



*The Kenya Alliance of Resident Associations*

## About Us

### CSUDP

The Civil Society Urban Development Platform (CSUDP) is one of the strategic partners in the implementation of the national framework of the New Urban Agenda launched in May 2017. CSUDP continues to contribute to the realization of social inclusion as envisaged in the New Urban Agenda.

### KARA

The Kenya Alliance of Resident Associations (KARA), an apex body representing the voice and pro-active action of resident associations on consumers and taxpayers' rights countrywide – on accelerated access to public service delivery. KARA promotes social accountability through supporting structured public participation in service delivery agenda.

# URBAN CITIZENS AND THE BIG 4 AGENDA

## Town Hall Dialogues

Kenya is undergoing a demographic transition with a majority of the population set to live in urban areas by 2030. Such urbanization, if well harnessed, is likely to inspire unprecedented economic and social transformation. However, unplanned, uncontrolled and unregulated urbanization may also bring along serious risks that could impede the development, cause environmental catastrophes, and result in increased poverty and insecurity.

The of the urban institutions as envisaged in the Urban Areas and Cities Act (2011), carry good promise for renewed urban development. Citizens have an integral role in these new urban institutions. Their role is particularly provided for under section 22 of UACA, which envisages active interface between the citizens and their urban boards in the governance and management of urban areas. The urban boards are also composed of non-state nominees to moderate the civic interest.

Through a partnership between the Kenya Alliance of Resident Associations (KARA) and Civil Society Urban Development Platform (CSUDP), in collaboration with the Council of Governors, **urban dialogues** anchored on Town Hall format have been conceived. The first series of these town hall dialogues seeks to inspire debate on the practical role urban citizens can play towards the realization of the Big 4 Agenda within their urban localities.

# The Town Hall Dialogue Series



The recently concluded 5<sup>th</sup> annual devolution conference held in April 2018 in Kakamega concluded with a resounding commitment to strengthen public participation in all facets of governance and development. This came against the backdrop of the launch of the Kenya Urban Support Program (KUSP) that seeks to strengthen urban institutions as a precursor to improved service delivery. These urban institutions, according to law, includes the citizens forum (section 22, UACA).

Meaningful efforts have gone towards laying ground for public participation through guidelines such as the County Public Participation Guidelines (2016) and more recently the national Public Participation Policy. While such efforts are commendable, the practice has fallen short with a number of surveys revealing inadequacies with the approaches.

Citizens groups have also deployed various models of citizens' engagement with varied levels of success. Some of these models have included the Local Urban Forums (LUFs), the neighborhood associations, and community action groups (CAG), amongst a host of others.

Experience from these models have demonstrated that four key elements are important for effective citizens engagement; One, is citizens to have confidence and trust amongst themselves and on their government; two, is for a conducive environment to exist that facilitates dialogue and consensus building; three, is for information and knowledge to be readily available and accessible; and, four, is for accountability to prevail at all levels of engagement.

The Town Hall dialogue series is designed to facilitate open dialogue and consensus building amongst citizens groups of varied interests. The first series will host dialogue on the Big 4 Agenda.



### The Big 4 Agenda

On 12 December 2017, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta announced his new plan, the 'Big Four', to guide the development agenda of the country in the period 2018-2022. The Big Four focuses on key basic needs that are critical in uplifting the standard of living of Kenyans on the path to becoming an upper middle-income country by 2030. The agenda priorities are affordable and decent housing; affordable healthcare; food and nutritional security; and, employment creation through manufacturing.

These four areas are expected to bolster strong inclusive economic growth. Urban areas present the greater confluence of enablers for the delivery of the Big Four.

### Citizens as enablers of the Big 4 Agenda

The relationship between Citizens and their government was fundamentally changed by the Constitution of Kenya (2010), placing citizens at the core of decision-making on matters affecting them. In particular, Article 174c gives powers of self-governance and enhances their participation in the exercise of the powers of the State.

Citizens are a key asset in the realization of the Big Four agenda. They form the much needed labor force to achieve the Big Four and as well occupy the position of beneficiaries of successful delivery. However, the core strength of the citizens lies in their ability to organize and coordinate this valuable asset. Dialogue amongst the citizens, such as that anticipated through the Town Hall Dialogues, sets a good premise for citizens to appreciate and leverage their asset worth to enable successful delivery of the Big Four.



During the next 5 years, I will dedicate the energy, time and resources of my Administration to the Big Four.

The **Big Four** will create jobs, which will enable our people to meet their basic needs. Jobs will transform the lives of our people from that of hardship and want, to new lives of great comfort and wellbeing. **And that is the future I have seen.**

*Uhuru Kenyatta*

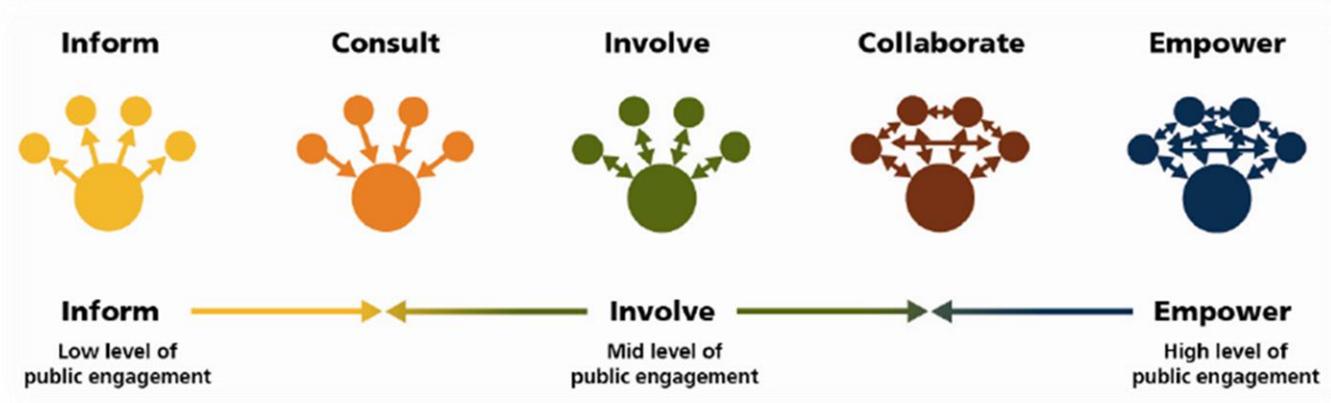
## Town Hall Dialogue Highlights

The Town Hall Dialogue program will involve the following highlights:

- The Big 4 Agenda and the emerging opportunities for citizens involvement
- Identification of the roles of citizens in the implementation and realization of the identified sectors, propose mechanisms of discharging the roles and appreciate the benefits of participation and mechanisms of securing the benefits to the citizens
- Summarize the priority issues for future attention in the Governor's Round Table Forum

### THEME:

## OPPORTUNITIES AND ROLES OF CITIZENS IN THE BIG 4 AGENDA



Source: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)

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