

REPORT ON THE CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since 1999, UDN started involving communities in periodic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), and advocating for transparent and accountable utilization of public resources, with a major focus on Poverty Action Fund (PAF). In 2002 UDN established the CBMES. The approach is pro-active, continuous and involves more community people in Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) processes. The processes include skills development in M&E, field monitoring, understanding government policies, programmes and participation in policy processes, sensitization on citizens' rights, tracking government expenditure of particular projects, lobbying and advocacy.

The CBMES is expected to deliver a mass, pro-active and continuous participatory learning and action in the assessment and influencing of public expenditure at policy, programme and activity levels. This is aimed at yielding an interface between public officials (policy-makers and technocrats) and the members of civil society in the promotion of public accountability and improvement in the quality and quantity of public service delivery. CBMES is operational mainly in the six districts of Kamuli, Bushenyi, Kumi, Bugiri, Iganga and Kanungu.

2) Background for the CDF in Uganda

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in Uganda arose out of a Presidential pledge¹ to MPs that was intended to relieve them from the pressures of their constituents in regard to promised development projects.

In the Budget proposals for the Parliamentary Commission for the Financial Year 2005/2006, an estimate was included in the Development budget called Constituency Development Fund (CDF). In the Ministerial Statement which was presented to the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee for consideration, the Parliamentary Commission defended their budgetary proposals including this CDF.

In the Report of the Plenary session of Parliament, which was presented by the Deputy Chair Person of the Committee on 8th September 2005, the Committee recommended, among other things, that Parliament approves the CDF.

During the plenary session of Parliament on 9th September 2005, after long discussions on the proposed CDF, Parliament adopted the Report of the Legal and Parliamentary Committee which included a recommendation that the CDF of 2.95 Billion shillings that had been earmarked for MPs be released to them expeditiously.

¹ That in many of the meetings the President was having with Members of Parliament, the MPs were complaining that their constituents always expect them to contribute to Development projects in their area. That this puts allot of pressure on the MPs as they have to use their own money to contribute to such projects. That the President then promised the MPs that in the budget of 2005/2006, Government was going to include funds for the MPs to use in their Constituencies. The Parliamentary Commission decided to call this fund Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

3) Legal, Policy Framework and Guidelines for CDF in Uganda

There is no law governing the management of CDF in Uganda. At the time the CDF was approved by Parliament the following was done;

- On 11th October 2005, the Parliamentary Commission appointed a Committee of seven MPs and the Clerk to Parliament (Chaired by Hon. Ekullo Epak with the Clerk to Parliament as the Secretary) *to formulate the interim guideline/ procedures for the disbursement and accountability of the CDF for the financial year 2005/2006.* This Committee accordingly worked out the guideline/ procedures. The following points in the guidelines are noteworthy:
 1. That every MP has to establish a Committee of 5 people composed of him/ herself as the Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer and two other members for the purpose of handling this money;
 2. That the money would be released to the individual MP and the responsibility of accounting for it to the Accounting Officer (Clerk to Parliament) would lie with the MP;
 3. That the money for the Financial Year 2005/2006 would be accounted for within 6 months while that of subsequent years would be accounted for within one year;
 4. That the funds would only be used on activities that directly increase household incomes and productivity; on interventions that can trigger rapid rural transformation and economic development; and on agro-processing and marketing of produce in the respective constituencies;
 5. That the money would not be used on development of infrastructure projects already under the Local Government initiatives or Central Government programmes or projects; and on political and/or religious activities.

NB: The Clerk to Parliament released the money to the individual MPs of the 7th Parliament in November 2005. According to the Clerk, he has been receiving accountabilities for the money from the MPs which he has not been in position to verify. That he is waiting for the Auditor General to do the verification during his normal Audit of the funds spent by Parliament. That even then, he as the Accounting Officer is not satisfied with the modalities in place for handling this fund. That although this Financial Year's budget contains a provision for this money, he has already informed the Parliamentary Commission members that he will be reluctant to release this money to the MPs this year before Parliament puts in place a law governing the handling of the funds.

4) The Problem

The concern of UDN is that there is no Law that governs the establishment and operation of the CDF. The policy guidelines too seem to be shaky and relaxed in

enforcing proper accountability and prudent utilization of the public funds provided for under the CDF. The nature in which the CDF is passed on to the Members of Parliament seems to be so informal and susceptible to abuse.

5) Objectives of the study

i) Broad Objective

The broad objective of the study is to change the implementation modalities of the CDF Uganda. UDN will, therefore, contribute to kick-starting a process of advocacy for enactment of a Law to govern the management of the CDF.

ii) Specific objectives of this research were;

- Establish whether people had knowledge of cdf
- To share cdf information with the local communities
- Find out whether the November 2005 release was utilized as per the guidelines
- Get information from local people on how to improve the cdf
- Use the information to advocate for changes in the management of cdf

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research was carried out in six districts of where UDN operates and a sample of 60 mps of which some lost their seats and others retained them were interviewed on how the cdf money was utilized during their term of office.

Although some MPs revealed the projects where they invested the money, they said they needed to cross check to remember the exact projects and the parishes where the projects are. They were happy about the fund but most of them say the money was little to fulfill the needs of their constituencies. Many of them were not comfortable with the guidelines because they did not match with their constituency needs. Others said the project is a flop and should be scrapped.

Responses

1. Dr Johnson Nkuuhe (Isingiro South Former) Mbarara district.

The guidelines were not friendly at all. The beneficiaries of the money have to determine the priorities because they know better the problems facing their constituencies. The most pressing needs in my constituency were to build bridges but the guidelines did not allow me to do that.

The funding of MPs should continue but the amount of Shs10 million be increased. Its okay for the money to be on MPs' personal accounts but the

constituency development committee members should be signatories to prevent misappropriation.

I spent my Shs10 million by buying goats and rabbits for women groups. I also used it on fundraising for churches and schools because they needed the money more than others. I have already accounted for the money to the Clerk of parliament.

2. Jack Sabitti (Rukiga- former MP Kabale district)

I'm not happy about the timing of the money. I received the money during campaigns and I had to give it voters because the money was meant for them.

The money is too little and should not be restricted to poverty eradication projects that are not supported by government. We know the needs of our people and its better we spend the money as we require and only present the accountability.

I spent the money in helping the youth, women and disabled groups for income generating projects though I would have loved to help schools and churches. I could not follow the restrictions. I had to help construct churches. The money should be channeled to a different account and not mixed with MPs salaries. MPs should only monitor and restrict the usage because he is accountable. You cannot trust a politician with public money. But I accounted for mine.

3. Baguma Isoke (Buyanja former) Kibale district

I was very comfortable with the guidelines and wished the money started at the beginning of my term in Parliament.

I wish the money would be put on the MPs personal accounts. Our people should know that we contribute to development.

For me I bought bicycles for the youth to ferry their merchandise to markets and trading centers. I also bought wheel chairs for the disabled to enable their movements.

I invested the rest of the money into income generating projects for women, youth and the disabled.

For a long time I have been using my own resources to fund such projects but the CDF gave me some relief.

4. Joseph Balikuddembe (Busiro South Wakiso district)

Yes I got the money and used it according to the guidelines. However, I want the guidelines to be relaxed to allow me invest the money in many other projects other than restricting to poverty eradication programmes.

I assisted people who did not have school fees. I put the rest of the money into Busiro Farmers Association which has membership of 300 people.

I bought a maize mill, which is helping my farmers and it has generated up Shs22 million. I still want the money to be on account so that I can manage and account for it.

5. Tom Kayongo (Lubaga North former Kampala district)

The guidelines are okay but they should be relaxed a bit to allow in some more projects that match by the people's needs.

I distributed mine to women groups (NIGIINA) which they invested in fishponds and those who wanted a starting capital.

Those who already had capital, I only boosted them up. I also supported primary schools and churches that were in bad shape. CFD should not be channeled to MPs accounts because most politicians lack integrity.

I'm sure less than 50 percent of the MPs put the money to its rightful purpose. Its better for the money to go the accounts constituency committees.

6. Felex Okot Ogong (Dokolo) Lira district

I got the money and appreciated although it came at a wrong time of campaigns.

Although the money is very little, it gave MPs opportunity to address urgent problems that cannot be tackled by government immediately.

I bought 140 bicycles and gave them to people with the intention that they would pay back the money in installments. I have been disappointed that many people have not paid back. I suggest there should be a policy to follow up people who deliberately refuse to pay back.

The guidelines should be relaxed to allow us tackle different problems like disasters in the constituency. Government does not move as first as MPs. We are closer to people we know their problem better.

I want the CDF to be increased to Shs60 million every year for MPs to effectively fight poverty in constituencies.

7. Christopher Kibazanga (Busongoa South) Kasese district

I have no problem with guidelines but I don't want the money to be channeled to the MPs' personal accounts.

MPs are not professional to account for public funds. The money should go the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) but specified for constituencies.

MPs should only be leaders of the fund and advise the committees accordingly.

I used the fund to buy a grinding mill for maize and land to house the mill.

I also gave money to women groups' involved in businesses and bought wheel chairs for the disabled.

Because I did not use all the money, I have given provisional accountability and would present the rest latter.

8. Dr Arapkisa Yeko (Kween) Kapchorwa district

I got the money. I'm comfortable with guidelines but want government to increase the amount of money because the needs of rural constituents are numerous.

I bought a maize mill. I'm putting up a building that will house the mill. This will cost me more than Shs10 million.

I also gave some money to youth and women groups involved in community based projects.

Its okay for the money deposited to MPs' account so that voters can realize our contribution.

9. Nyombi Tembo (Kasanda South Mubende district).

I got the money and I was happy with the initiative. The guidelines were fine but the timing was wrong. It created political differences because people in the constituencies belonged to different political parties.

I used the CDF to buy chicks, cassava cuttings for my constituents.

I have been using more than Shs30 million every month from my personal earnings to support constituency activities but the CDF gave me a boost.

However the amount of Shs10 million should be increased. I'm comfortable with the way the money is being handled. It should be given to individual MPs because they need to be visible in the areas they represent.

I suggest that MPs should present sensible work plans to the Clerk of Parliament before receiving the money.

10. Tomson Kyahurwenda (Buhaguzi County) Hoima district

Yes am aware of the money and I received it in the 7th Parliament. I want Parliament to change the CDF guidelines to allow MPs spend the money on projects that benefit their areas.

The guidelines were limiting us to concentrate on programs that don't receive any funding from government. This was tricky because voters would expect you to support the rehabilitation of roads and schools that are insufficiently supported by government.

I'm comfortable with the money being channeled to my personal account so that I can manage and plan for it well. However, this attracts a lot of temptation, you can easily spend it as if it your money. We cannot allow district leaders to receive the money because in many districts, leaders are politically divided, which frustrates the cause.

I used the money to buy footballs for the youth, improve road network, support agricultural activities and facilitated youth and women groups to travel to other districts for study tours.

The groups were traveling mostly to Kabale and Masindi to visit success stories in agriculture.

11. Sarah Nyombi (Ntenjeru Northm, Kayunga district).

I got the money and I was very happy that it has done some little work in my constituency. The guidelines were proper but the money was too little. It was a drop in the ocean. Our people have a lot of needs. But this was a good decision that government wants us to contribute to development. I used the money to support income generating projects in the constituency and it has worked.

12. Pius Mujuzi (Kyotera, Rakai district)

Yes I got the CDF and I want government not to scrap it. However, I want the guidelines to be improved since I intend to invest the money in other projects. I suggest that it becomes mandatory that every MP present works plans for the money before receiving it. Plans must be approved by Parliament. In 7th Parliament we had no plans and it became difficult to utilise the money properly.

I used mine to purchase high breed seeds for farmers, cassava and potato cuttings.

I also bought 420 high breed piglets and gave them to my constituents. I gave the rest to development projects for the youth, PWD and women groups.

But I suggest that MPs open specified accounts for the CDGF so that it does not mix up with their earnings because the CDF is public money.

I want the constituency committees to be signatory to the accounts. This would give a starting point for our successors other than personalizing the money.

13 Deusdedit Bikwasizehi (Buhweju)

I'm aware of the CDF and I received it. I'm also aware of the guidelines and I followed them. I used the money on income generating projects like wheat growing. I believe MPs should receive the money because they are leaders of the constituencies and we are accountable for the money.

14. Ssebuliba Mutumba (Kawempe South) Kampala district

I'm aware of the CDF and I received the money during the 7th Parliament. The timing of the money was bad because it came at the time of campaigns. Many MPs used it to campaign and print campaign posters.

The guidelines should be relaxed to match with people's needs. I used mine on income generating projects and I have already accounted for it. We used it as a revolving fund and gave out to individuals for business. My constituency committee also gave money to community based NGOs.

I used some to de-silt drainage channels in my constituency.

The money should not be deposited on our accounts. It should go the constituency committee and we work together with already established non-government organizations. However, most people who got the money and were supposed to pay it back refused to pay back. They don't want to pay back the money because they know its government money meant to given out freely.

15. Sylvia Ssenabulya (Woman Mityana district)

I received the CDF and am comfortable with guidelines. I used mine on income generating activities. I bought piglets, goats for farmers. I bought spray pumps for farmers to youth and women groups. Its fine for the money to be on my account because I'm accountable to the clerk. Like women MPs the money is too little for the whole district.

16. Herbert Nuwagaba (Kajara, Ntungamo district)

I received the money but the guidelines were not clear. I had to break some of them and use the money basing on the needs of the people. I bought seeds for farmers, gave out some to women and youth groups that were engaged in brick laying and crafts for commercial purposes. Its better that CDF is not mixed up with MPs incomes. It should put on a different account, which would be managed by the constituency development committee. The MPs should simply be chief signatories and overseers.

17. Peter Lokeris (Pian county, Nakarapiripit district)

I know the CDF and I got it. Only that the guidelines were not friendly and should be relaxed. I injected mine in food security, and bee keeping for the youth. Government should put in place a clear CDF policy otherwise the purpose would be defeated. The money should be on the constituency development committee account and the MPs becomes the chairman. Politicians cannot manage public funds well.

18. Igeme Nabeta (Jinja municipality)

I received the money but it was too little compared to our neighbors in Kenya. We should copy the Kenyan system. I bought boats because my constituency has islands. I also bought iron sheets for churches and schools. I had to violate the guidelines. I put the rest of the money in some savings and credit cooperatives for people to get loans. The money should be out of the MPs' hands and be channeled to the constituency accounts.

19. Benard Mulengani (Bukoli Central former) Bugiri district

I received the money, I knew the guidelines and I followed them. Only that they should be amended. I gave the money to women and youth income projects. The MPs should remain receiving the money because that is when voters will realize their efforts in developing the area. But the money was little and should be increased.

20. Charles Angiro (Erute North) Lira district

I got the money but it was too little. That money cannot eradicate poverty. Government should increase it. It should be the MPs to receive the money because they are accountable for it. Am aware of the guidelines and they are ok. I sat down with the committee and identified how to distribute the money. We gave to women and youth groups. I have already accounted for the money.

21. Louis Opange (Pallisa)

Am aware of the CDF and I got it. But the guidelines were restrictive and I don't think any MP followed them. Our churches need to grow with our support. The academic performance in my constituency is poor and I would love to support it. Schools are ill equipped. We have no time to follow up the income generating projects.

I put mostly money spent in farming activities and income generating activities for women, youth and the disabled. The money should remain on my personal account because I'm the one who is accountable. To do effective work, the money should be increased from Shs10 million.

22. Tomson Kyahurwenda (Buhaguzi) Hoima district

He wants Parliament to change the guideline to allow them use the money as required by the voters. I'm comfortable if the money is channeled through my personal account.

I used the money to buy footballs for the youth, improve road network, and support agricultural activities and facilitated youth and women groups to travel to other districts to learn the development and they have done it.

The groups were traveling mostly to Kabale and Masindi for success stories in agriculture. No good relationship with district leaders.

23. Michael Mabikke (Makindye East, Kampala)

I'm aware of the CDF and I got it. Only that the guidelines were not friendly and should be relaxed. I injected mine youth projects.. Government should put in place the CDF policy otherwise its intention would be defeated. The money should be on the constituency account and the MPs become the chairman.

24. Louis Opange (Pallisa)

I'm aware of the CDF and I got it. But the guidelines were restrictive and I don't think any MP followed them. Our churches need to grow with our support. The academic performance in my constituency is poor and I would love to support it. Schools are ill equipped. We have no time to follow up the income generating projects.

I put the money mostly in farming activities and income generating activities for women, youth and the disabled. The money should remain on my personal account because am the one accountable. To do effective work, the money should be increased."

25. Margaret Baba Diri (PWD North)

I got the money. I'm aware of the guidelines but I was not comfortable with them. I wanted to use the money to buy solar energy panels for schools that had no power but the guidelines were unfair. I invested the money mostly in farming for food security and gave some to women and youth groups to boost their income generating activities. I have already accounted for it.

26. Mary Karooro (Woman Bushenyi)

I received the money though it was little to serve the whole district. Am aware of the guidelines but they should be reviewed. There is to help schools and churches in my district and as MP I would love to it but the guidelines don't allow mw. I gave the money to grouped involved in bee keeping, crafts and other

income generating projects that I cannot mention off calf they are all in the accountability which I have already presented.

27. Yefusa Okulo Epak (Oyam South) Apac district

Yes I got the money and used it as per the guidelines though they were to restrictive. I want them to be relaxed. The timing was also bad. For me I created a revolving fund where people should borrow and refund at certain percentage. The would be enough if only the guidelines allowed us to put it into infrastructure like construct bore holes for our people. I put mine into piggery, ice growing, brick laying for the youth and other. Am happy that some of these people are refunding the money so that others can benefit. I have already accounted for mine.

28. William Wopuwa (Bubulo East) Mbale district

I got the money but because it came during the time of campaigns, I diverted and I will have to pay it to the constituency. That is when I would account for it. Government should relax the guidelines because our schools, churches and roads need our support as MPs. The way we receive this money should be changed because there are many temptations. WE should open constituency accounts and only be chairmen and chief signatories to the money. The money should also be increase.

29. Latif Sebagala (Kawempe North, Kampala district)

That CDF money is not enough although the idea is good. I think we should have new guidelines to manage it properly. This will make it meaningful.

30. Emmanuel Dombo (Bunyole)

The CDF is a good innovation. I spent it on village projects and other pressing issues. Unfortunately, voters were misled into believing that it was free money they would spend anyhow.

To redeem the situation, we need new guidelines and strict measures that would prevent wastage. MPs should be overseers of the projects being implemented in their constituencies by Constituency development committees.

31. Joseph Balikuddembe (Busiro South) Wakiso district

He wants the guidelines to be relaxed to allow them invest the money in many other projects other than restricting to poverty eradication programmes.

He assisted people who did not have school fees.

The rest of the money he put into his Busiro Farmers Association which has membership of 300 people.

He said the money which been given out to farmers has been generated up Shs22 million.

He bought a maize mill that has generated enough money for the farmers to use.

32. Baguma Isoke (Buyanja) Kibale district

He was very comfortable with the guidelines and wished the money started at the beginning of the term.

He still wants the money to be put on the MPs personal accounts because is the only voters can relies their contribution to development.

He used his money to buy bicycles for the youth to ferry their merchandise to market and trading centers.

He also bought wheel chairs for the disabled to enable their movements.

He invested the rest of the money into income generating projects for women, youth and the disabled.

He said for a long time they have been using their own resources to fund such projects but the CDF gave them some relief.

He wants the money to be channeled to the MPs accounts but be declared to the constituency committee.

33. Jack Sabitti (Rukiga former) Kabale district

He was not happy about the timing of the money. I received the money during campaigns although most people though it was money intended buy their votes.

The money is too little and should not be restricted to poverty eradication projects. We know the needs of our people and its better we spend the money as we require and only present the accountability.

I spent money by helping the youth, women and disabled groups for income generating projects though I would have loved to give it schools and churches.

34. Ken Lukyamuzi (Lubaga South-former)

The fund is essential. It helped me support projects like schools and healthy centers in my constituency though this was against the guidelines that were stipulated. I had nothing to do but to use the money for the projects because they were in dire situation.

I would wish the guidelines governing the CDF to be amended so that MPs fully understand what the money is intended for.

Another problem with this money is that it is not easy to budget and plan for. That is why we need proper guidelines that would address this issue.

The amount of Shs10 million given to each constituency should be maintained given the economy of this country.

35. Katongole Badru (Kyaka County) Kyenjojo district.

I spent the money to fund the construction of a girls' hostel in Mpala Sub County and a school laboratory in Kasule parish.

I banked the money on the account of the constituency development committee which enables us to spend it appropriately. It would be better for guidelines to demand that the money be banked on such bank accounts otherwise; the money will be open to abuse.

The Shs10 million is enough because money can never be enough.

36. Ssekitoleko Juliet Kabonesa

The CDF money was not enough. As a national female youth MP then, I found it hard to implement something that would benefit all youths in the county. We ended up using the money to organize several youth training programmes but the money was not adequate for such programmes. I wish this money could be raised to something like Shs30 million. The guidelines should also be amended because they are currently restrictive on how the CDF should be utilized.

37. Reagan Okumu (Aswa County) Gulu district

This money would be well utilized if it is channeled through districts and trickle down to lower local government and then to villages. District chief administrative officers would be best suited to disburse this money. It is against financial regulations to give money to MPs for them to implement projects. How do you expect them to account. They are lawmakers who could oversee development programmes in their constituencies but not implementers.

The Shs10 million is not enough but it was a good start.

38. Ruth Nvumetta Kavuma (Woman MP Kalangala district).

The money was viable. I spent what I got to support women groups in Kalangala district. However, the guidelines should be amended to cater for special interest groups such as women. Giving me Shs10 million to support development programmes in an entire district is not fair. Let the guidelines give special attention to MPs who represent such big constituencies.

39. Patrick Amuriat (Kumi county) Kumi district.

The CDF is a good scheme that was however not publicized. MPs and their constituents didn't understand its purpose. Some MPs thought it was for schools fees. In fact most of them used it to campaign.

The Shs10 million is very small to fund anything for a full year. If government wants it to be useful, it should be released every month.

I think government is trying to run away from its responsibility of developing this nation. Why do you bother MPs telling them to start implementing development projects?

I wish the guidelines were amended so that the money is handled at sub county level where MPs only work with sub county leaders to identify projects that should be supported.

If the amount is not raised from Shs10 million, the CDF should be scrapped.

40. Moses Kizige (Bugabula north-former)

The amount was so little. It never caused any development to the constituencies. It should be scrapped.

It was misused by MPs in the 7th Parliament. For it to become meaningful, it should be raised to at least Shs400 million, which is not possible given our economy.

41. Oliver Wonekha (Woman MP- Buduuda district)

Although the amount was small, it was a good start. It enabled be enhance several government development projects. I supported women piggery projects in the district.

42. Jane Alisemera (Woman MP- Bundibugyo district)

I bought a grain mill for one women co-operative society in the district. However, since the money came during campaign period, many people in the constituency thought it was to woo them into supporting the National Resistance Movement. There is room for improving this scheme if better guidelines to manage the CDF are introduced.

43. Nathan Byanyima (Bukanga county-Isingiro district)

It is a very good scheme, though the amount that was given out was so little. I would recommend that government raises the amount.

I cannot propose that the scheme be scrapped for one bird at hand is better than two in the wilderness.

Of course to make the CDF more effective, we need to get new guidelines to manage it.

44. James Kakooza (Kabula county- Rakai district)

I have no problem with the amount of money that was given to MPs. Whatever amount; it added value to development in these constituencies.

I spent mine to rehabilitate roads and other infrastructures in the constituency. MPs who say it was inadequate could be those who failed to account for it.

Anyway, there is need to amend the guidelines such in future MPs don't get excuses for failing to put it to proper use.

45. Ndawula Kaweesi (Kiboga West-Kiboga district)

The whole idea of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is to make a Member of Parliament intervene in immediate small emergencies in his or her constituency. That is how I can interpret it.

Of course the Shs10 million is peanuts it cannot create a lot of change as far as development is concerned. In my case, I spent the money by training various women groups in my constituency on how to create and manage income-generating activities. By the time the training ended, I had run out of money and I had to beef it with my won money. All women in the sub counties that make Kiboga West benefited.

I think new guidelines should be created to handle this fund. The guidelines should make it a must for the setting up of an office in every constituency to

handle the CDF. MPs and their Constituency Development Committees should have work plans that would be followed in the utilization of this money. Such an elaborate arrangement would help all stakeholders to account for the money.

46. Peter Mutuluza (Mawokota North-Mpigi district)

I'm aware of the CDF. I got it but it was so small. However, no money can ever be enough. It all depends on the way you manage it.

I spent the Shs10 million I got by supporting various youths and women groups in the constituency. It gave them a boost because most of them operate under financial constrain.

The ten million is obviously little but it is better than nothing given the fact that government cannot extend services to all parts of the country adequately.

In future, I believe we need better guidelines to handle it so that it is not misused as before because the guidelines were not very clear.

47. Kubeketerya James (Bunya West-Kamuli district)

I'm aware of the CDF and in the 7th Parliament I got Shs10 million. Ten million is not enough for a constituency, but it can do something to improve the situation.

I bought a maize-grinding mill for a women group in Bunya. Of course ten million is not enough for a constituency. It could serve a better purpose if it is raised. For example in Kenya, MPs are given over Shs20 million. This money is catered for in the national budget. There is a given percent in Kenya's national budget that is set aside to cater for CDF.

We need better guidelines to manage this money. For example the guidelines we were given dictate that we should not spend it where government is already involved. I think this is wrong because government's funding in some fields is not adequate. Where a member of parliament does not touch the money at all. Constituency Development Committees should handle it. MPs should handle other issues of overseeing how the money is spend and doing follow-ups so that the money is put to the rightful purpose.

48. Teopista Nantoongo(Workers)

Since we are just starting, the ten million shillings was adequate. Given the country's economy and its demands, it was a good start.

I spent mine in the National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) that is my constituency. We are trying to get a permanent home (headquarters). The money was therefore a contribution to this project. We used some in various training activities in the Union.

I think we need to amend the guidelines to make them more clear and able to make MPs account for the money.

49. Christopher Kibazanga (Busongola North-Bundibugyo district)

The CDF would be a viable scheme if it were not peanuts. If proper procedures were laid out to manage it and how to account for the money. It offloads the burden of MPs of pulling money from their pockets to handle minor projects.

However, giving the money to MPs to distribute it is very bad. An MP cannot be an accounting officer. They should not handle any public money. You can easily compromise them if you made them account for any money.

You defeat the purpose of having them as overseers as it is stipulated in the guidelines that were given to us.

Cashing the money through individual MPs bank accounts is also wrong. The money is easy to swindle because we don't all behave the same way when it comes to handling money. The whole scheme should be re-organized to make it more meaningful.

50. Aggrey Awori (former MP-Samia Bugwe North-Busia district)

I'm aware about the scheme. However, if we had equitable distribution of development across the county, we would not need such a scheme. It came about because it was realized that some areas are marginalized in terms of development and service delivery. That is why this injection Shs10 million was developed.

However, compared to our neighbors in Kenya, who commit 10 percent of the national budget to cater for CDF, we introduced it haphazardly. The guidelines are not clear. They make the scheme to be abused.

I spent mine to fund various youth activities but it was not enough.

In my opinion, if government cannot raise it from Shs10 million, let it be scrapped.

51. Isa Kikungwe (Kyaddondo South-Wakiso district)

I know the scheme. It is viable. However, I would not say it useful, may be for political purposes. It introduces someone to more constituents. It makes an MP stronger in a constituency because they spend it as if they generated it themselves. Most of the MPs who got used it to buy booze for voters because we were closing in to the 2006 general election campaigns.

I spent my CDF to support village co-operative societies in Ndejje, Mutungo, Lweza parishes. I spent another portion to improve the dilapidated Busabala road, though the guidelines stated that we should not venture into areas that are supported by the central government.

52. Dr Francis Epetai (Ngora County)

The CDF was ill conceived. It has no clear law to govern it. There is no well-defined procedure spelling out the method of disbursement and accountability.

In its present form, it is undesirable. Writing a cheque in an individual MP's name is improper. The CDF has no legal backing to compel MPs to produce accountability for the money.

I used mine to buy footballs for various football teams in Ngora County. Other MPs told me that they bought iron sheets for churches among other ventures. I think the timing was bad for the release of the money; we were closing in to campaigns.

The purpose of the fund was not bad but it was easily abused by the MPs. The CDF requires a legal review to set out procedures that would spell out the auditing methods and accountability procedure.

53. Margaret Ateng (former Lira district Woman MP)

Though useful, that money is not sufficient to enable MPs cause serious development. You see the problem in this country; voters believe that an MP is a substitute for government as far as development is concerned.

I don't buy the idea of scrapping it. Instead, the amount should be raised to something reasonable.

The timing is also crucial in that money should not be released a few months to the end of one's term in Parliament. This tempts MPs to misuse it for campaigns. New guidelines should as be introduced to facilitate proper accountability.

54. Arimpa Kigyagi John (Mbarara Municipality-Mbarara district)

Although the amount was small, I was able to use it to pay school fees to children from poor families and the orphaned ones. Thirty-seven children benefited from the scheme.

A constituency committee of six people assisted me to implement the programme. To me the guidelines were clear because they dictated that no MP should spend money on programmes that have government support.

However, there is need to raise the amount that is given to MPs. We should try to copy from Kenya because for them the amount is significant and it creates great impact on the ground.

55. Pereza Ahabwe (Rubanda county East-Kabale district)

The CDF is viable only that it was very small.

I would recommend that it should be backed by a legal instrument to back up the guidelines. The CDF should be a component of the national budget the way it is done in Kenya. Otherwise, MPs will treat it as a political token that makes it being wasted.

56. Nandala Mafabi (Budadiri West-Sironko district)

That money should be sent to districts and be managed at local government level. Why should government give MPs money? It is obvious that the money will always be misused. MPs should be overseers of the various projects that are run and managed by local governments.

Development is a national issue that should be planned and pursued with clear direction not this business of dishing out money to individuals in the name of CDF.

Even if you gave Shs10 billion to each MP, no development will take off in their respective constituencies.

I gave the Shs10 million to a committee that distributed it to several community based development organizations.

57. William Nsubuga (Buvuma County-Mukono district)

It is a useful scheme. Though the guidelines were against spending the money on projects that are supported by government, I spend what I got on rehabilitating roads that were in a sorry state.

I don't want to say that the money was very little because even little money, once well spent can make a change. It was a boost to MPs who have to use their personal money to support various projects in their constituencies.

However, there is need to amend the guidelines to make everything run smoothly.

58. James Kinobe (former MP Katikamu North-Luweero district)

The CDF is a very good economic intervention. However, it came at a wrong time. At the climax of campaigns. Coming towards the end of MPs' terms in the House was also bad. Many MPs had used their money to support various projects. By the time the money came, they used it to replenish their accounts.

The demand by the CDF guidelines for MPs to form constituency development committees was also tricky. No MP could form an objective committee. Most of the committees were dominated by political supporters of the various MPs.

Scrapping the scheme will not help at all. What should be done is to block MPs from touching the money. The constituency development committee should open an account to which all the money would be banked. The MPs would only be an advisor to the committee when it comes to deciding what project to handle.

Since we are in a multiparty political arrangement, the constituency development committees should be representative of members of various political parties for transparency purposes.

59. Hamlet Mbabazi Kabushenga (Kinkizi East-former- Kinkizi district)

I used the CDF to buy a wheat-milling machine for a women cooperative society in Rutenga area. People in the area have land and labour but only need support to add value to their produce. That is why I decided to buy this machine.

The rest was used to start a revolving fund where members would access small loans to fund their small projects.

On the amount that was given to MPs, I think no money will ever be enough. It is how you use it.

60. Rose Namayanja (Woman-Nakaseke district)

The money was not enough; my constituency of Central region youth was so big. I ended up only supporting youth training programmes. New guidelines are required to make everything clear.

Otherwise, the intention to create the CDF is good.

The following information was got from the grassroots in five districts.

In Kumi District most people in seven sub counties did not have knowledge of the Cdf money information apart from hearing it on radio when the president was on radio.

BUGIRI DISTRICT

Six sub counties were sampled and People did not know anything about cdf apart from one person who was close to the mps

KANUNGU

All the people contacted in six sub counties did not know about the cdf.they were hearing it for the first time

KAMULI

Most people did not know about the cdf some had heard of it on radio and they did not know of the committee that was established by the area MP though the mps claimed it was established and yet they could not mention the names of the committee members.

Former MPs argued that the money had been used during the 2006 parliamentary elections of which the community benefited.

All respondents interviewed did not mention any project catered for by the cdf in the upcountry.

BUSHENYI DISTRICT

In Kanyabwanga, Katerera, Buhweju, Kigarama, Kiyanga people did not know about the cdf. In Kakanju the money had been used for micro finance though they were ignorant of the cdf. The cdf money given to the woman mp was utilized to buy mattresses for health centers and some money was put in the women bank account.

In all the five sub counties there was no committee formed by the mps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Let the grassroots be involved in the planning of the projects and monitor the implementation
- Radio announcements should be made when the money is released
- Individual Mps should not have access to the cdf money directly.
- The clerk of parliament should get the names of the committee members before the money is released.
- Allocate some portions of money to be invested in the following; local chicken farmers association, Agro- small scale processing industries e.g maize and ground nut mills

- CDF should go through a system of planning, reporting and release of funds
- All sub county in the constituency should be represented in the committee
- Sensitization of cdf should be carried out in all the constituencies
- The committee members should be residents in the villages
- The committee should make a budget, present it before money is released
- The committee should be elected by the communities and not the mp
- There must be evidence to show that there is a proposed project before funds are leased
- Members of the committee should not be politician but people with integrity in the communities
- Technical staff should be involved for planning purposes
- MPS should sensitize people about the CDF
- Representation of all the sub counties in the district
- There should be a committee established and two sub counties should have one representatives and this person should not be a politician and a full resident of the place
- An account should be opened and cdf money kept there
- It should be put in the papers that the money has been dispatched
- The communities should be sensitized about cdf

Conclusion

Following the research findings and recommendations cdf was mismanaged. UDN believes that there should be a law in place to govern management of the cdf and guidelines should be followed.