

# **GOVERNANCE OF CITIES IN DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT IN KENYA: EXPERIENCES FROM KISUMU**

**George M. ONYANGO**

*Maseno University, Private Bag, Maseno, Kenya*

**Stephen G. AGONG**

*Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, P. O. Box 210-40601, Bondo, Kenya*

## **Abstract**

Devolution in Kenya has had ramification on local governments especially urban areas. Kisumu City is unique as the only city with a rural county hinterland. It has created a challenge for the County Executive in terms of managing County expectations and City interests in terms of governance. This paper looks at Kisumu in terms of the governance structures, spatial planning and finance as key aspects of having an effective city management and governance. It points out the gaps that exist within the legal framework that operationalizes the devolved structures for the city. It allows for an appreciation of the management and governance structures of the city as it strives to put in place systems that would make devolution for the city to work.

**Keywords:** Devolution, Governance, Cities, Kenya

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Kenya's decentralization is among the most rapid and ambitious devolution processes going on in the world, with new governance challenges and opportunities as the country builds a new set of county governments from scratch.

Feinstein (2015) and Ojumbo (2012) notes that decentralisation entails the devolving of responsibility to sub-national tiers of government and is often described in terms of political, administrative and fiscal dimensions where:

Political = power to elect representatives who are able to make various laws and regulations;

Administrative = responsibility for the provision of certain services and activities; and

Fiscal = distribution of revenue between different tiers of government and the regions' powers to raise revenue through taxes, charges and surcharges.