

Local government and administration in zambia assignment



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It will also illustrate with the help of practical Zambia examples. Firstly, we will look at what local government administration is, its history and how it has evolved. Before drawing the conclusion, it will highlight the significance of local government administration in the development process of a country. According to Allow (1988), " local government administration can be defined from two perspectives".

The first perspective is that of administrative where it serves the purpose of supplying goods and services and the second purpose is to represent and involve the citizen in determining specific local public needs and how these local needs can be met. Local representative government is a process that spans and connects representation and administration at local levels within local government structures. Allow (1988), further states that local government is a product of devolution as a dimension of decentralization. Other scholars, define local government from a legal point of view.

Robinson (1937), outlined that Local government may be said to involve the conception of a territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organization o regulate its own affairs. Genome (1987), defines local government as that part of the whole government of a nation or state which is administered by authorities subordinate to the state authority but elected independently of control by the state authority by qualified persons resident or having property in certain localities which localities have been formed by communities having common interest and common history.

Local government is an essential link in the relationship between the government and the citizenry, especially because it is bound to particular areas and to the people who are affected by the problems that are peculiar to those areas. This enables government to better understand and address these problems. Local governments are also instruments for greater community participation because they have jurisdiction over fewer people than higher levels of government do. Consequently, they provide more channels and opportunities to utilize the talents, insights and creative abilities of individual citizens.

Local authority is sometimes referred to as Municipal authority and it is a term that refers to a rural and urban political subdivision below the national level which is instituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, United Nations (1997). Given the foregoing, one notes that local government remains a sphere of government institution with limited legislative power and authority that operates within clearly defined geographical and legal jurisdiction within a nation or state.

The defining feature of local government is the authority to enact legislation within the defined jurisdiction and therefore the enjoyment of a measure of autonomy. It is vested with prescribed, controlled governmental powers and sources of income to render specific local services and to develop, control and regulate the geographic, social and economic environment of defined local areas as observed by Meyer (1978). Local authorities are created to give residents of their area a say in government and administration of local affairs and vested with specific powers to make by-laws.

Local authorities are headed by councils consisting of elected members.

Local government are basically created to render different services in geographical area , primarily because of the inability of the central government to attend to all he detailed requirements of society that have to be satisfied by government . It is the means by which the residents of the local community can together accomplish what neither the national or the state government nor the individual residents can accomplish as proficiently alone.

There are a range of numbers of urban services by local authorities and these as follows; street cleaning, sanitation , refuse collection, road construction and maintenance, housing, water and sewerage , clinics, residential and industrial estates, planning and zoning, fire and ambulance services, naming and recreational services, Meyer (1978). The council is the main organ within the structure of local government. A council is an essential part of every unit of the local representative government.

In Zambia, the current structure of local government can be historically stressed as way back as 1990, when the one party state or era came to an end. Mammal (2003) mentions that with the removal of United Nation Independence Party (NIP), the Movement of Multiparty Democracy (MD) Government enacted a new local Government Act in 1991 coined the Local Government Act (CAP 281 of 1991). The new Act brought the following changes; i). The Ministry of decentralization became the Ministry of Local government and housing and was responsible for Local government while cabinet office was responsible for provincial and district administration, ii).

A deputy Minister appointed by the president became the political head of the province and was assisted by the provincial permanent secretary who headed the secretariat , iii). The dual system of district administration was re- introduced, ' v). The local government elections were also re-introduced and the RYO or Council Chairperson replaced the District Governor while Town clerk or Council Secretary replaced the District Executive Secretary. In 1995, the MD Government introduced the national, provincial and district development co-ordination committees to co-ordinate development activities.

In 2000, the Government introduced the position of District Administrator (AD), the name which later changed to District Commissioner (DC) who was appointed and reported to the president and heads field administration. All these measures, were implemented to solidify and strengthen the linkage of local government with central overspent. Addressing the latter part of the question, local government administration promotes equity in social economic development in the number of ways as discussed below. The paper also provides examples to explain.

First and foremost, as an orientation to governance, social equity stresses fairness and equality along with efforts to remedy disparities in conditions and outcomes. It includes redressing injustices and restoring equality through the provision of benefits to those who have been unfairly treated, and remediation damages that were previously incurred. It means expanding opportunity and promoting equal access to services; providing equal quality of programs and services; ensuring procedural fairness to prevent

discriminatory treatment; and striving for equal protection from hazards and equal outcomes in education, health, and employment.

Essential to these goals are the full engagement of all segments of the community in the process of governance and the empowerment of individuals to improve their own lives, Johnson and Spar (2011). Local government administration provides a direct linkage of the people (the governed) and the government. It provides a platform for citizens to inform the overspent of the needs of the community. This is done through Councilors who manage the affairs of the District Council.

The Councilors are also responsible for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of Council budgets. Given that District Councils are closer to the people, the District Council through its Councilors is able to easily identify the needs of Society and also reduce social gaps and inequality in society. This helps close the gap between the citizen and the central government administration. It also provides opportunities for grievances to be aired and wrong remedied.

In Zambia, structures such as the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCD) have been structured in the local government system as a channel for comprehensive planning and budgeting of development programmers at district level. The District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCD) is a foundation of the hierarchy of planning and administration in a district. It encompasses Government departments, local governments, civil society, Community based organizations (Cobs), private

sector and pitfalls. It is an important institution for co-ordination of district development activities.

Docs are consultative structures at District level that discuss development issues, assess and scrutinize the data on policy implementation. At District level, the decentralized development planning process is the responsibility of district officers of the line departments, Council officers, donors, Non-governmental organization (NAG) and so on, who are co-ordinate by the Town Clerk to form the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCD). The District Development Coordinating Committees (Docs) are chaired by the District Commissioner and the District Council acts as secretariat.

With the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCD), the Government has deliberately focused efforts on the districts as the basic units of national development and also devolved functions in the policy documents to democratically elected districts. Responsiveness of government will be improved because local representatives will be best placed to know the exact nature of local needs and how they can be met in a cost-effective way. The District Development Coordinating Committees (Docs) are able to tailor central plans to meet local conditions based on up to date information available at district level.

Residents of a community are connected economically and socially; the social equity refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed among them. The more evenly costs and benefits are distributed, the more equitable the community is, and this is reflected in

economic, and social outcomes Local governments can encourage the acceptance of certain initiatives (for example, affordable housing or housing that is universally accessible, green building, or an increased number of healthy food outlets in the community) by well-designed incentives that avoid unintended barriers to desired projects.

For instance, the Livingston Municipal Council through its Council resolution and by-laws was able to clear street vendors from trading in District Centre in spite of the national policy of allowing street vending. Currently, Livingston is the cleanest district in the country. This policy measure has also contributed to the reduction of water-borne diseases such as cholera in the districts. Local Government has been instrumental in promoting the allocation of resources and opportunities fairly to the poor through the elimination of barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.

For instance, the district council in Shavings and Churned have in the past decade worked to allocate land to the people who were displaced during the constructions of the Kari Hydro electric plant. The Councils have been instrumental in providing land and building community schools and clinics in the area. Many District Councils using the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) have influenced the construction of rural roads to connect villages. In Zambia, the government in 1995 approved and introduced Constituency Development Fund (CDF) as a means of financing micro-community projects for poverty reduction (GAR, 2006).

With respect to revenue collection through levies, the local authorities have promoted equity by introducing and imposing equitable levy structures tailored to protect the poor and the vulnerable in society. With respect to services, the Lusaka city Council runs a library which offers the poor and vulnerable to academic books and an opportunity for a quiet place to study from. In concluding, Local government are basically created to render different services in geographical area , primarily because of the inability of the central government to attend to all the detailed requirements of society that have to be satisfied by overspent.