

**ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AREA DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEES (ADCs) IN DECENTRALIZATION. A CASE STUDY OF  
NTCHISI DISTRICT IN MALAWI**

**BY**

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## **i. Declaration**

I, ***Chrispin Bokho***, hereby declare that this thesis entitled 'Assessment of the Effectiveness of Area Development Committees (ADCs) in Decentralization, a case of Ntchisi district in Malawi is my own original work and that according to my knowledge, this has never been previously done and submitted for degree purposes at any other institution of higher learning. I also declare that this thesis does not contain any information or references that have not been duly acknowledged.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ii. Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my beloved children Chrispin Bokho Junior and Ulemu Bokho. Guys, you inspire me and you are my happiness. I promise to do whatever I can to my capacity to help you become reliable citizens. I love you very much. Keep working hard even in my absence. May Almighty God Bless you.

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## **v. Abbreviation**

ADC	Area Development Committee
ADMARC	Agriculture Development and Marketing Corporation
ADP	Area Development Program
AEC	Area Executive Committee
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon Dioxide
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DC	District Commissioner
DDC	District Development Committees
DDP	District Development Plans
DDPH	District Development Planning Handbook
DEC	District Executive Committee
ESCOM	Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOM	Government of Malawi
GVH	Group Village Headman
HH	Household
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KII	Key Informants Interviews
LC	Local Council
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MDP	Malawi Decentralization Policy
MHC	Malawi Housing Corporation
MLGDP	Malawi Local Governance and Development Program
MP	Member of Parliament
MPC	Malawi Post and Communication

MTL	Malawi Telecommunication Limited
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NICE	National Initiative for Civic Education
NOYD	Ntchisi Organization for youth and Development
NSO	National Statistical Office
OVOP	One Village One Product
PAC	Public Affairs Committee
RC	Resistance Council
ROM	Republic of Malawi
ROU	Republic of Uganda
SPSS	Scientific Package for Social Scientists
TA	Traditional Authority
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNISA	University of South Africa
US	United States
VAP	Village Action Plan
VDC	Village Development Committee
WDI	World Development Indicators

## **vi. Abstract**

*Decentralization is an approach Malawi government is using to accelerate development. In order to achieve this, local structures like ADCs were instituted to improve community participation and enhance demand driven type of development.*

*This study examined the effectiveness of the ADCs in decentralization. The study was conducted in TAs Chilowoko and Kalumo in Ntchisi district.*

*Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Through random sampling, 97 respondents were interviewed using a household questionnaire. Two focus group discussions and 14 key informant interviews were also done.*

*Analysis of the quantitative data collected was done using Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) tool while the qualitative data was analyzed manually using common themes that emerged from the findings.*

*The results show that the community members do not commonly know ADCs and that they do not have autonomy to enhance community participation in decision making. ADCs do not have the autonomy to operate as custodians of development. ADCs are also facing many challenges that include lack of operational resources, incentives, transport and political infringement.*

*On the overall, therefore, the study recommends that there is need to create awareness on the existence of the ADCs and other local structures to the community members. Secondly, there is need to review the National Decentralization Policy, Local Government Act and the Guidebook on decentralization in Malawi.*

## **Chapter One**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1. *Chapter Overview***

This chapter outlines the background to the research, the problem statement, study purpose and significance of the study. It also outlines operational definitions to explain and clarify terminologies that appear in the subsequent chapters. Lastly, the chapter gives an overview of the chapter and the outline of the whole thesis.

#### **1.2. *Background to the Study***

Most African countries at independence had an idea of having a strong and centralised government to give vitality and dynamism in shaping the transition from a colonial to an independent state in the governance system. The attainment of independence and the demands for accelerated development after decades of colonial neglect gave rise to rapid expansions of the public services which in turn began to challenge the delivery capacity of the services to the people. Failure to render expected and required services gave birth to failed governments and corruption. This failure by centralised governments to render required services has seen a shift in public management with paradigm shift in favour of devolution of power (Decentralization). As a result, the state can no longer be the sole provider of services and other actors must get on board (Forge 2006:2).

Gordon and Christ (2008:7) therefore points out that in African countries and beyond, there appears nowadays to be a remarkable consensus on the desirability of decentralization, with support coming from international development agencies (the 'donors') and civil society organisations.

According to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) (2005:4), in Malawi, attempts at decentralization began during the colonial era when the British introduced the policy of indirect rule through chiefs and catered for some elected district councils.

However, development of the new Republican Constitution in 1995, forced Malawi government to introduce decentralization according to democratic standards. In 1998, the National Decentralization Policy was adopted and the Local Government Act was passed through Parliament. These provided the political and legal basis for the transfer of power, responsibilities and financial resources from central government to local government. Through the Local Government Act of 1998 local government authorities called councils were established (MLGRD 2005:4).

To make decentralization a reality at a district level, there is an operational structure as illustrated in appendix 3. At the helm of the district structure, there is a District Council. It is composed of the elected body of councillors, the ex-officio members which are Traditional Authorities (TAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) from constituencies that are within the local government area; five people representing special interested groups, such as women, youth, disabled and people living with HIV/AIDS in a district (MLGRD 2005:42).

Below the District Council is the Area Development Committee (ADC), which represents all Village Development Committees (VDCs) in a TA. This committee is composed of elected members from VDCs with deliberate inclusion of women and other vulnerable categories of people like the youth and the disabled. The lowest in this structure is the VDC (MLGRD 2005:42). Like the ADC, the VDC is also composed of elected members with inclusion of local leaders (Village Headmen) and other service providers in the area. In this regard, VDC and ADC are the committees that touch the ground because their representations are by both community members and the service providers who are working closely with people at a field level.

Apart from the above structures, two technical committees support these structures technically. At the district level is the District Executive committee (DEC) represented by the heads of government departments and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in a district. At TA level is the Area Executive Committee (AEC) composed of team leaders of different government departments and NGOs working in the area (MLGRD 2005:45).

### **1.3. Statement of Research Problem**

Introduction of decentralization as said by Hussein (2004:123) has generated enthusiasm and great expectation among the local people to take part in decision making particularly in proposing solutions to their development needs. Secondly, it has also raised awareness about bottom-up approach in development especially in districts that have developed socio economic profiles. The expectation is that decentralization would lead to greater economic efficiency in the allocation of goods and services. Thus an economic motivation prevails one closely connected to the neo-liberal mood of this period, with decentralization portrays as leading to improved service delivery at local level through deconcentration and privatisation and the mobilisation of local resources (Gordon 2008:12). According to

Despite claims that participatory approaches to development improve efficiency and effectiveness and promote processes of democratisation and empowerment; there is little evidence about the effectiveness of participation in ensuring sustainable development and material improvement through decentralization among poor and marginalised people. For example, almost a decade down the ladder in democratic decentralization era, Malawi's record of accomplishment with regard to the Human Development Index is quite damning. Malawi has dropped from position 138 out of 178 countries in 1990 to position 166 out of 178 countries in 2006. This underlies a steady decline in health care delivery, education, economic growth and general living standards as stated by Gordon (2008:77).

In addition to that, poverty in Malawi is severe. Shocks from over-reliance on rain fed agriculture go hand-in-hand with longer-term food insecurity to create a culture of malnutrition. High disease prevalence has shortened life spans to an extremely low level of 57.7 years (<http://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/country-health-profile/malawi>). Rural areas must be the focus of any attempts to tackle this deep poverty, since these are where the majority of the poorest Malawians live (MDG Center, East and Central Africa 2007:3).



The above findings are very disturbing. The question could be why is this happening contrary to the decentralization objectives and after establishing structures at all levels to facilitate implementation of the same? It is not easy to point a finger on who is largely contributing to this failure until an investigation on each level's performance is carried out. Literature shows that there are more studies focusing on the performance of the district councils only. However, ADCs are very important local structures because they are the base that touches the ground. In this case, ADCs act as a bridge between the service providers like District council and other service providers and the community members. Since the effectiveness of the councils are known, it was therefore very important to investigate the ADCs on how they are performing in terms of execution of their roles and assess the satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the same.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the study**

Performance of ADCs has a strong bearing on the overall implementation of decentralization. Effectiveness of these structures can ensure improved wellbeing of people especially the local masses through enhanced community participation, promotion of bottom up approach and sustainability of development initiatives. The study was answering some questions like; do ADCs make real decisions that are implemented without interference of the higher authority like the central government? Do they have the capacity to channel their grievances to the appropriate service providers? Do they merely legitimize government? Are they associated to specific political parties that may affect other peoples' total participation in development issues? Do they have the abilities to initiate or screen projects in their area of operation?

##### **1.4.1. Broad Objective:**

The main objective of this study was to find out the effectiveness of ADCs in promoting and management of community development in accordance to decentralization requirements in Malawi. In this case, the research assessed if the structures have ability and space to make decisions and execute their roles effectively to enhance community participation and sustain the development activities in their areas.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives:**

- i. To assess the autonomy of ADCs to exercise their powers as per decentralization guidelines without interference of the central government.
- ii. To assess the ability of ADCs in involving the community members in development identification, planning implementation and monitoring.
- iii. To find out the economics, governance and politics of the committees and how these affect their performance
- iv. To assess challenges faced by the committees as they carry out their duties.
- v. To assess the extent to which the effectiveness of the ADCs could in turn impact the efficiency of the National Decentralization Policy in Ntchisi as well as in Malawi as a country

#### ***1.5 Importance of the study***

Decentralization is one of the major areas of emphasis in most democratized countries and Malawi is no exception. However, decentralization can easily achieve its goal if guidelines are being followed and all structures like ADCs are effective in service delivery.

There is a lot of literature on decentralization in general focusing on guidelines, achievements and challenges of decentralization. In addition to that, more studies have been conducted to evaluate the performance of the district councils on how they have performed within a given period. However, according to my knowledge, there is very little information on the specific performance of the local structures in enhancing decentralization and community participation. Apart from fulfilling the requirements of my degree, the study therefore contributes to filling the knowledge gap that exists. There is hope that the information is essential for both government and civil society bodies' in decision-making. This is to ensure that the performance and/or effectiveness of ADCs are enhanced especially in the targeted districts. To be specific, the study results will help the ADCs, VDCs, District Councils, government departments, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and all community members that will access the document or part of the information.

## ***1.6 An Overview of Research Methods***

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure that all the objectives are met.

### **1.6.1 Quantitative Methods**

The quantitative method was used to collect numerical data from households through a survey design. In this case, the researcher collected the people's perceptions towards the effectiveness of the ADCs in execution of their roles. A pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire specifically developed for this research was used.

Random sampling methodology was employed to select 97 households for the House Hold survey. Quantitative data was entered and analysed using SPSS computer package to generate percentages, charts, frequency counts and tables to explain descriptive statistics while correlation was used to assess the relationship between variables.

### **1.6.2 Qualitative Methods**

The research also collected qualitative data to assess the people's feelings, thus experiences, attitudes and behaviours. The methods targeted specific individuals that have specific information on the effectiveness of ADCs. These are the people that are familiar with the subject matter. Key informants Interviews (KII) and focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were specifically employed to generate this data.

The qualitative study population for Key Informants were specifically participants drawn from ADCs, VDCs, NGOs, government departments, political party representatives while for Focus Group Discussion were from CBOs.

Purposeful sampling was used in selecting participants for FGDs. 2 Focus Group discussions targeting 2 CBOs thus 1 per each were done. This was deliberately done to make sure that only those individuals and groups that have the subject matter should be involved in this study.

On the other hand, Key Informants for interviews were handpicked based on their roles or/and experience in working with the ADCs in the area. This was done to ensure that only people with adequate knowledge of the topic participates in the research. The selection of KII included 4 key ADC members, thus 2 per each ADC, 2 VDC members from 2 VDCs, thus one per each ADC/TA, 2 government departments that are actively providing services in each of these ADCs, 2 NGO heads representing 1 per each T/A and 2 political party representatives. For the summarised targeting please, refer to the table below;

**Table 1: FGDs and KII done**

<b><i>Method</i></b>	<b><i>T/A Chilooko</i></b>	<b><i>T/A Kalumo</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
<b>Focus Group Discussion</b>	1	1	2
<b>Key Informants Interview ADC</b>	2	2	4
<b>Key Informants Interview VDC</b>	1	1	2
<b>Key Informants Interview Government Stakeholders</b>	2	2	4
<b>Key Informants Interview NGO Stakeholders</b>	1	1	2
<b>Key Informants Interview Politicians</b>	1	1	2

The qualitative data was collected using Key Informant Interview and Focus Group discussion guides for key informants and FGDs respectively. The questionnaire and the guides were pre-tested before conducting the real research.

Data was transcribed by people who did not participate in the interviews during data collection. Before data was entered for analysis, data cleaning was done to remove the outliers that could distort the results of the research. Secondly, Data validation was done to verify some information that may be

contrary to the general feeling of the community. This was to ensure that the study operated on clean, correct and useful data. This was done through;

(1) Consistency checks to ensure data in these fields corresponds.

(2) Data type checks which was aimed at checking the data type of the input and give an error message if the input data did not match with the chosen data type e.g., In an input box accepting numeric data, if the letter 'O' was typed instead of the number zero, an error message would appear.

On the other hand, analysis of qualitative data involved firstly transcribing and coding of the text, followed by a content and key theme analysis. Content analysis is a research option in the social sciences used to reduce large amounts of unstructured textual content into manageable data relevant to the research questions. In this methodology, the text was broken down into manageable categories on a variety of levels (i.e. key words, word sense, phrase, sentence or theme) and coded. The coded contents were quantitatively analyzed for trends, patterns, relationships, similarities, differences etc.

### ***1.7 Operational Definitions of key Concepts***

It is evident that there are some words and statements, which have been used in the thesis that needs some clarification. As such, the following concepts, words or statements in this thesis are defined as follows;

***Area Development Committees:*** It is a committee under decentralization set up that is below the District Council and operates at a TA level, consisting of many group villages. (Samuels, Sibale and Selvester, 2009:2).

***Community Development:*** It is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community wellbeing (economic, social, environmental and cultural) often evolves from this type of collective action being taken at a grassroots level.

Community development ranges from small initiatives within a small group to large initiatives that involve the broader community (Adminpeernet 2012.)

***Citizen participation:*** An active process in which participants take initiative and action in purposeful activities in relation to local institution or area of which they are citizens or legal residents (Hussein 2004 110).

***Decentralization:*** This involves transfers of power, authority and resources from central government to lower levels within the political-administrative hierarchy of the state (Ribot 2011:1).

***Deconcentration:*** Transfer of workload and selected administrative or decision making authority and responsibility from the headquarters to lower field level officials

***Devolution:*** It is the transfer of authority and power to local units of government, which operate in a quasi-autonomous manner outside the direct administrative control and structure of the central government (Kiggundu 2000:95).

***District Council:*** A team of people responsible for rural development at a district level and is responsible for managing decentralization at district level.

***District Executive Committees:*** It is a technical and advisory committee to the District council and all the above committees. It is the overall responsible for implementing the District Development Plans (DDP) (MLGRD 2005:45).

- District:*** It is a politically demarcated area, which is under one District Commissioner (DC).
- Effectiveness:*** This measures the extent to which the original objectives and policy goals are achieved.
- Group Village Headman (GVH) :*** A community leader overseeing a a cluster or team of village headmen.
- Members of Parliament (MPs):*** These are political representatives in parliament. Each one represents a demarcated area called a constituency.
- Traditional Authority:*** He/she is a community leader responsible for supervising a cluster or number of Group Village Headmen.
- Village Development Committees:*** A committee under decentralization set-up that is below ADC and operates at group village headmen consisting of many villages
- Sustainable Development.*** Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (The World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987)

### **1.8 Chapter Layout**

The dissertation is in 5 chapters as explained below. The first chapter is the Introduction, which is followed by chapter 2, which is Literature Review. Chapter 3 is the Research Design and Methodology while chapter 4 is Field Research Findings and the fifth chapter, which is also the last chapter is about Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations for the study.

#### **Chapter One: Introduction**

This chapter introduces the thesis by providing the background to the study, the research problem statement, research objectives and significance of the study. It also outlines the overview of the research methods and operational definitions of key concepts to explain and clarify terminologies that are used in the subsequent chapters. Lastly, an overview of the chapter outline of the whole thesis is provided.

#### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

The chapter discusses decentralization set up in Africa with a case of Uganda. It also outlines decentralization set up in Malawi and Ntchisi District. It then outlines the structure and functions of ADC. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the importance of ADCs, Challenges faced by ADCs and a conclusion. Apart from that, the chapter discusses community and sustainable development in relation to community empowerment and decentralization.

#### **Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology**

In this chapter, operationalization of the whole study is outlined. Specifically, research instruments, sampling methods, data collection and analysis have been outlined.

#### **Chapter Four: Field Research Findings**

The chapter introduces research findings, discuss the sample and field work results. Figures and tables are provided to summarise the findings.



## **Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter discusses the main findings of the study. Apart from interpreting the results, the chapters also provides recommendations to be considered by different individuals, structures and guidelines to improve the effectiveness of ADCs and other structures in decentralization. Furthermore, the chapter provides areas that require further research that future researchers may adopt. Finally, the chapter provides a conclusion that summarises the whole chapter.

## **Chapter Two**

### **2 Literature Review**

#### ***2.1 Chapter Overview***

This chapter firstly discusses the concept of development by looking at the definition of development, theories of development, development situation in Malawi and then a conclusion. Secondly, the chapter discusses a general overview of decentralization and provide a general understanding of decentralization and reasons for its introduction. The chapter also discusses decentralization in Africa to have a picture of how Africa received and is managing decentralization process. It provides a case study of Uganda that gives some insights of achievements and challenges faced by some African countries. The chapter then outlines decentralization setup in Malawi by discussing how decentralization was brought in Malawi and how it has been sustained to this date. The chapter further outlines the strides made in strengthening decentralization in Malawi. Discussion on Decentralization in Ntchisi District where the study took place is also discussed. The chapter also reviews how the district has structured itself to efficiently meet the objectives of decentralization. Functions, Structure, importance and the challenges faced by ADCs are also outlined before providing the conclusion for this chapter

#### ***2.2 The Concept of Development***

##### **2.2.1 Introduction**

ADCs are the custodians of community development. Their effectiveness is largely on the way they facilitate, initiate and manage their community development projects. It is therefore appropriate to understand the concept of development first before knowing more about ADCs and their effectiveness.

Development is the term that is abstract and many people or institutions have defined it differently. Cavaye (2001:111) defines development as the creation of wealth, which are the things people value. It involves ongoing economic, social and environmental improvement, sustaining a desirable environment; having a vital social system that fosters collaboration, equity and freedom;

and a vital economy that is diverse, competitive and accessible. Thus, development increases choices, sustains positive attitudes, improves the function of institutions and enhances quality-of-life.

Myers (2006:3) argues that development should not focus on material or social changes, a thing that is associated with having more things only. He feels that this kind of thinking presents a limited view. He therefore agrees with De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:71) who elaborates that development is about people, their needs and their circumstances.

On the other hand, Global Movement for Children (2002:65) defines development as giving the people more control over their lives and more choices about how they live as their basic needs are being satisfied.

Development therefore means increasing choices, bringing new options, diversification, thinking about apparent issues differently and anticipating change. Development involves change, improvement and vitality, a directed attempt to improve participation, flexibility, equity, attitudes, the function of institutions and the quality of life. It is the creation of wealth, meaning the things people value, not just dollars (Cavaye 2000:1).

Not everyone thinks development is universally realized at the present time. Among those who think that the goal of a better life for all is practicable, there are broad disagreements on how to get there. However, development can be used for many different political purposes, including some and perhaps most, that conflict with its essentially egalitarian ethic “a better life for all”. The idea of development can be used to legitimize what in fact amounts to more money and power for a few. So putting all this together, development is a contentious issue around which swirl bitter arguments and fierce debates (Peet & Hartwick 2009:1).

### **2.2.2 Community Development**

A community is a group of people with a shared identity. Hence, community development relies on interaction between people and joint action, rather than individual activity what some sociologists call “collective agency”. Putting the two terms together – community development – means that a community itself

engages in a process aimed at improving the social, economic and environmental situation of the community (Cavaye 2000:1).

On the other hand, rural community development builds the five capitals of a community – physical, financial, human, social and environmental. It is through participation in their community that people rethink problems and expand contacts and networks; building social capital. They learn new skills, building human capital. They develop new economic options, building physical and financial capital. They also can improve their environment (Cavaye 2000:1).

Adminpeernet (2012) emphasizes that effective community development should be a long-term endeavor well-planned inclusive and equitable holistic and integrated into the bigger picture initiated and supported by community members who also are the beneficiaries. This is grounded in experience that leads to best practices. Thus, community development is a grassroots process by which communities become more responsible to organize and plan together, develop healthy lifestyle options, empower themselves, reduce poverty and suffering, create employment and economic opportunities, achieve social, economic, cultural and environmental goals. Community development seeks to improve quality of life. Furthermore, effective community development results in mutual benefit and shared responsibility among community members. Such development recognizes: the connection between social, cultural, environmental and economic matters the diversity of interests within a community its relationship to building capacity Community development helps to build community capacity in order to address issues and take advantage of opportunities, find common ground and balance competing interests. It doesn't just happen. Capacity building requires both a conscious and a conscientious effort to do something (or many things) to improve the community.

Lasting development within rural communities relies on less tangible components of development such as community ownership, local leadership, action, “rethinking” and motivation. Indeed, the “concrete” benefits of community development such as employment and infrastructure, often come

through local people changing attitudes, mobilizing existing skills, improving networks, thinking differently about key drivers of rural and regional development also include the passion and motivation of people, attitudes of self-help, effective local leadership and organization, a commitment to learn and change attitudes, thinking about issues differently and focusing on action (Cavaye 2001:112).

### **2.2.3 Development theories**

According to Apeyo (2012), a theory is a set of logical proposition about how the real world is structured or the way in which it operates.

He further defines development theory as a set of logical proposition which aim to explain how development has occurred in the past and or how it should occur in future. In other words, development theory is conglomeration of theories about how desirable change in society is best achieved.

In this study Dependence and Reciprocity Theories have been used to determine some of the factors that promote or deter development in the communities.

#### **2.2.3.1 Dependence Theory**

According to dependence theory, the cause of underdevelopment is the dependence on industrialized countries while internal factors of developing countries are considered irrelevant or seen as symptoms and consequences of dependence. The development of industrialized countries and the underdevelopment of developing countries are parts of one historical process. Developing countries are dependent countries. The economic and political interests of industrialized countries determine their development or underdevelopment. The goals are superimposed. Underdevelopment is not backwardness but intentional downward development (Kuhnen 1987).

As to the causes of dependence, the various theories differ, economic factors always dominating. External trade theories concentrate on economic relations between countries. Imperialism theories stress the politico-economic interest

while dependence theories concentrate on the deformation of internal structures by dependence which perpetuates the situation (Kuhnen 1987).

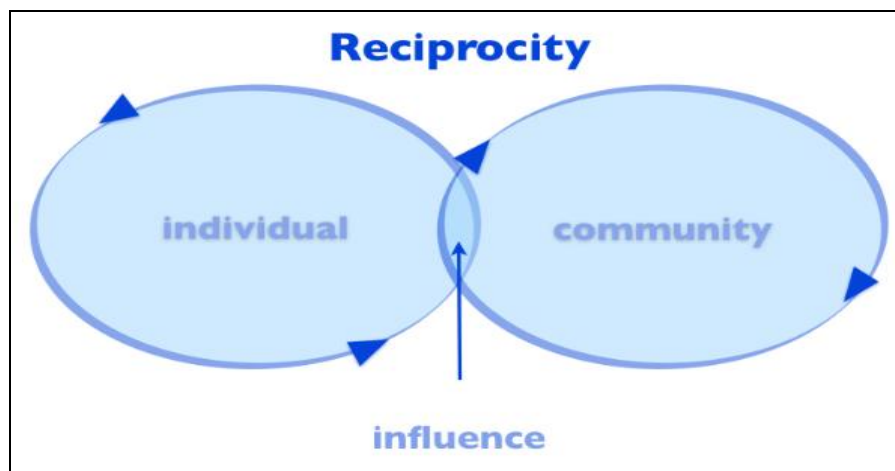
Although Dependence Theory is emphasising on the status of countries by comparing those that are industrialized and not the concept of this theory can also be applied at local level. Local structures and individuals are also failing to develop due to the same principal of dependence on those that are better off hence this is affecting personal and community development as well. The dependency is eroding ownership while reducing sustainability of development projects. Thus soon after the support is pulled out, that also marks the end of such projects as well.

### **2.2.3.2 The Reciprocity Theory**

The Reciprocity Theory found on (<http://marenhogan.wordpress.com/2012/02/01/community-theories>) states that in order for people to be a part of your community (donating time, attention span and participation bandwidth) they need to feel like they're getting value. In this case the community manager (or similar) have to provide content, conversation, benefits, value, etc. At its core, the reciprocity theory believes that social motivation is based on each person's desire to be recognized as an individual and belong to a community. Thus if these are not available, it will be difficult for the person to participate.

He gives examples of people who join and share contents on social networks like Facebook, Twitter or Foursquare. This is to be part of a community that values their thinking, happiness, experiences just to mention a few even if that community is just connecting online with offline friends.

**Figure 2.1: Reciprocity Venn Diagram**



On the other hand, the reciprocity theory states that in order to be recognized as a valued community member, an individual must produce or curate valued original content. Provide value to the community and your influence will grow. It's reciprocal.

Here lies the essence of the reciprocity theory; whatever you give to a community, you earn in return. It's reciprocal and potentially infinite as long as you continue to provide value to the community.

In this study, the theory is illustrating that for the community members to participate in community development activities in their communities, they need to be recognized as individuals and not materials. Thus, their contribution that may be physical, mental, psychological and/or social should be taken seriously as a valuable and necessary contribution to the community's development. Secondly, they need also to feel the belonging to their specific communities and not being excluded. On the other hand, the community members themselves have a very big role to contribute their value to the community and they will in return have an influence.

#### **2.2.4 Sustainable Development**

One of the biggest challenges in development is how to help the poorest people in a sustainable way. Over the past 30 years, many sub-Saharan

African countries, such as Malawi, have been receiving advice and assistance from an increasing number of development agencies. However, the aid and advice they provide is often conflicting and brings very little if any development impact (Sikwese, Chikhosi, Makoko, Malik, Mphande, Ngwira and Zamba 2007:3). This is in agreement to the concept of Dependency Theory

Myers (2006:96) feels that development needs to be looked at as a process that seeks to enhance peoples' and institutional capacities in managing resources to improve quality of their lives and reduce dependency syndrome. Thus, development process empowers the individual members of a household through their involvement in relevant activities and seeks to enhance the livelihood security of the people, this then is sustainable development.

Furthermore De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: xvii) explains that development should emphasize the human factor and thus it must involve a process in which the capacity of people is built up so that they take responsibility for their own course, hence making it sustainable.

As illustrated by Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003:199), in Cameroon, self-reliance is one of the bases of effective and sustainable community development. The concept of self reliance is located centrally within the discourse of community development and is connected to related concepts like self-help, mutual-help, indigenous participation and rural development. It advocates the need for people to improve their condition using local initiatives and resources in their own hands and this contributes to sustainable development. The concept is fast being accepted as a new formula for community development in most African countries including Malawi.

Anyanwu (1992) in Fonchingong *et al* (2003:199) contends that the concept of self-reliance has the tendency to give greater stimulus and cohesiveness in most African countries communities where development has depended significantly on voluntary cooperative efforts.

This explains the emerging trend in community development, which sees it as an important point of take-off for better living. The emphasis is to involve



groups of people in planned programs from which they may gain skills that will enable them to cope more successfully with the problems of their everyday life.

Self-reliance is thus sustainable development on the basis of a country's (region's) own resources, involving its populations based on the potentials of its cultural values and traditions. Communities and individual people define their own development according to their own needs, values and aspirations (Preiswerk 1980).

### **2.2.5 Development indicators**

According to (<http://www.greenfacts.org/glossary/def/development-indicators.htm>), Indicators are used to illustrate progress of a specific area in meeting a range of economic, social and environmental goals. Development indicators help to know the progress of the attainment of development goals in an area. Secondly, knowing local development indicators in the area also helps to know what people value as development as it defines development in their context.

Although the indicators of development can be similar, there is difference between indicators at global as compared to the local level.

Globally the following are some of the indicators according to World Development Indicators (WDI) for the World Bank (2012): school enrolment for primary education; carbon dioxide emissions and improved water source. This is the percent of rural population with access to safe and life expectancy at birth. On the other hand, locally the following indicators represents an effective development in a specific community:-an increase in social services such as good housing, health, education, nutrition, clean environment and sufficient clean and safe water. An increase in income that enables families in a community to meet their needs and set aside savings could be another indicator of community development. A decrease in infant and maternal mortality, a demand for modern technology, sustainable use of environment could also indicate effective community development (United Republic of Tanzania 1996:5).

While agreeing with the above indicators Cavaye (2000:3) argues that community development is not just “growth”. Growth means more jobs and more investment but implies “more of the same”. It does not necessarily increase choices, networks or ability to manage change. Development can also sometimes mean “less”, fewer people in a community or the loss of a manufacturing plant for example could improve the circumstances of what people value in the community. Development can occur without growth and growth can occur without development.

From environmental point of view, development is not interested so much in the growth of an economy but rather the conditions under which production occurs and the results that flow from it. In terms of conditions, development pays attention to the environments affected by economic activity and the labour relations and conditions of the actual producers of wealth-peasants and workers who produce growth (Peet 2009:1). The development indicators are used to assess the level of development or poverty of a specific area. Although these may be similar, the indicators may differ at different levels.

#### **2.2.6 Development Situation in Malawi**

Using the above indicators, it has been found that Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 166 out of 177 countries by the United Nations Human Development Index 2006. Over half of the people live below the poverty line (HDR 2006), with many depending on erratic rain fed agriculture for their food and their livelihoods. Malawi's economy is primarily agricultural, with around two-thirds of the population living in rural areas.

##### **2.2.6.1 Health and Population**

On health and population, Malawi has a total population of about 16 million people which is one of the highest in the southern African region taking into consideration of its total land size. It has a total fertility rate of 6.0, general fertility rate of 215 live births per 1000 women aged 15-44. Compared to other southern African countries, this is one of the highest in the region (Malawi Demographic and Health survey 2004:56).

Malawi Demographic and Health survey (2004:126) further indicates that the country has child, infant and neonatal mortality rates of 133, 76 and 27 deaths per 1000 respectively. Such high deaths have high impact on economic development of the country

Malawi has not been spared of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. At a regional level, Elbe S in Human Security and Development (2007:206) shows that out of 40.3 million HIV infections worldwide, 25.8 million representing 64% of the total infections are in the Sub Saharan Africa. Malawi is in this region as well. This is why the Malawi Demographic and Health Survey report (2004:230) indicates that HIV prevalence rate for Malawi is at 12% for the population age group of 15-49 years old. Prevalence for women is slightly high as compared to men at 13% as compared to 10%. This is also dangerous to already fragile economy because the age group of 15-44 is the most productive one that can help to boost the economy of the country.

#### **2.2.6.2 Economic Situation**

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Fact book (2011) shows that in 2011, the country's GDP, real growth rate was 4.6%; GDP on purchasing Power Parity Basis was 900. These are very low values and shows that poverty is still rampant. On the other hand, the same report reveals birth and death rates of 40.85 and 13.22 people per 1000 people respectively. This may also have a negative impact on the development of the nation.

#### **2.2.6.3 Education, Environment and other conditions**

World Development Indicators (WDI 2012) for the World Bank shows that the school enrollment is at 135%, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is at 0.1, Poverty headcount ratio is 52.4%, access to improved water sources is 80%, life expectancy is 53 years and GNI per capita, atlas method is US\$340 (WDI 2012).

Despite these challenges, Malawi has registered progress in a number of areas including high economic growth, declining poverty levels, strong donor support, increased foreign direct investment and transformation in infrastructure (MGDS 2012:13).

### **2.2.7 Development Situation in Ntchisi**

Ntchisi district is one of the 28 districts in the country. It covers an area of 1,655 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 224,872 of which 96.8 % live in the rural areas. The female/male ratio in the district is 51/49. The large majority of the district population depends on subsistence farming for their livelihood (NSO Population Census 2008).

Mpherere ADP Assessment report (2006:10) reveals that the district is characterized by rampant poverty as evidenced by inadequate basic needs such as portable water with coverage of only 40% as compared to the national coverage of 80%.

Secondly low household income level is another factor identified through the assessment, which is increasing peoples' vulnerability to poverty. There is very few viable income generating opportunities for the people in the district. The economic activities in the area are limited to subsistence agro-production, which includes crop and livestock production. A few other people are engaged in small-scale businesses such as hawkers and selling produce (Mpherere ADP Assessment report 2006:10).

According to Ntchisi District Socio Economic Profile (May 2006), some of the factors which have contributed to low income in the district are low prices of farm produce due to limited competitive markets, limited employment opportunities, lack of value added products as there are no agro-processing industries in the district. The other factor is use of non-trade and un-calibrated scales by vendors who are cheating farmers.

Low agricultural production is another challenge faced by the people in the area. The reasons ranges from having very small land holding size, poor agricultural technologies, lack of access to farm inputs and inadequate agricultural extension services. As a result, this creates food insecurity which is manifested by high malnutrition levels among under five children assessed to be at 49 %. On the other hand, it is also discovered that the quality of education is very poor with an adult literacy levels of 26.5% (Mpherere ADP Assessment report 2006:10).

### **2.2.8 Malawi's Effort to Accelerate Development**

According to Republic of Malawi (ROM) Integrated Rural Water supply and Sanitation Project Appraisal Report (2001:3), Malawi government has put strategies to tackle the root causes of poverty and enhance development. The Government has identified poverty reduction as its central policy objective and this was articulated through the Poverty Alleviation Program (1995-1998). The poverty reduction focus is underpinned by strategies and efforts geared towards economic growth. It supports measures aimed at providing sustainable social infrastructure, including the provision of potable water and awareness creation and adoption of sound environmental sanitation practices is based on community ownership and decentralized government systems.

The report further clarifies that the policy framework postulates two channels of assistance to the poor; through (a) the Public Sector Investment Program (PSIP); and (b) direct intervention in response to community needs, identified and translated into project ideas by the beneficiaries themselves. Thus, the focus on community level mobilization, where beneficiary communities including women and the poor are encouraged to participate in designing and implementing poverty reduction activities (ROM, Integrated Rural Water supply and Sanitation Project Appraisal Report 2001:3).

Currently, the government of Malawi is implementing another strategy that is in line with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which is Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II). This is the overarching medium term strategy for Malawi designed to attain Malawi's long term development aspirations. The strategy covers a period of five years from 2011 to 2016. It follows the successful implementation of the country's medium term strategy, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) between 2006 and 2011. The objective of MGDS II is to continue reducing poverty through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development. The MGDS II identifies six broad thematic areas, namely; Sustainable Economic Growth; Social Development; Social Support and Disaster Risk Management; Infrastructure Development; Governance; and Gender and Capacity Development (MGDS II 2012:12).

MGDS II (2012:12) indicates that within the six thematic areas, the MGDS II isolates nine key priority areas (KPAs), namely; Agriculture and Food Security; Transport Infrastructure and Nsanje World Inland Port; Energy, Industrial Development, Mining and Tourism; Education, Science and Technology; Public Health, Sanitation, Malaria and HIV and AIDS Management; Integrated Rural Development; Green Belt Irrigation and Water Development; Child Development, Youth Development and Empowerment; and Climate Change, Natural Resources and Environmental Management. The selection of the key priority areas is meant to sustain and accelerate economic growth within the available resources. MGDS II, emphasis is being placed on maximizing the contribution of potential growth sectors such as agriculture, mining and tourism, while creating an enabling environment for private sector participation and development; fostering job creation; empowering rural communities; ensuring equitable access to land; and enhancing sustainable use of the environment.

On sustainable economic growth, the strategy is focusing on eight sub-themes namely: agriculture; natural resources and environmental management; mining; private sector development, industry and trade; rural development; tourism, wildlife and culture; labor and employment; and land. Within the subthemes, focus is being placed on wildlife and culture, labor and employment and land. Whilst agriculture, mining, natural resources and environmental management, industry, trade, integrated rural development and tourism have been isolated as key priority areas.

Secondly, the ROM Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project Appraisal Report (2001:3), states that the GOM has introduced a public sector and governance reform program. The main objective of the reform program is decentralization in the form of devolution of government authority, policy formulation and program implementation to the districts.

This is evidenced by MDGS II (2012:25) that reveals that government has prioritized decentralization as a mechanism for improving rural livelihoods. The process is meant to provide people at district and local levels with the ability to effectively plan and prioritize implementation of activities and

democratically elect their local representatives. As a result, district councils, ADCs, VDCs just to mention a few have been formed to run this business.

The expectation is that decentralization offers a better mechanism for reducing bureaucracy; ensuring quality, timely and equitable provision of services; and enhancing transparency and accountability. During the past five years efforts have been made to assist rural communities by implementing a number of programs including community development programs; FISP, rural industrialization with One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative as one of the major components; public works program through which construction of some school buildings was carried out; construction of teacher's houses and clinics; provision of water supply schemes; and improvement of other rural social infrastructure (MDGS 2012:25).

### **2.3 Decentralization**

As stated above, Malawi government has chosen decentralization as one most used methodology or mechanism to visualise its strategy (MGDS).

MLGRD (2005:2) defines decentralization as "the process by which central government gradually transfers some of its political power, responsibilities and financial resources to local governments." On the other hand, Phillip (2009:9) defines decentralization as "the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government organizations and / or the private sector." He goes further to state that decentralization is the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and the raising and allocation of resources from the central government and its agencies to field units of the government agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi autonomous public authorities or corporations, regional, area-wide or functional authorities.

Lakwo (2009:13) provides a third definition of decentralization as the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and the raising and allocation of resources from the central government ministries and agencies to field units of central government ministries or agencies (deconcentration); subordinate units or levels of government (devolution); semi-autonomous public authorities

(delegation); or nongovernmental private or voluntary organizations (privatization).

Despite having some variations, there tends to be a common agreement that decentralization is a generic concept for various forms of structural arrangements in government and organisations. As a process, decentralization involves the transfer of authority and power to plan, make decisions and manage resources, from higher to lower levels of the organisational hierarchy, in order to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery (Hussein 2004:108) In the third definition, apart from clarifying the types of decentralization, the definition gives the local level governments powers not only to receive and manage the financial resources from the central government but also to raise its own resources as well. This is another very important aspect in ensuring the improved performance of decentralization systems since the performance of most local governments is compromised due to lack of finances.

The rationale for decentralization as illustrated by Byrne, Mirescu and Müller (2007:7) is linked to subsidiarity, principle which contends that the lowest level of government that can perform functions efficiently and effectively should be the one to do so; that the administration of public resources should be brought as close to the people as possible.

Hussein (2004:107) therefore believes that decentralization can break up the workload to manageable portions which promote greater efficiency, coordination and effectiveness in public service delivery. This is because the decision making powers are transferred from the centre to local institutions.

Based on the above information, Hussein (2004:112) views decentralization and use of the local structures as important strategies. He says that decentralization enable citizens to express their real development needs and engenders sustainable development and grassroots commitment to political and development activities. In this regard, most developing countries in Africa including Malawi have reinvigorated local structures and set up a system of committees at the local level.



### **2.3.1 Decentralization in Africa**

Devas (2005:2) points out that there is a difference in the way decentralization was introduced say to countries in Africa as compared to other continents like in Europe. In central and eastern Europe in the early 1990s, it was because of a real demand from the local level for local democratic control and autonomy, as a reaction against the failures of the centralised state over the previous four decades. On the other hand, in Africa and some Asian countries, it was introduced with pressure from international agencies like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These agencies concerned at the failure of central governments to deliver services efficiently and to address poverty, have endorsed the economic arguments for decentralization, which tend to coincide with the neo-liberal agenda of reducing the role of the central state. The World Bank and other donor agencies like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have advocated and even required, decentralization in a number of countries in Africa and Asia in exchange for donor aid; hence decentralization in Africa has received quite mixed results; positive as well as negative.

In Africa, Uganda's decentralization is one good example that has been loaded with praises for successfully promoting citizen participation at all levels. The country has realized tremendous success stories as compared to many other African countries.

However, Muhumuza (2008:65) has a different view all together. He feels that many donors and writers have been thunderous in praising Uganda for successfully implementing decentralization. He points out that there are a lot of challenges and failures that Uganda has faced as well. As a result, this is increasing note of scepticism about the results of decentralization, hence need for critical analysis on its performance.

The Republic of Malawi (ROM) National Decentralization Program (2001:8) indicates that Malawi has made several study tours to Uganda among other countries visited hence may have similar trends in terms of approach, implementation and success stories. Due to this, Uganda's decentralization

will be critically analysed more especially on the approach, achievements and challenges faced.

### **2.3.1.1 Case of Decentralization in Uganda**

Decentralization in Uganda according to Muriisa (2008:89) is taking place alongside broad economic and political reforms. Uganda's 1995 constitution and 1997 Local Government Act specify five levels of local government – district, county, sub-county, parish and village, among which the 78 districts and more than 900 sub-counties have political authority and financial autonomy.

NRM government revived the efforts to implement decentralization in Uganda. Wanyama (2002) in Muhumuza (2008:64) states that the official policy objective of decentralization was to empower people, promote popular participation, equitable distribution of resources, accountability and responsibility while at the same time enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. The initial process started in 1986 with the countrywide introduction of the Resistance Councils and Committees (RCs) systems.

In Uganda, major results realized from the implementation of decentralization are on financial, political and departmental service delivery and accountability.

In the first place Uganda managed to devolve its spending powers to the districts. Important expenditure responsibilities in the social sector were devolved to its sub-national governments as stated by (Nsibambi 1998).

However, the spending powers have limitations because local governments as stated by Devas (2005:3) have limited local taxing powers from which to finance the services assigned to them. As a result, service levels fall far short of what is required. Generally, they are heavily dependent on transfers from the centre, which are often allocated in inequitable and non transparent ways. This dependence undermines the accountability of local governments to local voters and tax-payers. On the other hand, inadequate funds make the local structures not to implement what was planned. This is not in agreement to Local Council's framework requirements, as pointed out by Saito (1999) that

commands all districts to compile and implement district development plans, which reflect grassroots needs.

Another success story is that decentralization in Uganda has managed to involve more people in the decision-making and planning processes to respond to local needs. For example, the Local councils (LCs) are consultative forums for local decision-making (Saito 1999). Through elected representatives, policy proposals are channelled to the legislative bodies.

The provision of primary education in Uganda as illustrated by Muriisa (2008:89) serves as a good example in which participation of the people in the delivery of services is exhibited. Parents and the local population provide labour for the construction of classrooms while government provides funding for corrugated iron sheets and other construction materials.

Despite the above achievement, there is a limitation that most of the developments that are being implemented at community level are not demanded by the community members themselves. For example, there are externally determined programs that differ from local needs. According to Muriisa (2008:93) in one district, residents argued that funds to implement decentralization were usually obtained from donors who fund specific projects even when these may not be priorities of the local area. This makes the local structures to be ineffective and less popular at community level.

ROU (1997:15) says that implementation of decentralization reforms expanded participation compared to the past when it used to be a privilege of certain elites in the national assembly. In this case, decentralization reforms expanded participation to sections of the population that were previously marginalized. For example, quotas for women, the youth and people with disabilities were entrenched. In Uganda, it is a legal requirement that one-third of the local councils be constituted by women.

However, despite this attempt, Muhumuza (2008:67) argues that instituting a quota for women to participate in local councils has not qualitatively changed the plight of these women. Arnstein further argues that there is a difference

between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power to affect the outcome of the process (Arnstein 1971:176). Women representatives have sometimes neither advocated that women-specific issues be put on the agenda of local councils, nor have they mobilized, conscientized and organized the grassroots women so as to confront the forces that have historically oppressed them. This is why Hart (1972:606) concludes that effective participation is not only about how many times one participates but the importance of the decisions made.

Furthermore, Muhumuza (2008:65-66) observes that while local government reforms have symbolically increased participation in Uganda in terms of geographical space and numbers, the status quo has not changed much. Local governments have remained the preserve of local notables who have the education, financial resources and influence to contest for power. He gives an example of the law that stipulates that a candidate for a leadership position at the district level must have education qualifications of/or equivalent to an advanced level certificate while the leadership qualification for the sub-county level is the ordinary level certificate. Even at the village level, which is presumed to accommodate all grassroots people, leadership positions require literacy skills in reading and writing. This means that participation at this lowest rung is not necessarily all-inclusive as assumed. It is a preserve of the literate members of the community. This has a negative implication on citizen participation in a country which has only 76 per cent and 63 per cent of men and women who are literate respectively (Muhumuza 2008:66). It may easily be said that many people participate and yet some people do not because of the widespread apathy concerning local councils

As a result, there are increasing reports that people shun council meetings, mobilization meetings and local elections and avoid paying taxes. Few people attend council meetings at the village level because they are viewed as time-wasting since participation has not translated into improved government responsiveness and service delivery. Neither has popular participation influenced program outcomes of local governments since local priorities are decided by the centre (Muhumuza 2008:66).

Therefore, the much-hyped decentralization reforms in Uganda have mixed results because they were embraced as a matter of ritual rather than conviction *per se*. The consequence of this is that local governments' financial autonomy is been seriously weakened (Muhumuza 2008:77). Despite the mixed results, Uganda has been a rising star in decentralization set up and its results in Africa. On the other hand, Malawi's decentralization is quite similar to that of Uganda in terms of execution and results.

#### **2.4 Decentralization Set-up in Malawi**

As reported in the first chapter, democratic decentralization reforms in Malawi were introduced in the wake of the democratic reforms which saw the ousting of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), a one party-led regime which governed the country for three decades and the ascendancy of the United Democratic Front (UDF) Party at the helm of government (Gordon 2008:73).

Although in Malawi, the adoption of decentralization was done later in 1990's as compared to Uganda's 1986, the official adoption of the constitutions in both countries was done in 1995. Like in Uganda, this was not Malawi's first attempt at decentralization but rather a culmination of a series of efforts which began with colonial administrators as early as the turn of the last century (Chinsinga 2007:92). At independence in 1964, the new Government inherited a well-devolved local government system that did not last long. The powers, functions and responsibilities of local authorities that included local education, roads and public health management, were gradually transferred to line ministries which in turn established regional and district offices alongside the District Councils (National Decentralization Program 2001:3-4). Gordon (2008:78) points out that the statutory powers of the local councils were substantially circumscribed and progressively neutralised by the establishment of District Development Committees (DDCs) to anchor rural development initiatives in 1967. Local councils were however not abolished and this therefore meant that from 1967 onwards Malawi maintained parallel and unavoidably rival institutions for the delivery of grassroots development

The democratic reforms efforts in 1990's eventually resulted in the inauguration of the current system of local government in November 2000 and

currently there are forty local governments in the country as compared to Uganda's 78 districts and more than 900 sub-counties that have political authority and financial autonomy (Gordon 2008:79). The difference may be because of differences in the size and population of the two nations.

This was due to a situational analysis of Malawi carried out in 1993 that highlighted the need for effective decentralization and citizen participation in development activities. It was clear that the absence of effective structures at the lower levels of government hindered the process of development and poverty alleviation efforts (MDDPM 1995:10). As a result, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) government adopted a selective decentralization policy that was formalised in the district focus development policy in November 1993. This marked the beginning of the process of reinvigorating local structures and citizen participation in development and local governance (MDDPM 1995:10).

Although the objectives of introducing decentralization in Malawi are similar to that of Uganda, there are minor differences. The Republic of Malawi National Decentralization Program (2001:5-6) states that the objectives are to abolish dual systems, improve coordination, promote popular participation and poverty reduction while in Uganda, as pointed out by Muhumuza (2008:64) the official objectives of decentralization are to empower people, promote popular participation, equitable distribution of resources, accountability and responsibility.

In Malawi, among the policy objectives to be attained by the decentralization process, as highlighted in the Malawi decentralization Policy (MDP) (2000:2) include:

- To create democratic environment and institutions of governance and development, at the local level this will facilitate the participation of the grassroots in decision-making;
- To promote accountability and good governance at the local level in order to help government reduce poverty;
- To establish strong local institutions that embrace participatory democracy and

- To strengthen and deepen democracy by bringing the services and decision-making closer to the public and improve governance by achieving accountability and transparency (Hussein 2004:117).

Two major forms of political and administrative decentralization that have been adopted in Malawi are deconcentration and devolution. In Uganda; devolution was adopted by NRM government to give local authorities substantial political, fiscal and administrative powers and responsibilities. According to Kiggundu (2000:95), deconcentration involves transfer of workload and selected administrative or decision making authority and responsibility from the headquarters to lower field level officials while devolution entails transfer of authority and power to local units of government, which operate in a quasi-autonomous manner outside the direct administrative control and structure of the central government.

The institutional matrix of the DAs, as presented by Gordon (2008:81) is as follows. At the top of the structure is District Council. Below are the ADCs and at the bottom end of the hierarchy are VDCs. This is relatively different from Uganda's decentralization which has 5 levels of authority as indicated by Muriisa (2009:89), which are district, county, sub-county, parish and village. The number and size of each level may determine performance of that specific structure at that particular level.

District Council is composed of the elected body of councillors who elect a chairperson. In their meetings, the elected councillors are joined by nonelected members (also known as ex-officio members) which are Traditional Authorities (TAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) from constituencies that are within the local government area. In Uganda, 30% of the council members are supposed to be women but in Malawi, it is only mandatory to have at least a representative in the committee as ex-official who does not vote (MLGRD 2005:12). The number of members representing vulnerable categories like women may determine the effectiveness of these committees in tackling the real issues that affect them.

Furthermore, like in Uganda, all districts in Malawi are compelled to compile district development plans, which reflect grassroots needs as stipulated in Chapter xiv section 146 of the constitution of Malawi (1995). On the other hand, chapter xiv section 149 of the same constitution mandates the Government to be under a duty to ensure that there is adequate provision of resources necessary for the proper exercise of local government functions and to this effect shall allow a local government authority to keep such proportion of the revenue collected by that authority as shall be prescribed by the National Local Government Finance Committee. This is in agreement to the Local Government Act (1998:6) which empowers the local councils to mobilize resources within the local government area for governance and development.

Below the District Council in Malawi is the ADC, which represents all VDCs in a TA. Apart from the VDC, the ADC is one of the committee that is close and represented by the community members. The committee facilitates planning and development at the TA level. Specifically, the committee sets priorities, identify and prepare project proposals addressing community needs, which cover more than one VDC. They also organise monthly meetings together with VDCs from their area, supervise, monitor and evaluate the implementation of projects at TA level, bring together community members and resources for self-help projects, improve on and prioritise project proposals for VDCs for submission to District Council (MLGRD 2005:42). ADC is the only committee that has a direct link both to the community members and government departments hence it is one of the most important committees. The members of an ADC are VDC chairpersons and vice-chairpersons, councillors, representatives of religious groups, representatives of youth and women groups in the area, representatives from the business community and chairperson of the AEC

The (DEC) is a technical and advisory committee to the District council and all the above committees. It is the overall responsible for implementing the District Development Plans (DDP) (MLGRD 2005:45). It further states that at a lower level, is the AEC, which is a technical committee responsible for



advising the ADC on all aspects of development for the community within a TA. The functions of the AEC are to assist and advise the ADC, to identify and prepare proposals, carry out field appraisals of proposed projects, review project proposals before submitting them to the DEC for consideration, conduct data collection and analysis at community level, to take a lead in the organisation of VDCs, train and assist VDCs in setting their own guidelines and come up with development projects. It is represented by the team leaders of government departments and NGOs in the area (MLGRD 2005:44).

Malawi's decentralization is facing similar challenges to that of Uganda as observed by Cross (2001:4) who indicates that key elements for successful decentralization, namely the effective articulation of demand at the local level and a strong, impartial administrative ethos supported by several levels of capabilities do not exist.

Although not much has been written on the progress of Malawi's decentralization as compared to that of Uganda, there are common developments happening between Malawi and Uganda as far as implementation of decentralization is concerned.

In Malawi the concept and approach of decentralization is similar in all districts. However, there may be some changes in terms of its implementation.

## ***2.5 Decentralization Set-up in Ntchisi District***

Ntchisi is one of the 28 districts of Malawi and is in the central region (Refer to the appendix 3). Ntchisi District Council is a statutory body established under the Local Government Act (1998) section 5 of the laws of Malawi. It is supposed to be headed by the chairperson selected from among the 26 councilors each representing a ward in the district. Since June 2005 the council is run without elected members as their term of office ended in March 2005 and no other election has been done according to Mpherere ADP Assessment Report (2006:17).

The district commissioner is the controlling officer of the council and heads the secretariat, which is composed of professional heads of government sectors in the district. In addition to this, the secretariat is supported by professional heads from different NGOs.

According to Ntchisi District Socio-economic Profile (2006), the district has a population of about 212073. The district has one functional council, 7 ADCs and 7 AECs namely Chikho, Chilowoko, Kalumo, Kasakula, Malenga, Nthondo and Vuso Jere. Furthermore, the district has 256 VDCs (Mpherere ADP Assessment Report 2006:14). The breakdown is as follows;

**Table 2.1: Summary of ADCs, VDC's and villages in the district**

<b>AREA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (ADC)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF VDC's</b>	<b>NUMBER OF VILLAGES</b>
CHIKHO	31	<b>165</b>
CHILOWOKO	41	<b>338</b>
KALUMO	55	<b>349</b>
KASAKULA	45	<b>367</b>
MALENGA	45	<b>247</b>
NTHONDO	24	<b>162</b>
VUSO JERE	15	<b>72</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1600</b>

Source: Mpherere ADP 2006 Assessment Report

Almost all government ministries/Departments have offices at the district level to carry out their respective functions and mandates under decentralization guidelines. The existing government representatives in the district are Ministries of Agriculture and Food security; Trade and Industry; Education; Health; Home affairs; Labour and Vocational training; Gender; Women and Community Development; Transport and Public Works; Local Government; Irrigation and Water Development; Youth, Sports and Culture; and departments of Fisheries; Forestry and Information. Furthermore, the district has the following statutory corporations like Agriculture Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC), Malawi Posts Corporation (MPC), Malawi Telecommunication Limited (MTL), Central Region Water Board, Malawi Housing Cooperation (MHC) and Electricity Supply Commission of Malawi (ESCOM) (Mpherere ADP Assessment Report 2006:19).

NGOs that are working in the district include National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE), Public Affairs Committee (PAC), World Vision International, National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM), CARE, Ntchisi Organisation for Youth and Development (NOYD), Action Aid, World Relief and Red Cross (Mpherere ADP Assessment Report 2006:20).

## **2.6 Structure and Functions of an ADC in Malawi**

As stated above, ADCs are one of the local structures under decentralization. They act as a link between the community members and service providers. Samuels *et al* (2009:2) alluded that ADCs are below the DEC and operates at a TA level, consisting of many villages. In some cases the ADCs are headed by the chiefs while in some cases the chairperson is elected among the members.

The ADCs are representative bodies of all VDCs created at the level of TA. The ADCs are led by a chair persons and their membership incorporates one female and one male member elected from each VDC , MPs, ward councillors, chairpersons of political parties, representatives of religious groups, youth and women groups, the business community and frontline staff in health, education, agriculture and community development (Gordon 2008:82).

Furthermore, MLGRD (2005:43) indicates that ADCs are responsible to set priorities, identify and prepare project proposals addressing community needs, which cover more than one VDC. They are also responsible to supervise, monitor and evaluate the implementation of projects at TA level. Apart from that, ADCs bring together community members and resources for self-help projects, improve on and prioritise project proposals for VDCs for submission to DEC.

Among the key functions of the committee include:

1. Holding monthly meetings in collaboration with VDCs;
2. Raising funds and mobilising community resources for projects;
3. Reviewing and integrating projects from VDCs; and
4. Submitting the proposed development projects to the area executive committee (AEC) and the district executive committee (DEC).

## **2.7 Importance of ADCs in Malawi**

Adamolekun (1991:72) suggests that decentralised governments units like ADCs are regarded as more conducive to both the formulation and the implementation of development plans, because such units are physically

closer to the people they are expected to serve. The planning process would directly involve local citizens in the choice of development programs and projects whose implementation would benefit from citizens' commitment to the achievement of plan objectives.

In the above case, this institutional matrix is designed as a conduit for grassroots involvement in the political and development policy processes. It serves as a channel for articulation, discussion and consolidation of the aspirations, hopes and demands of the grassroots for appropriate action. The sub-district participatory structures thus function as structured mechanisms of political participation and representation from the local to district levels and even beyond (Gordon 2008:81).

Clapper (1996:76) emphasises that citizen participation is critical to development since it enables local people to control and monitor resources and development activities. It serves as a means of monitoring abuse of powers and ensuring transparency and accountability in resource utilization. In addition to that it is evident that their participation in development committees, citizens provides the necessary input in form of labour, resources, information, feedback and advice required in the development process. This in turn enables the formulation of realistic plans that are in line with local circumstances and conditions and promotion of sustainability (Hussein 2004:110).

Furthermore, Gordon (2008:130) gives three other expectations which are commonly stated as increased equity, efficiency and decreased corruption.

Olowu (2006) further explain that decentralization heralds a permissive and enabling atmosphere for communities to effectively realize their full potential for dignified and fulfilling lives, as it is not only an institutionalised but also a legally underpinned form of participatory development

Decentralization or devolution is embedded with the belief to improve efficiency in service delivery by "debureaucratisation" and radically reducing the number of intervening forces or obstacles in service delivery. It empowers

various actors along the line to improve on quality, accountability, efficiency, good governance; performance and productivity for whatever services render the public (Forge 2006:7).

## **2.8 Challenges faced by ADCs in Malawi**

Hussein (2004:120) indicates that the promotion of genuine participatory development approaches through local structures like ADCs is facing a number of challenges as indicated below.

### **2.8.1 Inadequate Operational Resources**

It has been noticed that while the structures like ADCs are in place to enhance community participation and enhance community development, government extension systems responsible for their mobilisation lack resources and are, as a result, weak, poorly-motivated and unable to ensure that communities can participate in planning and program implementation (Adamolekun 1991:72).

This is evidenced by the MLGRD (2005:5) that reveals that the District Councils are facing challenges from being given inadequate money for their operations and having inadequate qualified staff apart from that the central government is reluctant to transfer power and authority to the Councils. This in turn affects the local structures as well.

### **2.8.2 Failure to Devolve Power to Lower Level**

The issue of devolution of power reveal reluctance on the part of a centralised system to devolve power to the periphery. Though the theoretical concepts of decentralization and democratisation are gradually being embraced throughout the continent, implementation processes encounter serious and many difficulties. Commitments to theoretical principle is one thing; willingness of implementation is another, as most of these societies are ingrained with corruption, poor governance, inefficiencies, resources and financial constraints. The situation is exacerbated by inertia and the lack of political will to undertake changes, though there is need for changes if quality service deliveries are to be attained (Forge 2006:13).

Although the aim of this system is to ensure a bottom-up approach and to decentralise control and decision making powers over development activities, in practice the ultimate control remains with the centre. The role of the central government according to the legal instruments like the constitution and the local Government Act of 1998, is to set guidelines and supervise local institutions. However, in practice the centre tends to exert the ultimate power and control over local affairs including the actual drawing up of plans for the local institutions (Hussein 2004:120).

This is why Kiggundu (2000:111) says that public management at local level remains centralised in most developing countries despite the pronouncements by politicians and pressures from international donor agencies in favour of decentralization. Secondly, local government structures are facing problems such as lack of local autonomy, high dependence on central government policy, shortage of financial resources and poor administrative capacity. This has therefore, a very big impact on the performance of the local development committees.

To hit the nail on its head, (Oyugi 2000:12) concludes that Local Development Committees that were set up in 1960s and survived up to the 1980s functioned as appendages of the central agencies and they were not autonomous entities. The committees were used as instruments of the central authority to control the behaviour of the citizen in the development process. In short, the decentralised structures failed to effectively involve the citizens in decision-making matters relating to development in most African countries.

### **2.8.3 Political constraints**

Politically, the political environment, which is characterised by intolerance for diversity of opinions, electoral manipulation and confrontational tactics renders the existing local institutions ineffective in their task to promote citizen participation in the political process (Somanje 2001:4). In some cases for example, citizens are not willing to participate in self-help projects initiated by a rival political party. Thus, development activities and projects tend to be highly politicised in certain areas. This implies that local knowledge does not always determine the planning process and outcome. The local needs are

often structured by dominant political interest and what government agencies in question are able to deliver (Hussein 2004:124).

There are other situations where there is that overall lack of local democracy and the existence of a local democratic deficit. Many institutional arrangements established under decentralization reforms are insufficiently democratic and do not create a clear line of accountability from decision-makers to the local population (Gordon 2008:16).

#### **2.8.4 Illiteracy and Lack of Capacity Building**

Hussein (2004:122) observes that in some cases, only a few members of the (ADCS) are active and that most members are not even aware of their responsibilities due to inadequate training programs. He further observes that in some cases, citizens in other areas do not even know that VDCs are actually in existence in their locality.

Sukali (2000:11) observes that low level of education and the parlous economic standing of a large number of citizens and representatives negatively affect genuine participation in the development process. He further gives an example of local people in Malawi who failed to understand the importance of the role of councillors after their absence for six years since the abolition of district councils from December 1995 to November 2000

Malawi's decentralization policy requires all group villages to have a Village Action Plan (VAP), representing a development program for the VDC. The VDC is mandated to facilitate the planning and implementation of the plan. However, because of the inadequate capacity of VDCs and low education levels of the committee members, these plans are not implemented (Samuels *et al* 2009:2).

As a result, Devas (2005:3) observes that local governments often suffer from weak institutional capacity. Decision-making processes are unsystematic, mechanisms of accountability between officials and elected representatives are inadequate and there is a shortage of officials with the necessary technical, managerial and financial skills. This is often due to the lack of



financial resources to attract and retain high calibre staff. This may have an effect on capacity building initiatives to the ADCs.

Therefore, in most areas the participatory structures like ADCs as eluded by Gordon (2008:95), exist only on paper as they have virtually collapsed. The main reason for this is that they were constituted without being trained and briefed on their roles (terms of reference) which is attributed to the perennial financial problems facing decentralization and poverty reduction in Malawi.

#### **2.8.5 Mushrooming of Parallel Structures**

The collapse of ADCs has further been cemented by the tendencies of NGOs and other development partners to create parallel structures to ADCs and VDCs, often well-resourced and therefore very attractive to the grassroots, but without any linkages to the decentralised planning framework. Many people have little awareness about these structures like committees and they have rarely functioned as vehicles for sensitising, educating and informing the grassroots about the decentralization policy reforms (Chinsinga 2005).

#### **2.8.6 Legal Implications**

Legally, the local government Act of 1998 does not provide details regarding the functions of ADCs and therefore their activities have no legal basis. The members are not empowered to make binding decisions about development. In this case, citizen participation through these structures tends to be symbolic or façade (Hussein 2004:122).

### **2.9 Conclusion**

Based on the above information, it is very clear that decentralization is very essential in catalyzing community participation through community mobilization and identification of real issues that affect the community members. It is also very efficient in reducing the bureaucracy hence promoting efficiency in service delivery. However, it is also very clear that decentralization especially the operational structures like the ADCs are facing a lot of challenges that if not solved may affect their effectiveness. This agrees to what Rondinelli, John, Nellisand and Cheema (1983:3) says that the results of decentralization have been mixed. In countries like Uganda,

decentralization has resulted in greater participation in development activities, more effective and efficient administration of local and rural development programs and expanded administrative capacity outside of the national capital while in others not. However, these countries have also faced serious problems of implementation as well.

## **Chapter Three**

### **3 Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Chapter Overview**

In this research methodology, research design has been discussed by focusing on both qualitative and quantitative research. The chapter provides an overview of sampling methods and the sample sizes used during the study. Data collection techniques used in the research has been discussed as well. Data management and analysis is discussed before looking on the ethical consideration for the study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Blanche, Durreheim and Painter (2006:34) define research design as a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. In other words, these are plans that guide the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used to achieve this.

##### **3.2.1 Quantitative Research**

Bryman (2004:62) defines quantitative research as collection of numerical data and as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach (and of positivism in particular) and as having an objectivist conception of social reality.

Thus quantitative research refers to the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses pertaining to phenomena. The process of measurement is central to quantitative research because it provides the

fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships. Quantitative data is any data that is in numerical form such as statistics, percentages, etc. In layman's terms, this means that the quantitative researcher asks a specific, narrow question and collects a sample of numerical data from participants to answer the question. The researcher analyzes the data with the help of statistics. The researcher is hoping the numbers will yield an unbiased result that can be generalized to some larger population (Given, Lisa 2008).

The quantitative survey design was used in this study. According to Creswell (2003:174), survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. From sample results, the researcher generalizes or makes claims about the population. The findings of studies are generalized because the participants are drawn using statistical analyses as pointed out by (Van der Riet & Durrheim 2006:91. The quantitative method collected the people's perceptions towards the effectiveness of the ADCs in execution of their roles as its main objective of the study. A pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire specifically developed for this research was administered to the respondents to get this data.

### **3.2.2 Qualitative Research**

Apart from quantitative data, the study also collected qualitative data to assess the people's feelings, thus experiences, attitudes and behaviours associated to the effectiveness of ADCs in decentralization (Stevens 2003:28).

In reference to kinds of research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota (20013:1), points out that qualitative refers to studies of subjects that are hard to quantify, such as art history. The term qualitative research tends to be a residual category for almost any kind of non-quantitative research. The qualitative-quantitative distinction is often overdrawn. It is difficult to avoid quantitative elements in the most qualitative subject matter.

Creswell (2003:21) defines qualitative approach as one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives.

The researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data. In this case, the inquirer gets deeper analysis of the information required from the respondent.

The qualitative methods targeted specific individuals that have specific information on the effectiveness of ADCs. These were the people that are familiar with the subject matter. Key informants Interviews (KII) and focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were employed to generate this data.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

Data collection involves applying the measuring instrument to the selected group for investigation (Mouton 1998:67). In this study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The process of data collection started with a review of relevant literature on decentralization and community development.

#### **3.3.1 Secondary Data**

Secondary data is when the data has already been collected by someone else and you only need to extract the required information for the purposes of your study (Kumar 1999:124). This avoids duplication and collection of information that is already available. This reduced misuse of limited resources that could be used on other issues. On the other hand, the secondary data is important for comparing the trends of certain indicators over time.

Kumar (1999:26) explains, that “review and use of secondary data helps to acquaint ourselves with the available body of knowledge in the specific area of interest”. In this study, different sources of literature were used to get relevant and reliable information on decentralization in general, ADCs community and sustainable development. Both published and unpublished sources were used in the review. These included research papers, reports, journals, books, minutes, plans and many more.

#### **3.3.2 Primary Data**

Apart from secondary, primary data was collected to find the information that answers the research objectives. Mouton (2001:69) refers to primary data as your data which may be collected using different methodologies.

In order to collect this information interviews were done with different categories of people using questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informants interviews (KII) guides.

### **3.4 Data collection Techniques**

The study used three techniques to collect primary data and a single technique to collect secondary data. For primary data, questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) were employed while Document Review was used to generate secondary data.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire technique was used in the House Hold Survey. This is one of the most used tools for collecting quantitative data and is restricted to data of experiences and rejects any form of speculation (Plooy 2001:21). It is a set of questions intended to gather information pertaining to the research objectives. According to Kumar (1999:109), a questionnaire helps to provide uniform information which assures comparability of data. However, the quality of interaction between the respondents and the one administering the questionnaire has a very big bearing on the quality of the data collected (Kumar 1999: 115). To make sure that the process of administering to this questionnaire is done on a specific time enumerators were employed to collect this data. However, the researcher carefully and tactfully selected the knowledgeable and experienced enumerators to guarantee collection of quality data.

The questionnaire used was developed in English as per the requirements but was translated and administered in Chichewa, which is the target area's local and common language. To reconcile the two, the questionnaire was translated in Chichewa for easy understanding by the participants. As stated above, the community of Ntchisi is homogenous in nature and almost 100% of the people do speak and understand Chichewa as their main language. As such, it was easy for them to give more information on the effectiveness of the ADCs in community development.

To ensure that the translated questionnaire was able to capture the right information and doesn't mislead the people, the questionnaires were pretested. This enabled the collected data to be reliable. Cohen, Manion &

Keith (2000: 117) define reliability as being a synonym for consistency and reliability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. In other words, the research information collected should be proved true even if it is done during different periods and in different areas. The pretesting was done outside the targeted area for the research. 10 questionnaires were pre-tested and some questions that were capturing similar information were amalgamated and summarized. This exercise brought some lessons that helped to make necessary amendments to the questionnaires. This therefore helped to improve quality of data collected and ensured that right information relevant to the study was collected.

### **3.4.2 Focus Group Discussions**

Almedom, Blumenthal and Manderson (2007) describes focus group discussion as deliberations where people from similar backgrounds or experiences (e.g., mothers, young married men, birch attendants/mid-wives) are brought together to discuss a specific topic of interest to the investigator(s). In FGD according to Cresswell (2003:23), the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, with six to eight interviewees in each group. These interviews involved unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants.

Robson (2002:284) explains that this methodology has an advantage in that during a group discussion there is a lot more freedom for people to talk on issues under discussion with very little influence from the researcher and the participants are able to provide checks and balances within themselves weeding out extreme views in the process. On the other hand, Godsell (2000:10) cautions that such sessions need to be well managed as presence of peers in a meeting may inhibit others resulting in only a few people dominating the discussions.

In this study, 2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) targeted the CBOs in the area. The groups were deliberately selected because they work or are supposed to work very closely with the ADCs in their operations. The groups were therefore selected to represent the development committees available at a local level in the area. A total of eight members with four men and four

women from each group were invited at one place where open ended questions were asked. Issues discussed included assessing their knowledge on prominence, functions and performance of ADC in the area. It was also to assess their knowledge on development and how they are linked to the ADCs. It was evident that during these focus group discussions people were able to talk on issues under discussion with very little influence from the researcher and the participants were able to provide well debated answers after weeding out extreme views in the process.

### **3.4.3 Key Informants**

A key-informant is described as any person who is capable of providing detailed information, on the basis of their special expertise or knowledge of a particular issue (Almedom, *et al* 1997). This is to help get an in depth knowledge about the issue in context. As such 14 in depth interviews with ADC and VDC executive members, key personnel from government departments, NGOs working in the area and selected members of political parties were done. Out of these 14 interviews, 5 were with women participants. These were targeted because of their individuals' personal histories, per-spectives and experiences in working with ADCs. Interaction with the key informants was conducted using semi-structured interviews to allow them give out the needed information with ease. Key issues that were highlighted included assessing their personal knowledge about ADCs existence, roles and composition; their relationship with ADCs; the effectiveness of ADCs and challenges faced by ADCs just to mention a few.

### **3.4.4 Document review**

A document review was done to get some insights of the activities, challenges and successes the ADCs are currently facing. Some of the documents reviewed were minutes, reports, letters and memos.

## **3.5 Sampling**

Cohen et al (2000:99) mentions two methods that are used for sampling as probability (random sample) and non-probability (purposive sample). A probability sample is selected randomly where each unit of the population has an equal or known chance of being selected while a non probability sample is



not randomly selected implying that some units in the population are more likely to be selected than others (Bryman 2004:87). During this study probability sampling was used in selecting the participants for quantitative study and non probability sampling methods for the qualitative study. Purposeful sampling was preferred in qualitative research to ensure that only people with adequate knowledge and the most comprehensive understanding of the subject of study of the topic participates in the research.

### **3.5.1 Sample Size for Quantitative Study**

Keeping other factors constant, study results would be accurate if it would have a hundred percent representation. However due to several reasons or challenges, a sample representation of the entire population can be selected for the study. According to Cohen et al (2000: 92), there are many factors that prevent one from getting information from the whole population. Such issues include inadequate finances, materials, time and accessibility. This is true because such type of studies would be too big, complicated and therefore requiring a lot of financial, material, human and time resources. This necessitates collection of data from a smaller group or a subset of the population. Depending on how the selection has been done, the samples can be used as a legitimate basis for drawing inferences about the population from which they are drawn (Michael, Wood, Clark, Wilkie and Szivas 2000:75). However, Bryman (2004:87) emphasizes that the sample has to be representative of the population under study.

There are many formulas that are available to select the right sample size that is representative. One of them is **Raosoft Sample Size Calculator** available on <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>. The calculator determines the sample size by considering margin of error, confidence level, population size and response distribution. Using this formula for example, the sample size for this study would be **378 HH** with; **5%** margin of error; **95%** confidence level; **22854 HH** population size.

However, as already stated, using the formula alone would not do justice to the researcher due to financial constraints since this sample would need more resources. As a relief, Bryman (2004: 87) indicates that one of the most basic

considerations is that, it is the absolute size of a sample that is important not its relative size. According to Cohen et al (2000: 93), a sample size of 30 is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if a researcher would like to use the data for statistical analysis. On the other hand, TAs, Kalumo and Chilowoko are homogenous in nature since they are over 90% of Chewa tribe. This is in agreement with Bryman (2004:99) who highlights that, a community that is homogenous requires a smaller sample size than one which is heterogeneous. Audience Dialogue (2006:3) in Madziakapita (2008:93) indicates that the rule of the thumb is that a sample size of between 100 and 200 is recommended when one has no previous experience of surveys and no available survey data on the same. Secondly, the UNISA's Higher Degrees Committee recommended a sample size of not more than 100 for this study. As such, a sample size of 100 HH was selected for HH survey interviews. However after data cleaning, data for 97 respondents was used for analysis.

### **3.5.2 Sample Size for Qualitative Study**

On the other hand, qualitative research had 2 Focus Group discussions targeting 2 CBOs and 14 KII which included 4 key ADC members, 4 VDC members, 2 government departments that are actively providing services in each of these ADCs. Furthermore, 2 NGOs and 2 politicians were interviewed as well.

### **3.6 Data Management and Analysis**

Cohen et al (2000:147) defines data analysis as a process that involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data or in other words, making sense of the data. There were two types of data analysis that focused on both qualitative and quantitative.

Quantitative data was analyzed using the Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software program. During analysis, percentages, charts, frequency and counts were used to explain descriptive statistics while correlation was used to assess the relationship between variables.

Qualitative data management and analysis was used to do data reduction. In qualitative research, data reduction does not necessarily refer to quantifying nominal data. Qualitative data needs to be reduced and transformed in order

to make it more readily accessible, understandable and to draw out various themes and patterns. Data reduction acknowledges the voluminous nature of qualitative data in the raw. It directs attention to the need for focusing, simplifying and transforming raw data into a more manageable form (Berg 2001:36).

Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The enumerators and the researcher analyzed the content of the responses from the discussions and the interviews and draw common categories and themes. The results were used to compliment the quantitative data.

### ***3.7 Ethical Consideration***

Every member participating in the research has rights to be respected. It is out of this that ethical considerations were done before and after data collection. Creswell (2003:75) points out that as researchers anticipate data collection they need to respect the participants and the sites for research. Ethical issues arising during this stage of the research are sorted out diligently. This included making sure that the research do not put participants at risk, respect vulnerable populations, making sure that special needs of Vulnerable populations, mental incompetent participants, victims, persona with neurological impairments, pregnant women and individuals with AIDS are considered.

Furthermore, the study ensured that its results do not place the participant at risk of criminal or civil liability, nor damaging to the participants' financial standing, employability, or reputation (Berg 2001:48). This was done by making sure that only analyzed and interpreted information is given out for public consumption. In addition to that, names and details of individuals were strictly secured.

In addition to this, an informed consent form for participants to sign before they engage in the research was developed. This form acknowledged that participants' rights have been protected during data collection.

Elements of this consent form included the following as stated by Creswell, (2002:73); the right to participate voluntarily withdraw at any time, so that the individual is not being coerced into participation; the purpose of the study, so

that individuals understand the nature of the research and its likely impact on them; the procedures of the study, so that individuals can reasonably expect what to anticipate in the research; the right to ask questions, obtain a copy of the results and have their privacy respected and the benefits of the study that will accrue to the individual.

All participants were informed of the research and had a right to participate or not. Secondly, the researcher made sure that he keeps the anonymity and confidentiality of each participant to avoid revealing the identity of individuals without their consent.

Lastly, the research write up of findings did not use language or words that are biased against persons because of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic group, disability, or age.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4 Research Findings**

#### ***4.1 Chapter Overview***

This chapter highlights results of the research that was done in Ntchisi district in T/As Chilowoko and Kalumo. The study was assessing the effectiveness of the Area Development Committees (ADCs) in decentralization. These findings present the views of the local people, government departments and NGOs working in the area. The findings are divided into four sections. The first section highlights household characteristics of the respondents in the research. The second section focuses on knowledge of the respondents on decentralization and their participation in decentralization at community level. The third section assesses the participants' knowledge on ADCs and their performance. The last section looks at the concept of community development.

#### ***4.2 Household Characteristics***

Out of 97 respondents who were interviewed using HH survey questionnaire and the data entered for analysis, 60% were male while 40% were females. There were more men than women interviewed because the survey was targeting household heads to get the most tangible information about the family's life and knowledge. In most Malawian families, men are heads of their families hence more men than women. The 40% of the women either represents women headed HH or in the absence of their husbands, they represented the HH head during the interviews.

Educationally, 8% of the respondents have never gone to school, 71% attended primary education while 21% attended secondary education. There was no respondent who had ever attended tertiary education. The study assessed the education levels of the respondents to find out if there is any relationship between education levels and the ability of the community members to grasp information on development, decentralization and

existence of the community structures like the ADCs. The table below contains participants' information on their gender, age and education levels.

**Table 4.1: Respondents Characteristics**

<b>Characteristic</b>		<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	58	60
	Female	39	40
<b>Education</b>	Never Gone to school	8	8
	Primary Education	69	71
	Secondary Education	20	21
	Tertiary Education	0	0
<b>Age</b>	<12 years	0	0
	>12 years and <18 years	4	4
	>18 years and <50 years	72	74
	>50 Years	21	22

On age, the table 1 above shows that the majority of the respondents (74%) were of the ages between 18 and 50 while 22% were of the ages above 50 years old. This means that the majority of the respondents become heads of families at least after 18 years of age. Since the study was targeting household heads, the 4% of the respondents who represented the group which is less than 18 years represents either child headed households or households which by the time of the survey had no parents available at home but there was older children who could respond issues on behalf of their parents.

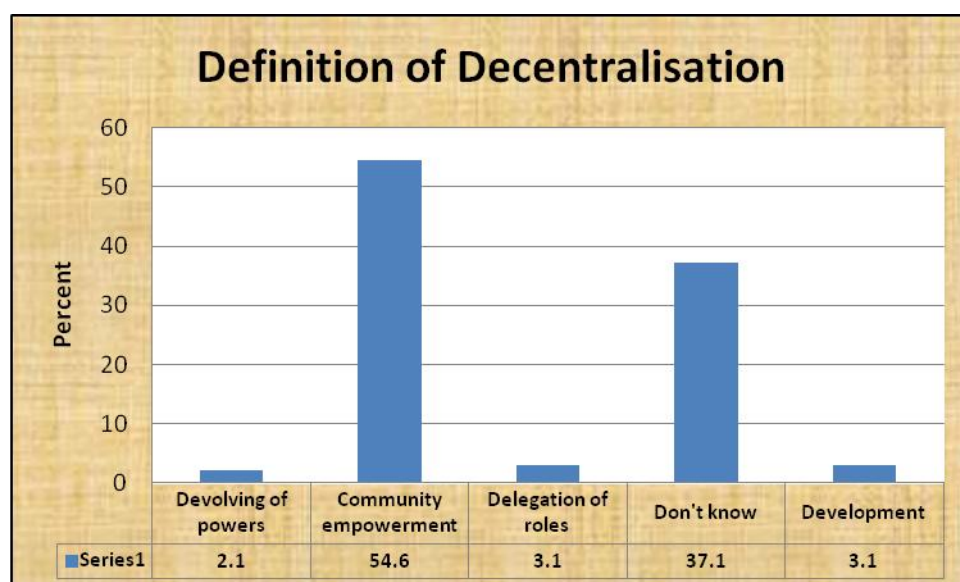
On the other hand, it is clear that the majority of the respondents are within the age group that is energetic (18-49 years) who can ably participate in community development.

#### **4.3 Respondents Knowledge of Decentralization**

Decentralization is a tool the government of Malawi and many African countries have used to empower and delegate powers to lower levels. In Malawi, ADC is one of the community-based structures to implement decentralization.

The study therefore assessed the knowledge of community members on decentralization. This was to assess how the community members view and understand the concept of decentralization. The figure below shows how the people define decentralization in their own context.

**Figure 4.1: Definition of Decentralization**



The study revealed that, 37.1% of the respondents do not know the meaning of decentralization although almost all of them acknowledged having heard something about decentralization. These respondents could not manage to organise a contextualised definition of decentralization because they just heard the word but not understand the meaning. Most of the respondents indicated that they heard the words like decentralization on the radios rather than through community gatherings.

The responsibility of making awareness about decentralization to the community members lies in the hands of the District council, ADCs and the VDCs. However, the focus group discussions with CBOs revealed that this is not the case in Ntchisi. As a result, most of the community members get the information mainly from the radios. The challenge with radio information is that community members do not have a chance to ask questions where they have not understood because generally the programs are pre-recorded before broadcasting.

Key informants interviews with key stakeholders especially from DCs office accepted that it is their responsibility to make sure that all people have adequate knowledge about decentralization. They however accepted failure to fulfil this noble task due to inadequate resources. On the same, interviews with some NGOs like World Vision indicated that they had invested a notable amount of funds to ensure that people are aware of decentralisation and its structures.

Lack of information has a bearing to the implementation of decentralization program. This in turn affects the effective performance of the decentralization structures like ADCs.

On the other hand, the study established that about 54.6% understand decentralization as community empowerment. Furthermore, other respondents understand decentralization as delegation of roles, devolving of powers and community development with 3.1%, 2.1% and 3.1% respectively. This means that about 62.9% of respondents know something about decentralization since most of the answers are closer to the real definition of decentralization.

Variations in the definitions differ due to sources and focus of the disseminated information about decentralization.

#### **4.3.1 Relationship between respondents' knowledge of decentralization and gender**

The study wanted to assess if there is a relationship between knowledge of respondents about decentralization and gender. The results are as below;

**Table 4.2: Knowledge of Decentralization by gender.**

<i><b>Do you know Decentralization?</b></i>	<i><b>Male (%)</b></i>	<i><b>Female (%)</b></i>	<i><b>Total (%)</b></i>
<b>Yes</b>	67.2	56.4	62.9
<b>No</b>	32.8	43.6	37.1
<b>Total</b>	100	100	100

***Sig<sub>(Cal)</sub>=0.279>Sig<sub>(std)</sub>=0.05 at 95% Confidence Level, Therefore, the hypothesis that knowledge positively depends on gender is rejected.***



The results show that there was slightly higher percentage of males (67%) who had knowledge than females (56.4%). However, a statistical test using Chi-square test shows that there is no strong relationship between knowledge of decentralization and gender of the respondents. Thus, knowledge of decentralization is not influenced by gender of the respondents. This means that both males and females have other factors that affect them not to know or understand the concept of decentralization. This could be because as stated above that dissemination of this information about decentralization is done through radio than community gatherings.

Chapota, Fatch and Mthinda (2014:8) says that in Malawi, more men than women own radio sets. Men usually carry their radio sets around and listen as they ride bicycles, travel on buses, play games, chat and attend public gatherings such as sporting events and meetings. He however indicates that more women access broadcasts through radio listening clubs or in groups as they rest and relax after completing their household roles. It is out of this argument that despite women having few radios, they have an advantage of having more women listening to one radio. As such both men and women access radio information almost equally. This could be the reason why both gender categories shows similar knowledge levels about decentralization which is highly disseminated through radio programs.

On the other hand, focus group discussions with CBOs, revealed that most of the men prefer listening to music than educative messages. This too could draw back men's' ability to capture messages disseminated through radio broadcasts.

The results could be different had it been that awareness about decentralization is done through community gathering because more men attend to these gatherings than women and therefore, men could have an added advantage.

#### **4.3.2 Relationship between Knowledge of decentralization and education level of respondents**

The study also assessed the relationship between knowledge of decentralization and education levels of the respondents. This was to find out if education has an impact on community members to grasp information about

decentralization. Statistical analysis of the t-test shows that the  $t\text{-value}_{(cal)} = 29.104$ ;  $\text{sig}_{(cal)} = 0.000$  at 95% Confidence Level. This then means that there is a relationship between knowledge of decentralization and education levels of respondents. This means that the people with higher education levels are likely to know more about decentralization than those with no or low levels of education. This is because people with higher education are used to absorbing new concepts like that of decentralization. In addition to that, some could have learnt the concept or basics of decentralization in schools as part of their academic courses.

On the other hand, Mpherere ADP Assessment report (2006:10) states that in Ntchisi, the quality of education is very poor with adult literacy levels of 26.5%. The literacy levels therefore justifies why the majority of the people in the district have no knowledge of decentralization.

However, knowing the education levels of the people in a community can help the ADCs to determine the best methodology of message delivery to those with no or low education levels to meet the same goal. This can improve the efficiency of ADCs and government in message delivery.

#### 4.3.3 Benefits of Decentralization

This analysis was done to assess the realized benefits of decentralization in the study area by the community members themselves. Thus, this was also to assess if the people are able to isolate and recognize some of these benefits in the area. The results are shown in the table below;

**Table 4.3: Realized Benefits of Decentralization in Ntchisi**

Decentralization Benefit	Frequency	Percent
Do not know	38	39.2
Accelerated development projects	32	33.0
None	17	17.5
Empowered communities	6	6.2
Community ownership of community development	3	3.1
Relieved responsibilities	1	1.0

The table above illustrates that 39.2% do not know whether decentralization has brought any benefits to the community in general and specifically to their lives. This is because these respondents do not have adequate information to

back their opinion. On the other hand, 17.5% of the respondents believe that decentralization has never brought any benefit either to their lives or to the entire community. This means that 56.7% of the respondents either do not know and/or feel that there is no benefit gained from decentralization in their communities. This agrees to the Focus Group discussions with the CBOs that revealed that the CBOs do not really see any benefit of decentralization in their area. The CBOs believe that the central government is still clinging to the powers and resources that are supposed to be decentralized. As such, there are no tangible results on the ground due to decentralization.

However, 33% feel that decentralization has helped to accelerate development in the area while 6.2% feel the concept has empowered the community members to take charge of development in their communities. About 3.1% feel that decentralization has promoted community ownership of community development projects while only 1% believes that decentralization has relieved the responsibilities of service providers.

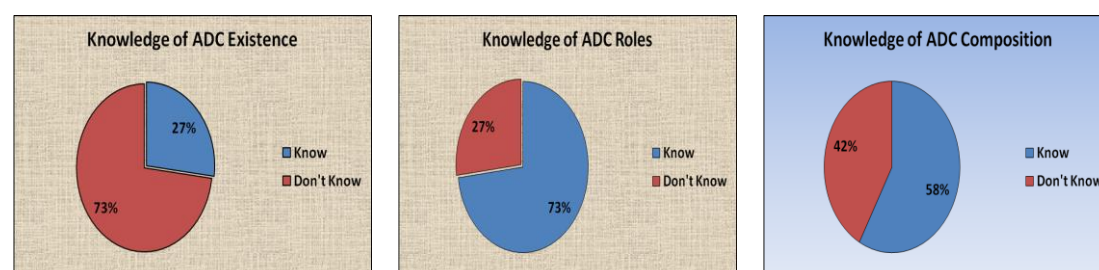
The fact is that it is very hard for the community members to accommodate decentralization if more than half of them do not feel its importance. In the study, the increased number of the respondents who do not know or realize any benefit from decentralization could be because of the reduced interaction between the responsible structures like the District Assembly, ADC and the community members. Secondly, this may be because many community members may not have full information on the goals of decentralization and its structures.

Contrary to the above findings, results from FGDs conducted with CBOs shows some appreciation of benefits that have been realised because of decentralization. For example, they mentioned that as community members, they are empowered to choose their preferred development initiative and are motivated to participate in development projects implemented in their communities etc. They however, feel that a lot should be done to fully realize the potential benefits of decentralisation.

#### 4.4 Respondents Knowledge of ADCs' existence

The study has established that the local community members do not commonly know ADCs. This is despite that ADCs have existed in their respective communities for over a decade now. For more information, refer to the figure below.

**Figure 4.2: Knowledge of ADC Existence, Composition and Roles**



The set of graphs above shows that only 27% of the respondents have knowledge of ADC's existence in their area. This is against the development that about 62.9% had at least some knowledge about decentralisation. Among the population (27%) that had knowledge about ADC's existence, only 58% know about its composition while 73% had knowledge about the roles of the ADC. Since ADCs are community based structures, all community members are supposed to know about their existence, composition and their roles.

The FGDs with CBOs showed that all members have knowledge of the existence of ADCs. They could however hardly explain about the composition and the roles. This means that they had limited information about these committees.

The KII with stakeholders, which included heads of government departments and NGOs revealed that ADCs are popular among the service providers like government departments and NGOs. It was observed through these in depth interviews that ADCs work closely with these government departments and NGOs in the implementation of their activities. As such, the stakeholders are much aware about the existence, composition and roles of ADCs. This shows that ADCs are closer to stakeholders than the community members they are supposed to serve.

Lack of knowledge by most of the respondents about the ADCs could be because of ADCs' inadequate and inconsistent community awareness and failure to work closely with the community members on issues of development as per the decentralization policy requirement. Secondly, this could be because the decentralisation radio programmes do not cover much information about ADCs.

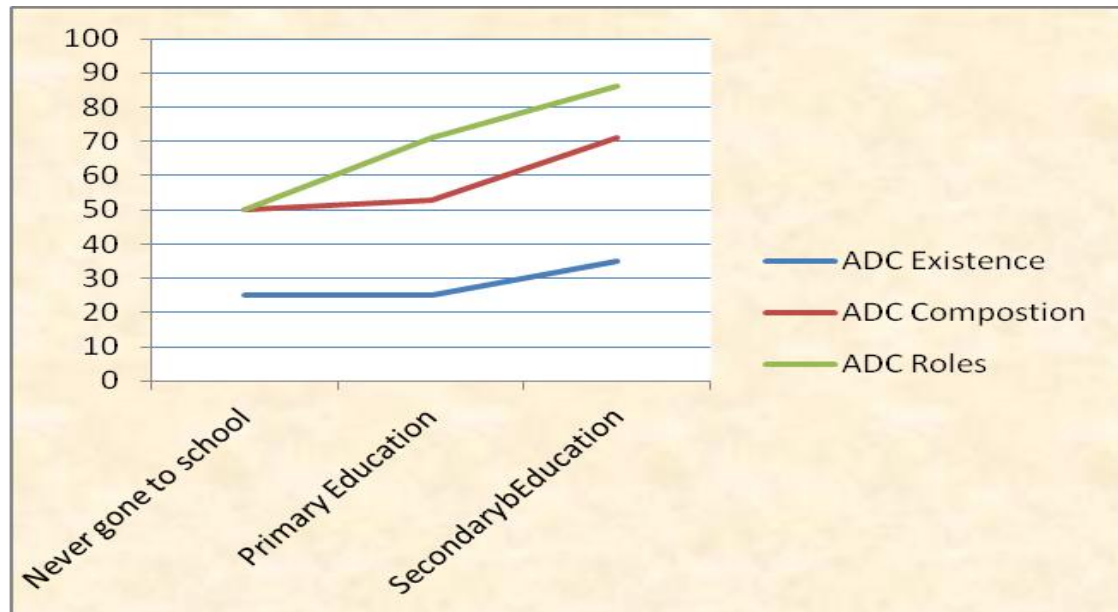
This therefore shows that ADCs are not effective in selling themselves to the community members. As a result, the members who are supposed to work with them do not know their existence, roles and composition.

Lack of knowledge of the ADCs existence resulted in difficulties to access more information about the effectiveness of the ADCs as the majority of the respondents (73%) had too little or no information about these committees. The study showed that some respondents had scanty information about these committees while the majority have never heard anything about these committees in their entire lives.

#### **4.4.1 The Relationship Between Knowledge of ADC and Education**

The study wanted to find out if education level is one of the contributing factors affecting the knowledge of the community members about the existence, composition and roles of the ADCs in the area. The results are as shown below in figure 3.

**Figure 4.3: Relationship between Education and Knowledge of ADCs' existence, Composition and Roles**



#### 4.4.1.1 Correlation Analysis

##### 4.4.1.1.1 Knowledge of ADC existence versus education level

The results from correlation analysis between knowledge of ADC existence and education levels shows that the Pearson Correlation = 0.074; Sig (2 tailed) = 0.472 > 0.05. Statistically, this shows that there is no relationship between knowledge of ADC existence and education levels. This means that the knowledge of ADC existence do not depend statistically on education of the community members. This shows both highly educated and lowly educated have little information about ADCs existence because they have not accessed the information. Secondly, an observation showed that most of the respondents who were within the communities that had active ADC representatives were able to know about ADCs existence despite their education levels than those with none. Hence, proximity is playing a big role than education.

FGDs with the CBOs revealed that there has been no campaigns to disseminate or sell out ADCs in the area. To make things worse, the

information disseminated through radios on decentralisation, do not cover much information about ADCs existence. This could result in people having no information especially the communities with no active representatives.

Furthermore, FGDs with CBOs revealed that almost all the members participating in the discussions revealed having knowledge of ADCs existence despite their levels of education. This therefore means that the biggest factor in this is proximity to working with the committees than their education levels. This agrees to the above results.

#### ***4.4.1.1.2 Knowledge of ADC composition versus education level***

The results from correlation analysis between knowledge of ADC composition and education level shows that the Pearson Correlation =0.205; and Sig (2 tailed) =0.314>0.05. This shows that statistically, there is no relationship between knowledge of ADC composition and education levels. This means that the knowledge of ADC composition do not depend statistically on education of the community members. In this case, even those with higher levels of education could not statistically have more knowledge than those with low education levels. This could be because both groups are lacking adequate knowledge and awareness of the same. As stated above, even the awareness campaigns about decentralization that is done through radios do not cover more information about ADCs. This therefore limits access to information about ADCs for all categories of people.

FGDs with CBOs reveal that it was difficult for almost all the members despite their education level to explain about the composition of the ADCs. This agrees to the above findings.

#### ***4.4.1.1.3 Relationship between Knowledge of ADC roles versus education levels of respondents***

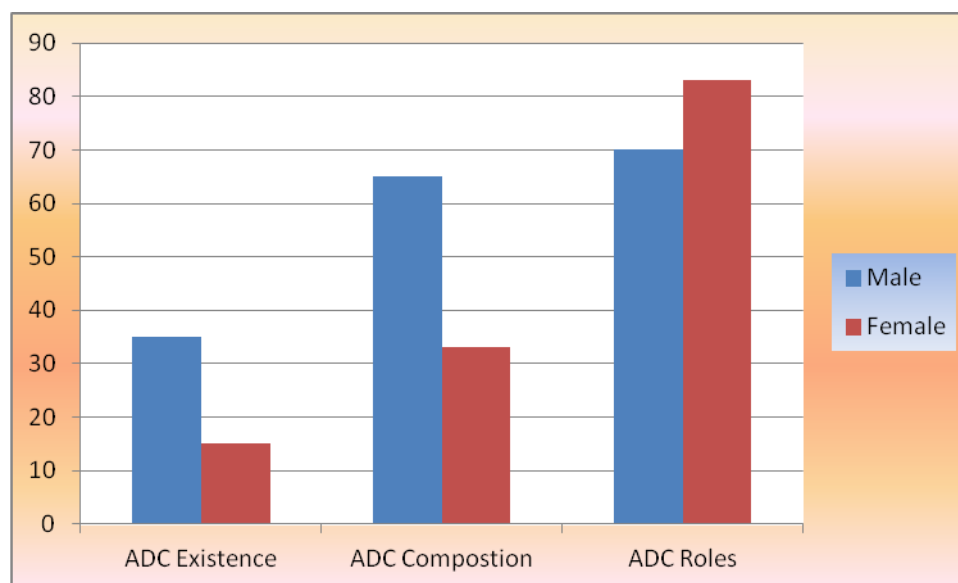
The correlation analysis results between knowledge of ADC roles and education levels shows that the Pearson Correlation =0.315; Sig (2 tailed) =0.117>0.05. This shows that there is no relationship between knowledge of ADC roles and education level. This means that the knowledge of ADC roles

do not depend statistically on education of the community members. Apart from the above reasons that radio programs on decentralisation do not cover roles of ADCs, this also means that ADCs are not fulfilling their roles to enable the community members to appreciate these roles. As such, lack of awareness and ADCs failure to perform is resulting in almost all the people having little information about the roles of ADCs in regardless of their education.

#### 4.4.2 Relationship between Respondents Knowledge on ADC Vs gender

Gender was another factor that was assessed to find out if it has an effect on respondents' knowledge of ADC existence, composition and roles as shown in the figure 4 below;

**Figure 4.4: The Relationship between Gender and Knowledge of ADC Existence, Composition and Roles.**



#### 4.4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

##### 4.4.2.1.1 Knowledge of ADC existence versus Gender

The results from correlation analysis between knowledge of ADC existence and gender shows that the Pearson Correlation =0.211; Sig (2 tailed) =0.038<0.05. This shows that the relationship between knowledge of ADC existence and gender is positive and significant. This means that the knowledge of ADC existence depends statistically on gender of the



community members. The study shows that more males have more knowledge about ADCs existence than females.

As stated above, women and men have almost equal awareness if the communication is done through radios rather than community gatherings. Unfortunately, decentralization radio programs cover too little information about ADCs. As such, most information about ADCs is disseminated through community gatherings, which are generally represented by men who are heads of families. On the other hand women usually stay at home and take care of their children hence could not easily be able to get outside information.

#### ***4.4.2.1.2 Knowledge of ADC composition versus Gender***

The results from correlation analysis between knowledge of ADC composition and gender shows that the Pearson Correlation  $=0.270$ ; Sig (2 tailed)  $=0.182 > 0.05$ . This shows that there is no relationship between knowledge of ADC composition and gender. This means that the knowledge of ADC composition do not depend statistically on gender of the community members. This could be because the study was assessing knowledge of ADC composition among those with knowledge of its existence. Hence, anybody who had knowledge of ADC existence could equally have knowledge of its composition despite the gender of that community member. The results could be different if the study was focusing on all the respondents including those that do not have knowledge about ADCs existence.

FDGs with CBOs revealed that it was difficult for all gender categories to explain the composition of ADCs. It was generally for the members to mention the chairperson and secretary and the representative from their location but not give the full composition of the ADC. This agrees to the above findings.

#### ***4.4.2.1.3 Knowledge of ADC Roles versus Gender***

The results from correlation analysis between knowledge of ADC roles and gender shows that the Pearson Correlation  $=0.127$ ; Sig (2 tailed)  $=0.558 > 0.05$ . This shows that there is no relationship between knowledge of ADC roles and gender. This means that the knowledge of ADC roles do not

depend statistically on gender of the community members. As above, this could be because the study was assessing knowledge of ADC roles among respondents with knowledge of its existence. As a result, anybody who had knowledge of ADC existence could equally have knowledge of its roles despite the gender of that community member. The results could be different if the study was focusing on all the respondents including those that do not have knowledge about ADCs existence.

FDGs with CBOs revealed that all CBO members are aware of the ADCs roles despite their gender. CBOs were very much aware of the ADCs roles because they affect the performance of CBOs as well.

#### **4.4.3 Economics of ADCs**

There was consensus between data from Key informants Interviews (KII) with the ADCs, VDCs, politicians and service providers like Government departments and the NGOs and the FGDs with CBOs that ADCs have no special source of funding for their operations. ADC members in many cases operate with no funding which force them to do work without any food, transport or compensation. They also revealed that this mostly is the reason why most of the ADC members do not work extra hard after being elected into power.

The ADC and VDC members who were interviewed through KII indicated that, when they initiate a project that is funded by government and NGOs, only resources for the project implementation is provided. However, resources for project management by the local structures are not included. On the contrary, the donors or the service providers still expect the ADCs to perform accordingly. The fact is that the expectation that the ADCs can perform very well in this case is unrealistic and unfair.

During in depth interviews with the stakeholders especially the NGOs, it was revealed that ADCs were not supported with operational resources because they lack financial management skills hence could not be entrusted with financial resources. Secondly, ADCs do not have a bank account of their own. This means that any financial assistance any organisation may be willing to

provide to the committees has to be cash. This may be against financial controls of many organisations. As such, many organisations are not willing to entrust them with financial resources.

However, stakeholders like government and NGOs have the responsibility to build the capacity of these committees in financial management. This will ensure that the ADCs can handle resources prudently.

This shows the ineffectiveness of both ADCs and government to mobilise resources for the ADCs to use in their work.

#### **4.4.4 The political affiliation of the ADCs**

Key Informants interviews with ADCs, VDCs, NGOs, Government departments and politicians agreed with findings from the FGDs with CBOs that ADCs are non-partisan and have no affiliation to any party. They work with any service provider who is ready to bring development in their communities. However, some opposition parties feel that ADCs are more biased to the ruling party, which normally has resources as compared to the opposition parties. In addition to that, the study shows that there have been attempts by other political leaders to use the ADCs as tools to achieve their political ambitions. Fortunately, the community members and the committees themselves block this ambition. In this case, ADCs have been effective in making sure that they are not influenced by politics.

#### **4.4.5 Governance of the ADCs in Ntchisi**

Documents review especially on minutes and list of ADC members, revealed that ADCs in Ntchisi especially in T/As Chilowoko and Kalumo are representative bodies of all VDCs created at T/A level. The ADCs are led by a chairperson elected among the representatives. This is in line with a new ADC structure which is chaired by a neutral and independent member as opposed to the past when it was chaired by the T/A himself. Other positions in leadership include vice chairperson, secretary, treasure and committee members. Their membership incorporates female members to ensure gender representation. In the targeted committees, women have occupied big leadership positions as well. The committee is transparent but not

accountable to people because it does not conduct frequent meetings with the community members to inform them about current developments due to variety of challenges that include lack of finances, transport and other operational resources.

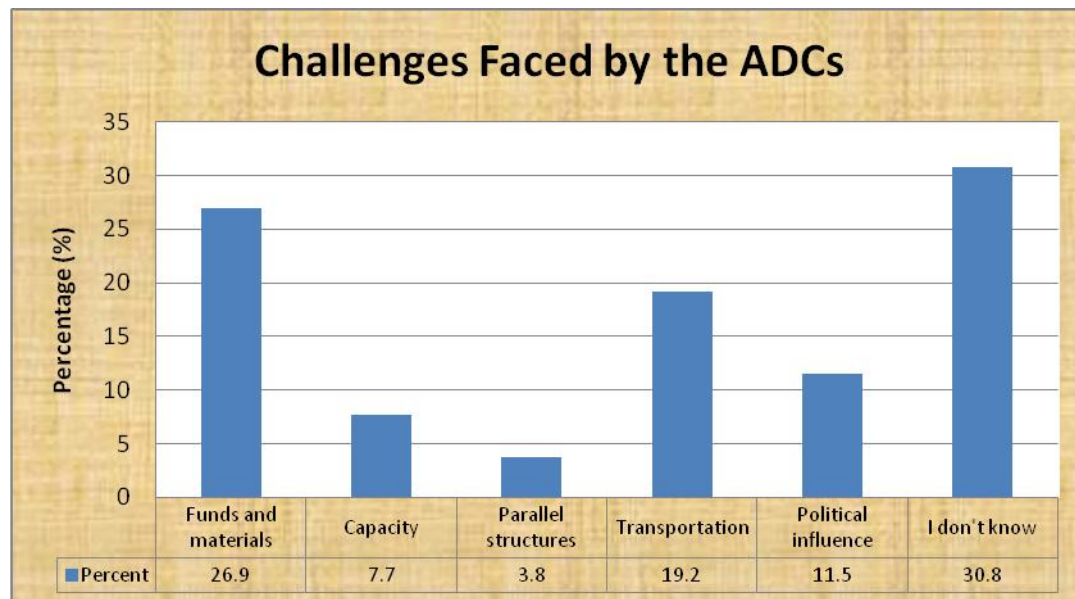
#### **4.4.6 Capacity Building of ADCs**

Effectiveness of any organisation or committee is enhanced by effective capacity building. Both KII with the ADC and VDC members and FGDs with CBOs especially in Chilowoko revealed that ADCs are facing a challenge of lack of capacity building. ADC representatives in Chilowoko revealed that they just work using their local wisdom with no extra technical expertise. *“Palibe amene amalotako zotiphunzitsa kaya amati tizigwira bwanji tchito tisanaphuzitsidwe”*. “Nobody dreams to train our committee. I do not know how they think we can work effectively without being trained.” One of the ADC members said. However, their counterparts in Kalumo should thank NGOs like World Vision for the capacity building initiatives though not adequate. It is very unfair to expect effective performance from local committees if their capacity is not built.

#### **1.4.3 Challenges faced by ADC**

It is a fact that every organization despite how health or effective they may be, they normally face some challenges. ADCs are no exceptions. The study through HH survey has revealed that some of the challenges ADCs are facing are as shown in Figure 5 below;

**Figure 5: ADCs' Challenges**



The Figure 5 above indicates that 30.8% of the respondents who have knowledge about the existence of ADCs have no knowledge of the challenges faced by the ADCs. This means that despite having knowledge about the existence of the ADCs, people in Ntchisi do not have detailed information about these committees. This could be as a result of inadequate interaction between the committees and the people on the ground. This agrees to the fact that despite having knowledge of ADCs existence, some respondents doesn't know its composition and the roles. This therefore justifies why some respondents just know that the committees exist but do not exactly know who the ADCs are.

Secondly, among those with knowledge about the ADCs existence, 26.9% believe that lack of funds and operational resources is the biggest challenge faced by ADCs seconded by lack of transport with 19.2%.

This is in agreement to the challenges raised by the ADC, VDC during KII and the CBO members during FGDs who complained that ADCs do not have a stable source of funding for their operations. In many cases, the members are forced to dig deep in their pockets and contribute some money for the committees operations. The members believe that government is failing to honor their promises made to the committees. The government is failing to

support them in the form of transport and operational resources. This contributes to the committees' failure to conduct awareness meetings to the community members.

Secondly, despite the fact that ADCs have a lot to do; they do not have any means of transport like bicycles. This was even evidenced during the study through KII when one member was found just coming back from supervising one of the community's projects of road construction. On this day, the member had just walked over 20km trip. *"Timangogwira ntchitoyi ngati yakunyumba kwathu. Ndanyamuka mmawa sindinadye kanthu komaso ndayenda pansi....zovuta."* "We just do this work as if it is our personal work. I woke up in the morning, walked to the project area and back and have not even eaten anything up to this time....this is tough." He lamented. This gives no incentive for the members to work hard as required. As a result, only few members are active in some committees because members do not see any direct benefit to their households. This therefore has a very big negative impact to the effectiveness of their service delivery.

It was also discovered that 11.5% feel that political influence is another challenge affecting the smooth operation of ADCs roles. As stated above that there are some political leaders who are using ADCs as instruments for achieving their political ambitions. This has been affecting the effectiveness of the ADCs.

Other challenges include lack of capacity building and emergence of parallel structures with 7.7% and 3.8% respectively. Additionally, the study found that there are some cases where there have been conflicts between the committees and the political leaders who form parallel politically motivated structures to do similar work to ADC's. For example, in Kalumo, it was discovered through KII with the ADC members and the service providers that a parallel structure was established to coordinate and manage Constituency Development Fund (CDF). These are funds allocated by parliament to every constituency (An area manned by an MP). As a result, the ADC is left redundant and without powers to manage development projects in their area as political leaders takes full charge.

In this case, the results show ineffectiveness of ADCs to solve their own challenges. This means that they entirely rely on external support to deal with these challenges.

#### **1.4.4 Responsible to solve these challenges**

The study wanted to find out if the community knows who is responsible to tackle the challenges faced by the ADCs. The results are in table 3 below;

**Table 4.4: Who is responsible to tackle the challenges faced by the ADCs?**

<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Government</b>	9	47.4
<b>Community members</b>	4	21.1
<b>NGOs</b>	3	15.8
<b>ADC Itself</b>	2	10.5
<b>Do not know</b>	1	5.3
<b>Total</b>	19	100

Knowing solutions and the one who is responsible to take charge to solve those challenges is a positive step to solving the challenges. The study found out that out of the population that had knowledge of ADCs challenges, 47.4 % feel that government is fully responsible to tackle the above challenges. Secondly, 21.1% believe that the challenges can best be solved by the community members themselves. Thirdly 15.5% believe in the NGOs to solve the challenges. Lastly, 10.5% believe that the ADC is responsible to solve the challenges while 5.3% do not know who to solve the challenges faced by the ADCs.

The ability of the community members to point at themselves as a source of solution to their own problems is a positive development as far as decentralization is concerned. People have to feel the empowerment and need to identify and solve their own development needs and challenges rather than pushing everything to government and other service providers. However, failure to involve the community members fully could result in the people not fully taking a leading role to solve the challenges faced by ADCs.

On the other hand, government still remains the giant to solve most of the challenges faced by the ADCs because it is the originator of the concept of decentralization. The government also needs to make awareness campaigns to the community on which challenges faced by the ADCs can be tackled locally and where the rest of the problems can be referred to.

#### 1.4.5 Areas of ADC improvements

The study asked the respondents to make suggested improvement to the ADCs performance that would enable them to improve their effectiveness. Table below illustrates the results.

**Table 4.5: Areas of ADCs improvements**

Area of Improvement	Percent of Cases	
	Percent	Cumulative Percent
ADC should improve on advocating for community empowerment	40.0%	44.4%
ADC need to improve on coordinating with service providers in community development	10.0%	11.1%
ADC need to improve in holding monthly meetings in collaboration with VDCs	10.0%	11.1%
ADC need to improve in raising funds and mobilizing the community	20.0%	22.2%
ADC need to improve in reviewing and integrating projects from VDCs	10.0%	11.1%
ADC need to improve in submitting proposals to AEC and DEC	10.0%	11.1%
100.0%		111.1%

The results show that 44.4% of the respondents feel that ADCs can be effective if they can improve in advocating for community empowerment. Thus, they have to encourage the community members to take charge of their own development initiatives. They have to make their own decisions and choices and they should lead in the implementation. This is indirectly implying that the community members are aware that the ADCs are failing to empower the community members in development issues.



Furthermore, 22.2% would like to see the ADCs improving in resource mobilization and community mobilization. This would help the ADCs to be self-reliant and solve the challenge of lack of resources of which the committees are facing as stated above under section 4.4.8. Additionally, other improvements include that ADCs need to improve on coordinating with service providers in community development. This is because they are failing to bridge the gap between the service providers and the community members as per the requirements.

The study also revealed that 11.1% of the respondents expect ADCs to improve in holding monthly meetings in collaboration with VDCs. Another 11.1% need ADCs to improve in reviewing and integrating projects from VDCs and 11.1% are expecting the ADC to improve in submitting proposals to AEC and DEC.

In addition to the above, KII with VDC members and FGD with CBOs in Chilowoko expressed the desire for the ADC to be visiting them regularly as one important and required improvement. This is a fact because currently, the ADCs are failing to visit the VDCs and the CBOs due to lack of finances and transport. As a result, there is no close interaction between these committees. Close interaction would help the ADCs to assess the real needs of the communities they are serving.

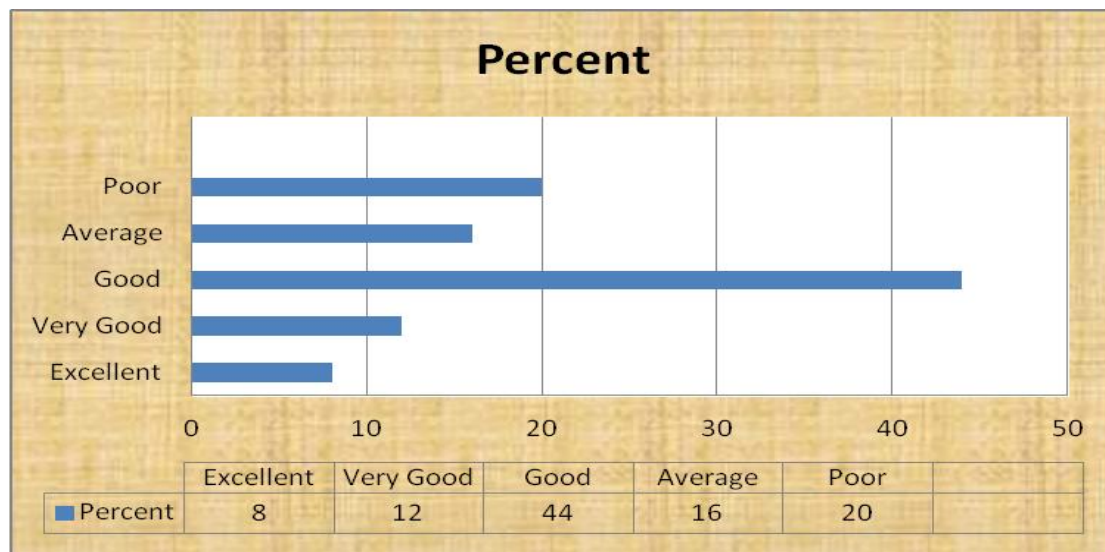
On the other hand, KII with other service providers like NGOs suggested that ADCs should participate in district based consultative forums where development projects are shared to ADCs. Currently, only Traditional Authorities, MPs, heads of government department and NGOs attend these forums. This is an important suggestion because document review at TAs offices revealed that T/As no longer chairs the ADC as was the case in the past. As such, the T/A may not fully represent the committee at such forums hence need for representatives of ADCs to participate. The argument is that, if the ADCs are recognised as the grassroots custodians of community development, they need to take part in decision making on where the development should target. Secondly, they need also to participate in full assembly meetings done at district level as community development

representatives. During these meetings, development projects are also shared and progress is reviewed. Their availability will therefore provide a very good forum for learning, responding to some questions, expressing their challenges and highlighting most significant stories from their respective areas.

#### 1.4.6 ADC Performance Ranking

The respondents that have knowledge about the ADCs existence were given a chance to rank the performance of the ADC ranging from excellent, very good, good, average, poor and very poor. The results therefore are as shown below. The assessment criterion was based on the ability of the ADCs in making themselves known to their communities, effectiveness of ADCs in accomplishing their roles, ability of ADCs in involving the community members in development and availability of ADCs in times of need. The results are as indicated below;

**Figure 4.6: ADCs Performance assessment among those that know its existence**



From the graph 6 above, the study shows that 44% of the respondents that have knowledge of ADC existence feel that ADCs performance is good. Contrary to this, 20% rates the performance as poor while 16% said that it is average. Furthermore, 12% indicated that the performance is very good while 8% of the respondents believe that the effectiveness of ADCs is excellent. It should be noted that the results are from the respondents who had knowledge

about ADCs existence only because it would not be fair to assess this information even from respondents with no knowledge of ADCs existence

On the other hand, KII with the stakeholders like NGOs and Government departments believe the ADCs are doing a good job and could be rated as average. On the centrally, FGDs with CBOs feel the ADCs have failed their work.

Based on the above results, it shows that there are people in the communities that are appreciating the work of these committees. This is encouraging taking into consideration that ADCs are facing a lot of challenges that are affecting their performance.

### ***1.5 The Concept of Community Development in Ntchisi***

As indicated in literature review, the term development is very abstract and it sometimes brings challenge to people to define it. As a result, the respondents were asked to define development by giving development indicators recognised in their society. Therefore, the table below shows the indicators of community development in Ntchisi especially in T/As Kalumo and Chilowoko.

**Table 4.6: Local community development indicators**

<b>Development Indicator</b>	<b>Percent of Cases</b>
Having more money	24.0%
Having enough food	64.0%
Having construction (Houses and roads)	73.3%
Having more knowledge on development?	4.0%
Having livestock	4.0%

From the table above, 73.3% of the respondents believe that having more construction projects both at community and at household level is the biggest indicator of community development. This is because they believe that even a visitor will be able to appreciate how developed an area is by just looking on construction work taking place at a specific area. Secondly, 64% of the respondents believe in having enough food. Thirdly, 24% think that having more money is an important indicator of development because you can do anything when you have money. Furthermore, 4% of the respondents believe

in having livestock as an indicator of development. The above results shows that most of the people believe in tangible things that can be seen and felt like construction work, food, money, livestock and other asserts than soft ware related development. For example, software development like capacity building scored 4% despite being one of the most important development need in the area.

Knowing the indicators of development recognized by the society is very important because it guides the service providers on which type of development projects the people can warmly welcome and participate freely. Thus, introduction of development projects that are outside these indicators may receive little or no community support leading to the failure of such projects. On the other hand, the indicators provide the right information to the service providers to enable them identify development gaps of the communities. This can help them to take appropriate action like awareness campaigns to address them.

### **1.5.3 Responsible to Ensure Community Development**

The analysis was done to assess who is responsible to ensure that community development takes place in an area. Secondly, this was aimed at assessing ownership of community development by the community members. The results are illustrated in the table below;

**Table 4.7: Responsible to ensure community development**

<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Government	20	20.8
Member of Parliament	17	17.7
ADC	4	4.2
Community Members	35	36.5
Local leaders	20	20.8
Total	96	100.0

The table above shows that 36.5% of the respondents believe that community members are responsible to ensure that community development is taking place while 20.8% believes in the local leaders. This sums up to 57.3% who believe that the community members and their local leaders have the responsibility to ensure effective development in their areas. This is

encouraging because it shows community ownership to development. This is also a stepping stone to achieving decentralization and institutionalizing of local decentralization structures like the ADCs.

Additionally, 20.8% believe that the government is the one that is responsible to ensure community development while 17.7% put their hope in the Member of Parliament (MP). Lastly, 4.2% of the respondents believe in ADC as responsible to ensure community development. The 4% of people who are entrusting ADCs to ensure community development is taking place is a very big sign that people do not recognize them as custodians of development. This shows ineffectiveness of the committees and loss of trust by the community members.

Knowing who is responsible for community development is important because it helps the community members to refer their development needs and problems to the right service providers hence this can accelerate community development. On the other hand, this can help development practitioners to provide relevant information to the community members to own their development needs to the right service providers.

#### **1.5.4 Community Development Projects in the past 5 years**

Almost 100% of the respondents indicated that the areas have had some development projects taking place in their areas in the past 5 years. Most common development projects are as show in table below;

**Table 4.8: Past development projects**

<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Building construction	55.4%
Road construction	30.1%
Capacity building	1.2%
Health services	16.9%
Education services	26.5%
Agricultural services	25.3%
Natural resource management services	19.3%
Social services	1.2%

Construction projects dominated the projects that took place in the area because 85.5% of the developments were under building and road

construction. This is in agreement to the development indicators the respondents provided which recognized construction as the biggest indicator of development. Education and agricultural services were second and third with 26.5% and 25.3% respectively. The study also revealed that 19.3% of the development projects that were implemented in the area were on natural resources management especially on tree planting. However, this did not come as one of the development indicator. This may be a sign that community members are implementing this project but they are not fully appreciating it as part of development.

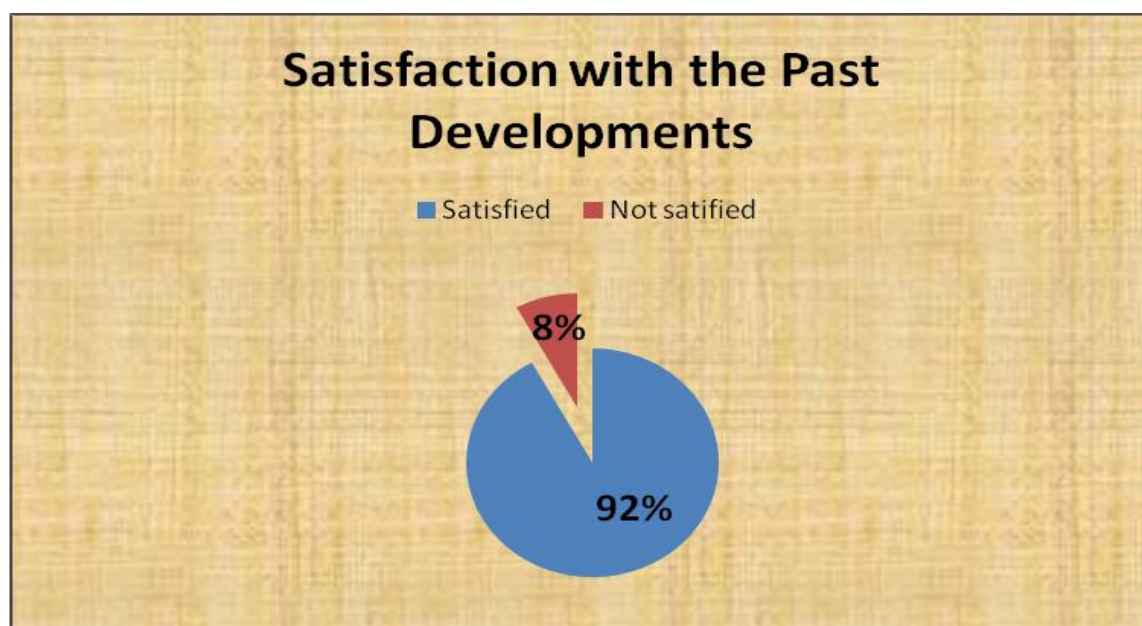
Additionally, 16.9% of the development projects were under health services. Lastly capacity building and social services scored only 1.2% each. This either shows that in Ntchisi there were not much in terms of capacity building initiatives or the people do not recognize capacity building as development.

However, this could be in agreement to the cry of VDCs, CBOs and ADCs during KII and FGDs of not being trained. This is a sign that in Ntchisi there is no much capacity building initiatives taking place.

#### **1.5.5 Satisfaction with the Development projects.**

The study wanted to find out if the community members are satisfied with the past development in terms of quality and level of meeting their needs. Below are the results.

**Figure 4.7: Are you satisfied with the past development projects?**



The figure above shows that 92% of the respondents were satisfied with quality and the scope of the development projects that took place in their areas. However, those that were not satisfied (8%) were not happy with the quality and that some of the development projects did not meet their needs. This could be because some of the projects were imposed on them by service providers.

Introduction of projects that meets the community needs and demands encourages total participation of the community members and ensure sustainability because the community members do own the projects. This can create a good entry point for the ADCs to mobilize the community members to participate in community development projects which are satisfying.

#### **1.5.6 Community Participation in Development Projects**

The study wanted to find out if the community members participated in the past, developmental projects and the results are as below;



**Table 4.9: Did you participate in the past development projects?**

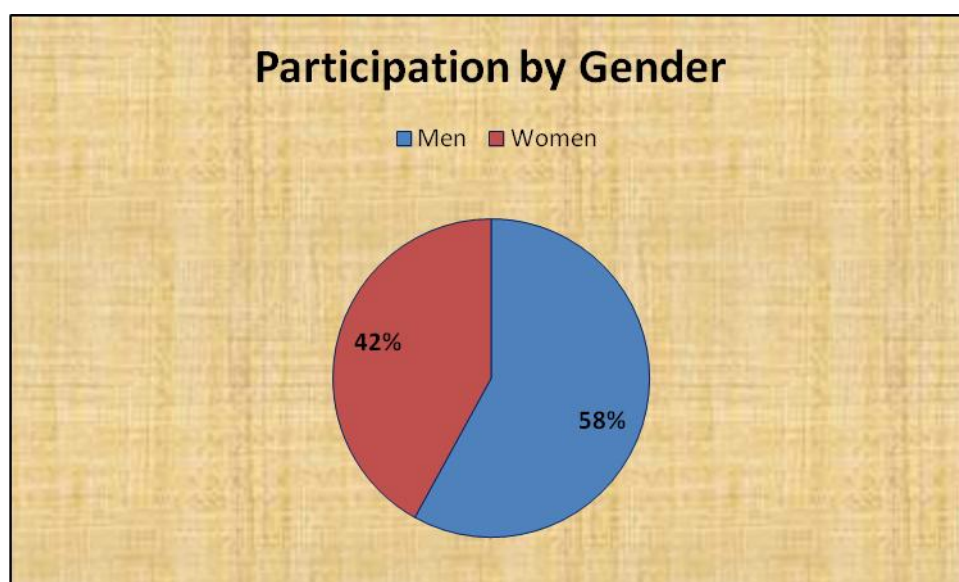
Participation Status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	79	81.4
No	18	18.6
Total	97	100.0

From the table above, it has been discovered that about 81.4% of the community members participated in the projects that took place in their areas in different ways while 18.6% did not participate. This is commendable and encouraging. This agrees to the fact that about 75% felt that community members are responsible to ensure their community development.

On this, the behaviour of the people in Ntchisi is in line with Reciprocity Theory, which encourages the community members to make their influence through their participation in different interventions of their communities.

However, the study did a further assessment on the participation by gender and the results are as in the figure below;

**Figure 4.8: Participation in community development by gender**



The figure above shows that there are more men (58%) participating in project management than women (42%). This supplement the reasons why more

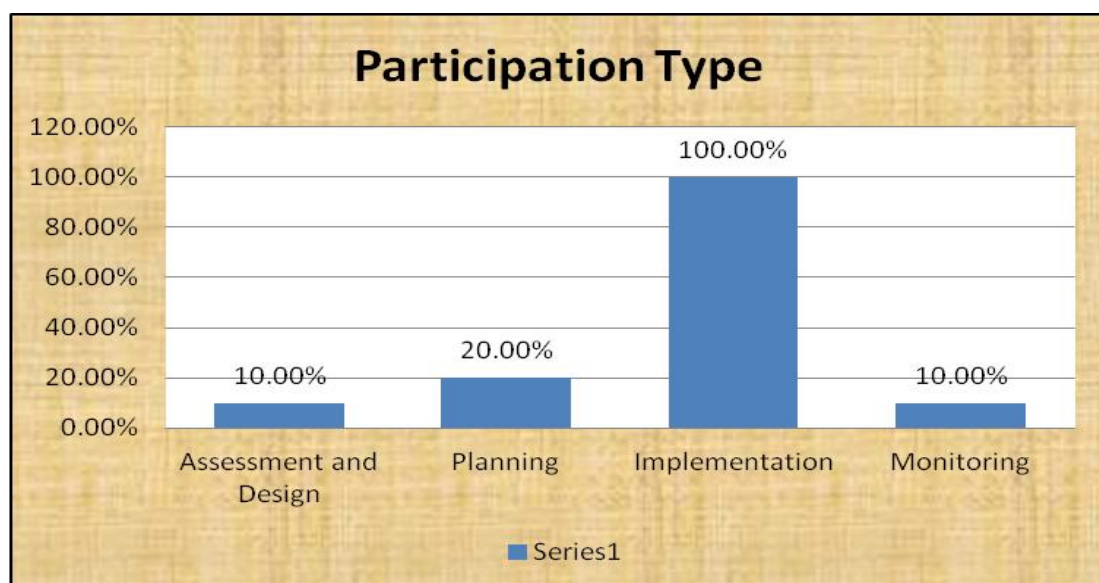


men have knowledge about the existence of ADCs than women do. This also agrees to the fact that more men are exposed to different activities happening in a community while women are encouraged to stay at home and do household chores.

Leaving or sidelining women in community development especially at decision-making stages makes needs of women not to be heard and considered. This is detrimental because the needs of women also represent the needs of the children since they spend a lot of time together as compared to men.

The study also assessed the participation stages of all the respondents that participated in development projects implemented in their areas and the results are as shown below;

**Figure 4.9: Which project stages did you participate?**



The figure above indicates that out of the community members that participated, 100% participated in the implementation stage while only 10% each participated in assessment and design and monitoring and evaluation stages. On the other hand, only 20% participated in planning. This is a sign that the people only participate in the implementation stage. It can therefore be concluded that community members are mostly used as tools for unpaid labour and not as decision makers. This is against reciprocity theory, which

encourages the leaders of the communities to recognize the ideas and the contribution of the community members. It is therefore very difficult for the ADCs and other local leaders to recognize and appreciate the ideas and contribution of the community members if their voices are not heard.

This agrees to the fact that 87.3% indicated that they contributed their labour, 10.2% contributed their money while only 2.5% contributed knowledge or ideas as illustrated below.

**Table 4.10: Participation type**

Participation Type	Frequency	Valid Percent
Contributed money	8	10.2
Contributed labour	69	87.3
Knowledge	2	2.5
Total	74	100.0

It has to be noted that real participation of community members encourages the community members to participate in decision making through planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such projects. There is a possibility of dumping projects to the communities if their needs are not heard as is the case in Ntchisi. This is contrary to what De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:270) emphasises when he says that those affected by development projects are to be the main players and decision makers.

The findings are against the principals of community development as indicated by Cavaye (2001:113) who says that community development agenda needs to not only deliver services and support, but also engage communities in a genuine partnership helping communities to “rethink” apparent problems, investigate how they can use existing skills and resources and identify motivated local people.

Participation of the community members in all the project stages should be encouraged as it empowers the community members. This is in agreement to one of the improvements required by the community members that ADCs need to improve in empowering the community members in issues of development. Furthermore, this explains why ADCs are facing challenges that

can be solved by community members as indicated in sections 4.4.8 and 4.5.1 where the community members feel they are responsible to ensure development in the area and also tackle the challenges faced by ADCs respectively. However, community members can help to tackle the challenges faced by ADCs if they are involved in decision making which currently is not taking place. This therefore shows that ADCs are not effective in promoting community participation that targets all stages of development.

**Table 4.11: Why did you participate in development projects?**

Reason For Participating	Percent
It is my role	56.9
Fearing a punishment	6.9
It is our real need	33.3
There was an attached benefit	2.8
Total	100.0

The respondents who participated in development projects that took place in their areas were asked the reasons why they participated in development projects in their areas. The study has found out that 56.9% participated because they know that this is their role. In addition to that, 33.3% did it because the projects were addressing their real needs. However, 6.9% did participate because they feared a punishment by the community leadership while 2.8% participated because they were to benefit something especially cash.

FGDs with CBOs also revealed that they always welcome development activities that would involve them. On the other hand, KII with stakeholders also confirmed that participation of development initiatives in Ntchisi is just very good. The service providers do not find challenges in mobilizing the community members to participate in the implementation of development projects.

In general, it shows that people in Ntchisi are positive towards participating in community development. This again seals the point that community members in Ntchisi feels that they are responsible for their own development.

### 1.5.7 Why not participate

Respondents that did not participate in any community development project were asked the reasons for not taking part and the below are the results;

**Table 4.12: Reasons for not participating**

Reasons	Frequency	Percent (%)
I was not involved	6	33.3
I was away	4	22.2
I had poor health	2	11.1
No development took place	6	33.3
Total	18	100.0

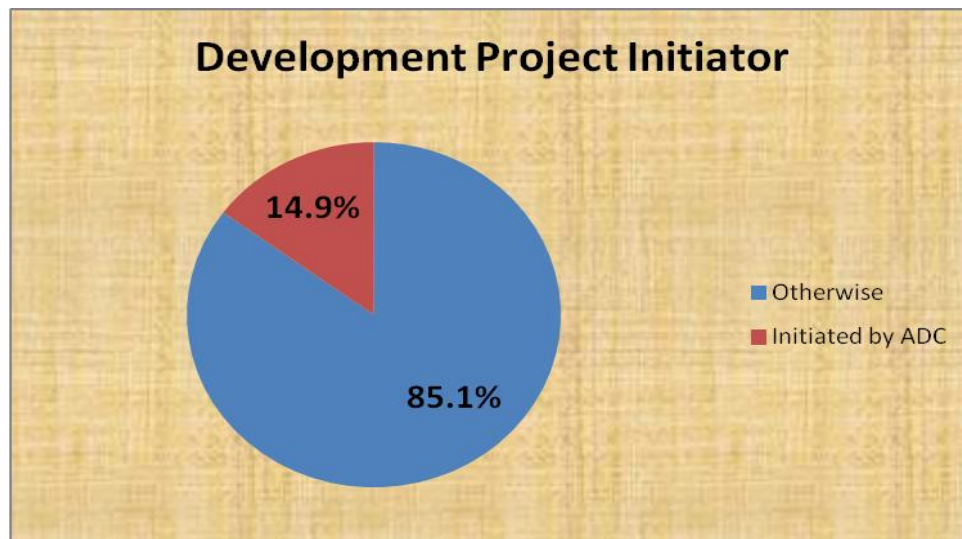
Out of the population that did not participate, reasons were sought to find out why they did not participate. It was discovered that 33.3% each indicated that they were not involved and because there were no development projects taking place in their areas. On the other hand, 22.2% did not participate because they were away from their communities. Lastly, 11.1% of the respondents who did not participate were ill during the time of such project implementation. On involvement, the study revealed that more respondents were not involved if there is an immediate personal benefit like cash. In such cases, the leadership have preference on who to participate and not.

Failure to participate in community development not only derails community development but also discourages other members who are willing to participate especially if there are no tangible reasons for the actions. On the other hand, the local leadership that include chiefs and the ADCs need to be transparent in the selection of participants in development that have immediate rewards like cash or food.

### 1.5.8 Initiator of Projects

Referring to the figure below, the study has established that only 14.9% of the developments were confirmed to be initiated by the ADCs while the rest were not. This is confirming that ADCs are not very prominent in the communities and are not working according to the powers invested in them.

**Figure 4.10: Who initiated the projects?**



KII with service providers and ADCs revealed that there are many development projects that are introduced to the communities without ADC's knowledge or authority.

FGDs with CBOs and KII with VDCs also agreed that the developments in the area are initiated differently with few being initiated by the ADCs while the service providers initiate most of them. In this case, the ADCs have a third party voice, which is not strong and cannot make any decision.

This therefore indicates that ADCs are not effective in terms of project initiation. However, the ADCs need to be empowered to initiate all the development activities done in the area.

### 1.5.9 Preferred Development Projects

The study wanted to find out what type of projects people would like to implement in future and the results are as shown below.

**Figure 4.11: What are your preferred development projects?**

Project Type	Percent (%)
Building construction	16.0
Road/bridge construction	22.2
Health services	14.8
Education services	21.0
Agriculture services	23.5
Natural resources management	2.5
Total	100.0

The study has found out that the preferred development projects that the people of Ntchisi will cherish most are Agricultural services, road/bridge construction and education services with 23.5%, 22.2% and 21% respectively. In addition to that, other preferred projects are Building construction with 16% then Health services with 14.8 followed by Natural resource services with 2.5%.

Agriculture is the most preferred development in the area. This is not surprising because the area is agro-based. This also agrees with the development indicators recognized in the communities where the respondents indicated food and livestock as some of indicators of development. Secondly, preference for construction projects agrees with the recognized development indicators as well.

KII with VDC and ADC members agrees with the community members by prioritizing agriculture and construction work. On the contrary, FGDs with CBOs shows the priority of health services especially on HIV and AIDS and pre-school education. This is in agreement to their focus areas of operation.

Fortunately, this is in line with the national strategy, MGDS II which isolated nine key priority areas from the themes which are necessary to achieve rapid

economic growth and improvement in the well-being of Malawians within the implementation period. The key priority areas are: Agriculture and Food Security; Energy, Industrial Development, Mining and Tourism; Transport Infrastructure and Nsanje World Inland Port; Education, Science and Technology; Public Health, Sanitation, Malaria and HIV and AIDS Management; Integrated Rural Development; Green Belt Irrigation and Water Development; Child Development, Youth Development and Empowerment; and Climate Change, Natural Resources and Environmental Management. (MGDS II 2012:17). This then shows that all the development preferences indicated by the people of Ntchisi are part of the national strategy.

Knowing the preferred projects in the area will help the service providers to know which projects are the priorities for the community. In addition to that, implementing the preferred projects would encourage community participation and ownership which will ensure sustainability.

#### **1.5.10 Challenges to Community Development**

Despite the fact that the areas have been experiencing development projects, there are many problems faced that are derailing community developments as shown in the table below.

**Table 4.13: Challenges to community development**

Challenge	Percent (%)
Inadequate money	21.1
Inadequate human resources	5.3
Corruption	14.5
Interference by government	1.3
Political interference	3.9
Poor local leadership	43.4
Alcoholism	1.3
None	9.2
Total	100.0

Despite registering some developmental progress in the district, the study has established that 43.4% of the respondents feel that poor local leadership is the biggest challenge to community development in the area. This could be evidenced through failure to involve the people in most critical stages of

project management. Secondly, the local leadership is failing to say no to the imposed development projects that go straight to the community members without going through the required local and government structures which shows ineffectiveness of the local leadership which include the ADCs.

Additionally, 21.1% of the respondents feel that community development is also facing a challenge of inadequate funding and other operation resources. This could be the main reason why local leadership does not have the ability to say no to imposed projects. This is because; such type of projects could be seen as opportunities for community development despite failing to tackle their real needs. Furthermore, 14.5% feel that corruption is affecting implementation of development projects in the area.

On corruption, KII with ADC members revealed that when ADC acquires funding for specific development projects, government staff members especially at DCs office are the ones that purchase the materials for the projects. As a result, low quality materials are bought at very high prices and sometimes not enough to finish the projects. There are also delays in implementation of such projects. This normally renders the ADCs redundant and useless.

On the other hand, 5.3% believe that inadequate human capacity is another challenge to community development. Interference by government, Political interference and alcoholism are also some of the challenges to community development with 1.3%, 3.9% and 1.3% respectively. Lastly, 9.2% feel that there are no challenges faced so far. These challenges if not solved, make the ADCs to look irresponsible and unpopular to the community members on issues of community development.

Knowing the challenges to community development helps to come up with possible solutions in advance. This improves efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

### **1.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the findings of the research that was done in Ntchisi district on the effectiveness of ADCs in decentralization. The



presentation has been done in line with the objectives and questions of the research.

The research findings show that despite different efforts the government of Malawi is doing to promote local structures in the area, they are not well known by the community members. This is so because the ADCs are not performing according to the expectation of the community members and the stakeholders.

In addition to that, people of Ntchisi are very much willing to participate in development activities. However, most of them are only participating at implementation stage of project cycle hence reducing the chance for the community members to contribute in decision-making.

Thirdly, the community of Ntchisi have no adequate information about decentralization hence they do not know much about the importance of the same. As such their participation in decentralization issues is very limited.

## **Chapter Five**

### **2. Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### ***5.1 Chapter Overview***

This chapter makes some recommendations based on the results of the study which was done in the T/As of Chilowoko and Kalumo in Ntchisi District. These are in line with the primary objective of the study which was to examine the effectiveness of ADCs in decentralization. The recommendations made are useful for all development institutions such as government departments, NGOs, local structures like the ADCs, VDCs and CBOs and the community members at large. Some areas for further research have been highlighted as well.

#### ***5.2 Key issues***

Major findings of the research have been isolated in line with objectives of the research. These formed the basis of the key issues and the recommendations made.

##### **5.2.1 Respondents' knowledge on the existence, composition, roles of ADCs.**

A good and reliable partner has to be known and should be available in times of need. It was discovered that ADCs are not commonly known in the area where they are serving. As such, they are also not available to the people they serve. People do not know their existence, composition and the roles. It is generally very difficult for the community members to work with committees that are not known to them. The study found that these committees are not well known because of reduced interaction between these committees and the community members.

##### **5.2.2 The autonomy of ADCs**

Generally, the ADCs have no autonomy in the way they work in their areas. In the first place, their autonomy is infringed by some service providers especially government officials from the District Council office. For example, during implementation of some government-supported projects, officials from

government are the ones that purchase the project materials despite that the committee is given the mandate to do the same. Secondly, every service provider can invade the area and introduce projects without getting consent of the ADC. Unfortunately, the community members do welcome such type of projects hence the ADCs becomes redundant. This means that the committees have no complete authority to manage or oversee the projects. The worse thing is that after a service provider has illegally introduced the project to the area, the ADC does not have the powers to prohibit the project from implementation. This makes the committee to be toothless and useless.

### **5.2.3 ADCs ability to involve the community members in development.**

It is incredible to find out that majority of the community members are involved in development projects in the area. This shows the willingness of the people of Ntchisi to be responsible for their own development.

However, there was no evidence that the involvement was as a result of ADCs existence and influence. This is true because even the community members that have no knowledge about the existence, composition and roles of ADCs also participated in community development projects at implementation level. It was discovered that most of the people get involved in development activities at community level either because they understand the need to do so or because they fear local leaders especially the village or group village headmen who have authority to punish them in different ways.

On the other hand, it is concluded that people are only involved during implementation as a means of getting free labour and not decision makers. This is true because the study shows that people are not involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation stages of project cycle. It is not right to take people as implementing machines while depriving their chance to make their own choices.

### **5.2.4 The economics, governance and politics of ADCs**

It is concluded that the ADCs have no sustainable and clear source of funding for their operations. As a result, they do not have any funds for their

operations. Hence, it was not surprising to note that they do not even have bank accounts where they could keep their finances. The main problem is that ADCs rely on external funding when available. In addition to that, legally, there is no body that was mandated to fund these committees. As such, in many cases if not all, they operate without financial support. As such, ADCs are the culprits of dependence theory that stipulates that the cause of underdevelopment is the dependence on industrialized countries while internal factors of developing countries are considered irrelevant or seen as symptoms and consequences of dependence. This can be applied to this in the sense that ADCs only depend on external funding and do not have their own methods on how to generate their own funding. As a result, ADCs only operate according to the instructions of the donors rather than following the powers invested in them. This is affecting their service delivery.

Secondly, ADCs have inadequate capacity in managing finances because they are not trained on the same. Some stakeholders are therefore taking this as an advantage to deny funding to the ADCs. The organisations say that they cannot trust these committees because they do not have adequate skills to manage finances. However, this is a scapegoat because these same organisations are responsible to build the capacity of ADCs in financial management.

On a positive note, the ADCs in Ntchisi have well structured leadership positions like Chairperson, Secretary, Treasure and the committee members. However, due to lack of incentives, some members become inactive and do not participate fully in the day-to-day activities of ADCS. This brings pressure to the remaining members who are expected to do all the work on their fellow members' behalf.

On the other hand, the committee has women representatives to promote gender as per the requirements of the decentralization guidelines. However, there was no evidence of the involvement of other vulnerable categories like the youth in their committees as per the guidelines stipulated in the

Guidebook on Decentralization and Local Government in Malawi (MLGRD 2005:44).

Additionally, it can be concluded that the ADCs in Chilowoko and Kalumo are non-partisan and do not belong to any party although, they are sometimes interfered by political leaders who want to use them to achieve their political agenda. There was an evidence that ADCs resist any political influenced in their work which is a positive aspect as far as development is concerned.

#### **5.2.5 Challenges faced by the ADCs.**

The study revealed that people that do not know about the existence, composition and roles of ADCs could also not know the challenges of the ADCs as well. Furthermore, even respondents that had knowledge about the existence of ADCs have no knowledge about the challenges faced by the ADCs. Most of these respondents could not know the challenges due to low engagement of these people with the ADCs.

The most common challenges in order of their magnitude are lack of funds and operational materials; transport; political influence and existence of parallel structures.

Additionally, there are some cases where there have been conflicts between the committees and the political leaders who form parallel politically motivated structures to do similar work to ADC's with an example of CDF implementation in Kalumo where a parallel structure was created.

#### **5.2.6 Effectiveness of National Decentralization Policy, Local Government Act and the Guidebook on Decentralization.**

It is concluded that the National Decentralization Policy lacks guiding information on how the ADCs should operate. Important guidelines on the autonomy, economics and governance of ADCs are not available in the policy. This is giving a lot of speculations and assumptions on how the ADCs have to operate. In the same way, the Guidebook on Decentralization and Local Government only talks about the composition, reporting structures and functions of ADCs is not clearly stipulated (MLGRD 2005:44).

This is in agreement to what Hussein (2004:122) said that the Local Government Act of 1998 does not provide details regarding the functions of ADCs and therefore this makes the activities of ADCs having no legal basis.

The members are not empowered to make binding decisions about development. In this case, citizen participation through these structures tends to be symbolic or façade (Hussein 2004:122). This therefore can be concluded that lack of this information is contributing to the ineffectiveness of ADCs. Similarly, any improvement to these documents will enhance the performance of ADCs.

### **5.2.7 Interpretation of the theories against the study findings.**

#### **5.2.7.1 Dependency Theories**

The theory states that the cause of underdevelopment is the dependence on industrialized countries while internal factors of developing countries are considered irrelevant or seen as symptoms and consequences of dependence. Thus, the economic and political interests of industrialized countries determine their development or underdevelopment. The goals are superimposed.

The results show that the ADCs and the entire community in Ntchisi are victims of Dependency Theories. In the first place, the findings that the ADCs do not have ways and means of generating their own financial and material resources are a sign that they completely depend on external financial and material support. In case there is no external support, the ADCs have no operational resources and cannot do anything. This is why the ADCs have no powers to say no to any intruder in the area in the name of being a service provider even without their consent. This trend is forcing more members either to resign from their positions or become inactive which at the end affect their performance. On the other hand it is very disturbing to note that the government could put in place structures that are not supported financially and materially. This becomes counterproductive.

### **5.2.7.2 The Reciprocity Theory**

The Reciprocity Theory is in two folds. In the first place, the theory states that in order for people to be a part of your community (donating time, attention span and participation bandwidth) they need to feel like they're getting value. In this case the community manager (or similar) have to provide content, conversation, benefits, value, etc. At its core, the reciprocity theory believes that social motivation is based on each person's desire to be recognized as an individual and belong to a community. Thus if these are not available, it will be difficult for the person to participate.

The findings show that the existing leadership apart from the ADCs are able to provide content, conversation, benefits and values of different development interventions that are taking place in the area. This is evidenced by high percentage of people who are participating in these development activities.

On the other hand, the reciprocity theory states that in order to be recognized as a valued community member, an individual must produce or curate valued original content. Provide value to the community and your influence will grow. It's reciprocal.

In the light of this, the people of Ntchisi are ready to give their effort, energy and knowledge to their communities for them to be recognized. This, as above is evidenced by the high participation of the community members in different development interventions taking place in their communities. However, there are some challenges that are limiting the community members from fully contributing their time and efforts to their communities. This is true because people are not given an opportunity to participate in decision making forums where they can express their opinion, knowledge and skills.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the above conclusion and issues, the study makes the following recommendations on the effectiveness of the ADCs in decentralization.

#### **5.3.1 Conduct awareness campaigns on the existence, Composition, Roles of ADCs to Community Members**

1. There should be thorough, rigorous and effective awareness campaigns on the existence, composition and roles of ADCs. This will enable the community members to know their partners in development and understand how they work with them. During these awareness campaigns, ADCs should explain to the community members about who they are, what they do, how the community can access their services and how can the community members help them to perform their roles effectively.

Some of the ways how the awareness can be done include;

- i. Currently, the central government is conducting awareness campaigns about decentralization especially through radio and television. This should continue with an increase in airtime and approaches used i.e. using drama, discussions, songs etc.
- ii. Much of this campaign has been focusing on the roles of district councils' secretariats and the ward Councillors. Not much information about the ADCs and VDCs has been broadcasted so far. Therefore, the campaigns should also target the local structures like the ADCs and the VDCs in order to balance up all the dissemination of decentralization information.
- iii. The District Council (DC) has the overall mandate to conduct community gatherings to inform the community members about the existence of ADCs and how the community members can work with these committees. Therefore, DCs should step up the gear to conduct more awareness campaigns about the existence, roles and composition of the ADCs to community members. In addition to that, the DC has a mandate to coax or involve other service providers like other government departments and NGOs in this campaign.



- iv. Central government and the District Council and all service providers should make communication materials like leaflets and posters carrying information about the existence, composition and roles of ADCs and distribute to the community members in the district.
- v. The ADCs should conduct frequent meetings with local leaders and the entire community members to introduce themselves despite having transport challenges. This can be possible because the committee is composed of members from all corners of the TA. As a result, they should divide themselves according to their geographical location and do these campaigns to reduce travelling distance while achieving the same objective. Furthermore, ADC members can take advantage of different meetings that are locally organized by local leadership to brief the community members about themselves.
- vi. There is need to assess which communication methodology is effective especially taking into consideration of education levels of the people. This may require a deep analysis to make sure that the little resources are effectively used.

### **5.3.2 The autonomy of the ADC**

- 1. Government should promote respect to the autonomy of the ADCs and other local community structures like VDCs by all service providers. Furthermore, the roles to be played by the committee in any community development project should be stipulated clearly to avoid conflicts and speculations.
- 2. All community development projects should go through these local structures. In this case, no service provider should initiate any development project in the areas without the knowledge of these local structures
- 3. The ADCs need to have their capacity built for them to know their roles. They need also to know what they can do in case some service providers decide to initiate projects without their consent or knowledge.

### **5.3.3 Community participation in development projects**

1. It is very pleasing that the people of Ntchisi have the spirit of participating in development activities in their communities. This is a stepping stone for the ADC to finalize promoting the same. However, The ADCs and other decentralization structures like VDCs should work extra hard to enhance community participation in decision making stages of development projects like planning, monitoring and evaluation. It has to be noted that real participation of community members encourages the community members to participate in decision making through planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such projects. De Beer and Swanepoel 2000:270 emphasise this when he says that those affected by development projects are to be the main players and decision makers.
2. ADCs should participate in district based consultative forums and in full Assembly Meetings done at district level as community development representatives. In these meetings, development projects are shared to ADCs. Locally, the Ward Councillors, MPs and the TAs represent the community members. This suggestion therefore holds because the study has revealed that T/As no longer chairs the ADC as was the case in the past. As such, the T/A may not fully represent the committee at such forums hence need for representatives of ADCs to participate.

### **5.3.4 The economics, governance and politics of ADCs**

1. The guidebook to decentralization should clearly indicate how local structures' operations should be financed. For example, any project being implemented should have a certain percentage towards the operations of these committees to ensure that they meet their targets. In addition to that, district councils should be mandated to fund ADCs on regular basis.
2. ADCs and other local development structures like VDCs should be trained in financial management. This will help them to meet the financial minimum standards of the donors of their funding.

3. The guidebook to decentralization should stipulate how the ADC members will be motivated to work as volunteers. This will ensure that all members are active. This is true because as volunteers, they need a motivation to keep them moving.
4. On composition, the election of the members in the committee should follow the guidelines in the Guidebook to Decentralization which indicates that women, youth and other vulnerable categories are supposed to be deliberately included (MLGRD 2005:44). Generally, this has to be guided by the district council, which organises and manages such elections.

### **5.3.5 Challenges faced by ADCs.**

The ADCs are facing a lot of challenges that require the attention of all players in development. The following therefore are the recommendations on this.

1. Both government and the community members should find the way to generate funds for the ADCs' operations to make sure that they meet their expectations. Locally, it is advisable that the community members and their leadership should come up with locally devised methodologies of income generating to enable these committees to be functional.
2. Government should provide means of transport i.e. bicycles to enable the ADC members to do their work effectively. Some of the roles of ADCs include monitoring of the community projects. As such, this type of work requires effective and sustainable means of transport of which the committees do not have. Where the Government has failed to supply transport, other service providers like the NGOs especially those working in the areas can take charge on behalf of government.
3. The committees should continue refraining from being partisan to enhance community confidence and participation in community development work.
4. The District council should conduct regular review meetings with the committees to reflect on their performance, assess their challenges,

draw lessons learnt and come up with the way forward to enhance on the opportunities while dealing with the challenges.

5. The government should consider conducting an evaluation study to assess the effectiveness of decentralization and use of the local structures and make appropriate changes.

#### **5.3.6 Review of National Decentralization Policy, Local Government Act and the Guidebook on Decentralization and Local Government.**

The National Decentralization policy and the Local Government Act should be revised to incorporate issues of the local structures like ADCs. This will make them legally binding as part of the decentralization system. These documents should contain information on ADCs existence, economics and governance.

On the other hand, it is encouraging that the Guidebook to Decentralization and Local Government has some information about the ADCs especially on composition, objectives, functions and reporting structures. However, the book doesn't state on the economics of these structures. Due to this, it has to be revised to incorporate the missing guidelines. The improvements that will be made on these documents will improve the performance of ADCs and enhanced efficiency of ADCs. This revision will also help these documents to realise their objectives as well.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for further research**

Further research is recommended in the following areas;

- I. Factors influencing low adoption of decentralization in Malawian communities
- II. Impact of politics on decentralization
- III. The mixed motivations for decentralization
- IV. Why has Malawi government not conducted local government elections since 2001

#### **5.5 Conclusion**

Based on the above issues, it is evident that ADCs in Ntchisi are not yet effective in their operations. This is true because they are not efficient in

making awareness about their existence in the area. As a result, people of Ntchisi do not know their ADCs. Secondly, the ADCs are failing to involve the community members to participate in decision making stages of project cycle. Furthermore, they are failing to solve most of the challenges they face and also they are failing to be recognized as development custodians of their areas.

However, the committees have potential to do well if they can be known by the community members; have adequate operational resources; have adequate capacity and are able to encourage the community members to participate in development work especially in decision making.

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## 7.0 Appendices

### 7.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire and Guides

#### 7.1.1 Household questionnaire

SECTION A. (INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION)			
NAME:.....	Gender: (i) Male [ ]	(ii) Female [ ]	Tick
Which age range do you belong to			
1 <12 years [ ]	3 >18 years and <50 years [ ]		
2 >12 and <18 years [ ]	4 >50 years [ ]		
Village.....	VDC.....	ADC.....	
Highest Level of Education			
1. Never been to school [ ]	3 Senior Primary Education [ ]		
2 Junior Primary Education [ ]	4 Secondary Education [ ]		
	5 Tertiary Education [ ]		
SECTION B. (UNDERSTANDING DECENTRALIZATION)			
B How do you understand decentralization?			
1	1 Devolving of power [ ]	4 Do not know [ ]	
	2 Community empowerment [ ]	5 Other	
	3 Delegation of roles [ ]		
B Who do you think is responsible for the implementation of Decentralization in your area?			
1	1 Government [ ]	4 Nobody [ ]	
	2 NGOs [ ]	5 Do not know [ ]	
	3 Community members [ ]	6 Other	
	4 Everybody [ ]		
B Which are the structures aimed at implementing Decentralization at community level			
3			

1	CBOs	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	VDC	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Others	
3	ADC	<input type="checkbox"/>			

B4	What benefits has Decentralization brought to this area?				
	1.	Accelerated development projects	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	2.	Empowered communities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	3.	Community ownership of community development	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	4.	Relieved responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	5.	Do not know			
	6.	Others			

<b>SECTION C. UNDERSTANDING AREA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (ADC)</b>					
C	Do you know your representatives in the ADC for (i) Yes (ii) No <input type="checkbox"/>				
1	this area? <input type="checkbox"/>				
C	If the answer is yes in C1, who are they and their positions if any				
2		(i)		(ii)	
		(iii)		(iv)	
C	Do you know the composition of the ADC?				
3		1	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	2	No <input type="checkbox"/>
C	If yes, are you satisfied with this				
4	composition? 1 Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 2 No <input type="checkbox"/>				
C	If the answer is no to C4, what improvements should be made to the				
5	composition of ADC				
1	Increase the number of members <input type="checkbox"/>				
2	Decrease the number of members <input type="checkbox"/>				
3	Include political representatives <input type="checkbox"/>				
4	Include more technical people <input type="checkbox"/>				
5	Other _____				
C	Do you know the roles of ADC? (1) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (ii) No				
6	<i>Ti</i>				
	<i>ck</i>				
C	If the answer is yes to C6, what are the roles of ADC in Development? <i>You can tick more than one field</i>				
7					
1	To advocate for community empowerment [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]				
2	To coordinate with service providers in community development <input type="checkbox"/>				
3	Holding monthly meetings in collaboration with				

VDCs; [ ]	
4	Raising funds and mobilizing community resources for projects; [ ]
5	Reviewing and integrating projects from VDCs [ ]
6	Submitting the proposed development projects to the area executive committee (AEC) and the district executive committee (DEC). [ ]
7	(vii) Other - - - - -
C 8	Is the ADC doing enough as per your expectation? (i) Yes [ ] (ii) No [ ]
C9 If the answer is no to C8, what do they need to improve? <i>You can tick more than one field</i>	
1	To advocate for community empowerment [ ]
2	To coordinate with service providers in community development [ ]
3	Holding monthly meetings in collaboration with VDCs; [ ]
4	Raising funds and mobilizing community resources for projects; [ ]
5	Reviewing and integrating projects from VDCs [ ]
6	Submitting the proposed development projects to the area executive committee (AEC) and the district executive committee (DEC). [ ]
7	(vii) Other
C 10	What do you think are the challenges faced by the ADC
1	Lack of operational funds [ ]
2	Lack of capacity building [ ]
3	Immerging of parallel structures [ ]
4	Other
5	High Illiteracy levels [ ]
6	Political influence [ ]
C 11	Who is responsible to solve the above challenges faced by ADC? <i>(Rank the below in order of priority with 1 the most responsible and 4 the least responsible)</i>
1	Government [ ]
2	Community members [ ]
3	NGOs [ ]
4	ADC itself
5	Politicians
6	Other



SECTION D. (UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)			
D 1	How do you understand community development		
1	Positive change to community	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 More food <input type="checkbox"/>
2	More money	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Hando uts <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Construction Projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Do not know <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Capacity building	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Others <input type="checkbox"/>
D 2	In your own opinion, what are the indicators of development		
1	More money	<input type="checkbox"/>	4 More knowledge <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Enough food	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Do not know <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Construction projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Othe r <input type="checkbox"/>
D 3	Who is responsible to ensure that community development in this area is taking place?		
1	Governme nt	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Political leaders <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Member of Parliament	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 NG Os <input type="checkbox"/>
3	ADC	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Othe r <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Community members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D 4	Would you mention any type of development the area has witnessed in the past 5 years? ( <i>You can tick more than one field</i> )		
1	Building construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Agriculture services <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Road constructio n	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Natural resource management services <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Capacity building	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Social services <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	9 Othe r <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Education services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D 5	Who initiated these developments?		
1	The community members through ADC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2	The community members direct to government		<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Community members direct to NGOs and donors		<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Community members themselves		<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Government just brought the development		<input type="checkbox"/>
6	NGO/Donors just brought the development		<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Community members through another parallel structure (state)		<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Other		<input type="checkbox"/>
D 6	Did you participate in the developments mentioned above?	(1) Yes No	(2) <i>Tick</i>
D 7	If the answer is yes, which development activities did you participate ( <i>You can tick more than one</i> )		
1	Building construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Road construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Capacity building	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	Education services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	Agriculture services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7	Natural resource management services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8	Social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>
D 8	In which stages did you participate? ( <i>You can tick more than one field</i> )		
1	Assessment and design	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	Evaluation and reflection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D 9	How did you participate in these developments? ( <i>You can tick more than one field</i> )		
1	I contributed my money	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	I contributed my labour	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	I contributed my knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	I contributed my land	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>
D 10	Why did you participate in these developments		
1	Because it is my role	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Was initiated by my party	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2	I was fearing a punishment	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	It was our real need	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	If the answer is no to D10 above, why did you not participate?				
11			4	I chose not to participate	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	I was not involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	The development was imposed	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I was away	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	It was not initiated by my party	<input type="checkbox"/>			
D	What are the challenges facing community development in this area				
12			4	Interference by central government	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Inadequate money	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Political interference	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Inadequate human resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Corruption	<input type="checkbox"/>			
D	Who do you think is responsible to tackle the above challenges				
13			4	Political leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Member of Parliament	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Community members	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>SECTION E. (INTEGRATING ADCs AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)</b>					
E	On these developments activities carried out in this area, what was the role of the ADC				
1			4	Evaluation and reflection	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Community mobilization	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Resource mobilization	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Design and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4	Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>			
E	Are you satisfied with the quality of the projects accomplished so far? ( <i>Tick one</i> )				
2			3	Not satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Somehow satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 Other (state)			
E If the answer to E2 above is 2 or 3, give 3 reasons			
1	This is not our real need	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	It is of poor quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	It was not completed at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E Throughout the project cycle for the above developments, has ADC been 4 monitoring this development?			
(1) Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		(2) No <input type="checkbox"/>	
E If the answer is yes, how frequent was their monitoring visits? ( <i>tick once</i> )			
5			
1	Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Once <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Never <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Others <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Once in a while	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E Throughout the project cycle for the above developments, who monitors 6 the ADC to ensure proper usage of resources and quality execution of work?			
1	District assembly Officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Community members <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Government Departments	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 None <input type="checkbox"/>
3	NGO and donors	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Others <input type="checkbox"/>
4	MPs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E For any supervisor above, how frequent was their monitoring visits			
7			
1	Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Once <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Never <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Do not Know <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Once in a while	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Others <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>E If given a chance to assist the ADC in decision making, which are the 8 developments ADC should initiate? (<i>Put them in order of priority</i>)</p>			
1	Building construction	[ ]	
2	Road construction	[ ]	
3	Capacity building	[ ]	
4	Health Services	[ ]	
5	Education services	[ ]	
6	Agriculture services	[ ]	
7	Natural resource management services	[ ]	
8	Social services	[ ]	
9	Other	[ ]	
<p>E Give reasons to justify your selection in question 9 E8 above</p>			
1	It's the most need development in the area		
2	It is most sustainable development project		
3	The resources are readily available		
4	I enjoy participating in such development activities		
5	Other		
<p>E Do you think the ADC is doing enough to initiate sustainable 10 developments?</p>			
1	Yes	[ ]	
2	No	[ ]	(Tick)
<p>E If the answer is no, what improvements should be 11 done?</p>			
1	They should involve community at all levels		
2	The development should be demand driven		
3	They should not be interfered by politics		
4	They should intensify monitoring		
5	They should make sure that there is no theft of operational resources		
6	Other		
<p>E In general, how would you rate the performance of 12 the ADC?</p>			
1	Excellent	[ ]	
2	Very good	[ ]	
3	Good	[ ]	
4	Average	[ ]	
5	Poor	[ ]	
6	Very Poor	[ ]	
<p>E Give at least 2 reasons for your answer above</p>			

1	-
2	
3	

### 7.1.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

GROUP INFORMATION							
Name of the Group:				Village:		Date:	
Composition of the group							
Men		Women		Boys		Girls	
Starting date of the group?							
KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTING ADC							
QUESTION				POINTS TO CONSIDER PROBING MORE			
1. Do you have an ADC in this area?				Assess knowledge on prominence of ADC in the area			
2. Do you know the ADC members and their positions				Probe on whether they know their ADC representatives for the area			
3. Do you know the roles of ADC? <i>Please mention them</i>				Probe whether they know the roles of ADC for them to ably assess the performance of ADC			
				Assess how did they know the roles			
				Check whether the ADC is able to sell itself to the community members			
ASSESSING ADC PERFORMANCE							
4. Is the ADC able to perform these roles effectively? <i>Please explain for each answer</i>				Assess their satisfaction on how the roles are being executed			
				Assess for execution rate in percentage			
				Check the ability of ADC to involve them in execution of these roles			
5. What other roles do you suggest ADC to do to satisfy your developmental needs? <i>Explain</i>				Assess their quick reaction to the existing roles			
				Probe for the suggested additional roles the ADC should do			
				Probe for the roles they think they need to be removed and why?			
6. Do you work with the ADC and how? <i>Explain</i>				Check reporting lines and whether they are followed			
				Check the ability of ADC to work with other community structures			
				Check networking and collaboration of community structures with the ADC and other organizations			

7. What are the weaknesses of ADC in this area?	Check whether they know the weaknesses of their ADC and they should mention them
	Check whether they take themselves as part of ADC
8. What are the challenges that you face as you work with ADC?	Probe what is limiting them to work effectively with the ADC
	Assess economical, political, social, environmental challenges
9. In your opinion, who is the cause of these challenges?	Assess the root cause for these challenges
	Find out if there are blaming game syndrome
10. How can you solve these problems?	Assess their ability to solve their own problems
	Assess if they know where to take their challenges to?
11. What do you think are the problems faced by the ADC?	Assess if they know the challenges faced by ADC
12. How do you think are these problems affecting your performance?	Check if they feel they are part of the team affected by these challenges
	Assess if they can link their problems mentioned above and the problems faced by ADC
13. In your opinion, How do you think these problems could be solved?	Assess their ability to identify problem solving skills
	Identify their suggested solutions
	Assess why they did not apply those problem solving skills
14. Who should be responsible to handle these problems?	Probe if they feel to be part of the solution
	Probe if they know where to take some of these challenges to
15. What is your feeling about the performance of ADC?	Assess the inner judgment about ADC efficiency and effectiveness
16. Give any advice that you may give to the ADC to be effectiveness?	Assess the recommendations
<b>ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE ON DEVELOPMENT</b>	
17. How are developmental projects initiated in this area?	Assess who initiates development
	Assess the process of initiating development projects i.e. whether the ADC leads the process
	Assess whether other community development structures and the general public is involved

18. Who ensures that the development is sustainable?	Assess whether ADC leads the process of ensuring sustainability of development projects
	Assess local indicators for sustainable development
19. Who owns the development projects?	Assess community ownership to development
20. What role does the ADC play in initiating and managing development project?	Assess if the ADC leads in initiating and implementation of development activities in the area
21. What role do you play in these development activities?	Assess the role the group play in these processes
	Assess the reasons for or against participation in development activities
22. What are the challenges facing development in the area?	Assess whether they know the challenges of development in their area
<b>PARTY AFFILIATION</b>	
23. To which political party is your group affiliated?	Assess the political affiliation of the group
	Probe more how this affiliation is affecting or promoting their developmental roles
24. Do you think the ADC is affiliated to a specific party?	Probe whether the ADC is affected by political influence
	If the answer is true what could be the implications
<b>PARALLEL STRUCTURES</b>	
25. Do you have parallel structures to ADC in this area and how do you work with them?	Assess existence of parallel structures to ADCs and how they affect the performance of ADC

### 7.1.3 KII Guide for ADC Members

GROUP INFORMATION	
Name:	ADC: _____ Date: _____
Position in the ADC:	VDC representing: _____
KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTING ADC	
QUESTION	POINTS TO CONSIDER PROBING MORE
1. Is the ADC in this area active and functional?	Assess knowledge on prominence of ADC in the area
2. Apart from yourself, do you know other ADC members and their positions	Probe on whether he/she knows other ADC representatives and their positions
3. As one of the ADC members, do you know	Probe whether they know the roles of ADC



your roles	
4. To which structures does your ADC report to?	Assess if they know and follow the reporting structures
<b>ASSESSING ADC PERFORMANCE</b>	
5. Since you know the roles of ADC, are you able to perform these roles effectively? <i>Please explain for each answer</i>	Assess their satisfaction on how the roles are being executed
	Assess for execution rate in percentage
6. What other roles do you suggest ADC should do to satisfy the community's developmental needs? <i>Explain</i>	Assess their quick reaction to the existing roles
	Probe for the suggested additional roles the ADC should do and those that need to be removed
7. Which group of people, individuals, government departments, NGOs and many more do you work with?	Check the ability of ADC to work with other community structures
	Check networking and collaboration of community structures with the ADC and other organizations
8. As a member, what do you think are the weaknesses of ADC in this area?	Check whether they know the weaknesses of their ADC and they should mention them
9. What are the challenges that you face as ADC as you do your work?	Assess economical, political, social, environmental challenges
10. In your opinion, Who is the cause of these challenges	Assess the root cause for these challenges
	Find out if there is blaming game syndrome
11. How do you think are these problems affecting your performance?	Assess whether they can relate their problems with their performance
12. How do you think these problems could be solved?	Identify their suggested solutions
13. In your opinion, Who should be responsible to handle these problems?	Probe if they feel to be part of the solution
	Probe if they know where to take some of these challenges to
14. Give any advice that you may give to ensure effectiveness of ADC	Assess the recommendations
<b>ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE ON DEVELOPMENT</b>	
15. Would you mention any development projects done in the past five years in this area?	Assess both completed and unfinished development projects
	Assess their local definition of development
16. Who initiated these	Assess who initiates development

development projects?	Assess the process of initiating development projects i.e. whether the ADC leads the process
	Assess whether other community development structures and the general public is involved
17. What role does the ADC play in initiating and managing development project?	Assess if the ADC leads in initiating and implementation of development activities
18. How do you ensure full community involvement in all community development cycle stages?	Assess the methodologies to mobilize community participation
19. Are there challenges faced during community mobilization to development projects?	Find out if there are bottle necks in mobilizing the community for development initiatives and why?
	If yes, how do they handle them?
20. What are the sources of your funding for the community development in the area?	Assess the donors and supporters for their community development
21. What contribution do the people of this area make in community development?	Assess if the ADC and the community members play an important role in the implementation of these projects
22. Who decides which development project should be implemented first?	Assess if they have binding powers to decide which development should be first.
	Assess if they have powers to refuse a development project which is not in their interest
23. How do you ensure sustainability of the development projects in the area?	Assess ways and means they use to sustain community development projects
	Assess if they face challenges in ensuring community development sustainable.
24. What are the challenges facing development in the area?	Assess whether they know the challenges of development in their area
25. In your opinion, Who is the cause of these challenges	Assess the root cause for these challenges
26. Who do you think is responsible to tackle these challenges?	Assess their knowledge in identifying who is responsible to solve the challenges
	Assess if they feel they are part of the problem
<b>EMERGING PARALLEL STRUCTURES</b>	

27. Do you have other emerging parallel structures in the area that do not directly work with the ADC?	Assess existence of parallel structures in the area
28. What challenges are you facing because of their existence?	Assess the challenges faced due to the existing of the parallel structures
<b>PARTY AFFILIATION</b>	
29. To which political party are you and the ADC affiliated?	Assess the political affiliation of the ADC member
	Probe more how this affiliation is affecting or promoting their developmental roles
<b>LITERACY AND CAPACITY OF THE ADC MEMBERS</b>	
30. What educational qualification is considered in selecting the ADC members?	Probe whether education level is one of the factors used to identify ADC members and why?
31. Do you have challenges in working with people who are illiterate? What are they?	Based on the above answer, assess if working with members who are illiterate has some consequences on their performance
32. Have you ever been trained in management of ADC? If yes by whom?	Assess the capacity building initiatives done to the ADCs.
	Assess when were these capacity building initiatives done
	Assess who provided these capacity building initiatives

#### 7.1.4 KII Guide for Stakeholders

<b>INTERVIEWEE INFORMATION</b>	
Name:	Organization:
Designation:	Date:
<b>KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTING ADC</b>	
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>POINTS TO CONSIDER PROBING MORE</b>
1. Is the ADC in this area active and functional?	Assess knowledge on prominence of ADC in the area
2. Do you know other ADC members and their positions?	Probe on whether he/she knows ADC members and their positions.
3. Do you know the roles of ADC?	Probe whether they know the roles of ADC
	Assess how did they know the roles
	Who or which organization sensitized them about these roles

4. To which structures does the ADC report to?	Assess if they know and follow the reporting structures
5. As an organization, do you recognize the existence of ADC?	Assess if they recognize the ADC which will enable them to work with it.
<b>ASSESSING ADC PERFORMANCE</b>	
6. If you know the roles of ADC, is the ADC able to perform these roles effectively? <i>Please explain for each answer</i>	Assess their satisfaction on how the roles are being executed
	Assess for execution rate in percentage
7. What other roles do you suggest ADC should do to satisfy the community's developmental needs? <i>Explain</i>	Assess their quick reaction to the existing roles
	Probe for the suggested additional roles the ADC should do
	Probe for the roles they think they need to be removed and why?
8. How do you work with the ADC in this area?	Check if there is good relationship with the ADC in execution of their work
	How is this relationship helping their work execution
9. In your opinion, What do you think are the challenges of ADC in this area?	Check whether they know the challenges of the ADC and they should mention them
10. How do these challenges affect you as you work with the ADC?	Probe what is limiting them to work effectively with the ADC
	Assess economical, political, social, environmental challenges
11. Who is the cause of these challenges?	Assess the root cause for these challenges
	Find out if there is blaming game syndrome
12. In your opinion, How can these problems be solved?	Assess if they feel they are part of the problem
	Assess if they know where to take challenges to?
13. How do you think are these problems affecting your performance?	Assess the relationship of the challenges faced by the ADC and the performance of stakeholders
14. In your opinion Who should be responsible to handle these problems?	Probe if they feel to be part of the solution
	Probe if they know where to take some of these challenges to
15. What is your feeling about the ADCs performance?	Assess the inner judgment about ADC efficiency and effectiveness

16. Give any advice that you may give to ensure effectiveness of ADC?	Assess the recommendations
<b>ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE ON DEVELOPMENT</b>	
17. How is development project initiated in this area?	Assess who initiates development
	Assess the process of initiating development projects i.e whether the ADC leads the process
	Assess whether other community development structures and the general public are involved
18. Who ensures that the development is sustainable?	Assess whether ADC leads the process of ensuring sustainability of development projects
19. Who owns the development projects?	Assess community ownership to development
	How does this relate to sustainability of the development
20. Do you face any challenge in mobilizing the community for community development work?	Find out if there are bottle necks in mobilizing the community for development initiatives and why?
	If yes, how do they handle them?
21. What are the sources of your funding for the community development in the area?	Assess the donors and supporters for their community development
22. What contribution do the people of this area make in community development?	Assess if the ADC and the community members play an important role in the implementation of these projects
23. Is the ADC, able to make own binding decisions?	Assess if they make binding decisions or they are just dictated by those above them
24. Who decides which development project should be implemented first between the ADC and the donor in this area?	Assess if the ADC has binding powers to decide which development should be first.
	Assess if they have powers to refuse a development project which is not in their interest
25. How is sustainability of development projects in the area ensured?	Assess ways and means they use to sustain community development projects
	Assess if they face challenges in ensuring community development sustainable.
26. What are the challenges facing development in the area?	Assess whether they know the challenges of development in their area

27. In your opinion, Who is the cause of these challenges?	Assess the root cause for these challenges
28. Who is responsible to tackle these challenges?	Assess their knowledge in identifying who is responsible to solve the challenges
	Assess if they feel they are part of the problem
<b>EMERGING PARALLEL STRUCTURES</b>	
29. Do you have other emerging parallel structures in the area that do not directly work with the ADC?	Assess existence of parallel structures in the area
30. What challenges are you facing because of their existence?	Assess the challenges faced due to the existing of the parallel structures
<b>PARTY AFFILIATION</b>	
31. In your own opinion, to which political party are you affiliated?	Assess the political affiliation of the ADC member
	Probe more how this affiliation is affecting or promoting their developmental roles
32. In your own opinion, do you think the ADC is affiliated to a specific party?	Probe whether the ADC is affected by political influence
	If the answer is true what could be the implications
<b>LITERACY OF THE ADC MEMBERS</b>	
33. Do you know educational qualification considered in selecting the ADC members?	Probe whether education level is one of the factors used to identify ADC members and why?
Do you have challenges in working with people who are illiterate in the ADC? What are they?	Based on the above answer, assess if working with members who are illiterate has some consequences on the performance of the ADC

### 7.1.5 Key Informants Guide for VDC Members

<b>GROUP INFORMATION</b>	
Name:	VDC:
Designation:	Date:
<b>KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISITING ADC</b>	
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>POINTS TO CONSIDER PROBING MORE</b>
1. Is the ADC in this area active and functional?	Assess knowledge on prominence of ADC in the area

2. Do you know other ADC members and their positions?	Probe on whether he/she knows other ADC representatives and their positions.
3. Do you know the roles of ADC?	Probe whether they know the roles of ADC
	Assess how did they know the roles
	Who or which organization sensitized them about these roles
4. In your own opinion, would you describe your reporting structure?	Assess if they know and follow the reporting structures
5. As VDC do you have a representative in the ADC?	Assess if the representative has capacity to influence the ADC in considering their development needs
<b>ASSESSING ADC PERFORMANCE</b>	
6. In your own opinion, is the ADC able to perform these roles effectively? <i>Please explain for each answer</i>	Assess their satisfaction on how the roles are being executed
	Assess for execution rate in percentage
7. What other roles would you suggest ADC should do to satisfy the community's developmental needs? <i>Explain</i>	Assess their quick reaction to the existing roles
	Probe for the suggested additional roles the ADC should do
	Probe for the roles they think they need to be removed and why?
8. How do you work with the ADC in this area?	Check if there is good relationship with the ADC in execution of their work
	How is this relationship helping their work execution
9. What do you think are the challenges of ADC in this area?	Check whether they know the challenges of the ADC and they should mention them
10. How do these challenges affect you as you work with the ADC?	Probe what is limiting them to work effectively with the ADC
	Assess economical, political, social, environmental challenges
11. In your opinion who is the cause of these challenges?	Assess the root cause for these challenges
	Find out if there is blaming game syndrome
12. How can these problems be solved?	Assess if they feel they are part of the problem
	Assess if they know where to take their challenges to?
13. How do you think are these problems affecting your performance?	Assess the relationship of the challenges faced by the ADC and the performance of stakeholders



14. Who should be responsible to handle these problems?	Probe if they feel to be part of the solution
	Probe if they know where to take some of these challenges to
15. What is your feeling about the ADCs performance?	Assess the inner judgment about ADC efficiency and effectiveness
16. What advice would you give to ensure effectiveness of ADC?	Assess the recommendations
<b>ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE ON DEVELOPMENT</b>	
17. How is development project initiated in this area?	Assess who initiates development
	Assess the process of initiating development projects i.e. whether the VDC leads the process
	Assess whether other community development structures and the general public are involved
18. In your opinion who owns the development projects?	Assess community ownership to development
	How does this relates to sustainability of the development
19. What role does the ADC play in initiating and managing development project?	Assess if the ADC leads in initiating and implementation of development activities
20. What role do you play in initiating and managing development projects?	Assess the methodologies to mobilize community participation
21. Do you face any challenge in mobilizing the community for community development work?	Find out if there are bottle necks in mobilizing the community for development initiatives and why?
	If yes, how do they handle them?
22. What are the sources of your funding for the community development in the area?	Assess the donors and supporters for their community development
23. What contribution do the people of this area make in community development?	Assess if the VDC and the community members play an important role in the implementation of these projects
24. In your opinion is the ADC, able to make own binding decisions?	Assess if they make binding decisions or they are just dictated by those above them
25. Who decides which development project should be implemented first between the ADC and the donor in this area?	Assess if they have binding powers to decide which development should be first.
	Assess if they have powers to refuse a development project which is not in their interest
26. How is sustainability of development projects in the area ensured?	Assess ways and means they use to sustain community development projects



	Assess if they face challenges in ensuring community development sustainable.
27. What are the challenges facing development in the area?	Assess whether they know the challenges of development in their area
28. In your opinion Who is the cause of these challenges?	Assess the root cause for these challenges
29. Who is responsible to tackle these challenges?	Assess their knowledge in identifying who is responsible to solve the challenges
	Assess if they feel they are part of the problem
<b>EMERGING PARALLEL STRUCTURES</b>	
30. Do you have other emerging parallel structures in the area that do not directly work with the ADC?	Assess existence of parallel structures in the area
31. What challenges are you facing because of their existence?	Assess the challenges faced due to the existing of the parallel structures
<b>PARTY AFFILIATION</b>	
32. To which political party are you affiliated?	Assess the political affiliation of the ADC member
	Probe more how this affiliation is affecting or promoting their developmental roles
33. Do you think the ADC is affiliated to a specific party?	Probe whether the ADC is affected by political influence
	If the answer is true what could be the implications
<b>LITERACY OF THE ADC MEMBERS</b>	
34. Do you know educational qualification considered in selecting the VDC and ADC members?	Probe whether education level is one of the factors used to identify VDC and ADC members and why?
35. Do you have challenges in working with people who are illiterate in the VDC and ADC? What are they?	Based on the above answer, assess if working with members who are illiterate has some consequences on the performance of the ADC
36. Have you ever been trained in management of ADC? If yes by whom?	Assess the capacity building initiatives done to the ADCs.
	Assess when were these capacity building initiatives done
	Assess who provided these capacity building initiatives

### **7.1.6 Respondents' Consent Form**

#### **Consent to be a Research Subject**

***'Assessment of the effectiveness of the Area Development Committees (ADCs) in Decentralization. A case of Ntchisi District.'***

#### **Introduction**

I **Chrispin Bokho** is conducting a research study on the above topic with the University of South Africa (UNISA) for my Masters of Arts in Development Studies. My study is assessing the performance of ADCs in Ntchisi district. I believe that your contribution will be essential to this effect.

#### **Procedures**

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire with a set of questions. The questionnaire has about \_\_\_\_\_ questions, which may take approximately 30 minutes. Questions will include details about existence of ADC, Development projects in the area, political affiliations, parallel structures, literacy of ADC and your own personal views and feelings about the performance of ADC

#### **Benefits**

There are no direct benefits to subjects. However, apart from helping me to complete my studies, it is hoped that your participation may contribute to the improvement of ADCs performance that may result in accelerated development initiatives in the area.

#### **Confidentiality**

The provided information will strictly be confidential. This information will only be used as group data and the report will not single out individual's personal information. The questionnaires and their contents will be secured and unavailable to the public except the final report, which will be available to all that will need it. After the research is completed, the questionnaires will be destroyed.

#### **Participation**

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at anytime or refuse to participate entirely without any consequences.

#### **Questions about the Research**

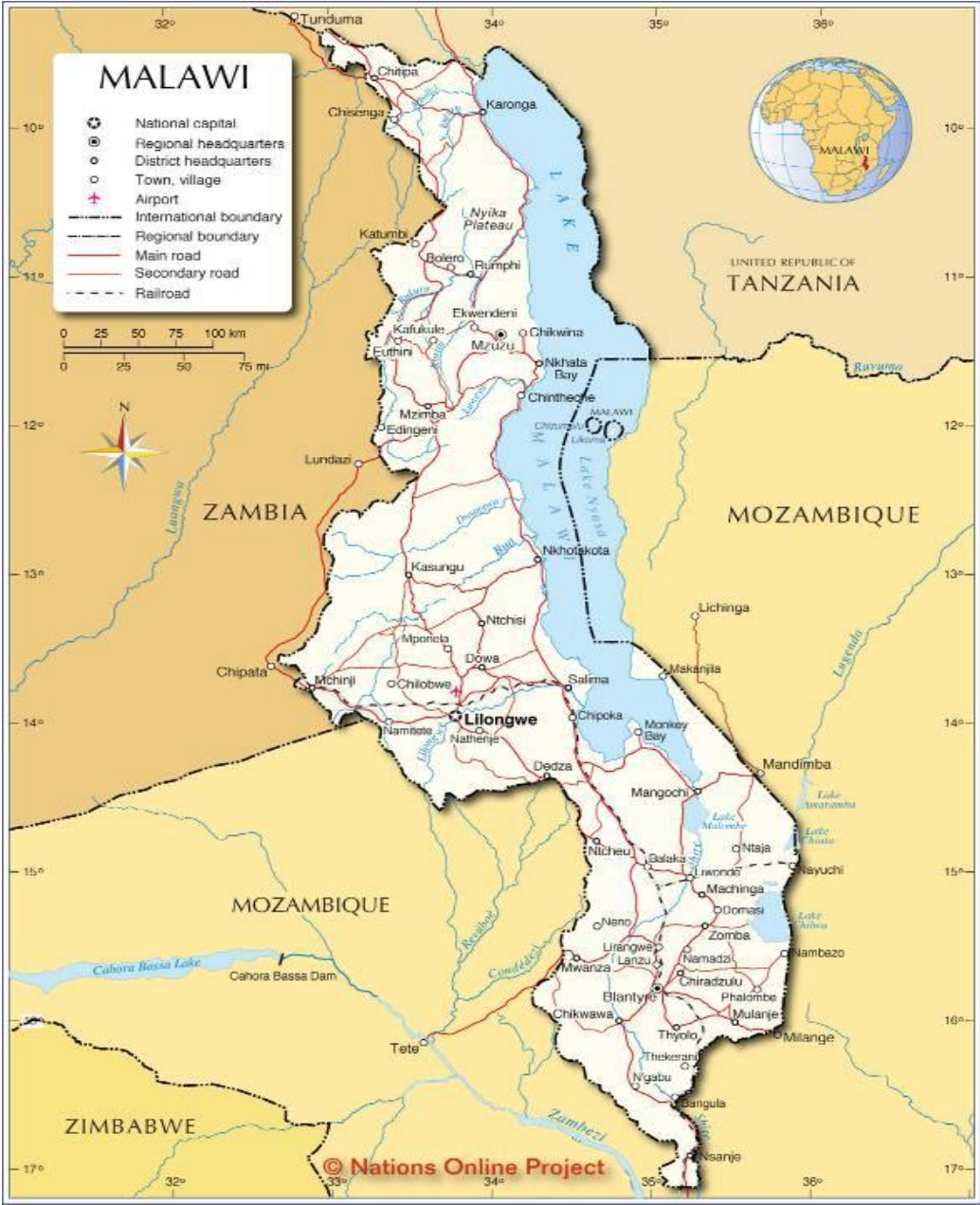
You are free to ask questions or express your dissatisfaction at any time of the research or after to me. In case the questions may come later, please you can call Chrispin Bokho on 0888 982 626 or e-mail at [43501990@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:43501990@mylife.unisa.ac.za)

I have read, understood and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will and volition to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

7.2 Appendix 2. Map of Malawi



7.3 Appendix 3. District Decentralization Structures

