

**INFLUENCE OF E-ENGAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY
GOVERNMENTS TAKING A CASE OF MANDERA COUNTY KENYA**

^{1*}Mohamed Maalim Dakane & ²Dr. Jackson Ndolo Muthini

^{1*}Scholar; Mount Kenya University, Kenya

²Senior Lecturer, KCA University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

E-Engagement has had an influence on a variety of government performances in a number of nations throughout the world. E-participation contributes to the promotion of transparency, which results in the decrease of corruption and bureaucratic inefficiencies, as well as an improvement in the delivery of public goods and services. The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of E-engagement on performance of county governments taking a case of Mandera County Kenya. The theory of public management was used to guide this investigation. The descriptive research design was used in this investigation. The target audience was made up of representatives from Mandera county Ministries, Sub-county wards, and members of the general public. The target population consisted of 6 sub-county administrators, 30 ward administrators, 10 County Executive Committees (CECs), and 9968 Mandera drowning victims from 6 sub-counties with a total population of 10,014 people in the target area. In order to select individuals from each of the four subgroups, stratified sampling techniques will be used. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select individuals from the County executive committee, Sub county administrators, and ward administrators, while simple random sampling techniques were used to select individuals from the general public. The research included a total of 285 participants who were randomly selected. Data was collected via the use of questionnaires. In order to determine the reliability of a research instrument, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed. A value of 0.7 or above was regarded dependable. From the analysis, it has been observed that E-engagement influences performance of county governments taking a case of Mandera County Kenya. The regression results indicated that E-engagement strategies had explanatory power over the performance of county governments where it accounted for 74.6 percent of variation in performance of county governments ($R^2 = .746$). Based on the research finding, the study therefore concluded that E-engagement strategies had significant influence on performance of county governments. The study recommends a similar study on E-engagement to be on the rest of the counties in Kenya so as to expound and compare the findings of this study and also to help the national and county government to help engage the public better.

Keywords: *E-Engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, ICT systems, Performance, County Governments*

INTRODUCTION

Electronic engagement is an ICT-supported citizen involvement process in different governance and governance systems, according to Zanello and Maassen (2011). Service delivery, administration, and decision-making would all fall under the umbrella of the procedures. An important part of ICT and infrastructure development is carried out by county assembly members. With the rapid adoption of numerous methods and policies that include individual citizen e-engagement participation, such as electronic governance and e-engagement, the development of multiple processes of governance has entered a highly crucial phase. Individuals and the county administration in Mandera County seem to favor different structures for interacting. An increasing number of people are relying on highly sophisticated ICT systems to conduct their daily activities. It's been difficult to make a customisation of ICT system use public.

Access to pertinent information is something that county residents have long wished they could get their hands on. However, a shortage of money has resulted in a poor percentage of success for ICT instruments in the field. As a result, it has had to deal with issues such a lack of financial resources and a lack of ICT system literacy. The usage of social media should be included into the ICT frameworks in order to increase the communication space between citizens and the government. Individual citizen e-participatory mechanisms would be strengthened as a result of these open and diversified venues. Zanello and Maassen (2011). The notion of civic voluntarism helps us better understand how people' willingness to participate might improve performance. The performance of the county government would be greatly enhanced if more individuals were willing to contribute their time and effort to participate in its operations.

The County Performance Management Framework (CPMF), which includes the National Development Plan (NDP), 10 year sector and spatial plans, 5 year County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), and the Annual Development Plan as outlined in Section 126 of the Public Development Plan, governs the performance of the Kenyan county governments. (County Government Performance Management Framework 2017). Economic, social, and political priorities for county development should be matched with the NDP's Vision 2030, the country's long-term development strategy.

The government has a focuses on offering crucial services to members of the public and to do this effectively, it solely relies on revenues collected from the public. In the absence of motivation and the will to pay rates by the public, the government is limited from providing the services. It is for this reason that the government is called upon to establish enabling environment for recovering costs from the citizens. When there is an active involvement of the public in governance through public engagement, there is a likelihood of growth in counties in terms of planning, project prioritization, targets on citizen's needs and better monitoring of government activities that enhance effectiveness and governance. Poverty reduction in drive of realizing development sustainability greatly depends on the nature of devolution implementation towards what it was meant to achieve.

It was found by Wanyoike (2016) that the distribution of money has a significant effect in project completion since resources are a critical project component. In addition to this, it was highlighted that MCA's involvement, in particular, accelerated the project completion time.

Statement of the Problem

Democracy is now globally accepted as a desirable good and the preferred way of governance. This is especially true for Kenya that like many other African countries is trying to make an often difficult transition to democracy. The success of such a transition demands that social institutions that socialize people politically be well attuned to give this democratic support. Such support is not automatic but it would be presumed that most institutions would

try to be in step with widely expressed social aspirations. Kenya is well known for having many voluntary associations, especially those based on the self-help concept.

E-engagement has had an influence on a variety of government performances in a number of nations throughout the world. Oduor (2015) asserts that there is a link between civic involvement and the performance of county governments. He continues to assert that there is a relationship between E-engagement and the performance of county governments (2012). For example, according to Oduor (2015), Mandera County has built a number of fundamental public involvement methods. The first is the ability for the public and interest groups to participate in decision-making processes related to county prioritizing, identification of budget allocations, and development initiatives, among other things. Second, Project Management Committees have been created by the county in order to increase public participation. The third public engagement component is providing chances first and foremost to the local community to offer the services and commodities that are necessary (Oduor, 2015).

In Mandera County, however, there are several gaps in the diffusion of information, whether via print or electronic media, interlocutors, or the internet. Along with information communicated via electronic media and interlocutors, a significant gap exists in the availability of printed materials and internet-based platforms, which are unavailable to the majority of rural and impoverished people in the county (Opiyo et.al, 2017). For the purpose of identifying various effective methods of facilitating E-engagement across the county through public participatory functional structures, this study will reveal various effective methods of improving the dissemination of information throughout the county, including rural and impoverished communities, in order to facilitate E-engagement across the county through public participatory functional structures.

Civic participation contributes to the promotion of transparency, which in turn results in the decrease of corruption and bureaucratic inefficiencies, which in turn leads to an improvement in the delivery of public services (Kenya school of Government, 2016). Despite its significance, the relationship between civic involvement and the functioning of the county administration has not been established in Mandera County, despite the fact that it should be. Several instances of misappropriation of public money in projects that do not add value to the lives of citizens have been highlighted by the auditor report for 2018. The capacity of public officials on issues of social responsibility, such as participatory procedures and decision-making processes, has also not been realized in Mandera County, resulting in the necessity for this research in the county.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of E-engagement on performance of county governments taking a case of Mandera County Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: there is no statistical significant association between the influences of E-engagement and performance of Mandera county government in Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Public Management

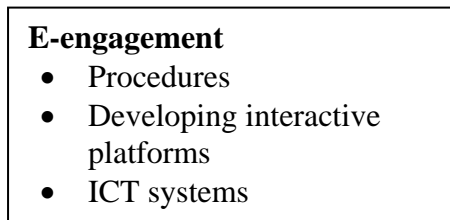
Hood put out the notion (1991). When it comes to understanding how civic involvement affects different government arrangements, the theory is key. It shows how public sectors would open up to more private sector impacts and so affect different government performances according to the new method of public administration. Efforts to increase the efficiency of the Mandera County government's operations and the system for implementing policy are all part of the new public management theory reforms. For further information, see Delwiche and Henderson (2012).

According to Bagumi (2014), all new public management changes are required in order to develop improvements in service delivery. For example, while governments in France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and the United Kingdom strove to enhance health care services while spending less, the new public administration led to higher disparities and more bureaucracy in some countries. Contrary to the operations in most sectors, implementation of the theory in the health care sector would entail that big providers like hospitals and insurers, hospitals and regulations stay stable, despite the theory's central element of competition.

The new public management philosophy has been criticized by citizens for a number of shortcomings. A central contradiction of decentralization was first presented by the idea. Delwiche and Henderson (2012), argue that as public managers are given more control over several initiatives, the decision-making process becomes more centralized. Public managers would instead make centralized choices instead of promoting decentralization as claimed by the new public management. Criticisms regarding the public sector's reliance on private sector management approaches are also being raised. Even while private sector activities may be encouraged by new public administration, there are hazards associated with some practices being adopted by private sector organizations.

The basic management infrastructure in developing countries would never be adequate in enabling market-centered reforms; instead, a variety of elements would be necessary before markets could be successful in achieving their objectives. Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi, et al (2013). When it comes to user-centric viewpoints, there would be four stages of development by the government. The phases might include a one-way information flow, two-way interactions, democracy, and money transactions, to name a few examples. Using the theory, we can better identify the amount to which a certain talent or resource, opportunity, or competency associated with the benefits of E-Engagement will boost the performance of the Manderu County administration.

Independent Variable



Dependent Variables

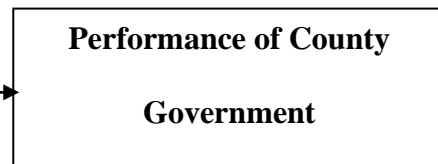


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. The design connects the study's questions or goals to the collected data. Survey designs result in a data description, whether in words, pictures, charts, or tables, and whether the data analysis shows or is merely descriptive.

Target Population

The target audience was made up of representatives from Manderu county Ministries, constituencies, Sub-county wards, and the general public. A total of 9,914 people was targeted, including 6 sub-county administrators, 30 ward administrators, 10 County Executive Committees (CECs), and 9968 people who will participate in public forums in Manderu drawn from 6 sub-counties. This study did not include public members who are below 18 years of age, hence all learners were considered to be less than 18 years of age.

Among those who participated were representatives from the Ministries of Water, Irrigation and Environmental Services; Agriculture; Livestock and Fisheries; Education; and Sport.

Aside from those mentioned above, there were the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry of public service and devolved units (including conflict resolution, radicalisation and public participation), the Ministry of health and social services (including health services), the Ministry of land, housing and physical planning (including roads, transportation, and infrastructure), and the Ministry of trade, industry, tourism and co-operatives (including the Ministry of youth, gender, and social services).

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Population
County Executive Committee	10
Sub County Administrators	6
Ward Administrators	30
Public members	9868
Total	9914

Source: Mandera County, public participation mapping report, (2019)

Sample size

Researchers may use the Sloven's method for estimating the minimum number of respondents necessary for the given population size in order to get a representative sample size, the formula is expressed as indicated:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where, n= sample size

N= population size

e = probability error

$$n = \frac{9914}{1+9914(0.05)^2}$$

$$= 284.636 \approx 285 \text{ persons.}$$

Ten percent of the population is considered the minimum for study, according to Gay (1976) and Shuttle (2008).

Data Analysis Techniques & Procedures

In order to evaluate the varied degrees of response-concentration regarding asset disposal strategies, data were examined using descriptive statistics including percentages and mean scores. To further investigate the study's quantifiable variables, regression analysis was used. The associations between the variables in the research were discovered via the application of Pearson's Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The significance threshold for all statistical tests will be set at 5%. There was number codes for each response, and they were allocated numerical values that match.

Equation below shows the linear regression model of the independent variables against the dependent variable.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Performance of county governments

X₁ = E-engagement

X₂ = Procedures

X₃ = Developing interactive platforms

X₄ = Civic structures

β₁ to β₅ are the beta coefficients

e is the error term which is assumed to be normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance.

β₀ is the y intercept

RESULTS

Response Rate

The research had a sample size of 285 research participants and the research assistants administered the questionnaire to all of them but they managed to get back 220 of the filled in questionnaire. This represents a response rate of 220 (77.19%) of the total reaction as indicated in the table 2 below. This questionnaire response rate decision was based on the study of Babbie (2007) who suggested that a fifty percent return rate was good enough for any data analysis but 70 % and above was termed as very good response. Therefore, the researcher resolved that this was an excellent return rate good enough to carry out the analysis.

Table 2: Respondents Response Rate

	Frequency	Percentage
Returned Questionnaires	220	77.19%
Not Returned Questionnaires	65	22.81%
Total	285	100.00%

Source: Field Data (2022)

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

Descriptive statistics were meant to describe and help the researcher review the overall drifts in the data, present perception of how diverse aggregates might be and present intuition into where one attainment holds in association with others. Descriptive statistics indicate broad inclinations in the data and the study used mean and standard deviation. To achieve the objective, E- engagement (Procedures, Developing interactive platforms and ICT systems) five-point Likert summated scale was utilized in the analysis. The results, which included mean and standard deviation, were analyzed, summarized, and presented in table 3.

Table 3: E- engagement

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Participation in policy and governance systems requires lengthy and arduous processes.	220	3.929	.91136
Participation options offered by county governments to the general public	220	3.641	1.13624
Incorporating electronic public participation into county government governance	220	3.629	.9329
There is preferences of people and county e-governance interaction frameworks	220	3.427	.9823
E-participation options for citizens are fair	220	3.526	.9488
Policy and governance frameworks that don't take public e-engagement into account are lacking	220	3.804	.9204
Constitutional actions on public e-engagement are not available to the public.	220	3.951	.9816
We are faced with issues such as a lack of financial resources and a lack of proficiency with ICT systems	220	4.126	.8636

Source: Field Data (2022)

The statements that ‘we are faced with issues such as a lack of financial resources and a lack of proficiency with ICT systems’ and ‘constitutional actions on public e-engagement are not available to the public’ reported the highest mean score of 4.126 and 3.951 with standard deviations of .8636 and .9816 respectively. The statement that ‘participation in policy and governance systems requires lengthy and arduous processes’ with the mean score of 3.929 and standard deviations of .91136 closely followed this. There are preferences of people and county e-governance interaction frameworks and E-participation options for citizens are fair reported the lowest mean score of 3.427 and 3.526 respectively., with standard deviations of

.9823 and .9488 respectively. It is important to notice that despite the above named statements reporting the lowest mean score, the mean is still high and according to the key, tie score is within the agreed scale.

Inferential Statistics

Because the diagnostic test results indicated that data was normally distributed, then the study subjected the data into further parametric analysis, which include the correlation, and regression analysis. The subsequent unit presents the correlation and regression results of the study.

Correlation Analysis

In order to analyze the influence of E-engagement on performance of county governments: a case of Mandera County, Kenya, correlation analysis was performed, using Pearson Product Method (PPM) at 5% (0.05) level of significance to establish whether there existed association between the dependent variable and each independent variables and establish the strength of the relationship. Correlation analysis of all the independent variables was determined to express their association with the dependent variable that is to infer features of populations grounded on samples (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The independent variables (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems) were correlated with the dependent variable of the study (performance of county governments) and outcomes accessible in the Table below.

Table 4: Analysis by Correlation Results

Correlations		performance of county governments	E-engagement Strategy	Procedures	Developing interactive platforms	ICT systems
performance of county governments	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 136				
E-engagement	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.342** .000 136	1 136			
Procedures	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.226** .008 136	.035 .686 136	1 136		
Developing interactive platforms	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.206* .016 136	.156 .070 136	-.057 .511 136	1 136	

ICT systems	Pearson	.437**	.071	.095	.064	1
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.413	.274	.460	
	N	136	136	136	136	136

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data (2021)

Forthcoming from Table above, the results; E-engagement ($r= 0.342$, $p< 0.01$), Procedures ($r= 0.226$, $p< 0.01$), Developing interactive platforms ($r= 0.206$, $p< 0.05$) and ICT systems ($r= 0.437$, $p<0.01$), depicts significant relationships with the dependent variable; performance of county governments and the independent variables. This is because each assessment exposes a p-value not exceeding 0.05; E-engagement ($p< 0.01$), Procedures ($p\text{-value} = 0.008$), Developing interactive platforms ($p\text{-value} = 0.016$) and ICT systems ($p<0.01$).

Among these relationship, ICT systems ($r= 0.437$) has the highest, which is moderate because the coefficient of correlation (r) was between 0.3 and 0.6. It is then followed by E-engagement ($r= 0.342$) which also had moderate relationship with performance of county governments. Then comes before Procedures ($r= 0.226$) to be followed by Developing interactive platforms ($r= 0.206$) where each had low with performance of county governments because r does not reach 0.3. The examination therefore confirmed that for the performance of county governments to be appreciated, the four E-engagement strategies deliberated should be embraced.

All the indicators of E-engagement strategies were correlated amongst themselves. This meant that they were all moving in the same direction. The results of this study concur with Marangu and Emanikor (2020), their influence on the Kenya Sugar Company organization's competitiveness were studied. The research has operated independent variables such as strategies for cost management, differentiation and market focus. It turns out that all the usual strategies for organizational competitiveness Sugar Company's production had a significant impact. The study concluded that it has a significant impact and influence on the organizational competitiveness of sugar companies. The study recommends that sugar companies make a greater effort to use common strategies because the study found that they have a statistically significant impact on the competitiveness of sugar company organizations. The following section introduces the correlation analysis of research according to the research objectives.

Regression Analysis

The study had the assumption that the role of E-engagement influenced s performance of county governments. The study had four objectives which were later stated into null hypotheses and tested at 95 percent confidence level ($\alpha = .05$). The aggregate mean scores were computed for the independent and dependent variables and used in regression runs and results used to test corresponding hypotheses and the results recorded in Table 5, 6 and 7.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.864 ^a	.746	.738		0.518424

a. Predictors: (Constant). E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems

Source: Field Data (2022)

The model summary results displays that there was an association between generic competitive strategies (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems) and performance of county governments ($R=.864$). The regression results indicated that the four predictor variables had explanatory control county governments where it accounted for 74.6 percent of variability ($R^2 = .746$). This means E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems can explain about 74.6% of the proportion of total variations in the performance of county governments. Thus, other aspects that were not deliberated in this study forecast the remaining percentages. Therefore, it should be noted that the explanatory command of the above regression model was measured using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while the significance of the model was determined by calculating P value, where 0.05 was used as the benchmark. The standard error of estimate (0.518424) indicates the average deviation of the independent variables from the line of best fit. This presented how the accurateness with which a sample distribution of a signified population applying standard deviation was displayed.

Table 6: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.406	4	25.8515	96.188	.000 ^a
	Residual	35.208	131	.26876		
	Total	138.614	135			

a. Predictors: (Constant), E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems

b. Dependent Variable: performance of county governments

Source: Field Data (2021)

So as to effectively interpret this table, the research used the beta value; coefficient of X_1 , X_2 , X_3 and X_4 , in equation (i) where the study suggested that on one side, they are all zero to signal (that is $\beta_1=\beta_2=\beta_3=\beta_4=0$). This represents the null hypothesis;

$H_0: \beta_1=\beta_2=\beta_3=\beta_4=0$

Alternatively, at least one of the betas is 0 and to mean $\beta_i \neq 0$. That is the alternate hypothesis was

$H_0: \beta_i \neq 0$

Notably, $\beta_1=\beta_2=\beta_3=\beta_4=0$ is only true and then accepted when the p-value exceeds 0.05 ($p >.05$) where accordingly assumption $\beta_i \neq 0$ is rejected. In cases where ($p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$) then the assumption $\beta_i \neq 0$ is true and as such it is accepted while rejecting the proposal $\beta_1=\beta_2=\beta_3=\beta_4=0$.

The ANOVA table results revealed that the variables (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems) had a significant influence on performance of county governments ($p\text{-value} = .000$). An F statistic showed that the general model was significant ($F = 96.188$, $p < .05$). This exhibited that the applied model can significantly predict the change in performance of county governments. The coefficients results showed the extent in which independent variables contributed to the adjustment in the dependent variable.

Table 7: Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.266	.380		6.699	.000
E-engagement	.272	.069	.285	3.951	.000
Procedures	.137	.052	.188	2.929	.010

Developing interactive platforms	.149	.073	.147	2.039	.043
ICT systems	.323	.059	.390	5.448	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance Of County Governments

Source: Field Data (2021)

Using the regression coefficient results, the study tested the hypotheses associated with the research objectives. To establish the influence of E-engagement on performance of Mandera county government in Kenya was tested using the hypothesis:

H₀₁: *There is no statistical significant association between the influences of E-engagement and performance of Mandera county government in Kenya.*

The results (T = 3.951; p<0.000) show p-value < 0.000 which is less than 0.05 meaning that at $\alpha = 0.05$, E-engagement has a significant influence on performance of Mandera county government, and so there is sufficient evidence that E-engagement is a useful estimator of Performance of County Governments.

The hypothesis tested to investigate the influence of Procedures on performance of Mandera county government, Kenya.

The t-test results suggests that ICT systems is the strongest predictor of performance of Mandera county government (t = 5.448, P = .000), followed by E-engagement (t = 3.951, P = .000), Procedures (t = 2.929, P = .010).and finally, Developing interactive platforms (t = 2.039, P = .043)

The resultant multiple regression equation that can be employed in predicting levels of performance of Mandera county government for 1 standard deviation enhancement in (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms, and ICT systems) can be stated as:

$$(\hat{Y}) = 1.266 + .272 X_1 + .137 X_2 + .149 X_3 + .323 X_4 + \varepsilon.$$

Where:

Y = Performance of county governments

X₁ = E-engagement

X₂ = Procedures

X₃ = Developing interactive platforms

X₄ = Civic structures

β_1 to β_5 are the beta coefficients

e is the error term which is assumed to be normally distributed with mean zero and constant variance.

β_0 is the y intercept

The unstandardized beta coefficient; .272, .137, .149, and .323 represented the expected improvement in Performance of county governments for a one unit increase in the E-engagement (X₁) leads to a 0.272 unit increase in the Performance of county governments, and vice versa, one unit change in Procedures (X₂) leads to a 0.137 unit increase in the Performance of county governments, a one unit increase in Developing interactive platforms (X₃) leads to a 0.149 unit increase in the Performance of county governments, and finally, a one unit increase in Civic structures (X₄) leads to a 0.323 unit increase in the Performance of county governments. All the variables were significant as the P-values were <0.05 which is an indication that all the factors were statistically significant. The following segment presents regression analysis results guided by the four study objectives.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis, it has been observed that E-engagement influence performance of county governments taking a case of Mandera County Kenya. The regression results indicated that E-engagement strategies (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms and ICT systems) had explanatory power over the performance of county governments where it accounted for 74.6 percent of variation in performance of county governments (R² = .746).

Based on the research finding, the study therefore concluded that E-engagement strategies (E-engagement, Procedures, Developing interactive platforms and ICT systems) had significant influence on performance of county governments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

County executives should organize public participation meetings in a way that allows deliberative communication that is two-way and oriented towards problem-solving, as opposed to meetings that are restricted to the answering of questions and at which the organizers give no room for dialogue. This change of tack will allow citizens to influence the decision-making process and will make them partners and not clients in the governance process.

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