

How has devolution fared in its first term?

Responses from Kwale County at the end of the transition period

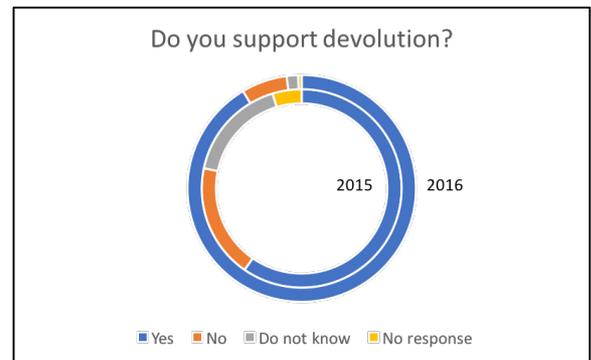
Policy Brief, February 2017

Objectives

The first electoral term in Kenya’s newly decentralised system is coming to an end. The second round of elections at national and county levels is approaching fast, which presents a good opportunity to evaluate perceptions of respondents across a large household survey study in Kwale County. This research investigates how Kwale’s water users respond to Kenya’s decentralisation reform introduced by the 2010 Constitution and how they perceive the performance of the first County Government. Here we present findings on a) support for devolution, b) likely voting behaviour in the 2017 elections, c) satisfaction with the performance of Kwale County Government, and d) perceptions of improvements in water and health services provision.

Methodology

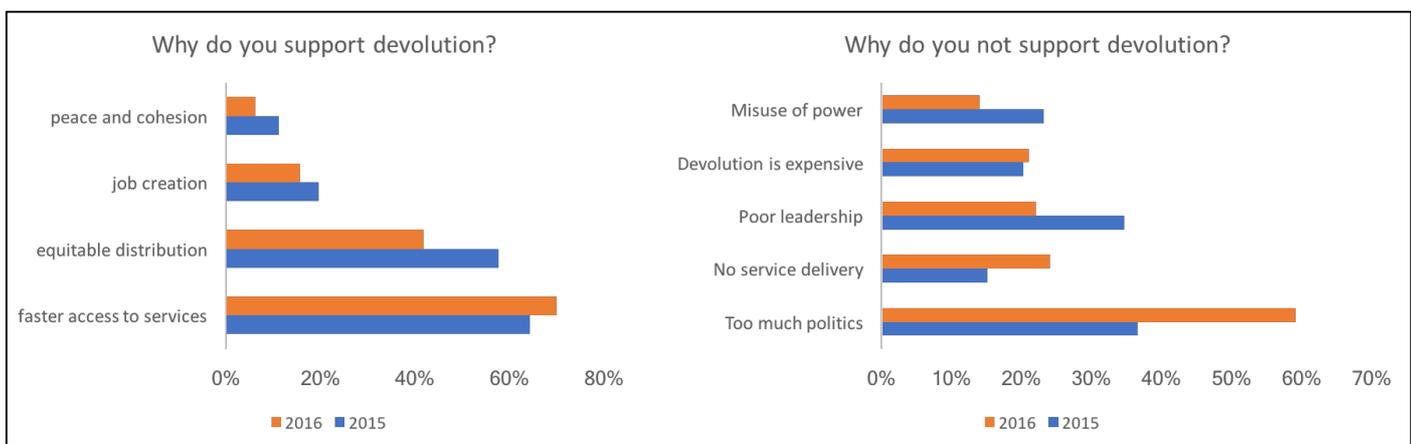
Three waves of a longitudinal household survey were conducted in Kwale County in October 2013 to January 2014, March to May 2015 and September to November 2016 (wave 1: n=3,349; wave 2: n=3,567; wave 3: n=3,542). A team of 25 enumerators was trained, the instrument was piloted and rolled out over a three-month period. Household respondents across a stratified random sample from the three sub-counties Matuga, Msambweni and Lunga Lunga were interviewed.



Key Findings

Do you support devolution?

At the end of the transition period, there is strong support for the devolution process among the Kwale respondents. Satisfaction with the 2010 Constitution increased by 28% in 2016 (69%) compared to 2015 (41%). Moreover, overall support for the devolution process lies at 91% compared to 60% in 2015.



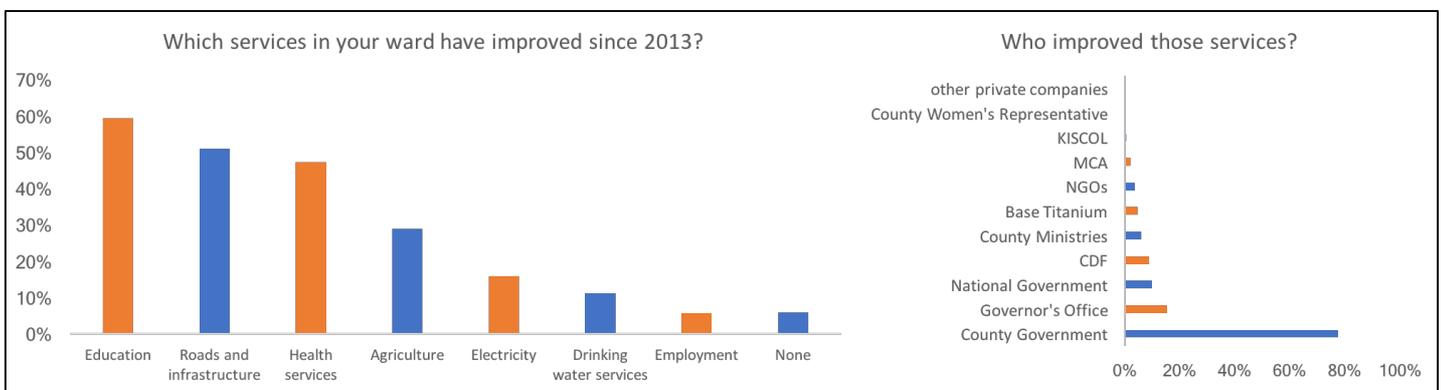
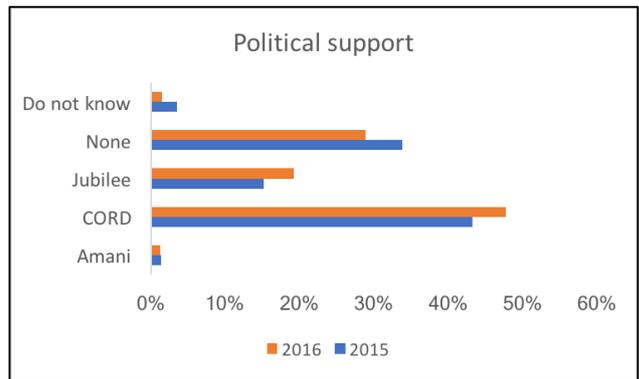
Are you going to vote in the 2017 elections?

93% of respondents state that they will vote in the 2017 elections. The main reasons for those who will vote are that they have the right to vote (70%), followed by the belief that voting brings change (44%). Those who declared not to vote stated that they do not like politics (14%) as their primary reason, followed by the belief that voting does not change anything (13%).

How satisfied are you with the performance of Kwale County Government?

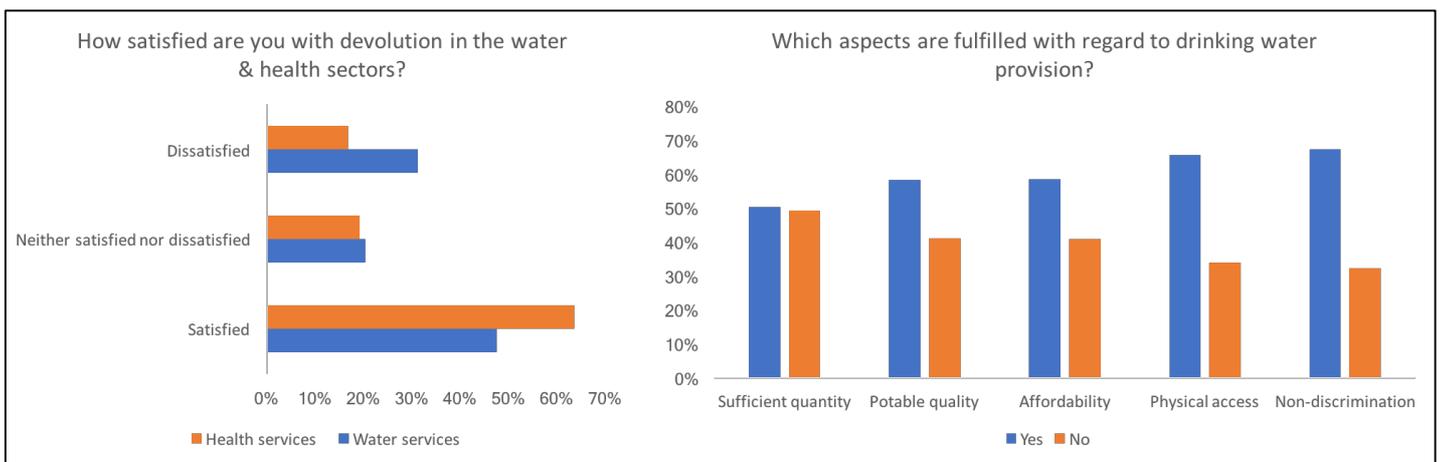
89% of the respondents are either very satisfied or satisfied with the performance of Kwale County Government. 78% of the respondents are likely to vote for the current Governor, and 43% are likely to vote for the current Member of County Assembly. Both CORD and Jubilee increased their support base since 2015.

Highest improvement across the wards since the election of the County Government in 2013 was perceived in the education sector (59%), followed by roads and infrastructure (51%) and health services (47%). Drinking water services are lagging behind with only 11% acknowledging that these services have improved in their ward since 2013. The County Government (77%) was by far seen as the main institution responsible for these improvements.



How does the water sector fare?

Of the two major devolved service functions, there is higher satisfaction with health service provision (64%) compared to a 48% satisfaction rate with water service provision. 85% expect the County Government to subsidise drinking water services. Only 12% stated that the County Government engaged in the repair of drinking water supplies in their area. Only half of the respondents stated that sufficient quantity was provided with regard to drinking water provision, followed by potable quality and affordability at 59% each, physical access (66%) and non-discrimination (67%).



More Information

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