer-term vision that simply aims to solve a particular neighborhood issue. Part of the vision is to include citizens who have historically been

excluded in the process, or forgotten neighborhoods, from participating in policy debates, formulation, and the design of their services. As Pastor Deo noted, “the tendency of neighborhood participation is positively related to individual’s social status.” For the case of my country, Pastor Deo continued, marginalization of a segment of the population resulted in unending conflict, wars, killings, and displacement.” These past negative events should be used, today, to strengthen communities and neighborhood-based organizations to build stronger, trustful, and sustainable communities, lamented one of the participants to the focus group discussions.

Participants in this study agreed that the central government and its communes should have their focus on sustaining links and capacities of neighborhoods and neighborhoods based organizations. Pastor Deo pointed out that CSOs should advocate for inclusiveness in the coproduction as early as they can and also work with the power-holders to strengthen the link between citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests. At the communal level, one of the Administrator pointed out that communes are partnering with different CSOs and other international organizations to engage citizens. He claimed that citizens are already engaged as all the decisions comes from them. He also continued to state that proactive awareness strategy is being developed to disseminate information from the governors to the governed in order to increase their engagement.

SCOs are to serve as experts in different areas deemed necessary for their skills and accomplishment as they deal directly with international organization claimed one of the participants. It was good to have support of citizens in contributing toward communal projects and activities to be implemented. The commune official added that SCOs are to advocate for greater public engagement and help the government to develop strategic thinking aimed at

engaging citizens continually to develop a deeper understanding of how the citizens perceive the local and national interests, and what sort of the country the public aspire 20 years from now on.

In case of the Republic of Burundi neighborhood-based organizations exists and relies on dedicated volunteers to accomplish their goals. Pinderhughes (1983) suggested that:

The powerlessness of individuals living in poor communities can only be addressed through strategies by which people can influence the external social system to reduce destructive forces and work with systems outside the family, such as churches, businesses, or schools, to improve their environment. (p. 111).

The initial layer should involve communicating public concerns from the perspective of public value. Epimaque Buterere of World Vision added noting that “in this case, power-holders are to be creating environments where citizen concerns should be heard and debated.” As set out in the Government of Burundi’s own decentralization policy, political, administrative, and financial decentralization in Burundi represents a radical transformational shift to be used to involve citizens and strengthen ties between citizen-power-holder collaborations. These transformations include a shift from top-down management to bottom-up planning (See Figure 3); from telling people what to do to partnering with them, from ruling over to ruling with. The text on decentralization emphasizes:

*Le Gouvernement de la République du Burundi a pris l’option politique de rapprocher les services publics de la population et **d’impliquer cette dernière dans la prise des décisions** et le choix des programmes et projets de développement de leurs collectivités.*

The Government of the Republic of Burundi has taken the political option of bringing public services closer to the people and of **involving citizens in decision-making** and the choice of the programs and projects of developments of their localities. (Government of Burundi, 2009: 61 – translation by the researcher)

The broad aims and objectives articulated in the 2009 Document Policy on Decentralization, continued Mr. Epimaque, require nothing more than involving citizens in the coproduction. One

of the Administrators pointed out that “citizens have a chance to drive this chariot as they have been empowered”

Staff from the World Vision (WV) in Bujumbura added to this conversation. According to the WV “Citizens should be involved at all stages of government, including phases of execution of projects and public initiatives.” The WV has been operating in Burundi for years and have adapted different methods of including citizens in the work they perform. According to Epimaque Buterere, Child Health Now (CHN) Communication Coordinator at the WV, the Law on Decentralization is the driver of engagement of citizens in the coproduction. He continued to state that the WV is “an essentially community based organization that focus on local level advocacy to sensitize the community members both on their rights and responsibilities. Currently, the leading local level advocacy approach is CVA (Citizen Voice and Action).” When done well, citizen engagement would have a number of advantage, including strengthen democratic legitimacy of communal process by ensuring that citizens are able to take and influence the decisions that affect their lives, increasing the accountability of government by ensuring that citizens are aware and can respond to the developing needs of their communes and zones.

In the case of the Republic of Burundi, engaging citizens and involving them in political life was seen by numerous participants as the “right thing to do.” When citizens have a say in their lives and because a large part that shape their lives is policy that governs their municipalities, they are willing to accept the responsibility derived from it. Many participants suggested encouraging power-holders to engage citizens in policy making at the earliest time while allowing citizens to participate in the ways that are meaningful to their lives. Once applied, declared one of the participants, it may enhance and increase a sense of confidence in delivery

ideas that sustain local development. As Epimaque Buterere pointed out “Citizens are supposed to be consulted to contribute ideas to local planning, implementation and evaluation.”

Information sharing. Many participants reported that information is the single greatest sources of knowing the fate of their communes and other local entities. Many citizens in focus groups spoke about a lack of information regarding central and local government affairs. As I observed when I visited different offices of Communes and Zones in Bujumbura Mairie, the posted information in French language lacked contents on issues that matter most to citizens, including budgeting or number of meetings held. I asked a question of one of the Chief de Zones: *Why is there a complete absence of information related to communal or zone affairs?* She responded by reminding me that they only “have three months in existence, we do not have data to communicate as of today.” Pastor Deo stated that posting information to inform citizens about the performance of their communes and zones would repeat the benefit of citizens trusting their commune and zone leaders. Pastor Bulabula Joseph added that it will also increase citizen participation through more proactive awareness raising.

Political dynamic. Political context in Burundi at the time of this research emerged as critical consideration for involving citizens in service coproduction. According to Pastor Bulabula Joseph, whether or not to employ the techniques of citizen engagement should depend on the political dynamic of the country. He indicated: “Today we are witnessing an unprecedented phenomenon. High ranked Hutu and Tutsi soldiers are being killed on a daily basis, which reflect the memory of 1993.” This affects how people behave or think about whether to “engage” or not to “engage” with citizens in the coproduction. Power-holders and citizens alike held negative attitudes about each other and created a major barrier to citizen engagement, said Ngendakumana, participant of the focus groups in Muramvya. She stated that, “Many

administrators are ambivalent about public involvement. Others hold resentment toward citizens who they have not even met.” These created unending conflicts in the past. Furthermore, Pastor Deo pointed out that, “Fear of involving citizens in the coproduction comes more on the problems associated with the past political system of centralized and single party.” This system, he argued, was inefficient, corrupt, abusive, and disfranchised citizens and negatively impacted our nation and community’s ability to respond to economic challenges.

Due to political complexity, numerous participants pointed out that power-holders still hold negative views of citizens’ capability and competence to participate in policy formulation and implementation: citizens are not competent in public decision-making; citizens are too apathetic and uncommitted to participate; and citizens lack communication skills. Institutional constraints, combined with political and bureaucratic incentives, are seen today as an obstacle to citizen engagement. In fact, the uncertain political dynamic as observed by the author justified the hesitation, contradiction and slow implementation of some of the provisions of the Law on Decentralization because they have been perceived as politically risky by central government authorities. These authorities think that once political and financial decentralization are given to communes, their authorities over communes will be weakened. CA1 argued that such behaviors on the part of policymakers create conditions that contribute to the breach of trust between citizens and power-holders. To CA1’s credit, he emphasized that “beside these observations, most citizens rate their local government as satisfactory. Much of what administrators hear may be citizen complaints rather than praise since citizens appears to criticize than to compliment public services.” From these perceptions, I asked a question: *To what extent should power-holders trust citizens from a normative perception despite their weakness?* In this case, power-holders at national and local levels must be prepared to engage the community through

deliberative processes that are accessible, visible, and inclusive. When citizens witness behaviors that are consistent with the well-being of their communities, they trust their government and become willing to embrace the actions undertaken by the government. Citizens who are attached to community are prepared to support government efforts to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty. Citizens must be involved as early as possible in decisions related to networked solutions and, therefore, must have intimate understandings of the interrelationships between the components of the problem and the solution. Public leadership, however, is instrumental to citizen transformations.

Government Commitment to Involve Citizens

According to Robert B. Denhardt, public organizations are, for the most part, service oriented and driven substantially by the needs, interests, and demands of their clients as well as citizens in general. Administrators and other power-holders are to be committed to the goals, mission and values emanating from the concept of decentralization where citizens are no longer seen as “subjects” but as “partners” in the development.

When the government commit resources both financial and human, citizens would have the opportunity to engage. As initiators, administrators should have three things in mind: commitment, communication, and collaboration. At commune levels, administrators are to develop a vertical and horizontal communication strategy on all strategic axes and at all levels (national, provincial, communal and hill). Thus, at the level of each commune, all decisions of local interests are taken by the communal council and the communal administrator elected by the local population.

A number of intellectual participants in the study claimed that the 2009 Government Policy Document on Decentralization called for leaders to consciously develop pathways toward

establishing new conditions and circumstances through communication to drive changes that inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities to engage in problem-solving in their communes, zones and hills. One of the participants in the focus groups realized that the “Administrator are to use a combination of speech acts among these: assertive, directive, and declaration to build trust and confidence while engaging citizens in the coproduction.” Assertive statements supported by clear evidence from other communes or similar countries, which successfully applied similar concepts to implement analogous programs, would be beneficial to those citizens and local officials who doubted the effectiveness of citizen engagement.

When I asked CA1 the question of *When do you think is appropriate to use citizen engagement?* He responded:

When there is enough awareness from citizens (grass-roots), then it will be an appropriate time to apply that concept. Awareness of their rights, of their relationships with their leaders and groups of interests. If ignorance was clearly out and they know that this groups of interests are here to serve us, we are not serving them. We should ask everyone who is coming with a project of local development, wait a minute, what are you trying to do, can't you instead do this.... We speak about this or that. If every family is to be sensitized, mobilized, informed about how to be engaged, I believe poverty can be removed. He continued, if leaders are from the family and they should be consulting people knowing their rights and responsibilities. Citizens still have the image of the colonizers, image of the chiefs, they think these people are the chiefs then they surrender rather than manifesting their rights. The people need to be aware of what they should receive from groups of interests. They need to work on awareness of the citizens. But they never do it. I don't see the progress 20 years from now.

In general, CA1's views relate to a disparate intellectual who waited for years in vain to grasp the benefits of programs provided by his urban communes. He believed that it is time for citizens to take ownership of the sinking ship and drive it away to its safety.

Summary of findings for Question 2b

In determining when and how to involve and engage citizens in the coproduction, it became apparent that citizen engagement and participation should be given a prime priority. In the case of the Republic of Burundi, participants' opinions were divided as to whether citizens should be directly involved in policymaking and the design of public services. Some of participants claimed that the level of education should be weighted when considering the capacity of citizens to provide meaningful thoughts. Other participants believed citizen-state engagement interface is the answer for today's government. Other participants think that a collaborative network through a wide array of channels, such as neighborhoods and neighborhood-based organizations should be used to collect ideas of citizens while selecting those seen as able to contribute ideas. Other participants felt that citizens are supposed to be consulted at all levels of local planning, implementation and evaluation. They argued that the presence of citizens in policy debates and formulation would increase trust and ensure sustainability of the newly created system. In this case, the political climate at the time of this research left the investigator wondering if citizens would be given the opportunity of participating fully or working in direct partnership with local elected officials as described in the 2009 Policy Document on Decentralization.

Question 2c: What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy-making and service design?

Introduction

This question was intended to explore lessons deriving from ways of improving citizen engagement initiatives and its effect toward policymaking and the design of public services. An analysis of available data and transcripts from interviews, focus group discussions, personal observations, as well as, research field notes was undertaken. The themes that emerged as far as ways to improve citizen engagement in policymaking and the design of public services were desirability of creating a framework for citizen engagement, interactive citizen-state-NGOs engagement, Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA) to citizen engagement, scaling-up initiatives, and understanding how these processes affect policymaking decisions and the design of public services to improve the image of communes. Participants manifested contradictory opinions on the best way to improve citizen engagement.

In its plan for decentralization of governmental services published in 2009, the Government of Burundi moved toward a higher end of citizen participation spectrum. Citizen engagement and participation within local government involved an “open policy-making process,” where decision making is shared between state officials and citizens in relation to developing programs and intervention within their localities. This means engaging the public and experts in debates about policy and establishing a new relationship with the citizens who become a valued partner to identify issues, discover new thinking, and propose solutions. This kind of thinking is a departure from more traditional approaches that disengaged citizens for decades. The question then was: *What is the best way to improve citizen engagement in this new governance system?* To govern is to choose. Power-holders have a golden opportunity to show

political leadership. Participants unanimously claimed that policymakers should take issues to be debated about how local entities are to be run into the community as a whole but responsibility and accountability for leadership should remain with communes and other state officials.

Way to Improve Citizen Engagement

This section will discuss way to improve citizen engagement. It includes the determination of the suitability of citizen engagement, interaction between citizens and government officials, and plans for scaling-up citizen engagement.

Determine Suitability of Citizen Engagement

Participants were asked about their thoughts on citizen engagement in newly created communes and zones in the city of Bujumbura or Bujumbura Mairie. The general view of participants was that the use of citizen engagement is a core of Burundian cultural principles and should be strengthened. In addition to these, notwithstanding citizens' general views, opinions were shared on the suitability of applying the concept of citizen engagement and participation in communes and zones while improving citizens understanding of how to engage and take action. All the 36 participants talked about the suitability of engaging citizens in policymaking, debates, and the design of public services, but they were not all in agreement. Out of 36 participants, 23 were of the view that engaging citizens in the early stage of our local government management, communes and zones was a good idea. And 13 felt that it is too early to engage citizens because they do not understand how the process of engagement and participation works and are not prepared to take the lead and provide constructive ideas that matter to their communes and zones.

Asked what way to improve citizen engagement, a large number of participants agreed that to deliver genuine public engagement leadership in both local (communes) and central governments is needed. Effective strategic thinking, which involves choosing between different

arguments, reconciling conflicting opinions, and arbitrating between different groups, and interests, and of effective governance of departments, and their agencies is keen to success. CA1, a local lawyer in Bujumbura added that, “In time, communes’ leaders should be able to demonstrate that the citizen is able to contribute opinions, ideas and suggestions on an ongoing basis.” Once applied citizen engagement will be seen as moving away from old processes and embracing a new relationship with the citizen where they are perceived as partners in policy making but not as subjects.

When asked the same question of the groups of interests, a Word Vision’s staff participant in the study narrated, the central government should “raise citizen awareness on their rights, their responsibilities in demanding better services, and their roles in the social processes.”

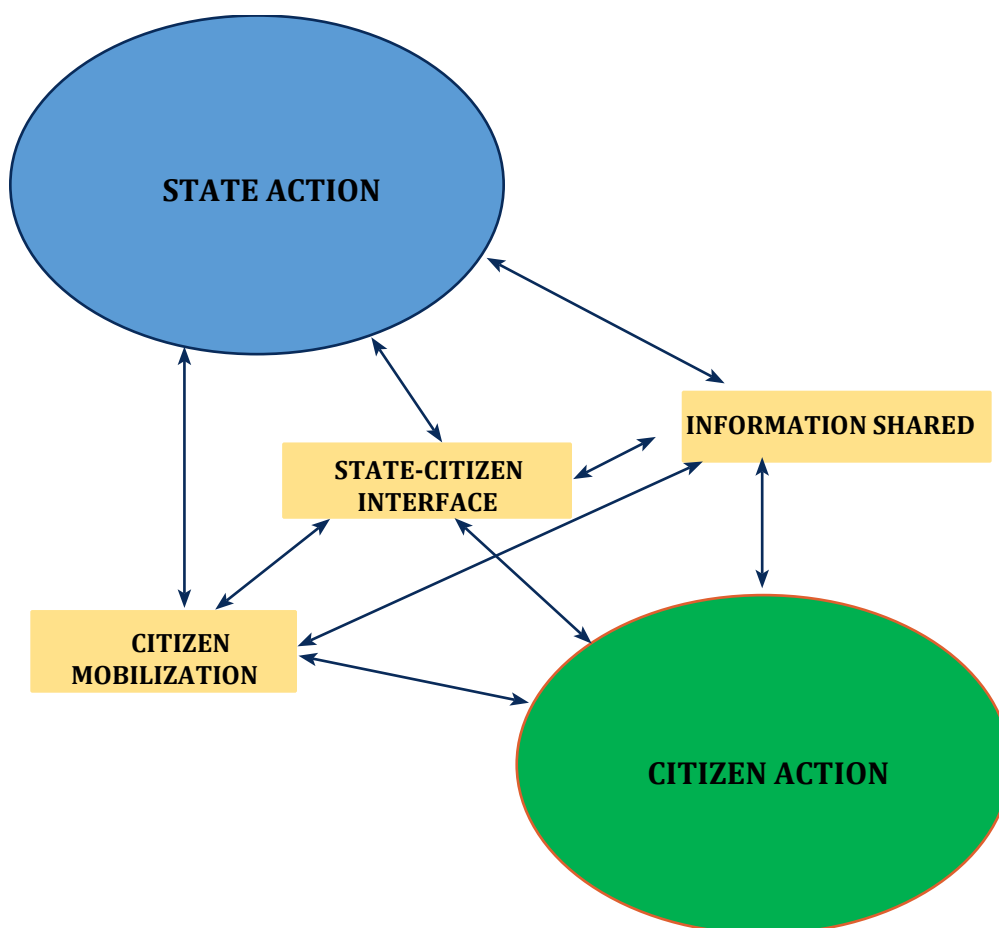
Encourage Interaction between Citizens and Government Actors

Figure 11 is an illustration of key elements of citizen-state interface and how it connects both citizens and power-holders in the coproduction. To understand ways to improve citizen engagement and how it affects policymaking and the design of public services, I examined and analyzed citizens interface with the government through citizen mobilization channels. The main question I asked of participants was: *What are the possibilities in creating interconnections between interactive governance and existing democratic institutions?* To answer this question, I referred to the 2014 document written by the Word Bank Group’s Managing Trade-Offs to Promote Sustainable Reforms as well as participants who provided viable alternatives after discussing the chart provided by the said organization (World Bank Group). The answer to this question renewed a sense of relief about Burundian citizens’ commitment to community interests.

An important issue I also observed is the relationship between citizen participation and the newly created communes. Thus, citizens are willing to participate in interactive processes and able to take on more active roles to influence the outcome of interactive governance.

In sharing information, participants agreed that the five key elements reviewed and discussed from the above chart might indicate when to engage citizen in meaningful ways in local government management. They include citizen action, state action, information sharing,

Figure 18- Key Elements of Citizen-State Interface



Source : Retrieved from World Bank's 2014 and updated as fit for Citizen Engagement

mobilization, and citizen-state engagement interface. The analysis indicated that almost 100 % of respondents would appreciate citizen-state engagement interface as a two-way information sharing spectrum to engage a broad element of citizens in the coproduction. CA1 pointed out:

Les principaux motifs pour impliquer les différents acteurs dans la prise de décision sont d'améliorer la qualité de la prise de décision en utilisant l'information et les solutions proposées par divers acteurs et de combler la distance perçue croissante entre les citoyens et les élus.

The main motives for involving different stakeholders in decision making are to improve the quality of decision making by using information and solutions put forward by various actors and to bridge the perceived growing distance between citizens and elected politicians.

The impact of interactive initiatives is not limited to engaging citizens in the coproduction.

Citizen-state interface often opens opportunities to citizen's mobilization in which citizens' actions combine with state's actions lead to the development, determination, and implementation of programs supported by both the state and its people.

Numerous participants cited a lack of a framework for citizen-state interaction as a barrier to participation. The problem lies in organizing the links between citizen-state interactive initiatives and state's power structures in order for them to become meaningful. In the case of Burundi, the 2009 Policy Documents for Decentralization calls for more direct forms of influence on policy-making. The role of political officials in interactive governance processes should not be minimized declared Pastor Deo who also claimed that "the success of the process depends on how citizens share information and the willingness of local and state officials to engage."

One of the participants pointed out that citizen-state interface would facilitate an open communication, access to information, and knowledge needed by providing transparent and open

dealing with local government services through mobilization of citizens. Pastor Deo added to this understanding. According to him, citizen-state engagement interface is the only feasible way today, which can move citizens away from self-interests, an opportunity for promoting participation of the people, the SCOs, and other organizations in local government processes, a way to encourage shared visions and introduction of new ideas and concepts in local government settings, and the evolution of intuitive solutions to development issues and problems facing Burundian people.

Another area that participants discussed was the *executive, political, and professional* interface. For the executive interactive, for example, participants pointed out that when leaders took the interactive process seriously, they are more likely to make time and resources available for citizen engagement. CA1, who stated that a lack of framework for citizen engagement as one of the barriers, argued that in communes or zones management, policymaking and decision-making is expert-driven and expert-produced according to technocratic standards while politicians continue to play a unique role as an authoritative power to decide who to engage or disengage. Madame Ngendakumana added to the conversation stating that if an interactive process is set up here in communes and zones to mediate between opposing perspectives and to work toward developing a meaningful joint vision of the area, the conflicts may end. One of the Chef de Zones added that the existing policy decision derived from the Arusha Peace are fully reckoned with, and determine the way in which the outcome of the interactive process is formulated and positioned. He noted that the past years have been tough with citizens rebelling against the government actions. Today with the slow implementation of commune functions, the government is moving toward inclusiveness. Policy choices are being made in accordance to

conditions set by the 2009 Policy Document on Decentralization and other existing Law and Decrees.

Political interference. Participants in this study agreed that politicians continue to play a unique role and have the authoritative power to decide where to invest or implement a given socio-economic programs. Zones officials who spoke in anonymity stated that, “In our city, power is divided by level, with each layer performing its own responsibility, we, as Chef de Zones, we don’t have anything to say.” From my observation, Zones lack financial resources to dictate what to do and rely on communes and Mairie for funding its activities. Central government officials, most of time, dictate what to do and disburse its funds as they see fit. One of the Chef de Zones explained, “I cannot even buy an anchor corrector.” According to Pastor Bulabula Joseph, even though the government is working on political decentralization, municipal officials are in hot water as they do not have much room to navigate because the current Law and Decrees bar them from doing what they want.

Professional interference. Within the professional domain, policy-making and the design of public services is professional-expert designed and expert-produced. Mr. Thierry, the Executive Secretary at the Interior Ministry was of the view that administrators of communes have to be vested with technical knowledge, expertise, and methods to solve communes’ socio-economic problems. Thierry continued to state that administrators who know how the cycle budgeting works, are more likely able to explain to the population what the commune expect from their contributions. This include the belief that the desirability of the solutions emanates from the know-how to apply technical procedures for an efficient implementation of a given programs.

One of the Administrators who was confident of the work he has been performing pointed out that “in this city, I am seen as one of the possible sources of knowledge. I am a member of Communal Council and its secretary. I provide them with necessary information leading to how to run effectively and efficiently our communes. From what I know, different stakeholders learn from me and my team as well.”

Plans for Scaling-Up Citizen Engagement

As stated above, participants to the study manifested diversified views about the best way to improve citizen engagement. One of the Administrators stated that the way to improve citizen participation is:

***Penser à la population directement.** Quand la population vous approche, il faut le répondre directement. Je suis le serviteur de la population, nous servons la population. Nous ne sommes pas les dirigeant nous sommes le serviteur, les animateurs des activités.*

Thinking directly of the population. When the population approaches you, you have to answer it directly. I am the servant of the people; we serve the population. We are not the leaders we are the servant, the animators of the activities.

This thought was shared by citizens and other stakeholders who lived the experience for years. The World Visions staff, for instance, explained that power-holders are to “increase capacity building for citizen engagement while strengthening the skills of Civil Society and Community Based Organizations.” The WV also believed that unless the literacy levels among citizens, particular the youth, is improved, the newly created communes and zones will have a tough assignment to engage those groups of people in the coproduction. Mr. Thierry, the governmental official added to this conversation noting that the SCOs and CBOs are valuable sources of improving community and citizen ability to provide resources while linking citizens to services needed by them. They have to be trained and empowered with knowledge and resources to provide viable information to the people they serve. CA1 was pessimistic. According to him:

IL y a un voyage ici. IL faut renforcer les conseils communaux, les conseils collinaires (5 personnes élues dans les collines qui traitent directement les affaires collinaires/la population des bases). Ce sont des gens illettrés avec des petits niveaux d'éducation qu'on néglige dans les villages. Du point de vue structures tout est bien, mais de point de vue pratique, il y a un voyage à faire.

Il faut créer un cadre des dialogues -- collinaires et aussi communaux. Les membres du conseil collinaire traitent avec les gens n'infus qu'une année. Il faut collecter franchement les informations en bonne forme. Des représentants des collines appuient par les natifs (les gens qui habitent dans la capitale et viennent des collines) qui vivent à Bujumbura. La collaboration entre les natifs et les conseils communaux. Par ce que les natifs sont des intellectuels éparpillés dans le pays qui sont capables d'aider leurs collines. Les natifs sont critiques et les conseils sont réservés. Et la politique se mêler dedans. Mais s'il y avait un dialogue dans ce sens, je pense que les collines peuvent se développer. Je propose de renforcer ce qui est là, alimenter avec un dialogue rythme, et la collaboration avec les natifs afin de se développer. Il faut que les conseils communaux nous consultent. Il faut encourager les dialogues.

There is a long way to go. You need to strengthen municipal councils, the hill councils (5 people elected in the hills who deal directly with hill affairs / the population of the bases). They are illiterate people with a low level of education who are neglected in the villages. From the structures standpoint everything is fine, but from a practical point of view, there is a long way to go.

It is necessary to create a framework for dialogues – communal and hill dialogues. The members of the hill councils deal with people only a year. The information must be collected in good form. Representatives of the hills supported by the natives (people who live in the capital and come from the hills) who live in Bujumbura. Collaboration between native and communal councils. Because natives are intellectuals scattered in the country who are able to help their hills. The natives are critical and the advice is reserved. And politics mingle in it. But if there was a dialogue in that direction, I think the hills can develop. I propose to reinforce what is there, feeding with a rhythmic dialogue, and collaboration with the natives in order to develop. The municipal councils must consult with us. Dialogues should be encouraged. (Translated by the Author, February 2017)

From the interview with CA1, I realized that there is a need to think about a partial framework for citizen engagement. Looking at the current situation in Burundi, a framework that can involve people in meaningful learning and discussions about emergent trends of their country, communes, and zones (hills) can be beneficial. Therefore, I proposed a Collaborative Learning Approach as a way forward to improve citizen engagement and participation in local government management. I then asked participants a question: what framework believed to be fit the concept

of citizen engagement in Burundi? a clear mode of citizen engagement was discussed and other defined as they choose.

Participants in this study defined ways to improve citizen engagement by framing the process of Collaborative Learning as the best approach to utilize in the case of the Republic of Burundi.

The Collaborative Learning Approach Framework. The Republic of Burundi have suffered for years from community and ethnic conflicts. Its leaders also have had to make decisions with two fundamental attributes in mind: complexity and controversy. In the case of Burundi, complexity was referred to multiple parties, deeply held values, and legal and jurisdictional constraints. Controversy in other hand included strong emotional attachment, incompatibilities (ex, history and jurisdiction) and personal issues, including identity. These attributes have been discussed earlier as hindrances to citizen engagement in Burundi.

In 2005, Walker and Daniel developed learning approach that followed five fundamental principle know as FAITH: fairness, access, inclusion, transparency, and honesty. These concepts have been the fundamental pillar of this dissertation. Collaborative learning stresses activities that encourage systems thinking, join learning, open communication, and constructive conflict mitigation. In the case of the Republic of Burundi. These are needed activities to bring individuals together for common purposes.

At communal level a planning team decision making approach, Collaborative Learning would encourage attendees/residents to learn actively, to think systematically, and to learn from one another. In this way, local and state governments in Burundi will improve management as staff and residents come together to resolve issues that matter to them. Its impact will be unmeasurable as both the communes and central government will benefit from its outcome.

Throughout the collaborative learning, participants talk with and learn from one another in groups and focus groups meetings. In this case, people clarify and refine their improvement through dialogue. To better achieve a desired result, Collaborative Learning will ask the relevant power-holders and convening organization (s) to participate, not as the facilitator or intermediary, but as major player in program coproduction. For example, for learning, developing improvements, and achieving mutual goals, Thierry, staff Director from the central government official have been keen in bringing needed information to discussing situation improvements with key participants (citizens and local officials). He clarified to both internal and external constituents the nature and scope of the programs expected to be implemented and how to work in collaborative way to achieve expected results.

Collaborative Learning may be a framework that can be adapted in Burundian situation to affect policymaking and services design and generate: 1) dialogue between diverse participants with contrasting views, income and education levels, and background provenance; 2) improve understanding of specific problems common to the Republic of Burundi; 3) increase rapport, respect, communication, and trust among participants without regard to the race or economic status; and 4) articulate, in a clear manner, concerns about the problems and situation. In this case however, power is dispersed and shared by all participants, which can be difficult to achieve in some point in a country that has suffered for years of atrocities, mistrust, and internal conflicts.

Furthermore, Collaborative Learning framework, noted Pastor Deo, is learning from citizens how public involvement could be best implemented to address their needs and concerns. Thus citizens are to be asked for ideas about public participation process and concerns participants may have.

Citizen View of the Focus Groups Discussions and Interviews

I asked participants in this study a basic question: how do you want to be involved in commune-led decision-making and the design of public services? From participants' responses and points of view, I realized that the use of Collaborative Learning would be an asset and a basis for public participation in Burundi, mainly in Bujumbura Mairie where citizens are more educated, have lived the experiences, understand the issues, and can contribute ideas. From the researcher's experience, Collaborative Learning tends to emphasize mutual learning, shared power, meaningful decision space, constructive communication interaction, and voice of participants. Important to my experience was learning from attendees who emphasized that public involvement could be best used to address their needs and concerns. Both the focus group discussions in Muramvya and Bujumbura asked for the ideas about public participation processes. Participants were asked to identify concerns they may have about the newly created communes and zones or hills. Participants identified two dimensions deemed necessary to them: access and influence.

The access dimension involved 1) broaden citizen participation; 2) holding meetings in different zones (in Bujumbura and hills in Muramvya and elsewhere); 3) making the meetings accessible to people; 3) publicizing the meeting better, through different channels, and earlier; etc. 4) making transportation available to attendees; 5) compensation for participation. According to participants in this study, the access aspect would allow attendees to trust each other while addressing inadequacies in decision making and planning. The success of this dimension, however, would depend on local and state officials' sincere intentions for convening

citizens and designing engagement in a way that envisions a clear path leading from engagement to inclusion.

The influence dimension was about giving participants a chance for a meaningful participation in the process where their ideas matter. Participants believed that by this concept (influence), they will 1) seek the participation of diverse groups of attendees; 2) encourage attendees to mix better in groups from different background and income level; 3) conduct activities that will increase group interaction and public involvement, including what type of involvement they preferred. As one of the participant, a member of the Mutwa ethnic group, in Murumvya pointed out:

Je crois que ce genre de processus a un grand potentiel de briser le manque de confiance et d'accroître le niveau de confiance des gens comme moi. Aujourd'hui, je peux partager la boisson avec un Muhutu et discuter d'une question qui nous concerne tous. Ce type d'exercice aide à rompre la croyance de longue date contre nous (batwa) et à fournir des solutions qui n'ont pas été comprises ou traitées auparavant.

I believe that this kind of process has great potential of breaking through the lack of trust and increase the confidence level of people like me. Today I can share the beverage with a Muhutu and discuss issue that matter to all of us. This kind of exercise helps break the long-standing belief against us (batwa) and provide solutions not previously understood or addressed.

Perhaps most criticism of citizen engagement practices comes from the fact that they are often not representative enough of the broader population. The challenge and success of this framework would come from local government leaders who are asked to participate as ordinary member of the community, not in their official role in Collaboration Learning process, to share their knowledge and expertise about the situation, to ask questions as other participants do, to listen, and to debate. The challenge will come from governmental agents' behaviors leading to accepting their roles as participants and interested citizens. Other challenges could be those related to competing interests, conflicting strategies and differing perspectives on what is right or

best for the commune/zone/hill and its sustainability. If those governmental officials remove themselves from self-interest behaviors and embrace community interests, they then would be able to reap the benefits of pursuing the economic sustainability of their communes while removing barriers to full engagement.

Summary of finding in Chapter 2c

A number of participants agreed that Collaborative Learning approach could provide a platform for innovation and engagement in Burundi. In sharing their information, participants agreed that state-citizen interface could change the way the central government delivers services. Citizens eager to become more involved in their communes and zones or hills all around our country can use this easy to use platform. Pastor Deo noted that the Collaborative Learning platform could provide incentive for communes and zones leaders as well as citizens to positively interact and deliver key services deemed necessary for their citizens.

Summary of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 gave a brief description of how the research was executed and the presentation of findings that yielded from the analysis. The empirical material gathered spoke to the narrative stories used by participants in regard to the experience they face and continue to experience. Consistent with Bateson (1979), narrative inquiry is about stories that individuals and families tell and construct after years of living the experience. It is about how these stories become their experienced reality. Participants defined on their own words the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in their country, the Republic of Burundi.

Through their constructed narrative presentations, participants in this study provided information of not only how they lived and experienced the hindrance factors to citizen engagement but also how they were lived by their constructed stories. In telling their stories and

using their experience, participants in this study, in accordance with Mair (1988), not only experienced their lives in and through those stories, but they were also being lived by them and continue to experience them. Figure 19 outline critical that need to be holistically addressed in the management of communes and zones.

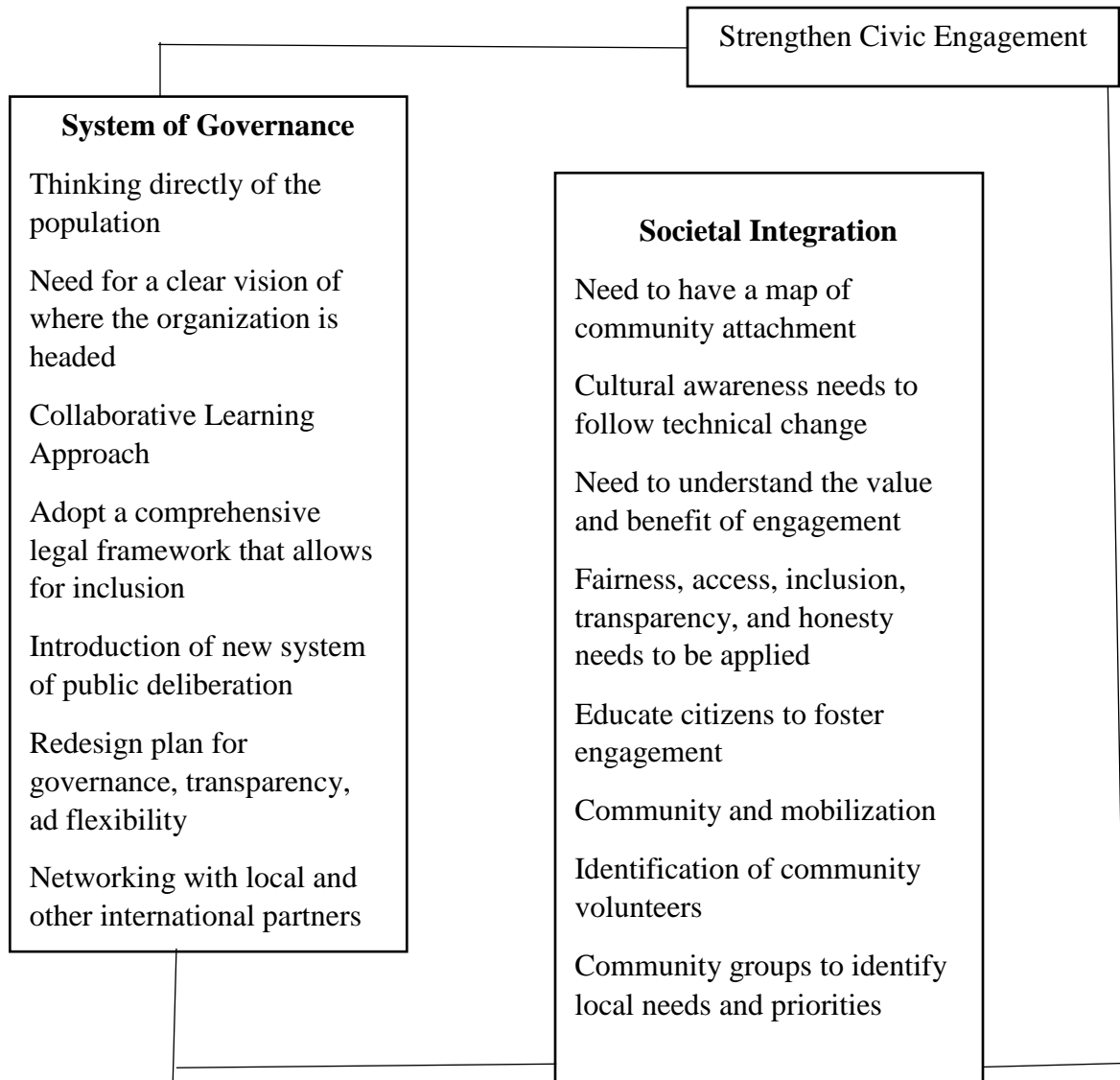


Figure 19. Strengthen commune engagement through various approach in response to citizen engagement. Success in governance means clear responsibilities and outcomes for state and local government, holding state and local official accountable to their actions.

Question 1 explored the issues or factors that affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. This question had two sub-questions: the first question dealt with issues or factors that encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management. The aim of this question was to explore factor for citizen engagement in decision-making and the design of public services. The second question was designed to let readers understand barriers that affect people's direct involvement in local government management. Transcript from interviews, focus group discussions, and documents were analyzed in response to this question. The findings revealed that citizen engagement in local government in Burundi through the lens of the new Law on Decentralization does exist. It was also found, in a wide-ranging view of participants, that local officials in Burundi support, in writing not necessarily in practice, citizen engagement in public policymaking and the design of public services. The government of Burundi has used the process of decentralization of governmental entities to adopt laws, policies and procedures that aim to educate, inform, and engage citizens in coproduction.

Question 1.a. looked closely at how Burundian power-holders and the groups of interests through the Law on Decentralization and other Decrees encourage citizen engagement in the coproduction. The 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization spells out, establishes, and reinforces mechanisms of citizen engagement in policy-making and the design of public services. These documents show how Burundian government is willing to put citizens at the center of policy design, development, and implementation. According to the Government of Burundi, citizens will no longer be seen as products but as partners in the coproduction. The role and support of the groups of interests, namely, donor countries and other international organizations are called to support the effort of the government in implementing these policies

and making the hope and dreams of these citizens alive. It was also found that, in Burundi, a legal framework on citizen engagement and inclusion exists via the Law on Decentralization that allows for civil society actors and community organizations, and other non-governmental actors to operate and express their opinions in support for the government efforts to engage citizens in the coproduction of public values. The approaches used by the government as shown through narrative presentations of citizens include but not limited to consulting citizens in key issues, and educating them about how to understand the benefits and values of the new Law on Decentralization while informing these citizens about their rights and obligations.

Question 1b. explored the barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management. It was found that there are enormous barriers that bar or make it harder for citizens to join or support the efforts of local government officials. These hindrance factors are internal as well as external. The enumerated barriers include but are not limited to lack of citizen forum to foster democratic dialogue; lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs; lack of accountability in the management of localities, internal organization of local administration, and the groups of interests' self-imposed behaviors. It was also found that political divisions are impacting negatively the government of Burundi's ability to respond to the needs and wants of their citizens. Given the level of distrust manifested by participants to this research about how the government of Burundi fails to embrace ordinary citizens' inputs and translate them into public policy agendas, the government has distanced further from citizens who want, at all costs, to have their voices heard in decisions made by their public officials.

Transcripts from the interviews reveal that the absence of a consultancy framework had negatively impacted how citizens interact with their local representatives. Creating opportunities for working relationships with a wide range of organizations is what Leighninger (2009) denotes

as “created arenas where citizens, decision makers, and other stakeholders can sit down and make policy together” (p. 12). One way to achieve it is to strengthen connections between power-holders and the communities they serve while creating a flow of balanced and objective information from the central government officials to local leaders. Local leaders, in turn, should pass on this information to citizens to assist them in understanding the problems and formulating solutions.

The finding also revealed that the internal organization of local government in Burundi is weak. The structure of local government management in Burundi has created a vacuum that is increasingly being filled by the self-interests behaviors of individuals, officials, and leaders of international organizations. Because a large number of Burundian citizens have witnessed inconsistent acts believed to be against the well-being of their communities, they (citizens) have retreated to self-interests behaviors. These inconsistent acts included preferential treatment due to political party affiliation, corruption, and neglect of the opposing party. In response to these behaviors, citizens have disassociated with government efforts and become preoccupied with personal issues. One of the issues with the structure observed has already been mentioned with Bell (1998) and his criticism of the ambiguities involved with institutions, agencies, and structures. In such heavy and politicized arenas, there will always be winners, those who support the effort of the government, and losers, those activists and civil society actors who oppose the way local, provincial, and national governments provide services to citizens. The civil society activists who spoke against the government in Burundi have seen their work restricted and their activities blocked. Interviewees argued that

La société civile(SC) est mal vue ici au Burundi avec la crise. La SC a une mauvaise connotation. La SC est confondue avec celle qui fait la plaidoirie.

Civil Society (CS) is poorly viewed here in Burundi with the crisis. The CSO has a bad connotation. The CSO is confused with those who advocate. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

In Burundi, the position of some key informants suggests that citizens have never been encouraged to act democratically by local government leaders (Zone and Commune officials). Interviewees forcibly argued that in Burundi, local government officials disregard willingly, or fail to provide support that will allow citizens to participate and engage effectively.

When it comes to the groups of interests, much needs to be done. Participants explained that the Republic of Burundi suffers from a lack of economic autonomy and reliance on donors to provide long-term visions, planning, and commitment. They (participants) claim that the role played by these donor countries or the groups of interests are ambiguous, discouraging, and moving citizens further away from participating in the management of their local government activities. Moreover, participants observed deterring factors that are external as well as internal and sometime they intermixed. Local government officials, indeed, fear citizen participation and inclusion as potential threats to their autonomy. Citizens and community groups have lived the experience for years, they know the issues and are able to provide solutions. Citizens interviewed have knowledge and understand issues even better than the experts from International Organizations (groups of Interests) do.

Question 2 aimed at finding out how factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in policymaking and the design of public services in Burundi have affected power-holders and citizens' ability to deliver public services. Analysis of interviews, focus group discussions, documents, and researcher's field notes revealed that there are factors that provide positive outcome in favor of engaging citizen in the coproduction. The findings revealed also that they are negative hindrances that bar citizens' ability to engage in the coproduction. The actions of

both power-holders and the groups of interests have had an effect on the ability of the public to act.

The question I asked participants was “How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?” This question has three sub-questions that layout the views of participants about what different actors should do to foster community organization, attitudes of responsibility, and strategic thinking. Participants in this study enumerated issues that favors and those issues that hinders their ability to engage and improve citizen engagement and how these factors had affected policy-making and service design. The adoption of the Law on Decentralization has stimulated engagement in the coproduction. The findings revealed 56 percent of people surveyed and participants in this study agreed that the hindrance factors have impacted their ability to act while 39% of respondents think there are positive factors that support the effort made by the government. (See Figure 8).

The question 2a. asked participants “How do these issues or factors encourage and/or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi? Participants in this study responded to this question by referring the researcher to the Law on Decentralizations and different decrees enacted by Burundian Parliament and by noting that factors encouraging power holders and citizens to act are enormous. According to them, they include key structures, accountability mechanisms and participation mechanisms as displayed in Figure 6 and 7. A number of respondents reported that the procedures for citizen engagement and participation are well-known by local officials. They have been documented in the 2009 National Policy Documents on Decentralization. To a large degree and in additional to the above cited, encouraging factors include also citizen control mechanisms, the design of local government management, and political reform. Participants in this study, for example, noted that political

reform have created opportunities for communes and zones to play an important roles in delivering services to their residents while engaging them in the coproduction.

The external factors observed and narrated by participants in the study had negative influence not only to citizens who have lived these experiences for years but also to both power-holders and the groups of interests. These external factors are linked to the influence of the groups of interests in dictating what to do rather than showing how to do things. They included but not limited to: the vague role played by donor countries known in this study as the groups of interests and outside development experts, the role of central government in promoting and implementing these afore mentioned development activities, inclination of groups of interests in selecting projects and programs of primarily interest to them, and selection of selective groups of population of their interests. The roles played by the groups of interests, for instance, have distance citizens from participating as their implemented programs and projects deemed necessary to them (groups of interests) are imposed to citizens with or without their will. Citizens are never listened to before any action is considered.

The aim of question 2b was to find out the appropriate time to engage citizen in the coproduction. I asked participants “When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?” Analysis of transcripts from interviews revealed that factor influencing the appropriateness of citizen engagement included timing, political will, citizens’ ability to convey their time and energy, and the government willingness to set out a framework mechanism that will allow citizens to know when and where to take part and be engaged in the coproduction. Some of the participants were on the views that those international organizations that supported and funded for the Arusha Peace effort and support partial implementation of the 2009 National Policy Document of Decentralization were to help set up a timeframe mechanism

showing when and how citizens are to be part and included in policymaking and the design of public services. Whereas, some thought it was too early to engage citizens in the coproduction because of the level of education and understanding of issues to be discussed. Others, including the World Vision preferred local level advocacy approach known as Citizen Voice and Action as a mechanism to promote dialogue and collaboration between citizens and their leaders. Timing and selection of participants emerged as critical factors in case of engaging citizen in the design of public services. There was no consensus among participants about “who should participate” in these forums as the level of comprehension and education played key roles. Some suggested that those who take part in these forums should serve as community experts. They should then be able to read, write, and convey a clear and convincing discussion. However, other felt that those who can articulate the issues and be, fairly, able to represent others, even if they don’t have any education or could not read nor write, should be given a chance to serve others.

Question 2c explored lessons derived from Burundi’s citizen engagement model. The question the researcher asked participants was “What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy-making and service design?” Analysis from interviews, available data, transcripts, as well as research field notes were taken. Collaborative Learning approach was cited by numerous participants as the best model to follow and a chance for Burundian government to improve citizen engagement. Participants also believed that this model would allow citizens to fully participate in the coproduction. There was consensus from all participants in this study that citizens are to be engaged in one way or another.

Issues that emerged as critical for the design of a framework for consultation were the need to conceptualize an inclusive model that clarify the relationship between citizens and power-holders, and the groups of interests as well. The Collaborative Learning Approach

Framework seems to answer the current concerns of the Republic of Burundi's citizen engagement. However, this framework while beneficial within the concept of the Republic of Burundi, still can be challenged as it values emergent consensus, which would be difficult to achieve in a country that suffered for so long from exclusion, divisions, and is experiencing a deep mistrust between citizens and their power-holders.

Based on the analysis and findings derived from the Republic of Burundi's citizen engagement experience, the emerging themes for discussion are whether or not citizen engagement in local government would be an asset for African countries to design for emerging leaders in the public sectors? How local governments learn proven methods to improve product coproduction? What conceptual framework model to be applied that support and facilitate citizens' engagement? It was important to consider local and international dynamic that hinder citizen engagement in local government management. Chapter 5 discusses the emerging them in line with the literature on citizen engagement in policy-making and the design of public services. Again, specific recommendations are made in line with the importance of this study and issues for further research are identified.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to provide a deeper understanding of how the relations among citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests are shaped for the coproduction of public services. The researcher wanted to understand the factors for and barriers to people's direct involvement in local government management. To this end, the study examined in detail how citizen engagement and participation in decision-making and service design in the Republic of Burundi is shaped. The following research questions guided the study:

5. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi?
 - b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi?
6. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - a. How do these issues or factors encourage, enhance, or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi?
 - b. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
 - c. What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policy making and service design?

In overview, Chapter 5 is subdivided into six sections: a summary, discussion of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, contribution to the literature, what power-holders and the groups of interests can learn from the experience of participants, and implications for future research. It should be pointed out that this research was grounded in the conceptual framework of citizen engagement in post-colonial African countries. The summary is divided into two sub-sections: First is the structure of the narrative report, discussing how the research was conducted. Second is the summary of the findings of the process of “citizen engagement” (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011) in policymaking and the design of public services of local government management. In relation to the research questions raised in this study, Chapter 5 focuses on answering the following question:

1. What conclusions can be drawn from the stories and narratives that participants used to describe their experiences in citizen engagement?

As an extension of this question, the conclusion of this chapter addresses the changes power-holders and the groups of interests can make based on the experiences of participants in this study. Furthermore, recommendations for future study are made, and contributions to future research are noted. Finally, the dissertation closes with a statement of implications for future research, and the researcher’s personal reflection.

Summary

The empirical materials for this study were collected through a qualitative case study from the city of Bujumbura—Bujumbura Mairie in Burundi—because the purpose of the research and the type of data collection required it. This methodology was used because it provided multiple sources of data to build a comprehensive understanding of what happened and/or is happening in Burundi (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Such detailed information and

analysis was required to provide an understanding of citizen engagement approaches for local government management, which would not have been possible if a quantitative survey had been applied. Four data sets and methodologies were used in the collection of empirical materials: research interviews, documents, field note observations, and focus group discussions.

Participants were 23 informants comprising power-holders (public officials), civil society actors, officials of international organizations, and citizens, as well citizen groups. In-depth, unstructured, and audiotaped interviews were based on participants' respective experiences, stories, or narrations. These participants were purposely selected because they were living the investigated experiences. Selected participants to this study were invited to complete the following statement "Citizen Engagement in policymaking and the design of public service is like...?" Because of the political situation in Burundi at the time of this research, a large number of participants did not complete this statement.

The researcher engaged each participant in an interview that lasted 90 minutes or less, discussing his/her experience with citizen engagement in policymaking and service designs. Documents used for the study were government laws and statutes and the Law on Policy Document on Decentralization, reports of civil society organizations, research observation field notes, World Bank reports, ProQuest Dissertations, and other secondary documents.

As described in Chapter 3, the analyses were done by detailed "description," "categorical aggregation," "direct interpretation," establishment of "correspondence and pattern," and development of "generalization." Findings were validated through the use of multiple sources of data; member checking; rich, thick description; and peer reviews. The analysis of the written stories and interviews were returned to all research participants in an attempt to give them an opportunity to provide additional comments. As Maxwell (1996) recognized, this member check

process “is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what they say and the perspective they have on what is going on” (p. 94).

The study did not set out to test particular theories. Citizen engagement constituted the lens through which the researcher viewed and examined the dynamics about local government management. Due to the nature of the research questions (open-ended), answers were not that specific. The findings from this study are lessons learned from Burundian citizens’ experiences. They will add to the knowledge base of citizen engagement in both emerging and Western countries. If developing countries mainly in sub-Sahara Africa and other less developed countries want to engage citizens in coproduction, this study presents the lessons learned from the Republic of Burundi about citizen engagement and participation.

Insofar as the method and process of narrative inquiry operates on both levels, Bruner (1986a), Gadamer (1981), and Schwandt (1999) argue that member checks will always suffer and risk the charge of misinterpretation primarily because the researcher is also an integral part of the interpretation process. For Gadamer, understanding is always interpretation and “it means to use one’s own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to us” (p. 358). For Schwandt, it is implied that the desire to understand always entails the risk of misunderstanding and of making no sense to the originator of stories. From this perspective, part of the problem realized from the view of postmodernist interpretations is the acceptance of the truth that different people may view the same event differently. According to Schutz (1964), the telling of stories is itself a function of the tellers’ “acts of attention” (p. 51). Within the context of this study, while participants’ interpretations and the telling of their own stories were accepted as legitimate and having a place within Burundian society, the scholarly interest in this study aimed at discovering how their stories would contribute to the construction of their experience.

The findings in this study were presented as per Riccucci's (2010) interpretivist standpoint. In the context of Burundi, reality is a matter of interpretation (p. 49). The report provided in this paper followed Creswell's (1998) assertion of a case study narrative. In this case, research provided a detailed description with quotes from informants as well as an interpretation of stories and narratives of citizen engagement. The paper was written with a different audience in mind in order to be heard and understood, and if possible, to be a source of a new research theme in public administration and public policy. Participants' own words, charts, and diagrams were used for the narrative in such a way as to generate readers' interests, interaction, and sustain the significance of the research. The findings were also subject to peer review by a professional in the field for comment and feedback.

The researcher worked to ensure that the research presents a proper balance between background information versus analysis, interpretation, and conclusion. Concerning the narrative presentation of this study, the researcher was guided by the objective of the study, which was to provide a deeper understanding of factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi. The strength of this research lies in its in-depth and detailed analysis of the phenomenon being investigated to fill the gap in the existing literature on citizen engagement. In terms of liability and credibility of the study, the author followed Creswell (1998). Creswell pointed out that some researchers in qualitative tradition have sought to establish "qualitative equivalents that parallel traditional quantitative approaches to validity" (p.197) so that qualitative research can be validated and accepted. McReynolds et al. (2001) emphasized that "reliability" and "validity" within the context of the qualitative tradition do not have the same meaning as they do in quantitative research. They pointed out that terms like "credibility," "trustworthiness," and "authenticity" are used instead of reliability and validity.

Guba and Lincoln (1994), who were cited by Trochim (n.d.), emphasized that qualitative findings can be validated through the processes of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformity.

Trustworthiness as per Marshall and Rossman (2011) requires that a qualitative researcher establishes that the findings from the study that are in consonance with participants' perceptive and beliefs. Since the essence of a qualitative study is to describe the phenomenon from the views of those who lived the experience, transferability required the researcher to provide detailed characteristics of what was studied. The researcher has provided information to allow for external evaluators to assess whether the findings would be transferred elsewhere. In case of dependability, the researcher was asked to indicate and report on the changing environments of the study and how the changes would affect the findings. And finally, the process of conformability requires the researcher to document procedures adopted to collaborate and confirm the findings as per Trochim (n.d.). This research tried to answer these viewpoints.

Acceptable measures recommended by the researcher to fulfilling the above-mentioned are those recommended by Creswell (1998) that included acceptable strategies used to assess the quality of qualitative findings. The measures included field notes and memos; the use of multiple researchers; the use of multiple sources of data; peer review or debriefing; prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field; working with discrepant data; clarifying the researcher's bias; member checking; providing rich, thick description; and external audit (Creswell, 1998; McReynolds et al., 2001).

In relation to the notion that the experience lived was expressed in participants' stories and narrative descriptions, the basic pattern that emerged is that participants in this study

constructed their stories based on their self-understanding of what they have experienced.

Critical needs of participants in this study were reflected in their stories and narratives.

CA1, a participant to this study, for example, explained how he sees the absence of consultancy frameworks as deepening the mistrust between citizens and their power-holders. As an educated lawyer, he feels that the government should have a structured framework where citizens and state officials could have a clear discussion about policy options for their municipalities. CA1's narrative was about a lack of a framework for a frank dialogue among key players in citizen engagement. His story reflects his understanding that citizens are to be engaged in all the cycles of policy-making and the design of public services. He continues to believe that if the government decides not to have a space where ideas of citizens and/or community groups are collected and applied, then citizens will stay disengaged from governmental actions and activities. This self-interest behavior is mainly manifested when government fails to discuss matters with citizens in consultative ways.

One of the power-holders, Mr. Thierry, the Executive Secretary of Education and Patriotic Education, used his experience to narrate that the central government is using all the resources to enact laws and programs aimed at engaging citizens in the coproduction. Thierry feels that the work he has undertaken to educate citizens through community-wide initiative programs and elucidate the newly elected or appointed commune leaders to love their country, engage citizens, and be loyal leaders is paying off: "I have to say that the workshops are organized by the program of education and patriotic training within the Ministry of Interior and Patriotic Training. Of these workshops come the recommendations of the people that show their aspirations." Thierry's narrative description of his story shows how the central government is committed to transfer knowledge from the higher level to the lower level unit of government.

Esperance, a participant to the focus group discussion, used her experience to describe how lack of transparent management attests to the scope of corruption and other malpractices. On the one hand, her narrative was informed and structured by the way she believes things are going. According to her, transparency is an important component not only for citizens to rely on in assuring that services and products will be provided, but it will also allow accountability that services are provided. As seen in Chapter 4, her assertion is indicative of her desire to see things change. Like CA1, Esperance's critical need was the necessity to build a strong relationship among all players of local governments, including local and state officials, civil society actors, and the groups of interests. In addition, it was also important for her to raise her point of being excluded from the process because, in practice, power-holders do not want to engage her in the process.

Finally, the influence of political parties was raised by Ngendakumana. Per her, political parties have become a distraction, a setback of central government's willingness to engage citizens, and a tool used by those politicians to link people to killings and disobedience of government actions: "From my experience, opposition parties are sowing hate and desolation. They should give this government a chance to govern and engage citizens." Reflected through Ngendakumana's stories was the critical need to support the government's engagement actions.

In summary, in all the stories and experiences told here are consistent patterns that connect all the stories narrated to experiences lived. The narratives that were described continued to reinforce and sustain the claim that support citizen engagement is needed and should be implemented as soon as possible. It emphasized that citizens are ready to embrace change, provide ideas, and support programs that will boost their economic wellbeing. A consultative

framework for citizen engagement, however, is to be created and used by both power-holders and the groups of interests to sustain engagement.

Discussions on Findings for Question 1

Research Question 1 asked: What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi? The question reviewed the findings for factors for and barriers to citizen engagement. This question had two sub-questions: a) What issues or factors encourage or contribute to citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi? And b) What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in Burundi? In terms of the factors that encourage citizen engagement, it was revealed that opportunities for citizen engagement in Burundi exist if leaders serve the public interest, which involves actions on the part of both the central and municipal governments that are consistent with the long-term well-being of the community. It was also revealed that barriers to citizen engagement in Burundi are enormous, challenging, and create mistrust among public and private actors, creating, therefore, an administrative vacuum and political turmoil.

Discussions on Findings for Question 1a

Question 1a asked: What issues or factors encourage or contribute to citizen engagement in local government management in Burundi? The answer to this question revealed that the government of Burundi's approach to citizen engagement lies within the Law on Decentralization promulgated in 2005 and its subsequent laws and decrees promulgated herein. Participants' narrative stories revealed that opportunities for citizen engagement do exist as a participatory mechanism described in the Law on Decentralization, which offers citizens opportunities to provide inputs in local government decision making and elect their municipal leaders, who in turn will be able to design services needed by the citizens. The Law on

Decentralization also creates a structural setting for communities and business leaders to come together in defining programs and services needed within their respective communities.

Chapter 4 presents a number of factors and participatory mechanisms in support of citizen engagement, among them mobilization, consultation, dialogue, delegation, and accountability. In all participants' stories and their interpretations, there was a consistent recursive pattern that connects all the stories to factors encouraging engagement in decision-making and the design of public services in Burundi. The first factor in favor of citizen engagement is the partial application of the Law on Decentralization that informs and structures how the process of decentralization, from elections of Hill councils to the central government approbation of financial resources to lower level municipal entities, are to be performed. The second factor includes those elements cited in Chapter 4: mobilization, consultation, dialogue, delegation, and accountability. Those elements are supported by the National Document on Decentralization adopted in 2009 by the government of Burundi. At the same time, the stories that were told continued to reinforce and sustain the beliefs that citizens supported this Law and have been gradually participating in the process.

Insofar as narratives gained through focus group discussions and interviews were used as to understand the meaning of the experience of participants in this study, the relationship between the construction of the stories and the meaning of their experience can be understood as follows. In constructing their stories, participants in this study understood that broad and representative public participation is difficult but not impossible to achieve. Their stories reveal that public engagement is direct citizen involvement in local government affairs rather than reliance on representation by the central government. Based on what people perceive, to them,

when they engage in problem-solving and decision making, they feel more connected to programs and projects implemented by their government.

One basic pattern that emerged is that participants in this study confirmed that the law setting up the decentralization process was aimed at strengthening social cohesion, improving local governance, and promoting access to basic infrastructure and service delivery. Participants who answered Question 1a positively are governmental officials or power-holders who strongly believe that the programs, including educational ones, that are being implemented today in Burundi align with factors that encourage citizen participation. There were divided opinions about the roles of citizens. Citizens interviewed showed little support on question 1a while government officials believed that the government has made substantial efforts to bridge the gap between citizens and their elected policy-makers. Those against this question argued that the central government lags far behind in engaging citizens in coproduction. They believe that the central government is facing a difficult choice after being pressured by their external supporters (World Bank and other multilateral organizations), which are pushing them to implement this Law on Decentralization.

Importantly, power-holder participants in this study voiced particular needs and values. As mentioned in Chapter 1, for Nabatchi (2012), participation is a space where public concerns, needs, and values are merged into government decision-making. The success of leaders in winning their followers, one by one, depends critically upon their capacity to listen to the stories of individuals, because it is precisely “stories of identity” that help individuals think about who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed (Gardner, 1995, p. 43). As one participant mentioned, citizen engagement occurs when local or national governments have solid structures and a representative participation that is manageable. This context means that citizens

are informed, consulted, collaborated with, educated, and empowered to provide their inputs towards the full functioning of their local government.

This Question 1a represents further a unit of meaning in that something in the present reminded participants what it means to be Burundians and of the need to come together and build strong institutions through the Law on Decentralization and other similar laws and decrees while working on mobilizing strategy that connects and engages people to their institutions. Secondly, as noted in Chapter 4, a fundamental difference about the past administrations and this administration, which has taken the lead in implementing part of the Law on Decentralization, is that people interviewed believed their government today has good policies in place for citizens to believe that those in power are willing to delegate institutional, financial, and administrative powers to local levels of government (communes and zones). At the same time, citizens should be placed at the center of municipal administrative debates through consultation, information sharing, and accountability. Similarly, citizens will have access to relevant and objective information and documentation as a path toward meaningful engagement.

The words of Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) provide a deeper understanding of what power-holders and citizens can and should do:

As individuals, as public servants, and as a nation, we must have the integrity, the strength, and the commitment to be honest with ourselves and to work continually to be true to our shared values. Whether we express our citizenship by becoming more involved in our community, dialogue, participating directly in democratic processes and institutions, or renewing our commitment or by becoming public servants ourselves whatever form it takes—an expansion of democratic citizenship will not only benefit citizens in their work together but also help build the spirit of public service throughout society to the benefit of all. (p. 209)

The predominant view in the case of the Republic of Burundi is consonant with the words of Denhardt (2011) related to power-holders' commitment to be honest with themselves about how

much they are actually doing to overcome citizen disengagement. This includes 1) acting to carry out major reforms to improve local governance and the full implementation of the Law on Decentralization and 2) providing collaborative spaces where the ideas of citizens can be taken into consideration. Chapter 2 discussed tools for citizen engagement and how these tools could be used to foster engagement and coproduction. Among these tools are the tool to inform, consult, and involve citizens by asking them to take part in policymaking debates and the design of public services.

One of the communal administrators said that “the population is consulted because decisions of Municipal Council come from the base.” According to him, those citizens not only play key roles in selecting those who represent them, but they are also meeting their democratic duties; therefore, they are engaged in coproduction. He could not imagine how he could be named Administrator of the Commune without the process of voting in the Communal Councils, which select the best Administrator to run communal business.

Finally, Thierry’s experience and explanation reinforced participatory mechanisms used to engage citizens in coproduction. According to him, the government has taken a number of measures, including educating citizens to understand their civic obligations and training public officials who will be in charge of their municipalities on democracy, budgeting, governance, and accountability, which are primary goals of this administration. Knowing the ups, downs, and tight turns of local governance and how to translate them toward engaging citizens in coproduction indicates the willingness of this administration to be bound by the spirit of decentralization and citizen engagement. While Thierry did not provide specific theory or training materials, he strongly believed that the processes undertaken are the real factors that enhance citizen engagement and participation in the newly created municipalities.

Recall, for instance, Duck's (1998) suggestion that for real change to occur, power holders need to win their constituencies' trust by responding to their critical needs. As described by Duck, the critical needs for participants in this study were reflected in their narratives. What this means is that lived experience structures expressions, and expressions structure lived experiences. Said differently, citizens and their power-holders have both expressions and experience to tell, as both share the same municipalities and view them differently in terms of who should have access to information, provide ideas, or decide policy issues. In relation to the notion that lived experiences structure expressions, a basic pattern emerged in that participants in this study constructed their stories on the basis of self-understanding of what they have lived and experienced as problems.

In conclusion, findings on Question 1a suggest that the government of Burundi is in a state of searching for its identity. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of administering today's public and private services while citizens are demanding to be part of the process is shaping how the governments in developing countries, including the Republic of Burundi, provides services and products to their citizens. In fact, increasing integration and globalization are dictating that the central government in Burundi move away from a traditional form of providing services, while bringing services closer to citizens. Thus, the government is asked to implement policies with fundamental goals of engaging citizens in coproduction and allowing them to fully play a role in policy implementation. It is important for power-holders to understand how the engagement process works and design policies to solve this crucial issue.

Discussions on Findings for Question 1b

The second research question asked: What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management? Responses from participants identified events that led to citizens

being reluctant to engage in the coproduction of public values. Interviewees provided their understanding of issues that matter to them, including lack of citizen forums to foster democratic dialogue, lack of transparency in the management of local public affairs, and lack of accountability in the management of localities, as well as the groups of interests' self-imposed behaviors and the internal organization of local administration.

First, the stories of participants reinforced a sense of community and a belief that the experiences they have undergone help them find effective ways to get citizens involved and working to foster civic culture. Second, as described in Chapter 4, participants in this study were adept at identifying negative issues, including corruption, apathy, favoritism, injustice, and political discrimination, that hinder citizens from participating in local government management. The distrust of the population toward their local administrators is based on a lack of forums to foster democratic dialogues. As CA1 observed, an increasing number of policy and governance challenges, such as inclusive growth, poverty reduction, government accountability, business integrity, and innovation, demand the participation of citizens, citizen groups, and the private sector to generate viable solutions. Other barriers include the illiteracy rate of active citizens who are willing to participate in coproduction.

Third is a lack of accountability mechanisms in the management of municipalities. Unequal treatment of citizens creates injustice and favoritism. Those facing these issues retreat from participating, assuming tribalism or ethnic discrimination. The findings of this study support the views of public administrators. It asks leaders to apply the concept of equal treatment while allowing unvoiced citizens to have a voice. Listening to the needs of their citizens and providing adequate solutions to their social and economic problems while allowing them to be part of the design of public services will move these citizens from self-interested behaviors to

embracing community interests. Based on the field realities experienced in Burundi, even though decentralization has taken a lead, citizens, are left deliberately ignorant of the processes being implemented. Those connected have access to policymakers and other governmental institutions. The poor and underserved citizens still have neither access nor the means to be connected to their institutions.

All the participants in the focus groups and the 23 interviewees raised the issue of barriers to citizen engagement. Participants in the focus group discussions were in agreement that commune and hill leaders are to do more to engage citizens in the decisions they take. They also believe that the central government should look for opportunities to encourage engagement rather than simply coming to people when they want to take 2% of their money for projects they did not ask for or participate in their formulations.

Those participants to this study who expressed their concerns about the lower level of their participation pointed out that the central government has never informed them about participating in formulating programs or services deemed necessary to them. Recall, for instance, Pastor Joseph, who said that “they don’t trust us and we really don’t believe in what these Nyumba Kumi says.” Pastor Joseph’s stories were influenced by the absence of accountability in the management of his central government. Pastor Joseph saw his role, and the role of other citizens experiencing the same concerns, as fixing the inefficiency. As mentioned in Chapter 4, participants manifested a lack of ownership of the decentralization being implemented.

The nature of the working relationships between the citizens and power-holders, between power-holders and groups of interests, and between groups of interests and citizens was explored further. These working relationships were a key barrier to engagement. Participants of the study

were adept in identifying the deep and pervasive causes relevant to the question. The following paragraphs will discuss these working relationships.

Citizens vs. power-holders. Citizens' perceptions of power-holders' commitment to fully involve them in policymaking and the design of public services are mixed. First, the findings reveal that citizens believe they are used by power-holders as vehicles for their own political and social purposes. Citizens feel that power-holders are engineering their support solely to gain political support from internal and external stakeholders (the World Bank and other International Organizations that engineered the decentralization system) for the purpose of gaining funding for specificities. For example, the Commune Development Plan and Hill Council, which have created structures called "neighborhood councils" or "neighborhood advisory groups," have no legitimate function or power. The Hill Council, for instance, is used as a vehicle to prove that the grassroots population is in line with the program being implemented. In practice, the programs implemented by the central government are purposely selected and never discussed by and with the grassroots citizens.

In terms of institutions, the legal framework in Burundi indicates that communes have general responsibilities for local affairs. According to the Law No. 1/02 of January 25, 2010 organizing communal administration in Burundi, the commune is the first conceptual pillar of public service at the local level that is not of a national scale or already assigned to the central government and /or mairie of Bujumbura. However, the researcher's observation reveals, as of the time of this research, that Zones and Communes have duplicate and undefined functions. Therefore, citizens are confused about what services they should seek from Zones and Communes. The Commune Council as a public consultative body, for example, is asked to conduct three meetings a year in which citizens can ask questions. Except for voting for some

key officials (even those voted in office, including commune administrators, are removed from office by their hierarchies without the consent or approval from citizens), the Commune Council or PCDC is used as a manipulating instrument or functions to advance the so-called democratic principle in a young democracy. Focus group discussions found that many citizens are discouraged by the real and/or perceived control of public decisions and decision-makers by power-holders. Understandably, the decentralization system in Burundi is in its inception phase. The system had been in existence for only three months at the time of this research.

Another facet is information. Absent in Burundi is a channel of information sharing. As observed, information was to be an instrument used by power-holders to inform citizens about their rights, responsibilities, and options. However, the one-way information system (see Figure 5) from power-holders to citizens, with no channel provided for feedback or comments, discourages citizens from participating. Most of the time, citizens, when informed or contacted, are intimidated by the presence of officials, and accept, then, the proposal given by the power-holders. From these discussions, it is clear that citizens are left with one option: *distrust their power-holders*.

Power-holders, in turn, feel that they are working in direct collaboration with their citizens, while following the letter of decentralization. They claim that an effort has been made to ensure strong institutions are in place and that citizens, as well as the newly appointed and elected administrators, are trained, educated, and informed about their country. Interviewed power-holders believe that the future will speak for itself, and that the goals of undergoing programs, including educating citizens on civic issues, will be realized in the coming years.

Citizens vs. groups of interests. When it comes to the groups of interests, citizens view them as “*le garrot qui crée la faim et empêche le développement*” -- the withers that create

hunger and prevent development (translation by the researcher). In other words, citizens feel betrayed by these multinational organizations. “These people drive newer, nicer, bigger cars. They live a comfortable life with plenty of resources in our country and enjoyed full immunity while they create crimes, including deepening misery and hunger. They don’t care about us as they bring policy and unwanted program by offering our government illegitimate debts,” said Pastor Deo, one of the participants in the focus group discussions in Bujumbura. Another participant in the focus group discussions in Bujumbura, Pastor Munganza, added that these organizations are “the new mafias against democracy because our voices are not being either considered or included in their programs and projects they design. We see them coming with our leaders, then see them going back to their business without involving us in their respective works,” lamented Pastor Munganza.

The groups of interests’ engagement has remained project-based and is not equipped to deal with the fundamental problems associated with politics and engagement of citizens. Rather than taking an open-ended approach to strengthen citizen engagement, these donor agencies are failing to turn to issues of citizen engagement as a driving force and driver of economic sustainability. They believe possessing feasible development strategies that inform realistic expectations of what can be achieved without inputs from citizens. As I heard, citizens see the groups of interests as instruments of the Western countries used by donor agencies to increase their suffering, hunger, corruption, and bad governance.

A poignant cry of alarm has been sounded by the population who are waiting without hope to be included in the programs and projects to be implemented. “You who speak to them, please tell them, we need safe water,” said one alarmed participant. It is a shame, lamented Pastor Deo, to see how administrators who work for the multinational corporations look, how

they live and the society they come from, and projects they propose, and we (Burundian residents) are still the subject of suffering, dying, and killings. Arrogance is how citizens define the people who work for the groups of interests. In general, there is a lack of deep social, economic, and political engagement between citizens and the groups of interests. As this researcher observed, the groups of interests have apparently precluded any relationship of reciprocity and complementarity with citizens whose lives they claim to touch and change. One of the Mutwa participants to the study said, we “saw them driving nicer cars and waving at us.” In general, focus group participants in Muramvya feel a sense of hopelessness and betrayal from those international organizations that they believed came to help them move out of deep poverty.

Power-holders vs. groups of interests. Burundian power-holders have for years trusted the groups of interests to provide adequate solutions to the problems their country faces. Burundian power-holders accepted and trusted proposed economic reforms by the World Bank and the IMF that would supposedly lead to economic sustainability and increase the level of education while ending poverty. Rather than providing solutions, these organizations have created a vacuum of miseries and desolation.

One of the suggestions provided by participants in this study was to look at the stated functions of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the International Monetary Fund and then compare the work they have actually provided to Burundian citizens since their offices opened in Burundi. During the time of the Kingdom before the independence, Burundian citizens were full participants in government actions. Then, throughout the history of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the government of Burundi relied on the most influential entities to fund programs. The top management of the Bank and other so-called experts spent their time meeting, consulting,

writing, and training Burundian policymakers in areas deemed of necessity to them. The majority of participants in this research were not in favor of how these groups of interests conducted their business with the central government. Their ideas support the position taken by Jean Ziegler (2005), author of “L’Empire de la Honte” (translated as “The Empire of Shame”) who stated that “at the heart of the globalized market, bankers, high-ranking officials of transnational corporations, traders in world trade accumulate money, destroy the state, devastate nature and human beings.” This view was embraced by many highly educated respondents, who reported concerns about the groups of interests and how their municipalities will be run. They believe that the groups of interests will impose projects and services to their government while failing to engage citizens in service deliveries. Pastor Deo claimed that Burundians have lived peacefully in their country and are able to provide solutions to their problems given the opportunities. He noted that, since these organizations have opened their doors in Bujumbura, their lives have changed from better to worse. Self-interested behaviors have become paramount. Citizens, he said, have completely forgotten the sense of togetherness their parents and grandparents lived with before the 1960s and are now divided because of political party affiliations imposed by those willing to destroy our lives.

Many of the key findings illuminate the often overlapping sets of circumstances that cause citizens and their power-holders to lose faith in the work performed by the groups of interests. Interviewees believe that the groups of interests impose programs, deliberately ignore the demands of citizens, and willfully hide programs believed to work for them, while providing unworkable solutions. All their proposed programs have led to scarcity of food, seeds, water, and other services. Interviewees believed the groups of interests pressure the government to implement unnecessary programs and projects that lead to a lower quality of life in Burundi.

Though the World Bank's purpose is to aid long-term economic development and reduce poverty in developing countries, and though it purports to accomplish this through technical and financial support. Participants in this study believe the Word Bank Group dictates what to do without showing government officials how to do it. The groups of interests work with the central government (though not with citizens or citizen groups), but at the same time, they fund only programs of primary interest to them. This interaction has provided little to no economic development; citizens have been pushed further into poverty. Similarly, the World Bank and IMF continue to apply economic policies—mainly privatization and liberalization policies such as loans, grants, debt relief, and debt cancellation programs—despite years of evidence that these policies have failed to engage citizens in coproduction, promote sustainable development, or end poverty, and have largely impacted negatively on the lives of the poor Burundian people. One of the participants, CA1, observed that the groups of interests' solutions are problematic because they hinder the Burundian government from choosing their own policy solutions.

Pressure to suspend loans that fund agriculture subsidies and other programs in Burundi has allowed the central government to implement what the Bank wants them to without the consent of its people. Projects that are supposed to support economic viability and revitalization actually spark massive capital flight and crippling debts. Moreover, projects that would satisfy Burundian domestic demands for development have never been funded, let alone proposed, by the World Bank and the IMF. This is because (as one of the focus group participants described), once funded, these programs would result in reduced imports from the US and other industrialized countries, because the Burundian government would be able to support itself. At the time of this research, for example, the former colonial ruler—Belgium—concealed €2 million to fund the electoral process in order to pressure the government to back down from

running for president. They also halted support for the police, where they fund at least 70 percent of the operation.

Burundian government staff interviewed felt, for a number of geostrategic reasons that the government is not allowed to implement, as it sees fit, independent policies that foster the country's economic development. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the decision not to implement comes from these multilateral organizations, including the World Bank and the IMF. CA1, a former Burundian lawyer, reported that the programs funded by the international organizations are not debated in the country. He claimed that they see the multinational organizations coming with projects already made and asking if the people support these programs. In reading different papers prepared and proposed by these institutions, as well as multilateral institutions, readers are given the impression that the programs proposed are inclusive and have the potential to boost the country's economic well-being and move it from deep poverty to a good quality of life. However, according to Ngendakumana, these potentials are never transformed into action.

What is true is that “collaboration” and “cooperation” are one-way processes in which the central government and its branches are asked to follow recommendations from the World Bank and the IMF without looking backward. The question is, how should power-holders perceive the groups of interests? In responding to this question, developing countries, including the government of Burundi, want to pursue innovative policies that engage citizens and other partners in development. Unfortunately, the policies and programs of those believed to be the experts of development have led the country into deep misery.

Discussion on Findings for Question 2

The second research question asked: How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi? This question aimed at finding out

factors in favors of citizen engagement as well as factors that inhibit the ability of power-holders to act. In discussing this question, the researcher asked three more questions for clarification and better understanding: How do these issues or factors encourage, enhance, or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi? When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach? And, finally, what are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does that affect policy making and service design? Participants to this study laid out issues they believe are essential for Burundian people to feel safe and engage in the coproduction. They also enumerated a number of issues that hinders citizen's participation.

Discussion of Findings for Question 2a

Question 2a asked: How do these issues or factors encourage, enhance, or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in Burundi? As described in Chapter 4, the analysis of interviews, documents, and field notes revealed that there are positive factors and a wide range of tribulations which restrain citizen endorsement to engagement or participation in actions undertaken by local and central government.

In terms of factors that enhance engagement, it was found that the opportunities for citizen engagement and participation in Burundi do exist. The factors for citizen engagement would have a positive outcome if leaders continue to follow the letter of the 2009 National Policy Document on Decentralization and see it as their preferred method of power sharing and accountability. Before independence in 1962, community participation was widely used in electing local and national leaders, but since the arrival of the Belgian colonialists, Burundians were very often disillusioned with political leadership and political institutions that excluded them from policy debate, development, and implementation.

What has emerged from the findings in Burundi are factors that favor engagement through a decentralization process. These issues include but are not limited to 1) citizen control mechanism, 2) the actual design of local government, 3) political reform. Control mechanism for example, is supported by Figure 5 and includes a) the newly created institutions (Collines/Hill Councils, Head of Colline Council, Administrator, and commune Council); b) accountability mechanisms that includes council meetings, biannual report on communes community development plan, annual report to council, commune council meetings, and annual budget; c) participatory mechanisms which includes open public meeting, development committee report to citizens, and public consultative meetings held twice a year where the public can ask questions. These factors support inclusivity of citizens in decisions taken by their local municipal leaders.

Government officials spoke in favor of the actions, including training citizens on civic issues, crafting laws in support of administrative decentralization, and encouraging citizens to meaningfully participate in decentralized institutions. Generally, the central government provided institutional mechanisms, among them commune and neighborhood councils, that lay the ground for engagement. As stated in Chapter 4, in drafting and promulgating the policy document on decentralization, the government envisioned placing citizens at the center of local development and democratic principles. The Burundian government is taking the political option that brings public services closer to the people while involving citizens in decision-making and choices about the development programs and projects of their localities.

Interviewees identified six factors that favor engagement. They include, mobilization, delegation, partnering, informing, consulting, and controlling. This confirms the assertions made by Thierry, the governmental official, and James H. Svara and Janet Denhardt (2010), authors of “Connected Community: Local Governments as Partners in Citizen Engagement and Community

Building.” Essentially, however, power-holders in Burundi understand that the challenges related to meaningful citizen engagement exist. As many public administrators have said, when citizens are invited to participate in public decisions without the appropriate foundation of information needed about how their cities and zones function to properly frame decisions, participation lacks meaning, diminishes trust, and encourages citizens to disinvest in community and retreat into self-interest mode (Denhardt, 2010; Glaser, 2006). Accordingly, the government has taken actions to encourage citizen engagement by training citizens and hiring local municipal leaders in order to have an intimate understanding of the public’s concerns and options for intervention that square with sustainable community.

As observed in Chapter 4, the factors inhibiting engagement are numerous. They are both external and internal in nature. The external factors include the vague role played by the groups of interests and outside development experts, the role of the central government in promoting and implementing development activities, the inclination of groups of interests to select projects and programs of primary interest to them, the tendency of these groups to select people who are favorable to their interests, and their biases in reports to internal and external agents. While these external variables hinder engagement, their capacity to influence how citizens participate in or retreat from engagement is huge. It was found that the groups of interests know what citizens want and have the capability to provide solutions. But self-interested behaviors, unethical business practices, and dictation from the Western donor countries have left citizens no choice but to retreat to self-interest. Participants’ experience shows that strong interference of central authorities in their communes, zones and hills are distancing citizens from participation. 56 % of citizens who responded to our questionnaires agreed that central government interference in local affairs and the vague roles played by the groups of interests, mainly by imposing programs and

projects to be implemented without consulting citizens have left citizens without other choice than moving away from supporting the actions of government.

The internal factors inhibiting citizen engagement observed include: illiteracy level and citizen's lack of skills, the contradictory interests of group memberships, gatekeeping by the local elite, a lack of community interest in participation, and citizens' low capacity to contribute ideas to proposed projects or programs. It is also important to note how participants understand and make meaning of their experiences with both external and internal factors that bar them from being part of the system they believe was created for them.

In conclusion, the experience of the Republic of Burundi's citizen engagement confirmed the idea that the decentralization process could lead to citizen engagement. Even though there is enough information that disfavors citizen engagement, the existence of this perception had an adverse effect. The opportunity for citizen engagement at different levels exists in Burundi via laws and decrees promulgated and published since the passage of the Law on Decentralization in 2005. Sensing this, the central government had created mechanisms that hold public officials accountable to their citizens. Further research may be needed to probe further because if the government allows meaningful participation by fully decentralizing its institutions, including financial and political decentralization and effective active participation of CSOs, municipalities will have full capability to serve the public interests, involving actions that are consistent with the long-term well-being of the community.

Discussion of Finding for Question 2b

Question 2b asked: When is it appropriate to involve citizens in local government management? On issue of when to engage citizens in the coproduction, the responses were not mixed. The study found that it is appropriate to engage citizens in policy-making and the design

of public services as soon as possible. Substantial citizen engagement is to be sustained over time only if citizens come to trust their leaders, understand their roles, and support the institutions and practices of participation. While the discussions focused on the actions taken by local and central government officials, it is worth noting that the experience and informational capacity of the groups of interests can be a tool for moving forward with engagement strategies.

When I asked the question of “How early in the process do you involve citizens in the coproduction (before or after the main decisions have been made)? Participants, mainly local citizens were on the views that they have never been asked to participate. Power-holders believed otherwise. One of the administrator admitted that “we need to make communes and zones part of decision-making process.” It was found that engaging citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests is “the best thing to do” and should be done in pursuit of economic well-being. It was also found that power-holders in full support of the World Bank and other international organizations are a vehicle to engagement and should be considered as ways to engage citizens in coproduction.

A collaborative network that involves all the key players may be used to involve and enrich citizens. This is in consonance with observations made by Glaser (2010) that when citizens are invited to participate in public decisions without the appropriate foundation of information needed to frame decisions, their participation lacks meaning. Glaser is saying that citizens should be empowered by information and then be able to provide inputs in policy debates and proposals. Meaningful citizen engagement requires leadership that allows citizens and citizen-led organizations to bring their ideas to the table. Realizing citizens’ right to engage in the democratic process is vital to ensuring the achievement of agreed upon development goals while rethinking how the salience of topics on the public agenda will be covered.

In this study a majority of respondents highlighted that the main challenges they face are limited opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes and the design of public services. These citizens and citizen groups feel excluded and marginalized in their societies and communities. The need for participatory structures and greater trust between citizens and institutions and between citizens and the groups of interests was also stressed. Efforts should focus on the most vulnerable citizens, including targeting extremely low-income residents, the youth, and marginalized women.

The study also found that there was no one route to obtaining the strategic goal of engaging citizens in policy-making and service design. In the case of the Republic of Burundi, opinions were divided as to whether the World Bank and other international organizations were needed to facilitate citizen engagement. In reality, policy choices applied by the World Bank and the IMF to engage citizens in coproduction have failed. These institutions focus on high levels of government rather than on citizens who have the most to lose by activities these organizations propose. By focusing on high levels and imposing on power-holders' their policy choices without consulting citizens at the bottom ranks, they prioritize unnecessary activities that create more miseries for the people. In Burundi, the critical factors are participation and the lack of it.

Discussion of Finding for Question 2c

Question 2c asked: What are ways to improve citizen engagement and how does it affect policymaking and service design? The study found that in order to improve the image of citizens in policymaking and the design of public services, citizens should be involved at all stages of government actions, including agenda setting and the design of public services. Analysis from interviews, available data, transcripts, as well as research field note taken revealed that

Collaborative Learning Approach could allow citizens to fully participate in the coproduction process.

One of the issues that emerged as critical for the design of a framework for consultation were the need to conceptualize an inclusive model supported by both the power holders and the groups of interests. While Collaborative Learning Approach framework is beneficial to all participants, still could be challenged by power-holders who may resist some of its application as values. Participants in the study narrated the following as best ways to improve citizen engagement.

First, the groups of interests are to essentially work as community-based organizations. Their focus should be on local level advocacy to sensitize community members on their rights and responsibilities, and on the need to engage. A social accountability approach designed to promote dialogue between citizens and their leaders would encourage citizen engagement. Some of the participants wanted to use the so called Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) approach. Through CVA, citizens from various walks of life are made aware of their rights and the minimum standards of the services they are entitled to (education, health, hygiene and sanitation, protection, etc.). Participants viewed this method—helping citizens understand public policies, monitoring standards, and then engaging in face-to-face dialogue with service providers and local decision-makers—as a path toward to full engagement and inclusion in policymaking and the design of public services.

Second, the groups of interests should have little difficulty in mobilizing citizens. In all areas where groups of interests fund projects and other international organizations exercising their works in Burundi, they have to seek strong and positive relationships with local stakeholders, including administration and decentralized technical services, faith leaders, faith

based organizations, and community-based organizations, community mobilizers, volunteers, and other community groups. The mobilization of citizens around any action that goes through these channels will improve citizen engagement and collaboration.

Another way to improve citizen engagement is the groups of interests recognizing that the data they provide to funders and the government are unbiased. For years, the data donor agencies have presented to communities and funders have been biased to satisfy donors' demands.

Finally, it must be recognized that the groups of interests' experts, policymakers, and development professionals are subject to biases, mental shortcuts (heuristics), and social and cultural influences, and that these biases are evident in reports and papers presented to a variety of audiences. Because the decisions of the groups of interests often have large effects on Burundian people's lives, it is especially important that mechanisms be in place to check and correct for those biases. Once the biases are communicated and corrected, lessons can be learned from the implementation of successful or failed projects. This will have an important impact on citizens, local governments, and citizen-led development projects.

Conclusions

The stories and narratives used by participants in this study were reflective of their past events. This kind of remembering continues to frame their experiences and allows them to provide meaning in their future decision making. So, what conclusions can be drawn from the narratives that participants used to describe their experience in citizen engagement?

A basic pattern connected participant stories to the experiences lived; their stories were expressions of their lived experiences. At the same time, the relationship between experience and stories were interpreted as being analogical or lineal in nature. Recall, for instance, Gregory

Bateson's (1979) mind and nature as a necessary unit. For Bateson, lineal reasoning refers to "patterns that connect" in living and social systems (p. 228). What this means, essentially, is that the experience structures expressions, and expressions refer to people's lived experiences. Restructuring governance in the Republic of Burundi offers the possibility of creating an environment in which priorities can be reordered and responsiveness to various communities of interests assured. What is true today is that the theory and practice of public administration is increasingly concerned with placing citizens at the center of power-holders' consideration, not just as a target, but as an agent of coproduction. Effective engagement by a citizen-centered local government requires political, economic, and administrative supports for genuine devolution of power to local officials and professionals and to the citizens with whom they engage. The results of this research paper are a contribution to the growing body of evidence of this important vein of knowledge.

The main objective of this research was to analyze citizen engagement in local government management in African post-colonial countries using qualitative inquiries to understand the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement. This study used a combination of qualitative inquiries, among them in-depth interviews, documents reviews, observations, and focus group discussions.

The results show that in the Republic of Burundi, factors that encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management exist through the new Law on Decentralization. Politicians' willingness to decentralize Burundian institutions and start implementing the Law on Decentralization were indicative of how far power-holders were willing to risk real engagement, and how successful public servants will be in enabling it to happen. The greater variation took place in 2005 when citizens endorsed the law as a form of

governance in their respective collines and communes. In January 2016, Burundian authorities allowed the law to take effect in the City of Bujumbura Mairie.

On the other hand, barriers to citizen engagement in Burundi outweigh the factors in support of citizen engagement. We can consider three effects: first, the social pressure exerted by some citizens and citizen groups as “Civil Society Organizations” motivated by the results of internal conflicts, unending wars, and mismanagement of government resources. Citizens, in this case, are retreating from their responsibilities due to a lack of voice in the management of local entities. Trust, therefore has become an issue as those citizens feel disconnected from the central government and commune administration.

Secondly, as one participant narrated, the determination to educate citizens to understand their rights and demand accountability faced “obstacles to citizens’ engagement, such as self-exclusion, poverty, and a pessimistic perception among citizens that the opportunities to participate and effectively influence local decision-making process remain limited.” Therefore, through municipalities, hills and zones, individuals who are being excluded from participating must be asked to be part of the process.

Thirdly, the determination of citizen groups to elect people they believe will be supporting local development is a pathway toward including the ideas of citizens in coproduction. Despite the government’s ambitious goals to decentralize their institution, there still is a lack of financial autonomy. Therefore, the decentralization of institutions remains slow as money is the driving factor of all activities being undertaken.

The results allow local government in the Republic of Burundi to look through the eyes of citizens to better understand their commitment to community and their willingness, or not, to join the government in making sacrifices that improve the community’s wellbeing. In this case, if

power-holders work in partnership with citizens and citizen groups for community change, there is a great potential to consider ideas proposed by citizens.

Recommendations

Despite the greater promise of citizen engagement through a well drafted Law on Decentralization, and similar decrees promulgated in the past years, in practice, these efforts leave much to question. In Burundi, public officials interviewed tended to point fingers at the public and members of different political parties and accuse them of being apathetic, disengaged, cynical, and incompetent. Citizens, in their turn, tended to point fingers at the public officials and believe that they bar the road toward full engagement.

This research uncovers many stories of participants, as well as interpretations of what interviewees think will work, what could not work, and why. Based upon these discussions and a review of the literature, several recommendations emerged.

Recommendations for the Government of Burundi: Power-Holders

The following recommendations are proposed by the researcher. The aim of my recommendation lies at straightening collaboration among citizens and their elected and appointed officials. The government needs to 1) understand and communicate the value and benefit of citizen engagement, 2) make citizens an integral part of public decision-making and service-design, 3) make sure a broad and representative citizen engagement is in place, 4) ensure two-way communication and information sharing, and 5) confirm that sound structures and engagement mechanisms are implanted.

Understand and communicate the value and benefit of citizen engagement. Problems that the government—both central and the newly created local municipalities—face today are complex and require input and commitment from a broad range of constituencies, mostly

citizens. At the same time, officials (power-holders) do not have guidelines, models, or frameworks to facilitate meaningful citizen engagement. As a result, citizens retreat from assisting the government's efforts. In the case of Burundi, power-holders overlook the fact that the value of citizen's engagement and participation is in the actual participation. The belief that local government (zones and communes) should involve the public is hardly new. Even though community dialogue can seem time-consuming and sometimes impractical and frustrating, it has the potential to turn the most exasperating gridlock into productive and useful conversation. The costs of involving citizens in decisions can avoid the costs of continued conflict, hate, and misunderstanding.

It is therefore recommended that the government of Burundi communicate with consistency the value and benefit of citizen engagement. What is needed today in Burundi is a strategy to educate power-holders and other decision-makers on these values and benefits. As participants in this study pointed out, it is critical to educate key players on viewing their constituencies as vital and valuable resources. Citizen participation should be viewed as an asset; after all, citizens can be the best advocates and do things power-holders cannot. Not only can citizens supply ideas on how to improve their communities' well-being, they also can help determine problems and opportunities with the resources available. Citizen input can be used to educate politicians, residents, and the groups of interests.

Make citizens an integral part of public decision-making and service design. Having established the value and benefit of citizen participation, the government must make citizens an integral part of public decision-making and the design of public services that they value most. Engaged citizens would cease self-interested behaviors, which would improve the quality of decisions. The government should also minimize the risky costs of conflicts while helping build

consensus on complex issues. Once established, the central government would help increase the implementation of decisions, help avoid confrontation, reduce tensions, and improve credibility and legitimacy of decisions made. In Burundi, citizen inputs are more needed today than ever as the central government is making a great effort to reform local institutions and improve access to basic social services.

It is recommended therefore that the government of Burundi should make citizens part of the decision-making processes. As one of the participants stated, “People will support what they helped to build and create.” There are varieties of ways to engage citizens, and the central and municipal governments should provide multiple opportunities for citizen engagement rather than a simple teaching or vote of hills and communal councils. Municipalities are the primary developer of government action plans that touch citizens directly. To ensure the process of decentralization, citizens must have a role to play at each stage of the implementation of financial, administrative, and political decentralization. Early engagement is critical because it allows for transparent management and ensures a large consultation of constituencies.

Ensure a broad and representative citizen engagement. In Burundi and in similar countries facing the same issues of decentralized institutions, a broad and representative citizen engagement seems to be difficult but not impossible to achieve. In Burundi, the participatory process tends to exclude those who are extremely poor, women, and the uneducated, while attracting those with government connections living in the middle range of socioeconomic indicators. This has led to private interests taking over the process and imposing their decisions. Participants of this study had similar concerns about engagement and participation.

Among the concerns were the need for a broad and shared community vision enforced by commune and zone leadership. This would be supported by cooperation, collaboration, and

partnership expressed through shared decision-making and a focus on communication, dialogue, and information exchange. This would ensure an inclusive participation and planning process, a design that would incorporate citizens' voices. What is needed in the Republic of Burundi is a commitment from power-holders to organize public processes that would bring together social groups holding different opinions, and engage them in a meaningful process of mutual social learning and public decision-making. It is true that those processes can take time and bring about conflict. As one of the participants stated, "the mass are bound to get out of control when they are together." However, these conflicts would be avoided if power-holders educate the population on the value of putting the interests of the community above self-interests.

The author recommends that the government of Burundi needs to be part of its communities and build trust with its residents. As one of the participants complained, "So often we respond to complaints and demands without recognizing that leadership is better placed to change the directions and take negative to positive through vision, creativity, imagination, and encouragement." Such partnership based on mutual respect and relationship will help gauge what is important for the public and get citizens excited about getting involved in their community. Building trust with residents is necessary when working with a broad array of opinions, and it is extremely important to involve various community groups, including student groups, women's groups, mechanical groups, and faith-based groups.

Recognize the importance of two-way communication and information sharing.

Public administration literature and practice suggest that participants in public processes want a better and more meaningful engagement, which requires officials to rethink the role of information. As observed and confirmed in Figure 4 in chapter 3, the central government and the newly created municipalities have mainly relied on a one-way information flow of providing

information to the public as opposed to a two-way dialogue. This approach has endured for a number of reasons, among them a fear of power sharing, or a belief that citizens cannot comprehend the complexities of public decision-making and the design of public services in order to meaningfully and effectively partake in these processes. In reality, as Manirakiza CA1 pointed out, if “communes want to make fair and competent decisions, the voice of citizens is to be listened to because it is not public opinion that we need to guide us, but wise public judgment.”

Information plays a critical role in public processes and therefore information sharing and mutual education should be in the list of priorities. Participants are to be granted access to accurate and relevant information in a format that is easily understandable. Experts must be available to explain information when needed; joint fact-finding can further facilitate productive problem solving.

The author recommends the central government and its communes institute communication plans that are constant, consistent, shared by competent people, and that ultimately require commitment. Such plans need to outline a response system (two-way communication tool) between public agencies and users, which is necessary in order to ensure information flow to and from the public. Citizen forums, public workshops, neighborhood parties, focus groups meetings, and online response systems via cellphones should be implemented in support of two-way information sharing. Each and every concern of citizens is to be addressed within a time-frame to satisfy citizens’ concerns and build trust within the communities.

The researcher recommends that power-holders continue to educate citizens on their rights, responsibilities, and obligations, which may lead to full engagement and participation.

The training system used by the Ministry of Interiors’ “*Programme d’Education Civic et de Formation Patriotique Civic au Burundi dans le Cadre d’Education Civic*” is to be encouraged and morally and financially supported to reach more youth and other citizens.

The central government must train career civil servants and local politicians to ensure that they better understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from each other. Training should contribute to the formation of new working relationships between central government employees and the lower tier employees. In addition to building local capacity, training should be a tool for creating personal networks among various levels of government, regions, and types of government workers. The focus should be training together different collines or hill or commune employees so that they can learn the strengths of each hill or commune and work in partnerships.

Confirm sound structures and engagement mechanisms. Citizen engagement principles should have a solid structure and representative participation. The structure should be manageable and flexible, enabling engagement to be both balanced and effective, and reflect the local activities and stakeholders’ interests. The following seven recommendations to power-holders should be considered:

1. Structures can be formal, informal, or a mixture. Their design needs to take into account existing processes and local institutions.
2. Participation of relevant representative stakeholders should be agreed on in a transparent manner and be balanced, practicable, and inclusive, so as to best serve the objectives of the dialogue and mitigate the risk of reform capture.
3. Smaller numbers of participants tend to generate greater trust and produce more effective dialogue, but this must be balanced against the need for inclusivity and representativeness.

4. Dialogue structures can be set up to carry out specific participatory processes via a series of working groups that conduct regular technical discussions as part of developing reform strategies for specific sectors or issues.
5. A leadership body, such as a steering committee, is to be created that will be more accountable and can provide added credibility and visibility with external actors.
6. Stakeholders' commitment to a rigorous process at start-up will help ensure that initial interest in citizen engagement is sustained. This means clear rules of operation, clarity of roles, an approach to identify and prioritize issues, and a rigorous approach to issues tracking.
7. The power-holders should strive at including the voice of civil society organizations and disenfranchised groups, and collaborating with them to ensure a more balanced and inclusive reform process.

Recommendations for the Groups of Interests and Other International Organizations

Based on the interviews and other lively exchanges with different participants, one of the most important issues uncovered is that the groups of interests need to do more to promote citizen engagement, not only through books and speeches but in meeting citizens and citizen groups face-to-face. The root problems in Burundi have to do with the social and political institutions within which Burundian citizens have survived for years. Primarily, it is a crisis of institutions that the World Bank and other groups of interests have created and for years have promised to solve through multilateral aid, institutional reforms, and other misleading measures. All of these so-called reforms failed miserably. Thousands of international organizations and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been operating in Burundi with missions, goals, and values that read almost the same: *We are dedicated to working with the world's most vulnerable people. We serve all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender, etcetera.* In theory, this emphasizes that the idea that citizens have been included in coproduction and have been

considered before implementing programs is absurd. As observed, citizens have not been neither contacted nor asked to provide inputs.

The groups of interests, including the World Bank Group and the IMF, impose on civil society actors and the government of Burundi the programs they want to implement. But their moral authority are waning for people in Burundi. Seen as contributing to the malaise of public life in Burundian society, the groups of interests could become a catalyst for engaging citizens in coproduction. And this means not just funding programs and writing good reports, but actively participating in engaging citizens in policymaking and the design of public services. Their commitment to engagement entails more attention to citizens, community groups, civil society organizations, and decentralized institutions, with more emphasis on dialogue, rational debates, and ultimately engagement in coproduction. In fact, the groups of interests have forgotten citizens and deal directly with the governments that they control. Unless the groups of interests change their behaviors, citizens will never contribute to programs and projects in their localities.

Successful citizen engagement is neither fast nor easy but a complex, incremental, and challenging process. Working with citizens and government requires patience, an ability to listen, and a desire to resolve conflicts. Such a process requires understanding the wants and needs of citizens. Both citizens and businesses are exceptional sources of ideas. Not only are they outside of the public sectors, but they also feel directly the impact of the new Law on Decentralization and the policies that derive from it. The central government in Burundi, as well as the newly created local entities, should create a better framework for collecting these ideas and transforming them into powerful policies and procedures. Today, consumers of government services should have much greater input into the creation and dissemination of the products and services they consume.

Having established the value and benefits of decentralization, the next steps for the groups of interests is to make citizen engagement an integral part of public decision-making. Not only will this integration foster democratic governance, but it will also improve the quality of decisions, minimize costs and delays, help build consensus on complex issues, increase ease of implementing decisions, help avoid confrontations, and improve the credibility and legitimacy of decisions made. Citizen input is especially needed in today's newly decentralized system, in which public agencies are dealing with complex issues that go well beyond technical, analytical, and design questions.

At the heart of closing the gap, the World Bank, the IMF, and other multinational corporations operating in Burundi must develop effective engagement strategies. An entrenched and well-articulated legal framework of engagement that informs and involves all the key players (citizens, power-holders, and international organizations) should be developed and implemented. This would provide checks and balances necessary for effective service delivery in a democratic context.

Secondly, the capacity of citizens to be engaged and participate effectively should not be assumed. The groups of interests are to invite citizens and power-holders to come together to develop shared definitions of problems and support for policy options agreed on by all members.

Thirdly, the legal framework related to decentralized entities in Burundi should clearly define responsibilities and standards of each entity while enumerating the consequences that may result if this framework is not followed. The groups of interests should work with the central government to create a strong legal framework to address issues related to citizen engagement, accountability, financing, and reporting, and to determine the type of control mechanisms that

are necessary and who is accountable for them, including hiring practices as well as issues related to the provision of goods and services.

A number of staff workers from the groups of interests have been effective organizers of citizen engagement in their respective countries. They have developed successful approaches using outside groups and acting on their own. As they are facing African reality in general, and Burundian realism in particular, they should work in a collaborative way with citizens and power-holders to ensure that the voice of citizens is heard. It is, therefore, recommended that the groups of interests develop and use monitoring and evaluation techniques as an effective tool to manage the citizens–power-holders dialogue, implementation, and accountability by demonstrating their purpose, performance, and impact. They should therefore ensure that:

1. Monitoring and evaluation techniques enable better overall planning, ignite potential advocacy, and provide both internal and external motivation to promote more effective implementation of program undertaken by both the central government and their local municipalities.
2. Monitoring includes tracking the implementation status of approved administrative, financial, and political reforms. The groups of interests can establish ‘follow-up teams’ or committees to track how well approved reforms and/or implemented programs are achieving their intended objectives.
3. While remaining flexible, user friendly and light, the monitoring and evaluation framework to be applied in the context of Burundi should be adopted by the World Bank and the IMF and other international organizations to provide stakeholders with the ability to monitor internal processes and encourage transparency and accountability.

The groups of interests must ensure facilitation. The citizen engagement process needs to be facilitated by professionals from the groups of interests and other dedicated people and

resources so as to efficiently manage all aspects of the dialogue process with a view to delivering results. Groups of interests should therefore ensure that:

1. Important qualifications of the facilitation function include organizational skills, negotiation capacity, creativity, transparency, understanding of technical issues, responsiveness, and an ability to engage with everyone from ministers to citizen groups to development partners to citizens.
2. Citizen engagement's facilitation function is often the face of all stakeholders, groups of interests, citizens, and power-holders. The job of the facilitator is to be client-driven but to 'lead from behind' as seen in the past years with the groups of interests. This means not directing the content of the dialogue, but putting in place the necessary, fair, and transparent mechanism to encourage stakeholders to equally participate over time on substantive issues.
3. The facilitation function needs to be anchored in an existing institutional context and make the best use of existing personalities who have the credibility to bridge the trust gap, as well as access to extensive networks in the public and private sectors.
4. The facilitation function might also benefit from bringing in technical skills or facilitation capacity from external environments, which, in such cases, might bring in some advantages in terms of neutrality.

The groups of interests need a major shift in public service culture. The groups of interests should go to the people rather than making people come to them. There is much work to be done in acquainting citizens with, and building their capacities for, participatory engagement and deliberative practices of policy development and service delivery. Because municipalities in Burundi are progressively being implemented, preparing citizens and citizen groups for engagement requires a long apprenticeship to democratic decision-making through participation and socialization within family, educational, social, and work environments. The World Bank, the IMF, World Vision, and other agents of globalization operating in Burundi are asked to look beyond and above their agenda and engage citizens for success. For the past fifty years, the

groups of interests' failure to deliver public services and the lack of commitment to their missions and values have been blamed on organizational culture. The groups of interests' integrity have been tarnished. Changing the organizational culture requires leadership development. This study demonstrates that a culture change in service for the groups of interests is synonymous to making improvements to the organization, influencing employee behavior, and providing better customer service.

The groups of interests must harness information, expertise, and opportunity. The groups of interests need to take the lead in harnessing information sharing and expertise to empower citizens, citizen groups, and power-holders. Engaging citizens in policymaking and the design of public services is essential so that information about needs can be understood and appropriate solutions developed. Moreover, the concept of citizen engagement introduces divergent thinking from unexpected sources, which encourages novel solutions to complex problems. The World Bank, for example, has expertise in engaging citizens in coproduction but has never used it effectively. The groups of interests should gather and investigate information from a variety of sources, explore new ideas and different viewpoints, probe information and identify gaps, maintain awareness of engagement, ask citizens questions to uncover information, and then find out the best practice approach, while providing room for power-holders and citizens to engage in policymaking and the design of public services. In general, they should ensure a constant flow of information by adopting formal communication strategies that allow for frequent, deliberate, and productive exchanges among citizens, citizen groups, power-holders, and partners located in their respective municipalities.

Recommendations for Burundian Citizens

Today's Burundian citizens are far more educated, knowledgeable, and confident than their predecessors. As they use evidence of all kinds in their own lives, in everything from food choices to business decisions, they expect the same of their central and local governments, as well as from the multinational corporations. As seen in this research, the question of how well Burundian citizens are equipped to engage is a vexed one. The focus of the discussion remains largely on the extent to which Burundian public servants are, or should be, skilled in the art of citizen and stakeholder engagement to come up with a system that will boost engagement. Some principles can be used by all stakeholders to build trust and increase performance. Among these principles are championing and facilitation.

Citizens are to be “champions” of engagement. Citizens need to take the lead and demand from both the government and the groups of interests greater inclusion in the coproduction. Leadership from a set of individuals or organizations is often necessary to reduce the trust gap, sustain the energy, and keep pushing for parties' involvement over the long run. However, when citizens take the lead and champion for inclusiveness, other stakeholders will follow. Citizens must, therefore:

1. Forego self-interested behaviors and embrace community interests. The Law on Decentralization is here to stay if Burundian citizens understand that their ability to demand more accountability through this law is their given right.
2. Use a stakeholder or influence mapping exercise to identify champions and understand their motivations to drive change in positive ways.
3. Demand accountability and dialogue from both the power-holders and their groups of interests.
4. Back the right champions, who have credibility, thus engaging the support of the groups of interests.

5. Choose champions who demonstrate an interest in reform, are transparent and credible, and possess the capacity to mobilize support and encourage engagement.
6. Engage high-profile, well-respected politicians who understand how citizen engagement can provide support to all citizens. It is easier for dialogue to survive the weakness of champions in the citizen groups than in the power-holders.
7. Beware of champions who are too strong, because then the agenda can become too narrowly focused, or dialogue can come to depend too heavily on individuals.
8. Understand that the groups of interests will gain by building collaborative leadership, whereby champions work together to achieve a set of agreed results.

Create a civic platform for the citizen engagement process. When citizen engagement programs are implemented effectively in a state or local government setting, more citizens are brought into the decision-making process. This means state or local governments can ultimately be more responsive to the community's needs while improving access to social services. However, citizen engagement programs are not without their problems; they can lead to gridlock, lack of consensus, abuses of power, manipulation of facts or the politicization of issues, and much more. To be more proactive, the governments should provide any easy-to-use platform for innovation, discussion, feedback, and engagement. Once created, this civic platform will connect public sector officials, citizens, and partners to engage, interact, and transact. With this platform, agencies can streamline and accelerate services through efficient workflow and online access with automatic update capabilities. Online capabilities may also improve access to information while building transparency and trust. Furthermore, power-holders should draft a strategic plan that lays out engagement and partnership goals—the explicit ways that citizens and community partners are going to address identified problems—and lays out objectives—the activities that will be carried out in pursuit of the goals.

Relationship Between Interviewer and Interviewees

As evidenced on a number of occasions in the collection of empirical evidence for this study, the relations between interviewer and interviewees were smooth and cordial. For the most part, the interviewer sat down in the interviewees' offices. Upon reflection, it is worth noting that because the interviewer spoke the interviewees' native language, the interviewees were comfortable speaking to him in their native language. For example, I sat face-to-face with state, commune, and zone officials and communicated in a cordial way. Some of the interviewees felt more comfortable speaking to me directly about how the decentralization process is going and what they expect in the near future. After reading the questions, interviewees communicated that it was not necessary for interviewer to say anything. The interviewer, in other words, left the impression that he was knowledgeable on the issues. Most interviewees asked the interviewer to further clarify the questions before they responded.

What Power-Holders and the Groups of Interests Can Learn from Participants

As seen through the stories and narrative presentations in this study, the issues that surfaced can be a source of learning for both the power-holders and the groups of interests. The underlying concerns pursued in this dissertation revealed a need to understand what power-holders and the groups of interests have missed in addressing the factors for and barriers to engagement.

As noted, Glaser (2015), relying on the counsel of H. George Frederickson, who introduced in the 1960s the concept of social equity as an agenda for public administrators, gave public bureaucrats a gentle nudge to focus on equity in the delivery of public services. Both power-holders and the groups of interests can better serve citizens if they rely on the concept of social equity. The definition of social equity developed by public administrators reads:

The fair, just and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract; the fair, just and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy. (National Academy of Public Administration, Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance, p. 471)

What citizens are demanding here is fair participation and inclusiveness in the decisions that matter to them. Both power-holders and the groups of interests can learn from participants in this study who are demanding “fairness and justice” in all of the programs, agendas, and projects the country does in partnership with the groups of interests. The stories of these participants point to how they themselves can be contributing factors, through their ideas, to issues that render them poor, uneducated, insecure, and in need of support from government activities, if they are listened to. An involvement in overall planning of their local government services would give citizens a clearer picture of what is and will be happening in their communes and zones and could lead to their willingness to participate in local service delivery.

On a practical level, power-holders and the groups of interests could learn the art and practice of building great communities. As one participant narrated, “their cities and communes have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because and only when, they are created by everybody.” Engagement should be premised on a long-term development framework. Strategic goals should be identified with the input of citizens, which would guide the choice of public investment from both the power-holders and the groups of interests. To achieve equitable opportunities with great opportunity for all, citizens, governments, and service providers will be better served if citizens are involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of strategies, programs, and projects. The voices of citizens, therefore, must be connected to the products and programs provided to them.

The groups of interests could also learn that they should be removed from the narrow band of self-interest while advancing community interests. Similarly, the government, which is guided by a blend of professionals, should at all costs advance the public interest by incorporating the views and desires of its citizens. For years, the groups of interests and the power-holders have been allowed to frame their issues almost by themselves, without involving citizens, which resulted in citizens being reluctant to embrace the actions undertaken by the government. In this case, citizens were sidelined, forgotten, and used for the purposes of accomplishing their interests. Power-holders and the groups of interests are asked to encourage collaboration, communication, and inclusion, allowing citizens to speak out on the issues deemed necessary to advance community well-being.

Because the narratives offered by participants in this study pointed out how they themselves contribute to the issues through their attention, interpretations, beliefs, and actions, power-holders and the groups of interests can learn from them by listening to their concerns before they implement programs or agendas. In other words, the social inequity that citizens experienced for years can be reversed when both power-holders and groups of interests manifest the desire to put citizens' interests first.

In summary, both power-holders and the groups of interests can learn that engaging citizens in policymaking and the design of public services will empower citizens, reinforce participation, and generate greater trust while producing more effective dialogue that removes self-interested behaviors. They should, therefore, establish the best practice of placing citizens at the center of product coproduction. Engagement cannot be left to chance. It needs to be planned for in terms of time and place, involving citizens in all layers of the process.

Contribution to the Literature

This research identified a gap in the literature that demonstrates the barriers to citizen engagement in the Republic of Burundi. As reflected in the literature review, Svava & Denhardt (2010), Glaser et al (2006), and Gaynor (2011), among others, speak of the need to engage in such a project. Specifically, Niamh Gaynor assessed the opportunities for and challenges to political engagement in Burundi. He also formulated a conclusion and recommendation that supports citizen participation in existing Burundian government structures (p. 42). It must be made clear, however, that citizen engagement was not the focus of his research. Rather, Gaynor aimed at investigating the effectiveness of and opportunities for citizen participation within the evolving decentralization process in the Republic of Burundi. In this research, the need for citizen engagement and participation in the Republic of Burundi was addressed.

Typically, the literature has focused on one of two approaches, that is, either factors for or barriers to citizen engagement. This dissertation used a qualitative research method, narratives and stories, to address these issues (Barry, 1997; Ruccucci, 2010). The recent interest in narratives is reflected in Bratton's (2010) extensive and comprehensive literature search of the perceptions of local government response in sub-Saharan Africa. Within the broader field of social science, Rainbow and Sullivan (1979) described the increased use of narrative and interpretative approaches as a reaction to positivism and the efforts of positivists "to integrate the science of man within a natural scientific paradigm" (p. 4). The same support of narrative approach was observed by Ruccicci (2011) who noted that "the knowledge built by interpretivists or constructionists is based on their own worldviews, history, culture, and experiences, and how they interpret the worldview and ideas of the people they are studying" (p. 66).

In this research, a conscious decision was made to not engage all key players in local government decision-making and financing. Instead, this study was motivated by the need to demonstrate the failure of multinational organizations that impose upon the government of Burundi what to do, and have failed to engage citizens in the coproduction.

Implications for Future Research

This study has demonstrated that the conceptualization, packaging, and implementation of the Law on Decentralization has had little impact on the conditions of ordinary citizens. The findings can serve as a useful beginning for further investigations on citizen engagement in Burundi, and in other African countries that have a similar Law on Decentralization. Several areas need further investigation. Future research can explore in detail the influence of factors such as consultation and its impact on citizen engagement in the African context. Detailed study can also explore the influence of gender on citizen engagement in sub-Saharan Africa's British and French colonies and its current implications. Future research can explore the role of ethnicity in citizen engagement in sub-Saharan French-speaking countries versus English-speaking countries. A study of the influence of international organizations, known in this study as the groups of interests, on citizen engagement can provide information on foreign policy, changes in aid delivery, and intergovernmental relationships among countries. What is true, however, is that the groups of interests, mainly the Bretton Woods institutions, can learn from this study by working closely with citizens who have the most to lose or gain in the projects and programs funded by these institutions.

Finally, there is a need for a study that explores the internal inhibiting factors of citizen engagement and a study that explores the relationship between internal and external factors.

Personal Reflections

This study was based on certain basic assumptions about four post-colonial countries—the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Due to financial constraints, only the Republic of Burundi was selected as a case study. The selected case study explored the lived experiences of citizens in the Republic of Burundi, which came by as a result of coincidence (financial constraint) left more questions than answers regarding the use of citizen engagement in the coproduction of public value in a country coupled with conflict and mistrust. It showed the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement, aiming at transferring part of the powers of the central government to regionals or local entities.

First, the study assumed that citizen engagement in the Republic of Burundi was necessary, as that country has been, for years, plagued by internal conflict and violence. I wanted to investigate the factors for and barriers to citizen engagement in this country engorged with violence, mistrust, and wars. Engagement would allow citizens to move from self-interested behaviors that have created conflict to embracing community interests, supporting the actions and programs proposed by their central and local governments while addressing the social and economic well-being of Burundian residents and preventing exclusion. Second, I assumed that understanding the social, economic, and political exclusion of a wide swath of the population would allow me to understand how far the government has to go to connect citizens and provide the services most needed. At the same time, it was desirable for local citizens who have lived experiences to narrate their stories and provide meaning to their experiences. Third, I assumed that the research participants were knowledgeable, able, and willing to openly share their lived experiences in Burundi. Fourth, I assumed that data collected from key informants' interviews

would not only reveal the experiences of the research participants but also would elucidate what it means for individuals living the experiences.

The research outcomes confirmed some of my assumptions as well as revealed the simplistic nature of the assumptions about the difficulty of engaging citizens in a country where electoral conflict between political parties is on the rise. It became clear that citizens are tired of conflicts and want to be part of the decision-making process in their newly created municipalities. The policies used by those in positions of power (both physical and financial) is revealed by the gaps in shared information between citizens, citizen groups, and power-holders as well as the groups of interests. Social accountability approaches should be applied widely at the commune and zone levels to promote dialogue between citizens and their leaders and citizens and the groups of interests. This should be crafted as a non-confrontational approach that not only holds leaders accountable, but also would show clearly the responsibilities of the citizens. Other forces or tides in the transitional process of implementing the Law on Decentralization are determinant factors that will allow those selected leaders to involve citizens in the coproduction of public value. However, during my research, it became clear that the current design of public services in the newly created communes and zones should be the prime focus of the groups of interests and that they should provide technical advice, resources, and training, removing the narrow bands of self-interest and ensuring that citizens are an integral part of the decision-making process. It turned out that the concept of accountability in the management of municipalities was linked to a wide spectrum of actors, both national and international, whose forces interrupt the outcome. It also became clear that citizens who are living the experience are asking for more oversight of the management of their communes, zones and hills to hold their leaders accountable.

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APPENDIX A:

LIST OF ACROYNYS USED IN THE STUDY

CDC	Committee on Hilly Development
CDF	Citizen Participation in State Devolved Funds
CSA	Civil Society Actors
CC	Conseil Communal
CCDC	Commuté Collinaire de Développement communautaire
CCC	Communication pour un Changement de Comportement
CNDD-FDD	Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces de Défense de la Démocratie/National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy
ENA	Ecole Nationale d'Administration
EU	European Union
FRODEBU	Front for Democracy in Burundi
UPRONA	Union pour le Progrès national/ Union for National Progress
PALIPHEUTU-FNL	Parti pour la libération du peuple Hutu-Forces Nationales de Liberation/Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People- National Liberation Forces
CS	Civil Society
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EU	European Union
FAITH	Fairness, Access, Inclusion, Transparency, and Honesty
FONIC	Fonds National d'Investissement Communal (Communal Investment Fund)
HI	Harvest Initiative
IEC	Information Education et Communication
IMF	International Monetary Funds
OLUCOME	Observatoire de lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques et financières (ONG anticorruption)/Observatory for fight against corruption and economic embezzlements

PO	Public Officials
PEFP	Programme d'Education et de la Formation Patriotique
MO	Mairie Officials
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
PCDC	Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire
PDC	Plan de Développement Communautaire
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programs
ZO	Zone Officials
WBG	World Bank Group
WV	World Visions

APPENDIX B:

CONSENT FORM

Participants in Citizen Engagement Consent Form

Hamline University

Consent Form

Title of the Study: *Citizen Engagement in Local Government Management in Post-Colonial African Countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania*

Dear Participant;

You are invited to participate in qualitative research study that aims at understanding and interpreting the barriers affecting people's direct involvement in local government management. It is hoped that the results of this study will enable public officials and leaders of non-governmental organizations to effectively use methods that encourage engagement in the coproduction of public value.

You were selected as possible participant because of your knowledge and experience related to the topic. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before acting on this invitation to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: *Alfani, Ngulwe*, a doctoral candidate at Hamline University, in the United States America.

Background Information

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the barriers to citizen engagement or the factors contributing toward people's direct involvement in community or local government affairs. This research is fundamentally guided by two research question: and five (5) sub-questions.

7. What issues or factors affect citizen engagement in local government management in selected post-colonial countries?
 - a. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in selected post-colonial countries?
 - b. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in selected post-colonial countries?
8. How do these issues or factors impact the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in selected post-colonial countries?
 - a. How do these issues or factors encourage or enhance and/or inhibit the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in selected post-colonial countries?

- b. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
- c. What are ways to improve citizen engagement/satisfaction and how does it affect policy making and service design?

Procedure:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be engaged in a two-step process.

Steps 1, Write your story

You will first be invited to complete the following open-ended statement

- a) “Citizen Engagement in public service coproduction is like...?”

While you are not limited to the length of your story, you are however, asked to respond within 5 working days. The investigator and his team will come to pick-up your response after the five working day. Please include your name, telephone number, and best time to call to arrange for step 2 of this research process.

Step 2, Research Interview

You will then be invited to participate in an audiotaped interview with the principal investigator at a time that is most convenient to you. Your written story will be used as a springboard for the interview. The interview will be open-ended and unstructured. It is anticipated that the interview will not go beyond an hour and a half. A written copy of your audio taped interview will be mailed to you for verification and/or further comments.

All audio taped and written information shared through these steps will be treated in strict confidence. All names will be changed to protect the identity of participants.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your current employer. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time later without affecting those relationships.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Risks:

In the event you experience stress or anxiety during your participation in the study you may terminate your participation at any time. All effort will be made to enable and maintain a healthy conversation.

Benefits

It is hoped that the information gained through study will enable public officials, the Neo-liberal of Globalization or group of interests and citizens to better understand the value of engaging citizens in the coproduction of public value in developing countries.

The information gained will also be critical to deciding whether or not this qualitative method of inquiry would need to be widely used in curricular involving citizen or community engagement in developing countries.

Compensation:

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any report of this study that might be published, the research will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records.

In accordance with the requirements of Hamline University, all audio taped information will be retained for at least 5 years after the approval of the dissertation. Only the principal research will have access to these recordings.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is *Ngulwe k. Alfani*. The researcher's adviser is Kristen Norman-Major, PhD. Should you have any questions, you may either contact *Ngulwe Alfani* or *Kristen Norman-Major* as follow:

Ngulwe K. Alfani
447 Woodduck Place Unit A
Woodbury, MN 55125
651-361-0435 St.
nalfani@hamline.edu

Kristen Norman-Major, PhD
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The Research Participant Advocates at Hamline University is Dr. Craig Waldron and Mark A. Glaser, PhD. They may be contacted at:

MARK A. GLASER, PhD
Hugo Wall School of Public Affairs

Dr. Craig Waldron
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Saint Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651-523-2971
cwaldron01@hamline.edu

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of Participant:

Signature

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date:/...../2016

APPENDIX C:

RECRUITMENT LETTER

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your interest in being a participant in my Dissertation research investigating the barriers to citizen engagement in local government management in post-colonial African countries. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the understanding of the factors that affect civic or citizen engagement, including things that citizens can control – mobilization, social contacts, group membership, and socialization – things that citizens cannot change such as demographic - age, race, and community size - and things that citizens can acquire, including education and income, involvement in civic life, religion, and the media.

With your permission, the interviews will be audio taped. All information from the interview process will be confidential, and your identity will be protected at all times.

Participation is strictly on voluntary basis, and you may withdraw participation at any time.

For this study I am seeking the following participant who:

- Is a resident of Burundi/DR Congo/Kenya/Tanzania
- Was/or is a Congolese/Burundian/Kenyan/Tanzanian public official
- Worked/ or work in local government – City, County or Commune for more than 5 years
- Is knowledgeable about management of local government (city, county, or commune).
- Was/or is an international official involved in local government management
- Participated in local government management processes

If you meet the above criteria and would like to participate in this study, please return the response slip at the bottom of this page in the addressed, stamped envelope, or contact me by phone (651-361-0435 or +243-896-536-664) or email (nalfani01@hamline.edu). After I receive your reply, I will contact you to arrange a date and time for our interview. If you don't wish to participate, no one will contact you, and your anonymity will remain protected.

Thank you for considering participation in this study.

Sincerely

Signed

Alfani Ngulwe

RESPONSE SLIP

...Yes. I am interested in being a participant in your study. Please contact me to arrange an interview or to give further details.

Name:

Phone number or email address.....

APPENDIX D:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Citizen Engagement in Local Government Management in Post-Colonial African Countries: the
Republic of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Kenya, and the United
Republic of Tanzania

The purpose of this research on citizen engagement in local government management in selected post-colonial African countries is to provide a deeper understanding of how the relations between citizens, power-holders, and group of interests are shaped for the coproduction of public services. The researcher will focus on citizen engagement to determine what, how and when it is appropriate to involve and engage citizens in policymaking and service design of their localities.

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Brief description of Study:

Questions

1. Describe your understanding of citizen engagement in local government management?
2. What are your thoughts on the application of citizen participation in policymaking and service design of their local government?
3. What is your observation about how the ideas provided by citizens are being considered in decisions taken by local leaders?
4. What do you think about how citizen participation is set-up in the city of Nairobi?
5. Tell me about the process of inviting citizens to participate in the process of decision-making?
6. What issues or factors encourage or contribute toward citizen engagement in local government management in the city of Nairobi?

7. What barriers affect people's direct involvement in local government management in city of Nairobi?
8. How do these issues or factors encourage or enhance the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in the city of Nairobi?
9. How do these issues or factors inhibit or prevent the ability of both public officials and constituencies to act in this city of Nairobi?
10. Are civil Society Actors involved in engaging citizens in actions that put community interests above personal interests? If so how? If no why?
11. Tell me about how the council works? Is there a representative of local residents involved in the formulation and the design of policy? If yes how? If no why?
12. What do you think about citizen commitment to relational community? Do you think members of the community are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of the broader community? If so how? If not why?
13. Tell me about the relationship you have with the state and national government?
14. What is the nature of the working relationship between the citizens and the public officials?
15. Tell me how you engage citizens in policymaking and service design management of your administration?
16. Tell me how you inform your citizens about their rights and responsibilities in relation to the management of your municipality?
17. When is it appropriate to involve citizens in a local government management approach?
18. What are ways to improve citizen engagement/satisfaction and how does it affect policy making and service design?

APPENDIX E:
MAPP OF THE CITY OF BUJUMBURA AND ITS COMMUNES



APPENDING F:

APPROVAL LETTE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

REPUBLICQUE DU BURUNDI



MINISTRE DE L'INTERIEUR ET
DE LA FORMATION PATRIOTIQUE
MUNICIPALITE DE BUJUMBURA
CABINET DU MAIRE

N° 531.18/ *802* /CAB/2016

Objet : Réponse à votre lettre.

Monsieur,

J'accuse réception de votre lettre du 14/04/2016 par laquelle vous demandez l'autorisation d'avoir accès aux informations sur la Municipalité en rapport avec vos recherches de doctorat en Administration Publique, je marque mon accord.

Dès réception de la présente, il faudra bien entrer en contact avec le Chef du Département Administratif qui vous présentera à la personne chargée de votre encadrement.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'assurance de ma considération distinguée.

LE MAIRE DE LA VILLE DE BUJUMBURA,

Hon. Freddy MBONIMPA

C.P.I. à :

- Monsieur le Chef du Département Administratif



APPENDIX G:

SOME EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Tocqueville

La décentralisation n'a pas seulement une valeur administrative, elle a une portée civique puisqu'elle multiplie les occasions pour les citoyens de s'intéresser aux affaires publiques ; elle les accoutume à user de la liberté. Et de l'agglomération de ces libertés locales, active et sourcilleuses, naît le plus efficace contrepoids aux prétentions du pouvoir central, fussent-elles étayées par l'anonymat de la volonté collective (p. 4).

Decentralization has not only an administrative value, it has a civic significance as it multiplies the opportunities for citizens to take an interest in public affairs; It accustoms them to the use of liberty. And the agglomeration of these active and leaning local freedoms is born the most effective counterweight to the claims of the central power, even if they are supported by the anonymity of the collective will. (p. 4). (Translation by the Author, August 2016)

CO1

La population est consultée parce que les décisions du Conseil Communale émanent de la base. C'est-à-dire les Comités Collinaires qui sont là avec les chefs des quartiers reçoivent les doléances de la population. Ça vient du bas et ça monte du haut. C'est le Conseil Communal qui analyse le besoin de la population. C'est l'inverse, c'est le conseil communal qui répond aux désirs de la population. Je suis seulement consulté.

The population is consulted because decisions of the Municipal Council emanate from the base. That is to say the Hilly Committee that are there with the heads of districts receive the grievances of the people. It comes from the bottom and goes up. It is the Municipal Council that analyzes the needs of the population. It is the opposite; it is the Municipal Council that responds to the desires of the population. I am only consulted. (Translated by the Author, November 2016)

CA1

Tous les employés sont payés par la Mairie. On dit que c'est la commune mais c'est toujours centralisé au niveau de la Mairie et c'est elle qui paye. La décentralisation c'est un processus et nous avons seulement trois mois de service. La loi est sortie mais la commission de la décentralisation est mise en place et entre de travailler. Le gouvernement est entré de transférer les compétences. La compétence administrative est celle qui est primordiale. Tu peux avoir toutes les ressources sans la capacité, vous aurez des problèmes pour y implémenter dans votre entité. Et nous suivrons ce processus pour y arrive.

All employees are paid by the Town-Hall. It is said that it is the commune but it is always centralized at the level of the Town Hall and it is she who pays. Decentralization is a process and we only have three months of service. The law came out, but the decentralization commission was set up and went into work. The government is transferring the kills. Administrative jurisdiction is paramount. You can have all the resources without the capacity; you will have problems to implement in your entity. And we will follow this process to get there. (Translation by the Author, November 2016)

CA1

Absence des cadres de consultances entre les dirigeants, entre les responsables et la communauté est un des problèmes ici dans mon pays. C'est théorique mais pas pratique. Il y a absence du cadre de consultance. Théoriquement, il y a les Conseils Communaux ou les gens qui représentent les autres dans les communes peuvent amener des doléances mais pratiquement, il est impossible de le réaliser. Il y a des structures théoriques qui ne sont pas très rentables et fructueuses qui amène un autre handicap.

Absence of consultancy frameworks between leaders, between leaders and community is one of the issues here in my country. This is theoretical but not practical. There is an absence of the civic platform. Theoretically, there are the Communal Councils or the people who represent the others in the communes who can bring about grievances but practically it is impossible to realize it. There are theoretical structures that are not very profitable and fruitfully that brings another handicap. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

PO1 – Interview: *Je dois dire seulement que les différents ateliers sont organisés par le programme d'éducation et des formations patriotiques au sein du Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la formation Patriotique. De ces différents ateliers sortent de recommandations de la population qui montre de l'aspiration des citoyens... Il faut que la jeunesse aille à l'école massivement pour qu'elle comprenne les droits et devoirs... Il faut que la population ait certaines connaissances afin qu'elle s'approprie de cette décentralisation.*

I must say only that the various workshops are organized by the education program and the patriotic formations within the Interior Ministry and Patriotic Training. From these different workshops come out recommendations of the population that show the aspiration of the citizens. . . . It is necessary that the youth attend school massively to understand the rights and obligations. . . . The population must have certain knowledge so that they can acquire this decentralization. (Translation by the author, August 2016)

APPENDIX H:

FIELD NOTES FORMAT

Pre-interview

Before the interview commenced, a search was conducted by the Google Search and Yahoo engine and information about the Republic of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and their Government, people and culture was recorded. Some websites of different local government entities in these countries, their Civil Society Organizations, and international organizations operating in these countries were visited and information about them was recorded. Efforts made to contact potential participants and other difficulties or otherwise encountered were all recorded.

Site visits

Researcher recorded observations about premises of the central government and the groups of interests in terms of security measures, entry requirements and procedures, impressions about the personnel, and the general atmosphere about the premises. In addition, proximity among the office of the central government, Mairie de Bujumbura, different urban communes, and different offices of international non-governmental organizations was noted and recorded.

Post interview

After each interview, the researcher recorded impressions about participants' demeanor, acceptability, understanding about the issues, emotion, body language, and receptiveness.

Personal reflections

The researcher recorded insights derived from interviews and focus groups discussions in terms of the emerging theme, meaning and how they contrasted with the researcher's preconceived

ideas or earlier interviews and discussions. This helped to adapt questions to probe into emerging new meanings.

APPENDIX I:

CURRICULUM VITAE

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 Woodbury, MN 55125
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 ngulwe@hotmail.com

Areas of Specialization/Interests

Survey research, policy formulation and analysis, public leadership and management, and citizen engagement process that strengthen community attachment and commitment to engaging citizens in local government.

Current Position

Advocate for citizen engagement

EDUCATION

Current Program at Hamline University at the School of Business: Doctor of Public Administration (DPA)

Previous Degrees:

2006: Master of Public Administration, Wichita State University

2004: Bachelor of Political Science, Wichita State University

Professional Experience and Work History

1. 2008 to date - work as a volunteer to NEEMA CORPORATION. Perform management training in local government management, including programs related to Human Resource Management, Public Finance, Public Work, and Economic Development.
2. Peace-Program – 2008-2010- Advocated for peaceful resolution of conflict in the Great Lakes region of Africa.
3. 2005. Management Intern, - City of Wichita, Kansas - City Manager's Office - Oversaw the implementation of a variety of programs, including Public Safety, Community Development, Park and Recreation, and Public Works. Performed grant searches for different departments: Budgeting, Public Work, Public Safety, Park and Recreation, Water and Sewer, Community Development, etc. Prepared Strategic Plans for Original Parks and Recreation for the city of Wichita, Kansas and Sedgwick County.
4. April 2006 to September 2011 - State of Kansas-Kansas Housing Resources Corporation:

- Served as a principal advisor to the Director of Asset Management on all aspects of quality assurance/control issues. Directed programs with up to 70 housing infrastructures and application projects – implemented Section 8 program in helping low-income residents to move from governmental dependency to self-sufficiency.
 - Networked with federal and state agents on different managerial issues, including public policy, hiring, and labor relation management.
 - Facilitated online discussions with different attendees, including staff members, state officials, owners of properties, and other partners.
 - Monitored compliance of programs and recommending corrective actions to comply with federal and state laws.
 - Monitored staff achievement of performance standards to assure that work meets goals and objectives. Indirect supervisions of housing professional staff to ensure work performed by internal staff complies with stated goals and objectives.
 - Assessed staff performance through various methods, including reviews of a number of work performed onsite, review of a percentile number of files, and evaluation of performance set out by the state and federal governments.
 - Verified the accuracy and completeness of documents submitted by property owners and recommended actions to the appropriate jurisdictions.
 - Trained staff and property owners on various rules, regulations, changes, and other memos from the federal and state governments, including training staff on a variety of laws, HUD Handbooks, Statutes, and memo.
- 5. 1996-1999 - Alfa-Computer Training Center – Kigoma/Tanzania**
 Work involved teaching different software programs, including MS DOS, Lotus, and WordPerfect and Microsoft 95 programs as well. Introduced a set of an active learning methods to the College now part of the regular teaching methodologies.
- 6. 1986-1994- Agronomy Technician(A2)– SERVICE SEMEMCES SELECTIONNEES-Gisenyi/Rwanda-** Experienced agribusiness (seed producers) with more than 10 years of experience in rural livelihoods in Rwanda and the DR Congo. Worked as “Agronomy Technician” in Rwanda for the Service Semences Sélectionnées (SSS), a Belgium Agro-Industry specialized in seed production, conditioning, and distribution activities.

RESEARCH AND SEMINARS

2016 - Doctoral Research - Research focused on citizen engagement process and looked at how people in four selected countries in Sub-Sahara Africa participate in policymaking and the design

of public services. The study involved citizens, power-holders, and the groups of interests (neoliberal player of globalization) with a purpose of providing a deeper understanding the factors for and barriers to citizens engagement in these selected countries. Qualitative research methodology was used that combined a narrative, focus group discussion, field notes, and face-to-face interviews.

Teaching:

April 2009 – Guest Lecturer (two lectures) Wichita State University Health Services Management and Community Development Program- Department of Public Health Sciences.

May 2009 - Guest Lecturer and presenter: University of Kansas' 2009 Summer Institute; Peace building: the Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo;
October 2009 – Guest Lecture at the University of Washburn in Topeka, Kansas in conjunction with Topeka Center for Peace and Justice - talk about Peace Program in the Great Lakes Region of Africa (The Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda)

Honors and Awards

2004 – The Wesley McCarty, the Sara and Harry Corbin, and the D.J. and Terry Scanlon Alumni- Faculty Scholarships

2003 — The Lee and Helen Kamen Scholarship

2002 — Department of Political Science Scholarships

UNITED NATIONS (UN) PROJECTS

- 2005 – Model United Nations “MUN”: Extensive Research on the United Nations’ work including: Peace and Security; Development, Human Rights; Humanitarian Affairs and International Law;
- 2005 – Diplomat: acted as a diplomat while representing Japan in Saint Louis Missouri and Laos in the UN edifice in New-York.

Peace Program and Development – Great Lakes Region

- NEEMA1: Response to International CRISIS GROUP: Congo - Five Priorities for a Peace building Strategy – alternative strategy to the proposed five priorities to end responsibly the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - May 2009
- NEEMA 2: Letter to the Excellence Ban-Ki-moon: urged the UN Secretary General to use alternative method to military actions in resolving the conflict in DR Congo – July 2009

- NEEMA 3: Gender Based Violence: Letter to the Excellence the U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, in response to her visit in Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. We urged her to advocate for peace to end responsibly the trauma of the women and girls who were sexually molested as the consequence of war – August 2009.
- NEEMA 4: Letter to the United Nations Security Council asserting justice and the end of impunity as a cornerstone for peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region – September 2009.
- NEEMA 5: Letter to the Excellence Ban-Ki-moon: A silent genocide – urging the UN Secretary General to cease all military operations in eastern Congo based on empirical evidences from the report of Congo Advocacy Coalition which is a group of local and international non-governmental organizations working in the DR Congo to track the progress on six key commitments related to protection of civilians – October 2009
- NEEMA 6: Letter to the Excellence Ban-Ki-moon and the UN Security Council: A response to the UN's unpublished report acknowledging a failure to disarm Rwandan rebels. November 2009

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