



2024 ENGINEERING INSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA SYMPOSIUM AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**A SUSTAINABLE ENGINEERING APPROACH TO MANAGING
CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF) PROJECTS THAT
GUARANTEES HIGH-QUALITY OUTCOMES.**

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INTRODUCTION

- Established in 1995, the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) aims to promote local community development.
- The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) which aims to finance community projects like educational facilities, health clinics, and water supply systems allocates a portion of the national budget to constituencies for local development projects.
- The government's goal is to bridge the gap between central governance and local needs by directing funds to communities.
- Our focus is on the Community Projects component, aiming for quality assurance and high-quality infrastructure delivery. Strategies are sought to improve project planning, design, execution, and maintenance, adhering to engineering standards.



INTRODUCTION

- The Challenges in ensuring high-quality infrastructure delivery include contractors' failure to complete projects, use of substandard materials, and insufficient community awareness. Inconsistent and limited funding and one-year project cycles also pose challenges.
- Enhancing accountability, transparency, and community participation is crucial for effective CDF investments.



MATERIAL AND METHODS

- The methods used were literature review, in-depth reviews and observation of sites.
- An extensive literature review was conducted on Community projects infrastructure development in Zambia.

Community projects

- According to the CDF guidelines 2022, Community Projects are projects, which are identified by the communities in their Wards for the benefit of the wider community.
- Community Projects address challenges of inadequate infrastructure, such as water and sanitation points, schools, health facilities, police posts, feeder roads, market shelter, crossing points, canals and dip tanks among others.

Examples of projects that can be funded using Constituency Development Fund:

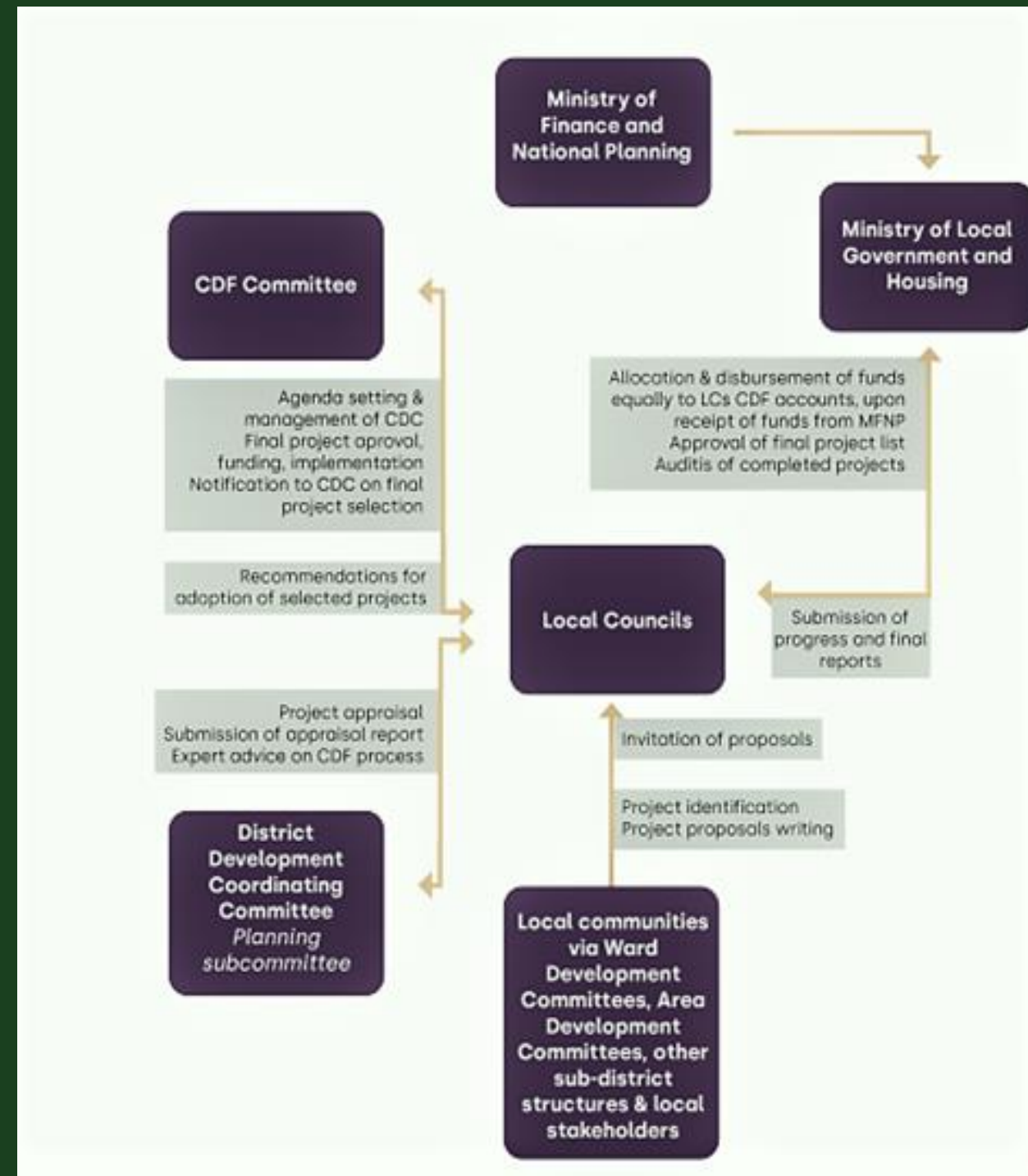
(1) COMMUNITY PROJECTS	
A)	Water Supply and Sanitation.
i.	Construction and rehabilitation of lined and other improved wells
ii.	Construction and rehabilitation of small scale dams
iii.	Construction and rehabilitation of boreholes
iv.	Piped water supply system
v.	Construction and rehabilitation of flush toilets or water borne sanitation system
vi.	Drainage system
vii.	And others
B)	Roads and Construction
i.	Construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of feeder and community roads
ii.	Community foot bridge construction and maintenance
iii.	Culvert installation
iv.	Cause way construction
v.	Canals, waterways embankments
vi.	Rain water harvesting infrastructure
vii.	Communal refuse bays
viii.	And others
C)	Agriculture Project
i.	Small Scale Irrigation Systems
ii.	Community Storage Sheds
iii.	Dip Tanks
iv.	And others
D)	Markets, Bus Shelters and Security
i.	Construction and rehabilitation of markets
ii.	Construction and rehabilitation of bus shelters.
iii.	Rehabilitation and construction of community police posts
iv.	And others
E)	Education and health Projects
i.	Construction and rehabilitation of education facilities [Schools, libraries and laboratories] including provision of desks
ii.	Construction and rehabilitation of health facilities e.g. health posts, maternity wing
iii.	Construction and rehabilitation of community library
iv.	Health Projects such as nutrition etc.
v.	Projects that take into consideration the care and support to People living with HIV/AIDS and other terminally illnesses
vi.	Education Projects such as literacy projects
vii.	And others
F)	Sport and Recreations
i.	Rehabilitation of community or welfare halls



MATERIAL AND METHODS

Institutional structure of the CDF in Zambia

- The current fiscal and institutional structure of the CDF is laid out in the CDF Act of 2018 and the CDF Guidelines 2022. The CDF process is illustrated below;



CHALLENGES

1 INCONSISTENT AND LIMITED FUNDING

- Limited funding with significant yearly variations has been a persistent challenge for the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) before the recent increase in budget allocation.
- Despite gradual growth over the years, CDF financing to local councils has remained relatively constrained, impacting the scale and quality of local services
- Allocation of CDF to constituencies tends to spread across multiple small projects within each ward, raising concerns about project quality.



INCONSISTENT AND LIMITED FUNDING

- Lack of specific limits on project numbers and quality thresholds in CDF guidelines complicates the situation.
- Timing of disbursements poses an additional challenge, often occurring in successive phases, leading to incomplete projects.
- Delays or partial releases of funds exacerbate the issue of incomplete projects and hinder effective project implementation.



2. PROJECT CYCLES LIMITED TO 1 YEAR HINDER THE PROCUREMENT OF LARGER PROJECTS

- Existing guidelines mandate that all projects must be acquired and finalized within a 1-year period.
- However, obtaining approvals from the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH) for the project list consumes a portion of this timeframe.
- This approval process increases the likelihood of projects remaining unfinished by the end of the fiscal year.



PROJECT CYCLES LIMITED TO 1 YEAR HINDER THE PROCUREMENT OF LARGER PROJECTS

- With larger funding allocations annually, local councils are inclined to pursue larger projects, necessitating longer procurement and implementation timelines.
- Unless the implementation schedule is extended, there's a potential for the number of unfinished projects to increase due to the longer timelines required for larger projects



3.LOCAL COUNCILS HAVE CONSTRAINED CAPACITY TO ADMINISTER THE CDF.

- Local authorities play a crucial role in the CDF framework, but concerns exist about their ability to efficiently manage CDF projects, especially with increased funding.
- Capacity limitations include insufficient personnel for project oversight, inadequate funding for on-site inspections, and institutional design constraints.
- It's essential to conduct a capacity assessment to identify specific areas of constraint and address them effectively.



4. LACK OF COMMUNITY AWARENESS, PARTICIPATION, AND EMPOWERMENT UNDERMINES THE ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EFFICACY OF CDF INVESTMENTS.

- Insufficient cross-cutting community contribution to CDF processes leads to misaligned projects and underutilization of resources.
- Factors contributing to poor local participation include limited awareness of CDF processes and opportunities for citizen engagement, insufficient dissemination of information, illiteracy, lack of technical skills, and poverty.
- Structural elements of the CDF, such as over half of committee members being directly appointed by MPs or local councillors, diminish the committee's ability to represent and advocate for local community preferences effectively.



5.CONTRACTORS' FAILURE TO COMPLETE WORKS AND THE USE OF INCORRECT MATERIALS ARE ISSUES OF CONCERN.

Construction of a Police Post in Mapanza Ward, Choma district

- On 2nd November 2022, the Council engaged Matview Construction for the construction of a Police Station in Mapanza Ward at a contract sum of K569,624 with a contract period of twelve (12) weeks starting from 9th November 2022 to 7th February 2023.
- The scope of works included; concrete works, sub and superstructure, roofing and ceiling, metal works, finishings, carpentry joinery and iron mongery, painting, plumbing installations and septic tank. As at 31st July 2023, the contractor had been paid amounts totalling K249,691,
- A physical inspection of the project carried out in July 2023, revealed that the works were not complete twenty-four (24) weeks after the expected completion date.
- The outstanding works included; roofing, blockwork above ring beam, plastering, painting, plumbing, septic tank, fitting ceiling board, carpentry joinery and iron mongery and metal work. Further, the contractor was not on site and the project had stalled since April 2023. See picture on the in Figure 2.



ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

- Inconsistent and Limited Funding: Fluctuations in yearly disbursements coupled with limited funding constrain the scale and quality of local services. The short project cycles of 1 year exacerbate this issue by hindering the procurement of larger projects, potentially leaving them unfinished by the end of the fiscal year.
- Capacity Constraints in Local Councils: Local councils lack the personnel and funding necessary for effective project oversight, further complicating the administration of the CDF.
- Community Awareness and Participation: Insufficient community involvement undermines the accountability and transparency of CDF investments. Poor participation can lead to projects that do not address local needs, resulting in underutilized resources. Structural issues within the CDF, such as the appointment process for committee members, may exacerbate this problem.



ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

- Contractor Issues: Challenges such as contractors failing to complete works and using incorrect materials contribute to project delays and quality concerns, highlighting the need for improved project management and oversight.
- Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive reforms aimed at enhancing funding stability, extending project cycles, strengthening local capacity, and promoting meaningful community engagement. Effective governance structures and mechanisms are essential to ensure that CDF investments lead to sustainable and impactful development outcomes for local communities.



CONCLUSIONS

- There are significant loopholes and inefficiencies in the delivery of CDF projects, evident in the performance of both contractors and local authorities.
- Decentralization efforts have been hindered by the lack of capacity within local authorities mandated to administer the fund.
- Infrastructure projects often face delays and poor planning, leading to poor quality construction and neglect after completion.
- Flaws in design and development, coupled with poor investment choices, can undermine infrastructure quality, economic gains, and result in environmental and social costs.
- To achieve sustainability and quality in CDF projects, there must be a strong commitment to longevity, transparency, and fiscal accountability in new infrastructure development.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of sustainable high-quality infrastructure and engineering involvement in CDF projects, this study recommends as follows:

- Establishment of a dedicated body, the Constituency Development Agency, present in all 116 districts of Zambia, staffed with requisite technical expertise, akin to entities like the Road Development Agency or Rural Electrification Authority, to manage the CDF independently from local councils.
- Implementation of a bundling approach for smaller projects, overseen by an independent engineering consultancy firm, to ensure quality execution.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Introduction of reforms in contractor selection processes based on past performance, with stringent measures for deregistration of defaulting contractors.
- Policy revisions for stricter regulation of engineering firm registrations, reserving contracts solely for firms led by engineering professionals, modelled after the stringent regulatory framework for legal practitioners.
- Adoption of a 5-year development planning framework for each constituency to streamline planning processes compared to the current annual cycle.
- Depoliticization of the fund by reducing political interference and enhancing citizen involvement in decision-making processes.



THANK YOU



Q&A SESSION

