

CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Riverside, California

Property Tax Policy in the City of Kigali (Rwanda): A Case Study
of Policy Implementation

A Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements of the degree
Doctor of Public Administration

Jean Marie Vianney Ntayomba

Division of Online and Professional Studies

Department of Public Administration

June 2019

Property Tax Policy in the City of Kigali (Rwanda): A Case Study
of Policy Implementation

Copyright © 2019

by Jean Marie Vianney Ntayomba

This dissertation written by

Jean-Marie Vinney Ntayomba

has been approved by the

Division of Online and Professional Studies at California Baptist University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree Doctor of Public Administration



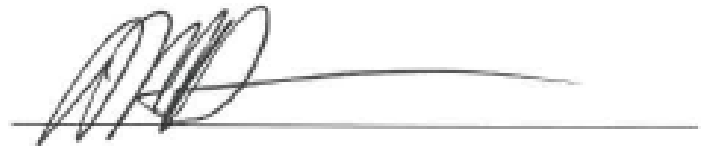
Pat Kircher, DPA Committee Chair



Ogbochi McKinney, DrPH Committee Member



Richard Ardito, DBA Committee Member



Dirk Davis, Ed.D Associate Vice President of Academics

ABSTRACT

Property Tax Policy in the City of Kigali (Rwanda): A Case Study of Policy Implementation

by Jean Marie Vianney Ntayomba

Problem: The city of Kigali (CoK), the capital city of the Republic of Rwanda is fast growing in demography and urbanization amid pronounced fiscal challenges. The city, its districts with the support of the central government, is exploring property taxation among other options to improve revenues to develop new infrastructure and modernize those existing. Studies around the world demonstrate that property tax is a hope for every local government. It is stable, reliable, and less subject to inflation as it applies to fixed assets. Nonetheless, studies show that in developing countries, property tax implementation has rarely worked well.

Purpose: The purpose of this research was to investigate perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers involved in property tax policy implementation in the city of Kigali from 2003 to 2018 by exploring how policy content (statute and other policy decisions), political acceptability, and institutional capacity impact property tax policy implementation. The ultimate objective was to discern the gap between what is practiced in the city of Kigali and general principles of policy implementation theory and practices as delineated in the literature to generate recommendations for reform.

Methodology: Interviews were conducted with tax collectors, local government managers, business community leaders, and civil society organizations. In addition, the study used secondary data analysis. In the process, the investigator has learned that property tax policy implementation is complex, multidisciplinary, and multifaceted. The

process implies arduous change management, handling social sensitivity, high economic cost, and the task is politically and managerially demanding. The process requires huge investments of money upfront before revenues start flowing, an issue that many developing countries find difficult to face.

Findings and Conclusions: The city of Kigali made tangible progress and learned valuable lessons through trial and errors. Detailed prior planning, cultural dialogue, employing collaborative governance to rally needed expertise, and engaging involved policy and organizations in continual learning are among techniques to improve implementation. In addition, employing participative democracy to rally taxpayers' support and early involvement of experts in information, communication, and technology can increase policy acceptability and make implementation easier.

Recommendation: Above all, it was found that symmetry between policy and culture is a strong element, that fairness of both policy and process of administration are critical, and that the only way to succeed is through collaborative governance.

Keywords: cultural dialogue, collaborative governance, change management, policy fairness, policy implementation, participative democracy, change management, property tax, government accountability.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is a product of hard work and saw contributions from experts, family, and friends. First, I am most grateful to the chair of the dissertation committee Dr. Patricia Kircher who provided guidance with diligence from beginning to completion. I am indebted to Dr. Ogbochi Mc Kinney and Dr. Rich Ardito, members of the committee who persistently endured an arduous walk with me during this dissertation writing. I received very valuable guidance and feedback, and I am grateful.

Special thanks to my wife Assumpta Murekatete, my children, Nicole Iragena, Ariane Uwase, and Parfait Sewase, who endured my absence. Thank you for unconditional love and support all along this work.

I am most grateful to the participants in this study for sharing graciously their experiences. Without their contributions, I could not accomplish this work.

I thank all members of the faculty in the DPA program and other staff of the California Baptist University who in one way or another have facilitated the attainment of this achievement. It has been a rewarding experience coming to this great Christian university for my doctoral studies.

May God bless you all

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Study	3
Research Questions	4
Research Question 1	5
Research Question 2	5
Research Question 3	6
Significance of the Problem	6
Definitions of Terms	8
Organization of the Study	11
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	12
Property Tax Overview and Background in the CoK	12
Property Tax and Local Governments Financing	12
Equity and Fairness	14
Revenue Adequacy	15
Low Costs of Administration and Compliance	16
Political Acceptability	17
Intergovernmental Relations in the CoK	17
Intergovernmental Fiscal Responsibility in the CoK	20
Historical Background of Property Tax in the CoK	21
Review of Property Tax Policies Under Implementation in the CoK	22
Policy Implementation Theory	24
Policy Content (Statute) and Implementation	34
Policy With Clarity and Coherent Logic	36
Allocate Initial Funding and Incentives to Implementers	40
Legitimacy of Policy Toward Implementing Organizations	41
The Statute Provides for Accountability Among Stakeholders	43
The Statute Guarantees Participation in Policy Design	44
Political Acceptability and Implementation	47
Lack of Consensus Versus Conflicting Interests	47
Political and Socioeconomic Events Change Policy Priorities	48
Difficulties in Network Coordination and the Role of Fixers	49
Fading Political and Budget Support	51
Political Interests Ahead of Property Tax Revenues	52
Opportunities for Collective Learning	55
The Role of Policy Analysis	56
Institutional Capacity and Property Tax Implementation	57
Overview of Property Tax Cycle and Management	57

Property tax base identification	58
Property tax base valuation.....	59
Property tax assessment.....	60
Property tax collection.....	60
Tax enforcement.....	61
Structure for Policy Integration	62
Leadership and Human Skills	64
Financial Resources and Implementation	65
Assets and Technology in Property Taxation	66
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	68
Research Questions	68
Research Question 1	68
Research Question 2	69
Research Question 3	69
Research Design.....	70
Population and Sampling.....	72
Instrumentation	75
Data Collection	77
Data Analysis	78
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS	81
Interview Findings	82
Research Question 1	82
Research Question 2	89
Research Question 3	95
Secondary Data Findings	100
Research Question 1: Policy Content Impact on Property Tax Implementation	101
Research Question 2: Political Acceptability Impact on Property Tax Implementation	102
Research Question 3: Institutional Capacity Impact on Policy Implementation	103
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS	105
Important Observations.....	106
Critical Phases in Property Tax Policy Implementation in the CoK	106
Key Pending Issues in Property Tax Implementation in the CoK	108
Key Lessons Learned.....	109
Recommendations.....	111
Research Question 1: Improving Policy Content.....	111
Research Question 2: Increasing Policy Political Acceptability.....	117
Research Question 3: Improving Institutional Capacity	119
Linking Findings With Theory	124
Limitation of the Study	126
Study Contribution.....	127
Further Studies	128
Conclusion	128

REFERENCES	133
APPENDICES	145
A. Interview Questions/Guide for Participant	146
B. Key Sequences of Property Tax Reform in the City of Kigali.....	149

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Administrative map of CoK	19
Figure 2. Property tax revenues in the city of Kigali.....	24
Figure 3. Property tax implementation model.	34
Figure 4. Property tax cycle.	58

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the city of Kigali in Rwanda implemented its first property tax policies to mobilize resources to fund its projects and provide better and more public services to its residents. Before 2002, there were neither legal text documents published with regard to formal property tax in Rwanda nor any documented practice recorded. This move came after the Rwandan government's decision to initiate a decentralization policy aimed at shifting from a heavier, all-powerful central government to more viable regional and local governments with increased political, administrative, and financial autonomy.

In addition, districts and central and regional cities were granted powers to tax. In the process, the city of Kigali—the Capital of Rwanda—became an independent entity and a leading test ground for the application of a decentralization policy in all its aspects, especially in implementing property tax policies, which constituted much hope for revenue sources for the newly reinvented local governments.

In this study, which focuses on the implementation of the property tax policies in the city of Kigali, the researcher reviewed the 15 years of implementation, evaluated the current state of affairs, and learned from frontline decision-makers and practitioners (implementers) who were involved in the process of implementation.

The goal of this study was to explore the critical factors that enhance or contradict effective property tax policy implementation, document potential actions, and create incentives that could increase effectiveness in property tax policy implementation in urban environments in developing countries.

The city of Kigali (CoK), the capital city of the Republic of Rwanda, is one of Africa's fastest-developing urban agglomerations with a demographic growth of 10%

each year (City of Kigali, 2002). Such a pace, coupled with existing controversies because of its poor past planning and complex social issues, combined to engender a host of problems that frustrate the advancement of the CoK in pursuing its dream of becoming a major regional hub for Eastern, Central, and Southern regions of Africa.

Rwanda's largest city, Kigali, carries a heavy burden of dealing with fast urbanization because of the large number of people emigrating from rural areas in search of better opportunities. As this influx of people increases, the city government faces a shortage of adequate public infrastructure, including housing, schools, hospitals, recreation, transportation and sewage system, and public utilities such as energy and water.

The mandate of public organizations is "to serve people" (Christensen, 2007), which means these organizations are created, structured, and provided with the authority and resources to make decisions and implement programs aimed at responding to daily needs of the citizens. In this vein, the CoK needs considerable financial revenues to become a self-reliant city that can finance much of the basic services and address pressing problems of unfit urban social infrastructures, low-quality health care, underrated quality education, inadequate systems of waste collection and management, curb safety risks, and an underequipped and understaffed police force. Kopanyi (2015) of the International Growth Centre, an Oxford University research consortium, reported that the CoK not only has a severe shortage of financial revenues, but it also has opportunities. He further stated that the CoK can tap into readily available and unutilized resources, such as property tax revenues.

Background of the Problem

In previous studies, Kopanyi (2014, 2015) discerned that although the CoK has considerable revenue potential embodied in taxable real estate, it has not been able to exploit this for a long time. Even though there are no reliable statistics available, Kigali Economic Development Strategy (KEDS; City of Kigali, 2002) estimated that the CoK collects less than 23% of the potential property tax revenues available. At this critical proportion, property tax still emerges as a major contributor to the city revenues. The CoK faces a stringent shortage of resources to deliver the desired level of public services that reflects its prospective performance goals. With these estimates, the preliminary question is to understand the reasons why 15 years of property tax policy implementation have not reached the desired outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

Several studies have concluded that property tax is the primary source of revenues for local governments around the world (Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2012). Because property tax is based on real estate, it is steady, reliable, and a regular source of income for subnational governments (Trasberg, 2004). Bahl, Martinez-Vazquez, and Youngman (2008) considered property tax a hope for every local government. However, it has not worked well in developing countries (Bahl et al., 2008). Therefore, research on improving property tax implementation for local governments in Kigali and other cities is of vital importance.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions and experiences of decision makers and implementers involved in the implementation of property tax policy in the CoK (Rwanda) during the last-15 years from 2003 to 2018. The focus of this study

was to understand the impact of policy content (statute and other policy decisions), political acceptability, and institutional capacity on property tax implementation since Rwanda passed the Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002, granting political, administrative, and fiscal autonomy to local governments for the first time in its history. This study is an attempt to capture first-hand experiences from pioneers of the practice of property tax implementation to explore-whether their experiences adhere to the best practices as delineated in the literature.

Through secondary data analysis and interviews with participants, findings of this study will reveal facts behind the current state of property tax policy implementation in the CoK, lessons learned, and pending issues and provide a basis for informed recommendations to the CoK on policy reform and further improvements of implementation. Furthermore, not only will recommendations of this study serve to improve the next phases of implementation of property tax in the CoK in Rwanda, but also the record of best practices and lessons gathered in this study could help improve practices of property tax policy in other developing countries with similar socioeconomic and political environment.

Research Questions

To study the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in order to understand the impact of policy content, political acceptability, and institutional capacity on property tax policy implementation practice, three questions guided this study.

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of policy content in the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

The first research question addressed the practitioners' perceptions on how property tax policy content (statute and other policy decisions) embodied the ideal of efficiency, equity, and fairness and how adequate the policy content was and the impact it had on implementation of property tax in the CoK.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of political acceptability on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

The second research question explored practitioners' experiences and perceptions on property tax political acceptability among stakeholders in the CoK and how it has impacted implementation. The question looked at the pros and cons of politics surrounding property tax policy, tax-related conflicts of interests versus consensus among stakeholders and inquired about political and socioeconomic events that potentially shifted policy priorities (fading political and financial support) during implementation. It also explored difficulties of coordinating and reconciling multiple stakeholders and interests, existence of traffic of influence for personal gains among stakeholders (i.e., elections, monetary gratification), and how these factors impacted implementation.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of the institutional capacity on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

The third research question captured experiences and perceptions of practitioners related to administrative and technical capacity (i.e., issues of policy integration into implementing, money, leadership and human skills, assets, and technology for implementation) and how these factors have impacted implementation in the CoK.

Significance of the Problem

The CoK is the largest urban conglomerate of the nation and is inhabited by 1,132,686 people (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012). Within the last 2 decades, the population growth has tripled, thereby exerting a heavy strain on the existing urban infrastructure. This population growth has outpaced the urban planning capacity and has far surpassed the social service infrastructure in almost all sectors, including water supply, urban planning and development, power provision, sewage treatment, health provision, and the school system. In addition, the increasing population has exacerbated the unemployment crisis, which is estimated at 75%, for youth and adults alike (City of Kigali, 2012).

KEDS highlights that the CoK can only collect 60% of the 450 tons of garbage it generates per day, and out of 173 km of roads and streets throughout the city, there are only 20 km of paved roads (City of Kigali, 2002). Even though the school attendance in the city is high at 92%, the quality of education is very low. Classrooms are overcrowded, not adequately furnished, and the number of teachers and the quality of

their training is questionable. As CoK residents demand more and better services, the city and its districts are falling short of funds to respond. Further, the city is unable to provide some vital services to the citizens, such as recreational facilities, public libraries, fire services, and enough classrooms.

As the CoK rapidly expanded and socioeconomic issues became more complex (City of Kigali, 2002), unauthorized construction spread haphazardly, which caused inefficient land use, placed habitats at risk, and caused environmental degradation as well as problems with sanitation and urban planning. In addition, the transportation system is currently overcrowded during peak hours, and there is a high demand for construction of alternate roads.

Clean water is a major problem in the CoK. There are still 17% of individuals who do not have access to safe drinking water, and those that have it face an acute shortage during dry seasons and must walk or drive several miles to fetch water in public standpipes in neighboring rural areas. There is widespread homelessness and numerous street children; however, numbers are not available because of the volatility and mobility of the people affected. Moreover, in 2017, the World Bank reported that electricity was a major obstacle to investment in Rwanda (World Bank, 2017).

The CoK needs to upgrade its provision of urban services. Even though it has made remarkable development strides in the last 15 years, the implementation of its current strategic plan and problems requires huge revenues beyond its current capacity (Kopanyi, 2015). Based on these facts, to face the problem of shrinking revenues, the findings from this study will directly and indirectly benefit more than one million residents of the city who will benefit from a better quality and quantity of services. A

clean and prosperous capital city is a pride to the country. Modern infrastructure, an effective government, and adequate services in the city would elevate the rating of the country's openness for business and subsequently stimulate overall economic development through local and foreign investments.

Definitions of Terms

There are major concepts employed in this study that merit definition: property tax, property tax policy and implementation, and the concept of the CoK and its districts, implementers, and decision makers.

Property tax. The terms *property tax* or *real property taxes* are often used to mean the same thing. There is, however, a significant difference. The problem lies precisely in the term property taxes. Property taxes can refer to both *personal property taxes* and *real estate taxes*. Real estate taxes refer to nonmovable property—land and building—while personal property taxes refer to movable properties, such as a vehicle, livestock, and furniture. This study is concerned with real estate taxation (land and building). In Rwanda, the legislature has used the term *fixed asset* to mean land and property. Throughout this study, the term property tax signifies tax on land parcels and on building and/or improvements on land as instituted by property tax laws of Rwanda.

Property tax policy versus property tax administration. Tax revenue is a function of two variables closely related: policy choices and implementation action. The term tax policy refers to a body of laws that govern taxation for a given administrative entity. Property tax policy defines, among other things, tax base, tax rates, who is the taxpayer or alternate payer responsible for paying the tax amount, and how he or she pays. Furthermore, it offers a detailed procedure for compliance, enforcement, and the

authority of the tax collector. Those concepts are defined generally by national laws organized under the term *tax policy*.

Property tax administration refers to implementation actions: a series of technical procedures of implementation *inter alia* identifying taxable properties, conducting valuation, individual tax assessment, and actual collection of taxes.

Property tax policies are determined by policy makers who are referred to as decision makers, and property tax administration is the responsibility of technical staff who are referred to as implementers in this study. Mainly, they are local councils in charge of making altering decisions (i.e., annual tax base review and redefinition of tax base) and providing guiding principles for the implementation of property. Decision makers on the one hand not only include the central government organizations that oversee fiscal policies including the parliament but also local decision makers who are mainly council members at district levels and at the CoK level. They work with policy analysts who are in charge of policy design and advising decision makers on policy matters and the political process associated with it.

Implementers on other hand not only refer to field, technical staff including tax collectors and public administrators (i.e., director of administration and finances at the district and CoK level, executive secretary in charge of the overall coordination of technical departments at the district and CoK level) but also staff of the Rwanda Revenue Authority, the national tax agency deployed in various entities to support them technically. In this study, decision makers and implementers are referred to in this designation.

Policy content. In this study, policy content refers to *statutes* (tax laws) instituting property tax in the CoK and *other policy directives* issued for its implementation. For ease of implementation, there are specific rules of policy design. Certain fundamentals must be observed because they have the potential to induce its implementation. The following paragraphs elaborate on the concept of policy content (statute) and the process of implementation. Indeed, Carter, Weible, Siddiki, Brett, and Chonaiew (2015) attested that “one of the factors that affects policy likelihood for success is its design” (p. 1).

Policy content outlines mandatory elements that must appear in the policy content to make implementation possible as delineated in the literature. Among important factors the statute must (a) define clear goals and be driven by adequate causal theory, (b) allocate initial financial resources and incentives to implementing bureaucrats, (c) be legitimate towards implementing organizations, (d) define the accountability system among implementing organizations, and (e) guarantee a formal participation in designing policy. In the study, policy is referred to as signifying the statutes of laws instituting or reforming property tax policy content and other significant policy directives issued for its implementation.

Policy acceptability. Refers to the interplay between political, social, and economic environments among implementing organizations, interest groups, and community organizations. Political interplay between elected and nonelected officials surrounding the policy entails how they communicate feedback regarding the policy, how they negotiate conflicting interests that interfere with effective implementation, and how

the policy is perceived by the taxpayers and the citizens in general in regard to how the policy aligns with their expectations, benefits, social economic stability, and so on.

Institutional capacity. In the context of this research, institutional capacity invokes the organizational set up requisite for the new policy integration for the purpose of implementation, including organizational structure, leadership and human skills, required assets, technology, and budget allocation in support of property tax implementation activities.

Organization of the Study

This study is structured into five chapters. Chapter 1 presented the research topic, interests, and research questions. Chapter 2 focuses on the review of the literature with subsections on policy content, political acceptability, and institutional capacity. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used with subsections on research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents findings of the study under two sections: interview findings and secondary data analysis findings. Chapter 5 provides discussion of the main results, the link to theory, scholarship contribution of the research, suggestion for further studies, recommendations, and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on reviewing some of the previous studies on the topic of property tax policy design and implementation. It summarizes the essential facts of available knowledge on the topic. A complete account of the existing literature on the topic enables the researcher to identify the space in the literature that this research's results will fill in. Efforts were employed to make it as comprehensive as possible.

This chapter introduces property tax as source of choice for local governments, and then presents its historical background and implementation in the city of Kigali (CoK). The rest of the chapter is developed in four major sections: (a) Section 1 introduces the implementation theory, (b) Section 2 explores the policy content and its impact on the policy implementation, (c) Section 3 talks about politics and stakeholders' coordination and their impact on policy implementation, and (d) Section 4 presents the institutional capacity and its impact on the implementation.

Property Tax Overview and Background in the CoK

This section provides an overview of the literature that highlights the prominent role of property tax in local government financing and local economic development around the world in general. Thereafter, this section presents the historical background of property tax policy and its implementation in the CoK to enable the reader to understand the context of the research.

Property Tax and Local Governments Financing

Property tax is a significant source of revenue for many local governments in the world (Sepulveda et al., 2012). Without an adequate revenue source, Bell (1999) asserted that “the local government lacks autonomy and is an assumed arm of the national or

provincial government” (p. 2). On a global level, Kelly (2000) found that “even though comparative data are scarce, property taxes account for 40-80% of local government finances, 2-4% of total government taxes, and 0.5-3% of GDP” (p. 38). Bahl et al. (2008) postulated that property tax is hope for every local government.

Sepulveda and Martinez-Vazquez (2012) found that there are predominantly accepted criteria or principles to describe a reasonable tax and to evaluate the appropriateness of alternative tax instruments, including efficiency, equity, fairness, revenue adequacy, low cost of administration and compliance, political acceptability, and minimum tax avoidance and tax evasion.

Property tax is an efficient tax (Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2012). Hence, “such a tax should not induce the significant behavioral responses of individuals and firms and should not distort the adequate allocation of resources in the economy” (Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2012, p. 178). When a taxpayer bears his or her tax burden following the benefit he or she receives, that tax is considered an efficient tax.

R. F. Dye and England (2010) noted that property tax is a dependable tax because it reduces dependence on state or deferral grants, which can result in a loss of local autonomy, especially in setting expenditure priorities. Hence, property tax makes local budgets less vulnerable to regional and national recession. Despite fiscal uncertainties, a local property tax would offer a more stable stream of revenue with which to fund essential municipal services.

Among other attributes of property tax, property tax minimizes tax avoidance and tax evasion. According to Sepulveda and Martinez-Vazquez (2012),

A tax should not induce significant legal and illegal efforts to elude the tax burden. Both types of responses erode the tax base, create deviations from the targeted incidence, distort the relative prices in the economy, and might aggravate problems in horizontal and vertical equity. (p. 179)

While residents who wish to avoid paying local sales tax can take their shopping and sales tax dollars to the next municipality or elsewhere, they cannot take their land or home with them. Thus, the property tax is a stable stream of revenue for local governments.

Equity and Fairness

The equity principle calls for equal treatment of taxpayers in identical conditions. Property tax aligns with the taxpayer's ability to make principal payments, which suggests that taxes should be levied according to a taxpayer's ability to pay. The property tax rate applies to the value of the real estate and is therefore proportionate to the ability of a taxpayer's revenues.

Property tax is also *fair* (Bahl, 2014). It is common knowledge that in communities with high property tax, property values are higher, and services in those areas are qualitatively and quantitatively superior. Hence, there is often better street lighting, increased safety, better police surveillance, higher quality schools, and so on. This is a notable incentive for taxpayers and local authorities to make property taxation work because it fosters a self-serving relationship between taxpayers, their properties, and local government authorities who collect the tax to provide services. Bahl et al., (2008) considered property tax very lucrative, asserting that a small statutory tax rate on properties can yield a significant amount of revenues.

Revenue Adequacy

For a property tax to be adequate, Sepulveda and Martinez-Vazquez (2012) stated,

A tax must raise enough amount of revenues relative to the costs of collection and the expenditure needs of a government. Besides, the tax base should be stable and rather insensitive to cyclical fluctuations. Property tax is a fair tax because of the significant source of revenues for local government. (p. 179)

Property tax is *stable* because it is based on immovable properties. Furthermore, property tax is also a dependable tax. In practice, fluctuations in market prices and income tend to have a slight impact on property tax. This is beneficial to local governments in charge of providing essential services, thus making it a local tax of choice. Additionally, property tax is progressive; it takes a more significant percentage from high revenue earners than it does for low-income individuals.

Property tax is also *visible* because it promotes citizen involvement and *accountability*. In his narrative, Bell (1999) postulated that property owners receive tax bills annually that specify the precise cost for community services provided by the local government. Such transparency promotes citizen involvement in the local budget process, thus strengthening accountability. This implicitly suggests that benefits are distributed across properties in proportion to their property tax liabilities. Dillinger (1991) highlighted that the link between property tax payments and benefits received improves accountability on a local level by encouraging feedback on the desirability of the goods, services, and tax price to local officials.

In his study on property tax in the state of California, Martin (2015) revealed the harmful effects of Proposition 13, which sought to cap the property tax that local governments charge property owners in the state. Among other things, his study revealed that Proposition 13 has even had a negative impact on students' achievements as measured by standardized tests administered over several school districts. Interestingly, seven of the eight cases studied indicated that the property tax limitation caused a substantial decline in the average score of these students (Martin, 2015). This subsection demonstrates how a well-designed and well-implemented property taxation policy by local governments can revolutionize municipal revenues and development.

Low Costs of Administration and Compliance

Sepulveda et al. (2012) highlighted that “the high cost of property tax administration reduces the share of tax collection that can be used to finance public goods and services. Similarly, compliance costs reduce the share of taxpayers' income available for private consumption” p. 179). As property tax is costly to administer, it is challenging to implement in developing countries with scarce financial resources (Kelly, 2000). In these countries, a multitude of essential social programs compete for few revenues available; therefore, local government chooses the list of expensive but less lucrative forms of taxes or fees.

Moreover, it requires enormous investment to establish a county cadaster (a comprehensive land recording of real estate of a county), which requires conducting an inventory of taxable properties, assessing their values, collecting details of their characteristics and ownership, monitoring property transfers, establishing a billing

system, creating an appeal system as well as enforcement. According to Kelly (2000), property tax is costly, and most developing countries face difficulties in implementing it.

Political Acceptability

A tax that is not acceptable to the taxpayer or a significant portion of the political class might become impossible to implement (Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2012), and even when it is implemented, a tax requires a high degree of cooperation between all the relevant agents and institutions to be successful. Failing to reach such cooperation might result in low voluntary compliance, inadequate or unrealistic laws, and scarce enforcement.

Intergovernmental Relations in the CoK

The-CoK is a conglomerate and comprises three districts (Nyarugenge, Kicukiro, and Gasabo) and 35 *Umurenge* at the lowest tier of government. CoK and its three districts each have an executive committee and a council elected by constituent assemblies. Furthermore, there is also a distinct distribution of functions among levels of local councils.

The council of the CoK defines the city development plan, elaborates the master plan, approves the CoK budget, designs and approves infrastructure development, and oversees the implementation of the master plan and other policies in the city.

District councils collect taxes, execute the master plan, and coordinate provisions of basic public services such as education, safety and security, health care, and other social services. The *Imirenge* councils oversee implementation of national and city council policies at the grassroots level, guide provision of public services to the needy, and coordinate neighborhood assemblies.

The CoK and each district are headed by a mayor and two deputy mayors elected among council members. The mayor of the CoK is an overall coordinator of operations that transcend one or two districts and plays a role of representation for the CoK vis-a-vis the central government's national and international entities.

With the aim to facilitate policy implementation with speed, efficiency, and administrative effectiveness, the three districts under the CoK (Nyarugenge, Kicukiro, and Gasabo) have the autonomy of decision-making and raising taxes in their respective jurisdictions under the obligations and rights endowed to them by laws. Any district council decision that has spillover effects must be debated in the overall CoK council as a higher tier of government. The law provides for the equalization of revenues between CoK and its districts (see Figure 1).

The CoK and its three districts are the mayor-council form of governments. They are headed by an executive committee comprising a principle mayor and two deputy mayors elected by the district's constituent assemblies. The council of CoK is the supreme organ of the city administration. It is composed of 33 members, each elected for a term of 5 years. Each district also elects its own council for 5 years. The city-appointed executive secretary assumes the responsibility of the daily operational management of the city under the guidance of the executive committee. Also, each district has a district executive secretary who coordinates all technical departments in the district playing a role of city manager.



Figure 1. Administrative map of CoK From “Kigali Economic Development Strategy,” by City of Kigali, 2002, Retrieved from <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/5398/2693.pdf?sequence=1>

The CoK and lower governments under its jurisdictions are differentiated but complementary so often overlapping responsibilities in certain areas. At the top, the council of CoK takes charge of the overall administration of the city and assumes responsibility for designing the city masterplan and policies for its implementation. It coordinates urban planning and infrastructure development and security citywide.

The districts take second-level decisions to implement the council of CoK’s decisions by defining various strategies and plans of action to execute the national and

council directives. At the lowest level comes the Umurenge administrative entity closest to the population without power of policy definition that basically-oversee execution of government policies in their communities. The CoK comprises 35 Imirenge in plural.

While higher levels of local governments previously explained are governed by executive committees and council comprising elected councils, the Umurenge is chaired by a designated executive secretary appointed by the central government. The executive secretary and his technical team's main responsibility is to oversee the execution of national government policies and the CoK and the district directives. However, they are assisted by elected council members who play an advisory role and the primary role of engaging citizens into policy-making consultation. The Umurenge is the bedrock for development, and it is the place where implementation operations take place. These local authorities have a prominent presence among residents, are real providers of public services, and conduct conflict mediation among residents to reduce cases that should be deferred to courts. They support information and guidance to all institutions operating in the district such as health, education, water, and educating communities on emerging policies.

As a general principle, the CoK assumes responsibilities for the actions that transcend the responsibility or boundaries of one district such as roads, overseeing water quality, public lights, overseeing security, and coordinating the administrative decisions that set standards for services to be provided through the city.

Intergovernmental Fiscal Responsibility in the CoK

The law on fiscal decentralization of revenues in the CoK provides for shared rights on revenues and dual responsibility in collecting taxes, including property tax.

Concerning the property tax, the law stipulates that districts under the CoK have the responsibility of the administration to collect property tax, but revenues are to be shared between the administration of the CoK and its districts. All property tax collected is deposited on regular account of the CoK, and at the end of each month, the accountant of the CoK will operate an equalization where 40% will be restituted on bank accounts of each district respective of the amount they have collected, and 60% is devolved to the district that has made collection. This means that 40% of all property tax revenues collected in three districts come to the CoK council. Umurenge exerts a close control of the execution of policies and thus learn first feedback of the population vis-a-vis policy adequacy, implementation issues. The Umurenge does not have responsibility for tax collection. It benefits from transfers from the CoK each month to sustain its payroll and sustain the cost of their daily operations.

Historical Background of Property Tax in the CoK

Legally, property taxation was not known to residents of the CoK until the year 2002 following the institution of the decentralization policy by the government of Rwanda. In searching the background, the researcher learned that the Belgian colonial administration introduced the ordinance of August 1912, which established tax on real property (Masengo, Ngoga, & Ingabire, 2014). After independence in 1973, Rwanda adopted law governing property tax. These legal instruments remained unknown to many Rwandans including local government authorities until 2002.

Prior to 2002, there was no implementation of property tax in the CoK per se, and land and buildings owned by households and businesses have never been subject to property taxation. Following the event of genocide and civil war in 1994, Rwanda

adopted a decentralization policy shifting from a centralized government to devolution of authority to local governments, which were placed entirely under the administration of the central government with little capacity for making political, administrative, and financial decisions (Rwanda Ministry of Local Government, 2012).

The Rwandan government has sought to empower local councils to serve as catalysts for conflict management, reconciliation of communities, and promotion of social cohesion. Local governments were also seen as vibrant partners to a faster recovery and economic development. The council of CoK as an independent organization born out of that process had set ambitious goals to become the economic hub in the region. For the first time, the city was led by an elected council instead of a national government appointee (Rwanda Ministry of Local Government & Social Affairs, 2001).

In a move to support the council of the CoK and other newly formed local governments, the government of Rwanda passed a bill, Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002, granting political, administrative, and fiscal autonomy to the city and district councils of Rwanda with the privileges to prepare their own budgets, the power to raise their own revenues, and make all their own administrative decisions. The potential source of revenues was the real property taxation on land and buildings. Fifteen years later, this study is the first attempt to assess what happened with the implementation of Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002.

Review of Property Tax Policies Under Implementation in the CoK

In establishing the source of revenues of districts and their management, Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002, stipulated that the property tax is levied on “fixed assets,” and

is charged in areas covered by any registered house or building wherever they might be. The law gives each district the authority to determine the rate based on the nature of the asset, its location, and what it is meant to serve. The law puts the obligation on the owner, the possessor, or the user to pay the property tax every year as determined by the district council (Law No. 17/2002).

Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002, also provided an exemption for some specific types of properties. Land and buildings owned by impoverished people, government-owned buildings, foreign diplomatic missions, scientific research, medical facilities, and other nonprofit activities are exempt from property tax. Regarding enforcement, the law stipulates that when the taxpayer fails to pay, he or she will receive a debt notification letter from the tax collector. If the taxpayer fails to abide by the obligations in due course, the fixed asset will be confiscated and sold out (Law No. 17/2002, Article 33).

Following little progress in implementation, there has been an attempt to reform by instituting Law No. 59/2011 of December 31, 2011, but little progress came as a result of this reform until the recent third attempt by Law No. 44 of October 29, 2018, which instituted stringent measures of enforcement.

Data on property tax in the CoK reveal apparent gaps. Goodfellow (2015) labeled these data as “patchy” (p. 14), and based on few data available, he showed that on average, property tax represents 3% of the total revenues collected in three districts of the city as depicted by the graph in Figure 2. Data for each of the three districts of the CoK are represented separately.

Figure 1 The composition of local revenue in Kigali's three districts, 2008-9

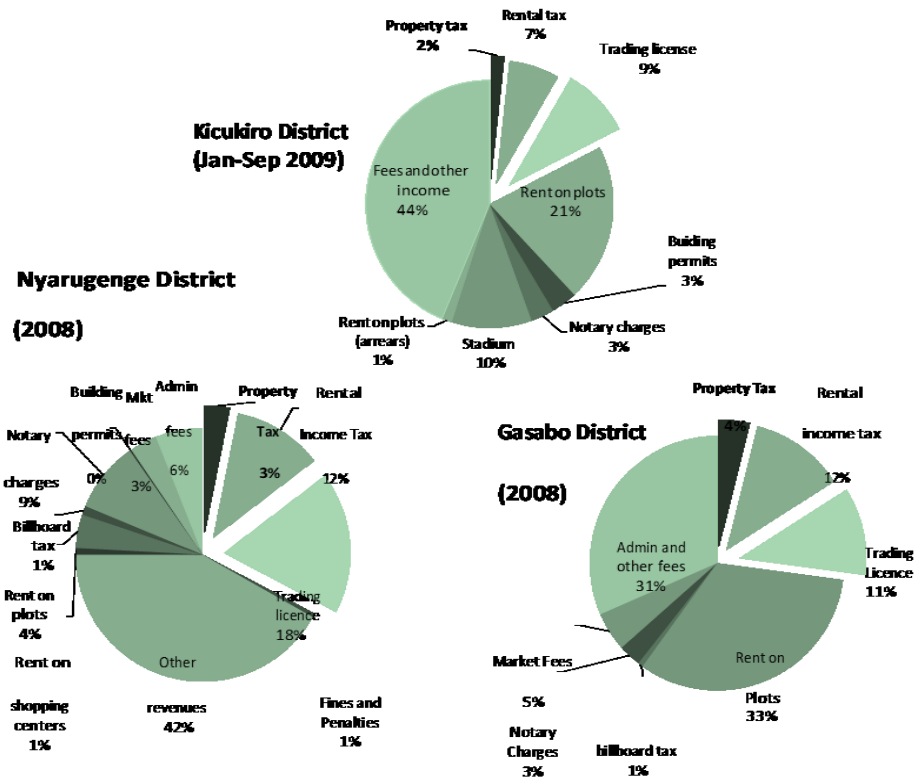


Figure 2. Property tax revenues in the city of Kigali From “Taxing the Urban Boom: Property Taxation and Land Leasing in Kigali and Addis Ababa (Working Paper 38), by T. Goodfellow, 2015, London, England: Institute of Development Studies.

Policy Implementation Theory

In the field of public policy, all governments are judged by how well they deliver results (Mulgan & Lee, 2001). In other words, they are evaluated based on the quality policies they design (responding to the aspiration of the citizens) and the effective implementation systems put in place to translate these policies into public services deliverables. This is applicable to any public policy including property tax policies.

In searching a theoretical framework, the policy implementation theory became most convenient to support this study. This theory started out of intellectual curiosity by two scholars, Pressman and Wildavsky, in 1973, following the failure of an antipoverty

program run by the Economic Development Agency in Oakland, California, in the United States. This theory developed over three generations but is still undergoing refinement.

The first-generation approach was basically tailored to a specific case study of a given policy (i.e., implementing antipoverty and economic development in Oakland, California) and focused on a *top-down approach* according to which a policy is formulated at the top and commissioned to the subordinate for implementation. With intent to amend the first approach, the second generation of researchers on implementation theory advocated for a participative approach, highlighting the necessity of involving implementers (street-level bureaucrats) in the formulation of policies. It was believed that incorporating the implementers' knowledge and expertise could yield policies that were more receptive by implementers and easily implementable. Thus, this second approach of implementation was termed *down-up approach*. The third generation tried the *reconciliatory approach* between the two and established its basis on the *communication model*, putting emphasis on continual interaction among stakeholders during the process of iteration of policy formulation, implementation, reformulation, and refinement of implementation. The main characteristics of this approach are twofold: implementation as a continual communication between policy makers and implementers and implementation as a learning process in which all stakeholders work together, communicate feedback, and improve policies and implementation conjointly and continually.

Until 1973, there were no formal studies of implementation. Before that, deLeon and deLeon (2002), scholars on the subject, had reached the simplistic conclusions that “implementation was too difficult to study (bureaucrats acting on their authority) or

simply that administrators carry out whatever policy they were charged with” (p. 469).

Triggered by the dramatic failure of the economic development policy under implementation by the Economic Development Agency (EDA) in Oakland, California, in 1973, two scholars of public policy—Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky—conducted a groundbreaking case study; their findings and discussions led to the basics of implementation theory. In this seminal work, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) defined implementation as the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal chain to obtain the desired results.

The following paragraphs present a brief outline of this unprecedented case study and briefly explicate the three significant developments of this study, called “generations,” in the study of this theory. In 1966, the U.S. federal government mandated the EDA to implement its antipoverty program centered on job creation for poor minorities. The goal was to stop poverty-fueled riots by creating 3,000 jobs for poor minorities through public works and local infrastructure developments. As this project came about as a duplication of a program that had been implemented successfully in rural areas, Eugene Foly, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce, believed that the project would be carried out because both a policy and money were readily available for implementation.

Conversely, the program was impeded in its development and subsequently fizzled out. However, 4 years later, despite the availability of money and relevant policy, the program produced shocking results regarding policy formulators and implementers. Few jobs were created, and the expected major public work projects in the program were not implemented. In 1973, out of intellectual curiosity, Pressman and Wildavsky

conducted a pioneering case study to understand the causes and obstacles to effective public policy implementation. From then on, other studies on policy implementation theory followed, and they were categorized into three generations, each one advocating a distinct approach to policy implementation theory.

The first-generation researchers including Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), Baldach (1979, and Derthick (1972) were focused on case studies analysis of a specific policy (economic development policy, mental health policies). As pioneers in the study of implementation, they brought the complexities of policy implementation to the forefront and in the center of policy makers, public administrators, and policy analysts. DeLeon and deLeon (2002) criticized this case-study approach because they had produced case-specific conclusions with the described lessons unable to develop into generic terms of implementation theory.

Then came the second generation divided into two schools, top-down approach and bottom-up approach, which were more sophisticated. In summary, the policy is articulated at the top of the hierarchy by those who possess the knowledge of cause and effects. They prescribe advice. The rules are established at the top, and the policy is aligned with the rules, resources, and capacity to carry out the commands from the top. They provide “prescriptive advice” (Matland, 1995, p. 147).

Bottom-uppers start their implementation strategy formation with the target groups and service deliverers. The target groups are the actual implementers of policy (Matland, 1995), which increases the chance of implementation success as implementers are involved in policy formation. Goals and strategies and activities must be deployed with particular attention to the people the policy will directly impact. The bottom-up

approach is aligned with participatory democracy and is more reflective of community interests, more realistic and practical (deLeon & deLeon, 2002), than the top-down approach because local officials are responsive to constituencies they serve.

The first group, labeled “top-downers,” included authors Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) and Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) who proposed a series of institutional and commitment-oriented hypotheses that assumed command and control orientation labeled as the top-down approach-of policy implementation.

The second school, labeled “bottom-uppers” approach comprised scholars, such as Lipsky (1971) and Hjern and Hull (1982), who stressed the importance of street-level bureaucrats in making policy implementation a success. In contrast to top-downers, their approach advocated for a democratic approach centered on the active participation of those affected in the process of planning and executing policies as a critical element of a successful implementation. DeLeon and deLeon (2002) challenged the bottom-up proponents because this cluster did not tolerate any idea of expeditious implementation when circumstances may dictate the use of the top-down approach. This brings one to the point that the policy approach to implementation is situational. While some aspects of the national security policy may require a top-down approach, other policies areas, such as environmental policy or property tax policy, may call for stakeholders’ inclusiveness in the process for a successful implementation. Scheberle (2004) specified that different conditions may require different implementation strategies, which is typical to property tax policy implementation.

In 1986, the scholar, Malcolm Goggin, and his associates constituted the third generation. The first generation was criticized for being nontheoretically based, case

specific, and noncumulative and overly pessimistic. The second generation developed the analytical frameworks to guide research on the complex phenomenon of policy implementation. The third generation focused on policy content and form, organizations, their resources, and human factors by looking at their talents, motives, predispositions, and interpersonal relationships (Goggin, 1990).

The third generation came to introduce the points missed in the first two generations' research on the implementation theory. Research of the third generation has led to the design of a communication model to advance the implementation theory. The model core trait is to uncover the dynamic relationships between the levels of governments that occur during policy implementation, specifically the intensive communications between decision makers and implementers. Sandfort and Moulton (2015) hypothesized that to improve implementation practice, one must understand and seek to influence activities happening at various levels throughout the implementation system.

Researchers in this cluster uncovered that although the implementation is a dynamic and interacting process, it cannot be understood merely by focusing exclusively on one level of action or another. The model reiterates how several interacting factors create the implementation environment. The researchers realized that the process of implementation produces valuable experiences and must necessarily prompt a continual feedback process in which agents of implementation must transmit messages to principles at the higher level of policy making (council, state, and federal). In return, implementers should receive further guidance on the way forward for a more productive implementation.

Implementers of property tax policies in the CoK should have been continually engaged in providing feedback and receiving more guidance from the council or from a higher level government agency that has authorities in property tax policy. This cycle of feedback enables reformulation of policy, aligning them to prevailing conditions of implementation.

Instead of being case specific and/or electing top-down or bottom-up approaches, the third generation of researchers chose a different approach to policy implementation. Trying to be reconciliatory of previous approaches, they wanted an exhaustive search for reliable indicators or predictor variables of practical implementation. The concept of *communication model* characterizes the third generation.

Goggin (1990) explained that the communication model of intergovernmental policy implementation was an effort to combine the insights of both approaches to explain how diverse factors work dynamically to affect implementation. The central feature of the third-generation theoretical argument is the dynamic interaction of bureaucrats, legislators, and organized interests at both the national and subnational levels within the intergovernmental relations' system.

Goggin (1990) defined the communication model as the glue that holds pieces together for effective implementation. This model sums up implementation as an interactive process and centers on bargaining among competing interests, which requires building consensus and overcoming the deadlock resulting from ideological bargaining between uncompromising factions. The researcher discerned that messages, their senders, and message recipients and the exchanges between them are the critical ingredients in decoding and absorbing messages.

Recognizing that implementation is a dynamic process resists the temptation to opt for either a top-down or bottom-up approach instead of synthesizing both approaches into a more comprehensive vision of intergovernmental policy. From this instance, the model incorporates a new concept of “policy learning” and its corollary policy redesign or reformulation.

Implementers’ feedback is key to redesigning the policy for effective implementation. Feedback is an essential component of a communication model. The third generation argues that implementation behavior varies predictably in the attributes of policy, organizations, and the environment in which implementation decisions and actions take place. In their early work, even Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) discerned that the complexity of joint action during implementation often necessitates coordination and cooperation, meaning that those who implement public policy have a steady hand in redesigning it.

As a learning process, implementation implies policy redesign. The dissatisfaction with an existing policy may lead to its eventual redesign. The council, legislators, or executive branch, by receiving reflected messages of dissatisfaction may redesign the policy. To conceptualize policy redesign, it is crucial to discern that the process of policy implementation is distinct from the implementation results; therefore, outputs and outcomes must be distinguished. The output is the extent to which programmatic goals have been satisfied while the outcomes are measured by more substantial changes in the society’s problem that a policy is intended to rectify. Property tax policies implementation is a never-ending process whereby implementers and policy makers must exchange information from each other, learn from each other, assist one

another, and change things together. That is why each year local municipalities must review property tax rates and fix other policy issues related to property tax policy implementation.

In conclusion, the third generation chose to be scientific by clarifying fundamental concepts. They defined implementation as a range of political and administrative behaviors directed toward putting a policy in place; they qualified implementation as a dynamic process that unfolds over time with changing implementation behavior following a set of activities that take place during the life of the program, not just during its startup. They emphasized the importance of extensive communications between stakeholders to decode messages, learn from implementers, provide feedback, learn interactively, and eventually redesign policy and make a course correction on implementation.

Restating Sandfort and Moulton's (2015) tome, "Implementation is hard and a thankless task" (p. 260) requiring ongoing learning and continual improvement. Policies on papers are a mere expression of the desired future by decision makers (legislators and executives). It is when implementation molds these policies that valuable lessons of implementation emerge, and the nature of outcomes is perceptible. Hence, implementers and organizations should continually learn new turns imposed by policy implementation.

Researchers from the third generation recognized that their contribution is unfinished work (Goggin, 1990). The researcher stated that they only contributed a blueprint by examining a sufficient number of cases of policy implementation in various states to be able to specify the causal paths leading to ranges of implementation behaviors

or styles. They recognized that implementation does vary over time and from one state to the next (Goggin, 1990).

There is a “candidate theory” they say. They conclude by encouraging students to test the third generation’s claim in the real world rather than accepting what the third generation says about why implementation varies. They urge scholars to be skeptical and test their hypotheses when opportunities present themselves (Goggin, 1990).

Furthermore, Mulgan and Lee (2001) and Blair (2002) set forth that until the time of their studies, the policy implementation theory paradox still existed. Blair stated that the research had not yet synthesized the knowledge of existing research theories into a coherent implementation theory. Khan and Khandaker (2016) even said that theoretical implementation development had died and they called scholars to undertake efforts to produce substantial theories so that policy implementation was recognized as an essential discipline. This study on property tax policy responds to these calls. This study proposes a novel model for the study of the property tax policy implementation in the CoK from 2003 to 2018.

Departing from the literature suggesting an account of variables that influence implementation and considering that each implementation is unique (so is the implementation of property tax policy in the CoK), this study takes the opportunity to develop a novel theoretical model based on third generation and other models found in the literature. It is built upon three factors that encompass many measurable variables that play a role in the implementation of property tax policy. The three factors are the policy content, the politics and stakeholders cooperation, and institutional capacity (see Figure 3).

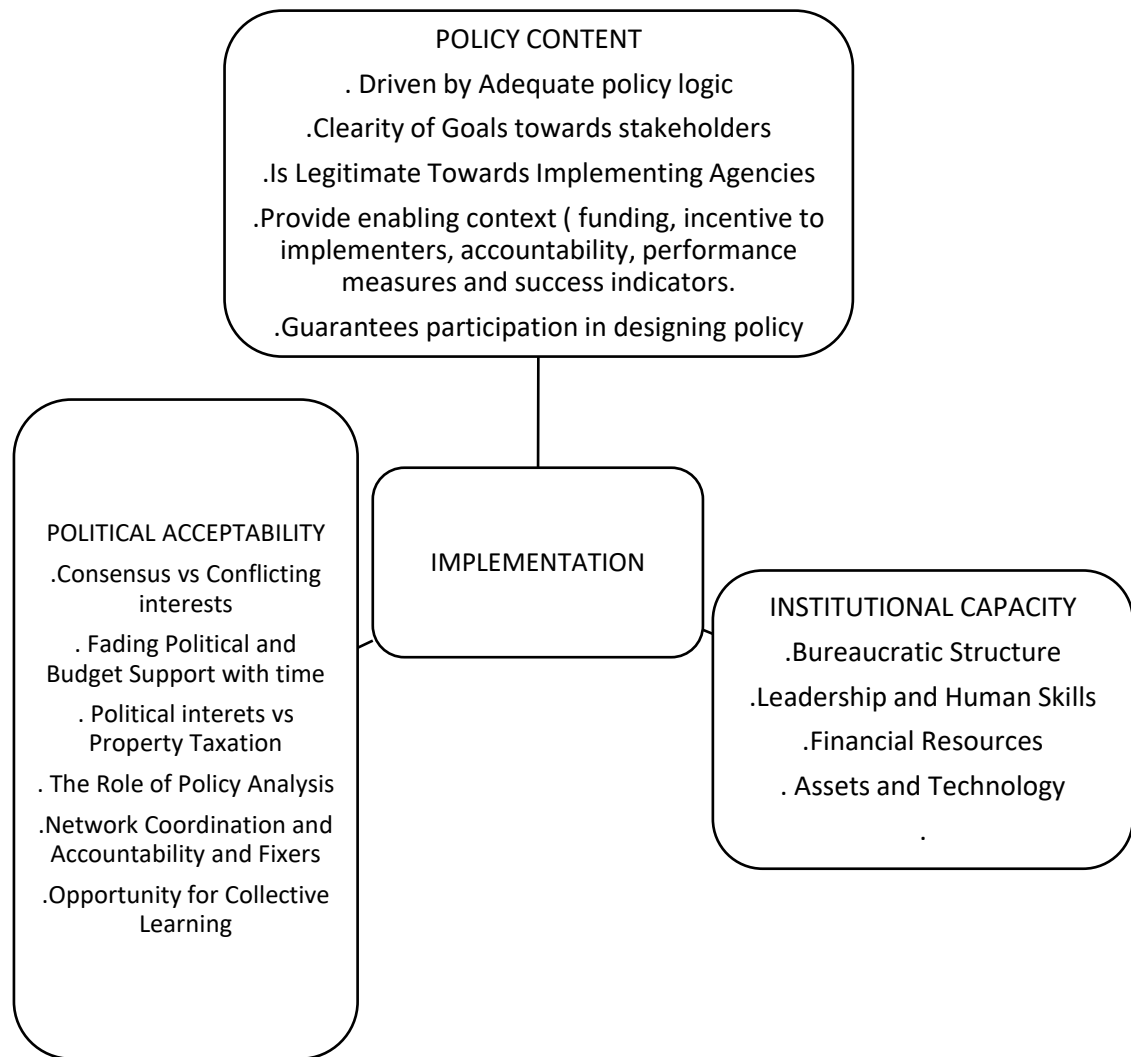


Figure 3. Property tax implementation model.

Policy Content (Statute) and Implementation

Designing policy has an impact on its implementation. The two concepts, policy design and implementation, are bedfellows. Based on Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1989) seminal work on policy implementation, a carefully drafted statute (or other basic policy decisions) can substantially affect the extent to which the statute's objectives are attained. The statute's ability to structure implementation stems from its core *content*: (a) clear and consistent objectives, (b) incorporation of adequate causal theory, (c) initial allocation of

financial resources, (d) hierarchical integration within and among implementing institutions, (e) decision rules of implementing institutions, (f) recruitment of implementing officials, and (g) formal access by outsiders. This is what this study terms as *policy content*.

Other scholars reinforce these conclusions. Weimer and Vining (2017) identified that among factors that affect success or failure of implementation, there is (a) logic of the policy, (b) the incentives to implement it, (c) the nature of cooperation required, and (d) the availability of skilled people to manage implementation. Thus, a policy design must define its goals clearly, outline convincing incentives for its implementation, and define essential stakeholders whose cooperation is required for a successful implementation. A policy design must also anticipate the acquisition of in-demand skills and relevant expertise to implement the new policy. Meier and McFarlane (1995) stated that in no small extent, policy implementation is a function of how a policy is crafted and in effect. a statutory coherence persists through the third stage of implementation, where the actual policy impacts occur.

Tummers, Steijn, and Bekkers's (2012) research results found that-policy content was the most critical element to trigger or not the determination of implementers to execute a new policy. One of the facts is that implementers resist implementation when that policy does not align with their professional values.

Recent researches on policy implementing regarding the impact of the statute and other policy decisions (policy content) and their impact on implementation brought novel details, especially on the importance of regulating or inducing the behaviors implementing agents and organizations.

Putting together findings of seminal works from the 1970s to 1990s (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984), Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989), Meier and McFarlane (1995), Goggin (1990), and recent studies (Tummers et al., 2012; Weimer & Vining, 2017), and taking into consideration the nature of this study, the following paragraphs show elements of policy content that preposition a policy for a successful implementation. A policy stands a chance to influence implementation based on the following factors: (a) the statute defines clear goals and is driven by adequate causal theory, (b) the statute allocates initial financial resources and incentives to implementing bureaucrats, (c) the statute is legitimate towards implementing organizations, (f) the statute provides for an accountability system among stakeholders, and (g) the statute guarantees the formal participation in designing policy.

In this study, policy content refers to statute (tax Law No. 17/2002 of May 10, 2002) instituting property tax in CoK and other policy directives issued for its implementation. The researcher captured narratives of policy makers and implementing bureaucrats to understand how property tax in the CoK was designed and assessed its content regarding these mandatory elements and how this has impacted the implementation.

Policy With Clarity and Coherent Logic

Scholars of implementation agree that to carry out programs successfully, it is essential for implementers to have a clear sense of the results desired because this helps to frame implementation activities (Goggin, 1990). The policy logic implies the causal linkage between what government intends to do (intervention) and the attainment of policy (program) objectives (outcomes). If the linkage is coherent and understood by the

officials responsible for implementing the program, and if those officials have jurisdiction over a sufficient number of critical linkages to attain the objectives (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989), this triggers the will to implement it. The means and ends of the policy must be clear.

The policy theory supports the idea that coherent statutes with a precise, clear goal, supported by an adequate causal theory, with clear administrative responsibility, clear implementation rules, and assigned to committed agencies are more likely to have their intended impact (Meier & McFarlane, 1995). Considering the complex political and socioeconomic environment and conflicting public and administrative behaviors that public policies are implemented in, the statutory coherence is necessary (Meier & McFarlane, 1995).

Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) contended that implementation cannot succeed without a goal against which to judge it. Meier and McFarlane (1995) added that precise and ranked goals mean vague or conflicting mandates do not handicap a policy. Incorporation of a causal theory means that policy makers understand why a problem exists and know the means to solve it. In the same vein, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) stated that clear objectives serve as a resource to actors both inside and outside the implementing institutions who can perceive discrepancies between agency outputs and policy outcomes.

Put in another way and based on Matland's (1995) assessment, the degree of ambiguity affects the implementation process significantly. The ambiguity influences the ability of superiors to monitor activities, the likelihood that the policy is uniformly understood across many implementation sites and organizations, the probability that local

contextual factors play a significant role, and the extent to which stakeholders vary sharply across implementation sites.

The study assesses whether there was discrepancy of policy language interpretation (clarity vs. ambiguity) among multiple agents of various local governments (CoK, districts, and Umurenge) involved in property tax implementation. As an extension to the clarity of goals in practice, it does happen that a message emanating from various agencies at the higher levels is not entirely (in entirety) coherent and consistent. Because of politics in the legislative process, some legislators use ambiguous language to rally appropriation votes due to the fact that various actors can interpret it in different ways that please them. Another source of ambiguity is at the top, because policy makers do not care that much about the details, they seldom pause to think about policy implementation.

At the implementation level, the clearer, more coherent and more consistent a message is, the easier it is to understand and, subsequently, to implement. A bright, coherent, and consistent policy message should pass the test of being easy to digest, to rally support, and to be able to be defended by both decision makers and implementers.

Another corollary to logic and clarity is consistency. Consistency is measured throughout communications by leaders and managers in the network. What happens at the top of the implementing organization during implementation has an influence (Goggin, 1990). The policy message must be repeated by influential leaders and managers of the policy network through regular communications and administrative tools (administrative acts, laws, amendments to legislation, rules and regulations, policy directives, political speeches, planning meetings, policy debates, progress reports, and

performance evaluations). Such regularity and consistency of communications targeting a specific policy conveys greater political support, consistency, and keeps the attention of bureaucrats in their implementation tasks.

Consistency is particularly significant because political, social, and economic changes may arise often during policy implementation with potential to alter the message willingly or unknowingly. Kingdon (2014) and T. R. Dye (2008) asserted that new elected or appointed authorities come with different agenda priorities, or come with less policy or organization knowledge, and have different electoral pledges that will shift the order of priority. On the other hand, other emergency policies and social programs can promptly occur and take over the attention of the decision makers and implementers.

In the same way, it is essential to emphasize the importance of *policy efficacy*. Per essence, policies are generally designed to address public problems. Some message may be conveyed that is technically impossible and would hence be unsuitable to translate into tangible public goods (Goggin, 1990).

It is important for implementers to understand the contribution that policy makes toward resolving the societal problem it was intended to or claims to achieve. Meaninglessness occurs when implementers are unable to comprehend the contribution of the policy to a higher purpose for the society (Tummers et al., 2012). May and Winter (2009) found that when frontline workers do not see how the implementation of the proposed policy will help their clients, they question why they should implement it.

In his survey, Tummmers (2011) found that public professionals who felt that the policy would not achieve the stated goals were far less willing to implement that policy. In an environment where programs compete for resources, clarity encourages prompt

implementation, reduces misunderstanding, eases coordination, and eliminates resistance in the interorganizational bargaining and negotiating process for implementation.

Allocate Initial Funding and Incentives to Implementers

As stated previously, implementers are the driving force behind implementation. Attitudes of implementers are crucial to the success of implementation; therefore, policy formulators must consider a set of motivation to bureaucrats for implementation, when putting together a new policy. Among others, bureaucrats cherish their autonomy and discretion, their professional values, and even personal interests (Tummers, 2011; Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Tummers et al., 2012).

The first incentive is the implementers' autonomy and discretion in the implementation. Tummers's (2011) research confirmed how the autonomy of the implementers is critical. He found that when implementers are given more discretion in the implementing decisions concerning a policy, they are willing to implement that policy. Tummers, Vermeeren, Steijn, and Bekkers (2012) emphasized that policy content and discretion of implementers was a determinant of attitudes and behaviors of the street-level bureaucrats. Research revealed that when professionals experience role conflicts, they are less willing to implement new policy programs, and one of the roles of discretion is to enable bureaucrats to cope with conflict. Tummers and Bekkers (2014) affirmed that discretion gives street-level bureaucrats the possibility to apply their judgments when dealing with the need and wishes of citizens.

The second incentive is the implementer's professional values. Among the many factors of policy content, Tummers et al.-(2012) found that "societal meaninglessness remained the most influential" (p. 731). Bureaucrats are far less willing to implement a

policy that does not contribute to societal goals. When they perceive that their work is meaningful for their clients, this strongly increases their willingness to implement it because “they have a desire to make a difference to their clients” (p. 541). With the same token, it also adds up legitimacy to the policy implementation process because it enables bureaucrats to meet the citizen’s needs.

The third incentive is bureaucrats’ personal interests. Based on Tummers et al.’s (2012) findings, bureaucrats judge a new policy vis-a-vis personal interests (increases their income, promotion, and job security). The more the new policy has added value to individual bureaucrats, the more committed they are to implement it. Thus, the policy content ideally must reflect some sort of incentives for implementers.

The fourth incentive is the provision of initial funding. A policy should also provide for a mechanism of financing for the implementation (Goggin, 1990). Sandfort and Moulton (2015) found that when the message provides for resources in a convenient and accessible form, the likelihood of straightforward implementation is guaranteed. Likewise, they found that when resources have been provided and subsequently removed, withheld, or delayed, the likelihood of cooperative implementation declines. Such a reverse decision seems to be a clear expression that the program is no longer at the top of the decision makers’ priorities, and implementers react by lowering their commitment to the execution of that policy. It is essential that the policy outlines the initial funding for policy implementation.

Legitimacy of Policy Toward Implementing Organizations

While the previous section focused on the attitudes and behaviors of implementers, in this section, legitimacy and accountability refer to policy acceptability

among participating organizations in the implementation. In collaborative management such as the implementation of property tax policy, the legitimacy of policy and processes is vital. Sandstrom, Crona, and Bodin (2014) defined legitimacy as stakeholder's acceptance of process and substance, which denotes fairness, correctness, or rightfulness of power of relations. Legitimacy denotes credibility and believability of the policy message among stakeholders, and it is an essential element to consider vis-a-vis implementation (Goggin, 1990).

A nonsense message is unlikely to sustain support necessary for implementation. Goggin (1990) and other researchers have noticed that a complex and ambiguous message is likely to incite *status quo ante* among stakeholder's because of equivocal interpretation. It is possible that a policy message is clear but inconsistent to an existing implementation environment or contradictory to existing programs or inconsistent with existing regulations at large. Thus, compatibility, credibility, and believability of a policy by stakeholders must be guaranteed before and during the implementation. This point is particularly meaningful because the congruency of new policy goals and the alignment with implementing the organization's goals and other existing vital programs is a crucial incentive for prompt implementation. To increase the potential for effective implementation, a policy message must respond not only to the requirements of clarity, consistency, and efficacy but also to the requirements of credibility and believability vis-a-vis the implementers (Goggin, 1990; Sandfort & Moulton, 2015). Thus, Tummers and Bekker (2014) stated that in giving room to implementing organizations when drafting a policy, adjusting the policy program makes it more relevant and legitimate.

The Statute Provides for Accountability Among Stakeholders

Sandfort and Moulton (2015) defined a network as the multitude of organizations that are legally autonomous linked through relationships based on cooperation and coordination. In a network, each stakeholder weighs in; hence, in a multitude of organizations where there are fragmented powers and interests, there is a need for clarity of purpose, cost, accountability, and coordination of efforts. Factors such as political framework; the socioeconomic environment of policy implementation; the stakeholder's inventory, respective contributions, capability, and modes of participation in the process; leadership, the authority of implementers; the affordability of the process tools of monitoring and coordination, overall outcomes, and each participant's benefit should be clarified to avoid interference and/or lack of support. Disagreement over one of those elements or power struggles within can jeopardize the relationship and subsequently impair implementation. Therefore, at the outset of policy making when important stakeholders have been identified, there is a need for setting up accountability mechanisms to ensure that each pledges his or her contribution.

In collaborative management when everyone is responsible, nobody-is responsible (Linden, 2010). Bardach (1978) quipped that actors in the implementation are relatively reluctant to commit their resources to a new operating program than they are to commit their support to a mere verbal proposal. In addition, it is relatively easier to secure commitments in the adoption stage than in the implementation stage because actors in the adoption stage generally know that the slow hard work of the implementation stage is yet to come.

An accountability system with legal authority, legitimacy, and political support to take decisions (incentive, sanctions) and rally all stakeholders participating in the network of policy implementation must be established. The role of “fixers” must be fulfilled to employ political bargaining necessary to resolve gridlock among stakeholders in the network and assemble support for implementation.

Among other things that can increase legitimacy, the statutes must define the decision rules by participating agencies. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) found that a statute can further influence the implementation process by stipulating the formal decision rules among implementing agencies. With a prescription of the principles of decision rules by the statute, implementation can be accelerated by abolishing multiple joints in decision-making, inducing decisions toward the statute objectives. For example, the statute can stipulate the majority required for specific actions.

The implementation of property tax in the CoK implies multiple actors with fragmented powers and many decision points that determine the course of the program. Therefore, in preparation for launching implementation, the policy maker must plan an accountability mechanism to hold stakeholders responsible for respective contributions.

The Statute Guarantees Participation in Policy Design

Studying policy implementation implies separating legislative policy making and administrative policy making and interconnection between them. Maynard-Moody and Herbert (1989) reported that the two segments are essential, are loosely and variably coupled, and intersect as they possess an essential overlap. Even though the two remain separate areas, in many technical areas, say Maynard-Moody and Herbert, administrative officials are allowed the initiative out of deference to their expertise. This is particularly

important at the local government level where intergovernmental bargaining is paramount.

Newell (2008), an expert in local government management, stated that public administrators, particularly in local governments, serve as informed facilitators who supply information on issues related to the policy as the council designs it. Newell also asserted that this job is sometimes made more difficult when elected officials opt for a policy choice that the manager does not recommend and when the policy is not clearly defined. It is particularly difficult when the manager has to play a retrospective role in monitoring the organization's success in carrying out policy directives and in evaluating the success of policies and procedures.

Newell (2004) also stressed that the public administrator must contribute knowledge of the local political, social, and economic context; the understanding of government processes and procedures; the memory of past and current policies; and interpersonal skills to the discussion. A public manager must be able to communicate articulately with all the actors involved and keep the discussion directed at the issues at hand. The professional manager can predict or anticipate reactions from the community and accurately project levels of support for potential policies or future initiatives.

Because of the political impact of property tax, public servants may, in certain circumstances, shy away from taking a single initiative in this arena for fear of negative political and social report. The way to avoid political repercussions on public servants is to engage policy makers in reforming policies.

Thus, policy makers could more openly and clearly define goals to be pursued, and further, they can try to include professionals in debates on how to achieve these goals

(Tummers, 2011). Thus, policy design must be open to opinions of policy experts and implementers' feedback so that the end policy product can be operationalized to yield tangible public goods. A clear and less controversial policy designed to address a problem induces more prompt implementation than policies politically unpopular or controversial.

Using input from document reviews and interviews with actors in property tax policy in the CoK who implemented the study can help to assess and evaluate the impact of policy content *inter alia* the logic of policy, clear policy goals, incentives to implementers, legitimacy of policy toward units and organizations participating in the implementation, provisions for funding, accountability, and inputs for implementers in policy design.

As a concluding remark in this section, this study is sharing a tool by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ascertain adequate policy content. The CDC's procedure of policy content evaluation provides a practice that could help other policy areas. The CDC recommends policy content evaluation that basically must answer critical questions: whether the policy states clearly the goals or objectives; whether all components are based on evidence clearly articulated; whether all requirements of implementation are clearly stated; whether those requirements are feasible given available resources; what mechanism exists for monitoring and evaluation; what state-specific indicators there are for assessing program success; who are the major stakeholders, their role, and the policy development; what fundamental changes could change the initially proposed content; and how the content of the policy is similar to or different from that of other policies in place.

Scholars in the literature of implementation referred to this practice without being explicit. For example, Goggin (1990) stated that a policy message quality and consistency can be improved using a panel of experts, coders, or policy analysts to analyze the content of laws and regulations. In the same spirit, Sandfort and Moulton (2015) believed that asking implementers for their opinions about the policy message clarity may improve results.

While recognizing the substantive role of a statute toward implementation, one cannot exclude the degree of social, economic, and political circumstances in shaping implementation environments and their outcome, which is the subject of the next section.

Political Acceptability and Implementation

As stated previously, property tax is widely recognized as the most sustainable and economically efficient source of subnational tax revenues (Jibao & Prichard, 2016). It is the vital source of financing for vital local government services: schools, police, public lighting, parks and recreations, sewage system, and so on. However, there is a growing recognition of political barriers to its implementation, particularly in developing countries.

Lack of Consensus Versus Conflicting Interests

Property tax policy is carried out in a complex environment where institutional, cultural, political, and economic variables interact to determine not only the economic effects of specific tax instruments but also their feasibility as policy tools. Property tax is highly political, requiring active communication between policy makers, implementers, and interest groups, and it is tough work to bring all stakeholders' interests to a consensus.

Property tax policy implementation is network management involving numerous actors who are interconnected through different types and strengths of relations. For active cooperation to occur, there must be a network manager with a robust facilitative leadership to ensure the necessary resources are allocated and that all relevant perspectives and interest groups are taken into consideration (Sandstrom et al., 2014). A coordinator, a fixer, and/or a network manager can activate structural support, political back up, and trust among actors and social capital.

It can be easier to design a property tax policy, but its implementation is daunting. As T. R. Dye (2008) put it, “Policy implementation is the continuation of politics by other means” (p. 52). Implementation activities invite diversified groups with specific skills and interests to successfully implement a policy; hence, it is crucial to plan for strong coordination and for fixers to engage in facilitating the negotiations and in rectifying issues of implementation (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015).

Political and Socioeconomic Events Change Policy Priorities

It is not only about meeting stakeholder’s agreements but also changing political and socioeconomic environment can complicate the process. In their preamble, Sandfort and Moulton (2015) stated that changing political environment due to events such as elections and new appointments of officials and boards, other social programs that emerge all shape and often shift the understanding and activities of existing policies.

Often, new public leaders or managers have personal political agendas or priorities. When there is a change of leadership, incoming leaders may decide to switch priorities, drop certain policies, repeal others, or place others on the bottom of priorities. This study assesses whether there were political or social economic shifts that have

impacted positively or negatively the course of property tax policy implementation during the last 15 years in the CoK.

Property tax policy implementation is a collaborative project. It is a type of tax that has a strong political significance because it involves difficult choices, reconciling diverging interests among actors, adapting to changing politico-administrative landscapes, and socioeconomic conditions.

Difficulties in Network Coordination and the Role of Fixers

Making property tax policy choices can be particularly difficult. Political, social, and economic factors come into play and make meeting everyone's interests difficult, while they also require tactical and political negotiation. Among other things, property tax implementation implies that local governments establish a tax base, decide tax rates, mobilize support for implementation, plan a strong enforcement mechanism, and establish a cost-effective tax administration supported by computerized databases and state-of-the-art filing and collection instruments. Property tax implementation calls upon numerous actors and considerable resources. The property tax cycle works as an assembly line; each unit has an irreplaceable role it plays, and each contribution must be pledged in the right amount, right way, and at the right time. It is hard work to achieve and requires intense and strong coordination. Thus, in addition to intensive political bargaining, there are difficulties in coordination of technical units.

Bardach (1978) drew an observation that "the universal complaint about public program implementation is that there is insufficient coordination" (p. 132). Robichau and Lynn (2009) found that the more numerous and varied elements there are that need to be assembled, the greater the potential for problems in the implementation process. Weimer

and Vining (2017) suggested that implementation should be prepared to use strategies that are essentially political in nature to assemble program elements, and keep all actors engaged in bringing their contributions to the table. New programs specifically need promoters and fixers to build advocacy coalitions within the implementation environment (Goggin, 1990).

Property tax is a process involving multiple organizations or units to work as an assembly line, considering various interests and potential external influences; the accountability within the network is key. Laws are subject to interpretation by taxpayers, local tax officials, and the courts. If the system of accountability is not guaranteed, a multitude of authority can undermine the progress. The interaction of these participants in decision-making regarding tax affects the amount of the tax collected by local government units. Further, the goals of participants must be aligned, and together they should adopt strategies that affect the outcome of the process. Bardach (1978) believed that the game metaphor was helpful as it looked at the players to see what they regard as the stakes, their strategies and tactics, their resources for playing, the rules of play, the rules of the game, the nature of the communications among the players, and the degree of uncertainty surrounding the possible outcomes.

At times, noncompliance can stem from other factors such as a lack of adequate skills on the part of some units (Bardach, 1978). These units may lack skills to produce a plan, while others may lack the necessary skills to implement a specific task or the ability to provide their contribution in a timely manner because of internal policy procedures. Some actors can delay implementation using tokenism, delayed compliance, or blatant

resistance. Therefore, there is a need for fixers who can continually solve the actor's relations and deal with bureaucratic red tape of participating organizations.

Bardach (1978) defined a fixer as someone who has power and motivation—an influencer, a champion who has the “smarts” to move the various games toward desired outcomes. A fixer is a crucial element when one has a multitude of actors with adversarial interests. Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) reported that “when a program is characterized by many contradictory criteria, antagonistic relationship among participants, as the case in Oakland it is not hard to predict its failure” (p. 90). Policies should be mutually supportive; participants in a common enterprise should contribute to a common purpose to achieve coordination.

A fixer must combine formal authority and political resources as leverage to yield results. A fixer must be wise enough to monitor performance without being distracted by the noise of various games, resourceful enough to get information, and powerful enough to punish and reward. A strong coordination is critical in bringing all parties who have opinions about the different aspects of the problem and its possible solutions together (Bardach, 1978). Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) concluded that the EDA project in Oakland suffered from a lack of coordinated planning.

Fading Political and Budget Support

Property tax implementation is an never-ending implementation. Each year the relevant authority must review, rate, and relaunch the process of the property tax cycle. It implies an ongoing mobilization of resource, continual political support, and modernization of the process with time. Property tax implementation involves policy makers, including locally elected officials, bureaucrats in local public service, courts of

law, external interest groups such as property owners, businesses, the media, investors and developers, landowners, and central government elites. It affects all functions of municipal governance, dominates local politics, and attracts external influencers.

Howlett (2018) noticed that implementation of public programs is often an extensive multiyear effort, which could require continued funding, and this implies continual negotiation and discussions to resolve problems within and between the political and administrative arms of the government. Thus, according to Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989), there is a need to maintain a period of/or continual infusion of political support during changing social and economic conditions. To this end, decision makers must agree on periodic analysis to correct deficiencies in the legal framework, retest priorities, realign goals, reiterate the importance of the policy, resolve conflicts, and reactivate political support. Mazmanian and Sabatier suggested 10 years as an appropriate time span to bring necessary behavioral or systemic changes in the implementation of policy.

Policy makers (elected and nonelected) who are invested with the power of influence must continually reiterate the perceived importance of the new policy upon the society, reiterating and highlighting its urgency for results. There is a need for a strong leadership to maintain continued political support and allocation of budget. The existence and the state of this continual political and budget support is one of the questions this study sought to answer.

Political Interests Ahead of Property Tax Revenues

As outlined previously, property tax is a highly politicized tax. A multitude of actors claim diversified interests and commit to contribute pledges for implementation.

Property owners (home and land) come in a multitude of personalities and social classes, including high-level public servants, legislators, local governments, and top earners in businesses and have the potential of playing a positive or negative role in property tax policy design and/or its implementation. Examples show that local politicians are too wary of penalties on local voters or high-level government officials and religious leaders meddle into local councils to directly or indirectly block, alter, or impose property tax rates (Monkam, 2011; Olowu, 2002).

In many developing countries, the governing elite and influential businesses tend to drag property tax policy decisions to meet their selfish interests. Bahl et al. (2008) discovered that in fearing the political cost, local governments in developing economies might not enforce local property tax because of its political value. The central government's lack of interest in the property tax lies in the calculus of central officials regarding revenue potential versus the political cost associated with it. Central governments frequently avoid debating the subject because of its complexity and political weight. Hence, the problem of property tax is not only of administration but also more of an issue of political will in several developing countries.

Youngman (2016) reported that in the United States, property tax has at times suffered from assessment practices intended to minimize political disputes rather than estimating correct values. In his study, Olowu (2002) found that in some developing countries, centrally appointed civil servants are directly or indirectly sent to chair local councils so that they can defend the interests of their patrons. Bahl et al. (2008) pointed out that at times elected officials are not able to act against delinquent taxpayers because

they are not given means to do so, and often those who are not in compliance are leaders in the community.

As a progressive tax, property tax takes a more significant percentage from high-income earners more than it does for low-income individuals. Under the urge of self-interests, these top earners can bring success or failure to property tax implementation by use of their influence on local politics. For instance, developers and high-level leaders in government can negatively exert their power on local council members to renounce the legislation, adopt meaningless rates, or delay or block necessary reforms. Thus, top earners can bring success or failure to property tax policy implementation.

There are instances where legislators were found prone to impose a limit on the tax rate that can be levied by the local governments under the urge of personal gains. Bird and Slack (2004) stated that one of the most fundamental barriers to effective taxation is sustained resistance it faces from property-owning elites who form a powerful lobby that can block both policy reform and effective implementation.

Again, in the developing economies, Bahl et al. (2008) noticed that central governments often resist giving up control over essential tax bases to their local governments with arguments that there are fewer resources and more constraints at the center or that subnational governments do not have a comparative advantage in administering these taxes, thereby evoking macroeconomic policies that dictate revenue sources be kept at the central level.

In her research on Francophone Africa, Monkam (2011) observed that the national tax agency agents in charge of enforcement neglected local governments' taxes and had instead put their emphasis on taxes that belonged to the central government

because these agents and their supervisors were not accountable to local public administrators.

Lastly, property tax was also found to be unpopular with locally elected politicians (Bahl, 2014). Locally elected representatives are tempted to shy away from increasing tax rates or enforcing property tax fearing the revolt from taxpayers or voters while they are seeking reelection in office.

Opportunities for Collective Learning

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) stressed that implementation is a process of executing, learning, and revising policies continually. Hambleton (1983) considered implementation as a policy or action continuum with policy continually influencing action and action constantly affecting policy. Nicolaides (2012) asserted that “effective implementation of a policy is a never-ending process. It involves constant monitoring of the effect of implementing actors and adjustment of implementing instruments if necessary” (p. 7).

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) stressed a need of maintaining a periodic or continual infusion of political support during changing social and economic conditions. They urged decision makers to forge an agreement on periodic analysis to correct deficiencies in the legal framework, retest priorities, realign goals, reiterate the importance of the policy, resolve conflicts, and reactivate political support. They suggested 10 years as an appropriate time span to bring necessary behavioral or systemic changes in the implementation of policy.

The Role of Policy Analysis

As stated previously, property policy implementation is complex. Designing a policy might look easy because at this stage under-the-surface problems are often ignored. Many scholars have advocated for scenario writing as a way of generating better alternate policies that are easy to implement. Bardach (1978) recommended scenario writing as an analytic device for anticipating problems that may occur during implementation. One of the tools of analysis is the political feasibility study.

Meltsner (1972) found that it is imperative to conduct a prior analysis of public policy issued by governmental agencies. Using the words of Yehezkel Dror, Meltsner stated, “The analysis leads to policies that can be implemented; political feasibility study is one way of bridging the gap between the desirable and the possible” (p. 859). The analysis of political feasibility should include “(a) identification of actors, (b) their beliefs and motivations, and (c) resources and sites of interactions” (p. 861). In judging political feasibility, identifying supporters and opponents of a policy allows the prediction of potential areas of consensus and conflicts as well as the ability to design alternative policies, which can achieve the required political support.

Weimer and Vining (2017) underlined that successful implementation requires analysts to be strategic. Good policy design is based on the realistic predictions of responses from people who must provide essential elements for implementation. Consequently, careful policy design anticipates problems in implementation and includes policy features to generate information, resources, and fixers to solve them. This study inquires about the role of policy analysis during policy formulation and the moment of implementation.

Institutional Capacity and Property Tax Implementation

The third element that influences implementation is the institutional capacity to implement. This section presents the overview of the property tax cycle to highlight the volume of work involved in property tax administration. In addition, the literature shows how important it is to set up an organizational structure to accommodate the new policy then explicates the importance of having skilled leadership and personnel, continued supply of money, appropriate assets, and cutting-edge technology that can accelerate policy implementation.

Overview of Property Tax Cycle and Management

Several specialized units participate in the property tax cycle administration. When the council or legislator issues a policy, technical units must execute and feed in their respective contributions to the implementation machinery. The following paragraphs detail the role of each participant, explain complexity and difficulties associated, and discuss requirements vis-a-vis the capacity of the implementing organizations.

Bahl et al. (2008) demonstrated that property tax revenue is a function of two variables related to policy choices—namely, tax base definition and tax ratio (TR), which is generally defined by national laws—and three variables pertaining to administrative action—namely, increasing the coverage ratio (CVR), valuation ratio (VR), and collection ratio (CLR). Thus, the formula for tax revenue = Tax base*TR*CVR*VR*CLR.

Experts caution that tapping property tax requires substantial preparatory work. According to Kelly (2000), a property tax system involves six primary functions: (a) tax

base identification, (b) tax base evaluation, (c) tax assessment, (d) tax collection, (e) tax enforcement, and (f) dispute resolution and taxpayer service. Figure 4 illustrates critical steps in the property tax cycle and community of implementation.

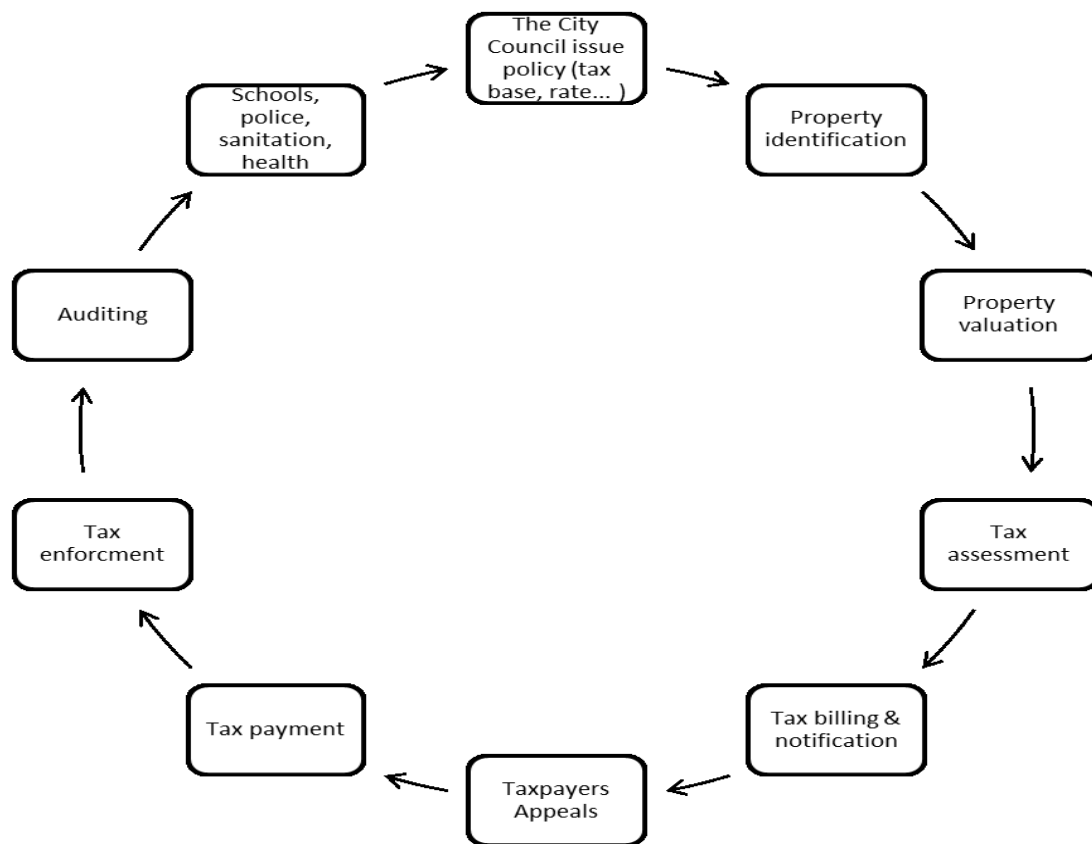


Figure 4. Property tax cycle.

Property tax base identification. Identifying properties and enumerating their characteristics are perhaps the most significant constraints to efficient property tax administration in developing countries (Dillinger, 1991). The objective of discovery is finding and describing all properties subjected to taxation; this occurs through both self-evaluation, where the taxpayer provides the information to the taxing authority, and government inventory, where the taxing authority obtains the data in the field.

In assembling the tax base, all properties are located and assigned unique identifiers. Cadastral maps usually reflect such information. To attain accurate valuation, appropriate information must be available to the valuers so that the property is located correctly and its salient attributes are described adequately in the proper records. In this study, the city manager was asked how property identification works and its associated constraints.

Property tax base valuation. Property tax base valuation occurs by visiting the identified taxable property and evaluating the tax base value. A tax base valuation is a crucial and fastidious exercise. Before reaching the cost records, several types of cadaster need to be distinguished, including a physical cadaster that reflects the physical measurements of each property and improvement and a legal cadaster that reflects ownership to the extent it can be determined (Dillinger, 1991). Also, there is the fiscal cadaster, which is an account of the tax value attached to the property. The evaluation cycle must be short, and experts recommend revaluation to occur every 10 years. To compensate for the lag in reassessments, local councils should consider reviewing nominal tax rates equivalent to the inflation rate (Kelly, 2000). Are there enough trained, equipped, and motivated valuation teams in the city, and what are the constraints?

Kelly (2000) recommended keeping the valuation cycle brief to ensure that evaluation rolls reflect current market conditions; thus, national legislation should require the frequent valuation of properties. Ideally, the goal should be to undertake such valuations every 3 years, and no more than every 5 years. Bell (1999) opted for outsourcing valuation exercises that can be outsourced. He stated that while the ability to

hire localized resources is essential, contracting for outside expertise on an as-needed basis allows even small assessing units to accomplish this exercise.

Property tax assessment. To determine an assessed value, the market value of a property is multiplied by an assessment rate. To determine the tax bill, the assessed value is multiplied by a property tax rate. In determining the fiscal cadaster, an official registry showing details of ownership, boundaries, and value of real property made for property tax purposes is a crucial step in tax property collection. A fiscal cadaster is a database of information affecting the valuation of the property for tax purposes. Dillinger (1991) stated that the focus of property tax reform efforts should be on developing a current and comprehensive fiscal cadaster. This is a costly work, and local authorities might typically have an insufficient capacity to maintain and coordinate their financial cadaster information systematically. Based on Dillinger's experience, the effectiveness of a self-declaration system depends on the cooperation of the taxpayers to provide accurate and complete information, the ability of the local government to verify the information provided, and the penalties available to induce compliance. Typically, however, audits are infrequent and, although simple sentences are high, the actual quality and comprehensiveness of the data supplied are often low (Dillinger, 1991). In this study, questions were asked about issues related to the establishment and maintenance of the fiscal cadaster of the city and constraints of implementation.

Property tax collection. Property taxation relies on active government participation to ensure that tax-base information and property taxes are current and that taxes are appropriately assessed, billed, collected, and enforced. Low collection efficiency is a significant constraint on the yield of property tax and can offset any gains

made by improving discovery and valuations (Bell, 1999). Thus, a property tax reform strategy must recognize the administrative-intensive nature and the importance of direct and active government administration for its revenue buoyancy (Kelly, 2000). This requires the unambiguous determination of tax liabilities, the accurate and prompt delivery of tax bills to those responsible, and a mechanism for collecting the amounts due. The ultimate responsibility for property tax should be attached to the individual property.

Tax enforcement. Although substantial efforts could be made to improve taxpayer education and rationalize the collection and accounting systems, the primary reason for the poor collection rate that many developing countries face is the lack of effective enforcement (Kelly, 2000). Property tax must be enforceable (Dillinger, 1991), and if the property tax is not paid within a specified period, a significant late fee should be assessed. When payment is not complied with promptly, there must be a way to ensure payment. In cases of serious delinquency—i.e., taxes overdue by 6 to 12 months—other enforcement measures should be implemented: the removal and sale of goods, attachment of pay and hold on bank accounts, and placing liens on the property. Ultimately, sanctions can include the confiscation and sale of the taxed property to satisfy the tax obligation.

Kelly (2000) found that many developing countries have a problem with tax collection and enforcement attributed to (a) lack of political will, (b) lack of transparent administrative collection and enforcement mechanisms, and (c) lack of taxpayer confidence in or understanding of how the tax is levied, collected, enforced, and used. Political will is a critical determining factor. Kelly (2000) indicated that high political

support is a prerequisite for successful property tax reform related to improving the collection ratio using effective enforcement provisions such as fines, liens, and foreclosures.

It is important to highlight the role of a useful mechanism of dispute resolutions for an efficient tax administration. Bell (1999) denoted that fair property administration and an inexpensive and straightforward appeals process are both vital to tax administration. The valuation of individual property may not represent market value accurately, especially in the eyes of the taxpayer; therefore, according to Bell, a tax system should include a simple and expedient appeals process that provides taxpayers an opportunity to address perceived errors.

This is the lengthy process involving first the creation of policy and later the implementing of policy, bringing together a multitude of stakeholders to participate in the process, claiming conflicting political, social, and economic interests. Operations of property tax administration are highly engaging, dynamic, complex, and demanding. They put to the test all facets of organizational capacity including bureaucratic structure, financial resources, leadership and human skills, and assets and information technology.

Structure for Policy Integration

Sandfort and Moulton (2015) commented that the capacity of implementing organizations and the skills of the people responsible for implementation are crucial to the process of implementation. The primary measure of success for implementation is the integration of the new policy into the standard operating practices and procedures of the implementing organizations, and the required skills of people responsible for implementation.

Hierarchical integration of policy is lodging responsibility for the policy within the hierarchical structure of the bureaucracy; this permits the bureaucratic powers to work for rather than against a policy. Favorable decision rules grant the agency flexibility in implementation so that policies can be adapted to circumstances (Meier & MacFarlane, 1995).

To start implementing a policy, before all else, it is necessary first to establish a structure to accommodate operations and shape how policies will achieve desired outcomes. The organizational structure is vital in accommodating policy implementation. Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) believed that a streamlined structure with a clear hierarchy and lean decision-making joints or few veto points accelerate the process of implementation. When organizational actors are numerous, qualified, and disposed to accept and undertake the course of action, the capacity to act is increased. The fragmentation of organizational structures adversely affects implementation. Tight, centralized, streamlined structures were found conducive to swift implementation compliance, while multilevel structures actively discouraged or delayed implementation (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015).

According to O'Toole (1983), conventional wisdom accepts that hierarchically integrated administrative structures ease the communication of policy messages and merely streamline the implementation process. There is a need to create a shared sense of implementation and some coordinated patterns of activities among many different individuals. In short, intraorganizational implementation is more straightforward to conduct than the interorganizational variant. An organizational structure for implementation is an essential element. Invoking conventional wisdom, Goggin (1990)

stated that the integrated administrative structure facilitates communication of policy messages and simplifies the implementation process. Thus, the implementation must create new organizations, departments, agencies, bureau, and so on.

Leadership and Human Skills

To implement policy, the implementing organization requires human resources. The next step is to acquire suitable personnel. Personnel compose the human side of the organization that deals with implementation. Goggin (1990) made it clear that even a “well-designed policy message with all the appropriate incentives for a prompt implementation can be defeated by organizational capacity or administrative glitches or weaknesses in the systems” (p. 132). The number of competent, motivated, and professional staff members increases the capacity and success of implementation more directly and productively.

The number of skillful and motivated administrative actors can easily convert a policy message into action. According to Sandfort and Moulton (2015), policy management requires skillful management to embed the new approach into the daily operations of an implementation system. Furthermore, successful delivery involves common features that include a clear and widely shared vision, policies that draw on the experience of what works, strong support and training for those responsible for implementation, and a clean line of accountability (Mulgan & Lee, 2001).

Goggin (1990), as well as Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989), highlighted the importance of managerial and leadership skills of the implementing agency. Thus, leaders and managers in the implementing agency must possess managerial and political

skills and be avid supporters of the policy goals if they are to lead the organization in reaching intended policy goals.

Implementing a property tax policy is a demanding multitask enterprise that requires diversified complementary skills. One needs agile and focused leadership capable of taking tough decisions, experienced subject matter experts, valuers, disputes resolutions experts, and information technology experts.

Financial Resources and Implementation

Money is the fuel for implementation. A well-crafted message and appropriate organizational structures are unable to achieve needed progress should an organization fail to provide adequate financial allocation. However, if organizations pledge the financial resources needed, implementers are then enthusiastic about initiating the program and taking it to fruition. Financial incentives are a trigger to kick-starting implementation. Money enables organizations to acquire structure and other necessary resources for implementation. In their comments, Meier and McFarlane (1995) quipped that the need for adequate funds is self-evident.

Bardach (1978) pointed out that money is an essential factor for which decision makers and implementers play games in supporting or sabotaging the implementation of the new policy, and in practice, certain funding agencies have made conditional grants to receiving organizations in exchange for a promise to use the funds for a specific purpose desired by the donor thus dictating the outcome. In Oakland, the EDA has tried to use its control over money to force concessions from certain beneficiaries (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984). In developing countries where government resources are scarce and the program implementation cannot sustain continued budget support by decision makers,

the program will run out of money and will eventually be dropped off the list of priorities.

Assets and Technology in Property Taxation

Technology is an essential tool for any effective tax administration. It is necessary for computerizing tax processes in any tax administration, and it allows citizens to conduct a self-assessment of their properties online, check their status of tax assessment, and make payments. In modern times, the use of technology and new management tools are critical factors to implement policy successfully (Mulgan & Lee, 2001). It was found that poor management of information technology, communication, and human resources strategies, as well as lack of timescale, substantially affect implementation.

Technology facilitates data sharing among stakeholders. It brings interconnectivity or networking between various taxation units. In developing countries, there is a need to develop the technical infrastructure to ensure availability and reliability of the network.

New techniques of public sector management can be used to achieve efficiency. Local governments can involve third parties through contracting or outsourcing. There is a need for infrastructure and a highly skilled information technology team to maintain an optimized network.

New technologies can be used in operations such as computerized mass appraisal, satellite-aided mapping, cross-referencing, and so on (Dillinger, 1991). Bahl et al. (2008) pointed out that digitalizing the tax system could help in circumventing the high costs and time delays associated with the valuation process by keeping up-to-date records of land

characteristics and ownership. If new technologies are utilized in property tax assessment, collection, and record keeping, they could minimize much of the current problem with the property tax in developing nations.

Maity (2016) reported on the case study of Kitchener, a city in Canada, wherein municipalities assisted by technology revolutionized the way they shared their data with their citizens by providing them with accurate information. It facilitated the management of all customer and financial data for property taxes and could also be used for operations.

Technology is a paramount necessity in property tax implementation. Evaluators, surveyors, and appraisers can utilize new technology on property tax administration to speed up their work with efficiency. Public-private partnership can help in leveraging the cost and benefits. A competent information technology company can sign a software agreement with the CoK and its districts for unified land and tax records management.

In conclusion, such software would help in streamlining data, analyzing property data, producing property values, generating tax bills, and setting and sending notifications to taxpayers. Even managing appeals can be done within one easy-to-use system. Such a decision can create uniformity and fairness in property taxation while providing a streamlined property tax system.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology this research employed to study property tax policy implementation in the city of Kigali (CoK). This chapter is split into six subsections including a brief reminder of the research questions, the description of the research design, the population and sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Questions

The research questions were designed to capture the perceptions and experiences of property tax policy implementers and decision makers in the CoK with the aim of learning from their experiences during the past 15 years of the practice of property tax policies in the CoK. The findings will enable the city leadership and participating stakeholders to take the necessary steps to streamline policy reform and improve future implementation for more revenues. The three research questions are focused on the three essential elements that were found through the literature to be the essential drivers of policy implementation: inter alia policy content, political acceptability, and institutional capacity. These research questions follow:

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of policy content in the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

This research question assessed practitioner's experiences and perceptions concerning property tax efficiency, equity, and fairness, the state of initial funding allocation to implementation, and provision of incentive to implementers.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of political acceptability on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

As this question deals with political acceptability, the researcher asked practitioners about the opportunity of policy analysis (political feasibility study) to assess policy acceptability by identifying opponents and proponents of property tax policy in the CoK, its receptability among elected and nonelected elites, taxpayers, political interests at stake, issues of policy network coordination, assessment of the implementation game, and mechanism and opportunities collective learning among implementing actors.

The study intended also to assess existence of conflicting political interests among stakeholders, lack or delays of commitment of inputs by stakeholders, difficulties in coordination of actors in the network, power struggle, personal political interest, emergence of political and socioeconomic events that have shifted priorities to other urgent programs during implementation, personal contradictory interests of local elected leaders (i.e., seeking reelection), and traffic of influence.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of the institutional capacity on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

This question was aimed at the experiences and perceptions of practitioners on the state of integration of property tax policy in the existing CoK's and partner agencies' bureaucratic structures, assessing the state of funding allocation during implementation,

impact of leadership and human skills, the use of technology, and how overall these factors impacted implementation of property tax in the CoK.

Research Design

The investigation of property tax implementation in the CoK is an exploratory evaluation following a case study design. The researcher interviewed a sample of 18 individuals concerning their perceptions and experiences gained during the last 15 years of implementing property tax in the CoK. The design, the data collection, analysis, and writing of this qualitative study have followed a case study design. Creswell (2014) stated that among qualitative designs, the case study is more convenient when exploring processes, activities, and events. It was thus appropriate for this study because the aim of the study was to explore the processes of property tax implementation and factors that influence it.

According to Creswell (2014), when conducting a case study, the researcher analyzes extensively a case under consideration, often a program, activity, process, or one or more individuals and then makes statements about the lessons learned from that situation and what should be learned from the meaning of the data to the entire population. Flipp (2014) asserted that case studies carry the advantage of enabling the researcher to collect detailed information using a variety of data collection techniques. This is because case studies employ almost every kind of qualitative data (interviews, observations, documents, artifacts, etc.), and this flexibility has served well in this study.

Creswell (2014) further commended case study in certain situations. He stated that case study is a design of inquiry used in various fields, especially in the evaluation of programs, events, activities, processes, or one or more individuals. Flipp (2014) pointed

out that a case study is done in the bounded system; thus, the first step is to define the boundaries of the case, the time, and/or space. All these reasons support well the use of case study design for this study.

As this study aimed to collect narratives from practitioners and decision makers' perceptions and experiences from their work, many reasons supported choosing a qualitative methodology for this study. Contrary to a quantitative study, this study did not aim to prove or disapprove any hypothesis or any set of phenomena or to establish a causal relationship whatsoever between variables; rather, it was interested in hearing stories of lived experiences.

A qualitative approach was most appropriate because the researcher wanted to listen to the narratives of property tax implementers and decision makers' experiences and appreciation of the realities surrounding property tax policy implementation in the CoK. Second, this researcher purposefully sought to understand what does exist, what happened, why it happened that way, and make interpretation to establish connection based on theories of public administration. The methodology used gives a voice to participants in the research.

Qualitative method presents many advantages for this study. In addition to hearing direct statements from subjects, the qualitative method has enabled the researcher to learn more by observing and perusing human interaction with participants, which increased understanding through both nonverbal and verbal communication and an opportunity to ask follow-up questions, rephrase questions for clarity, and seize the opportunity to grasp unanticipated responses (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative method was the best fit to carry out this study.

Population and Sampling

This study used a purposive sampling method because the quality and qualification of the participants were key elements for the validity of this research. Participants in the study were policy makers or policy implementers with valuable experience and practical knowledge to contribute to this study. Thus, they were selected carefully based on their knowledge on the subject matter and acquaintance with the practice of the property tax policy in the CoK and were either a current or former employee between 2003 and 2018. Thus, these singular criteria led to purposive sampling.

As mentioned in the background chapter, this study covered three districts that constitute the CoK. The participants consisted of seven council members and nine tax administration professionals in the city and districts. In addition, one representative of the Rwandan Federation of private sector (chamber of commerce) and one executive in the civil society were invited to participate in this study. In total, 18 people were invited to participate and recruitment continued until 18 respondents were reached. Among 18 participants, 15 were male and three were female to ensure gender balance.

In dealing with participants, the researcher followed ethical considerations and resolution. To abide by the highest ethical standards, prior to conducting the research, the researcher had secured the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the California Baptist University (CBU) IRB committee. This is a critical step to ensure that the initiating institution accounts for the protection of participants from potential harms, discomfort, embarrassment, invasion of privacy, or potential threat to the participants' reputation (Roberts, 2010). As a precondition to obtaining CBU IRB

approval, the researcher obtained the approval of the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda that oversees all research conducted in Rwanda except those in the medical field, which are under the authority of the National Ministry of Health.

Prior to diving into the depths of the study, the researcher established formal contact with participants to introduce and explain the research project, its purpose, and its benefits for the economic development of the CoK and its residents. Some participants in the category of tax collectors requested the researcher to secure the approval of their supervisors prior to accepting to participate in the study. According to Roberts (2010), gatekeepers in workplaces are concerned with the privacy and integrity of the working environment under their oversight.

With individual participants, the researcher sent a letter of consent eliciting the purpose, relevance, benefits of the research, protection of confidentiality, privacy, and the principle of voluntary participation. Other procedures required by IRB were also explained. Via e-mail, telephone, or face-to-face meeting, individual participants were briefed ahead of time about the nature of the questions to be asked. Some requested this briefing for better preparation to avoid long interviews or to avoid missing important information during interviews. Some also wanted to make sure that there were no questions that could compromise their professional ethics. In general, this procedure contributed in the reduction of the interview duration and avoidance of repeat interviews.

Interview meetings were scheduled at the participants' convenience not only in their offices but also in their homes or any other location of their choice with an appropriate environment to accommodate formal discussion. Creswell (2014) suggested that qualitative research takes place in the natural setting of the participant because this

gives the researcher an advantage to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and offers an opportunity to be involved in the actual experiences of the participants.

The interviewees' offices had an advantage because of access to data from their colleagues and records, and interviewees have at times called in subordinates who were better informed or knowledgeable on details about the study (Wynter, 2014). Many participants suggested other resourceful people to participate in this study and volunteered to make connections between the researcher and the would-be participants, and this worked well.

At the start of each interview, the researcher introduced himself, reminded each interviewee the purpose and nature of the study, and outlined the ethical prescription of CBU regarding the conduct of the scientific research. Then, the researcher explained the formal consent procedure and got verbal consent of the participant to participate in a research.

During the interview session, the researcher engaged the participant in casual preinterview conversation as an icebreaker to foster a relaxed interview atmosphere and build trust. As Roberts (2010) advised, the researcher must use good manners and refrain from interruption of normal activities in the workplace by respecting private space and conforming to the code of ethics of the host organization.

The researcher had explained the prior informed consent rule, the rights of the participant to withdraw at any time or refrain from providing any details with which he or she felt uncomfortable. Again, each participant was reminded that his or her participation was voluntary, that the data were to be used for academic purposes only, and that his or

her privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity was secure. Three participants had postponed their interview-because of concomitant schedule but later called the researcher to catch up with the interview session. Three others refrained from participating but suggested others to replace them.

The researcher-asked questions and follow-up questions depending on the clarity of responses. Many participants suggested other resourceful persons to participate, and this helped to reach the target number of 18 participants with requisite expertise to qualify for this study. During the session, the researcher avoided becoming judgmental by showing sides taken vis-a-vis the answers of the participants.

During the interview, the researcher took notes. No audio recording was used because Rwandans become skeptical of being recorded out of fear that the materials could be used in a wrong way.

After the interview, the researcher informed the participants that each interview transcript was assigned a code to protect the interviewees' identity and that all records and notes would be locked and stored in safe places that are only accessible to the researcher and that all materials would be destroyed at the end of the study when the final draft of the dissertation and corrections were approved by the university.

Instrumentation

The focus of this study was to capture perceptions and experiences of professionals on how three elements of policy, namely policy content, political acceptability among stakeholders, and institutional capacity played in the implementation of property tax policies in the CoK. Using semistructured interviews, the researcher recorded narratives from policy makers and practitioners concerning their perceptions

and experiences of implementation during the past 15 years of property tax policy implementation.

In addition, the study used secondary data analysis. The researcher reviewed relevant documents from archives of various government institutions, libraries, and organizational records. Among others, minutes of the city's and districts' council meetings, policy documents, institutional reports, and policy briefs were reviewed to obtain relevant information to understand what was done and what has occurred in the process of property tax implementation in CoK.

As the study focused on capturing the meaning these participants attached to their experiences, this study adopted a qualitative research approach based on Creswell's (2014) insight. Merriam (2002) defined qualitative methodology as an effort to understand trends of a situation and interactions going on within it. This understanding does not predict what may happen in the future in the field under consideration but assesses the nature of the setting to grasp the experience in that environment, deduct the lessons learned, and catch hold of its interpretation to thoughtfully understand that experience.

When conducting the investigation, the researcher collected the views, perceptions, expert's opinions, and experiences of selected participants with an objective that the outcome would contribute additional knowledge and bring new trends in the field of property tax policy implementation, particularly in developing countries.

Ultimately, the findings of the study will inform policy makers, practitioners, and scholars with an inside-out understanding of the impact of policy content of local and central political acceptability among stakeholders and organizational capacity of related

conditions on the practice of property tax implementation. In addition, the findings will enable the CoK leadership and stakeholders in amending policies, streamlining political support to improve implementation, and empowering the institutions of implementation for better performance and results in property tax policy implementation.

Data Collection

In this study, secondary data were used through document review and semistructured interviews with the help of an interview guide with open-ended questions. Documents of interest among councils' minutes, texts of laws, discussion papers, newspapers, policy papers, and others were reviewed to grasp the background information on the topic.

The major instrument of this study was a semistructured interviews guide. Creswell (2014) substantiated that qualitative interviews are the most widely used method in case studies. Creswell (2014) commended their efficiency because they are the best instruments for tapping into the subject's knowledge base about their experiences. Interviews serve the advantage of taking place either at a distance (telephone or web interviews) or face to face with participants. During interviews, participants can provide their historical information, allow follow-up questions over the line of questioning, and permit the researcher to rephrase or reconstruct questions.

Semistructured interviews were a good choice because they fostered the essential flexibility to refocus the conversation when the participant lost track on important detail. Also, with semistructured interviews, the researcher and participant sought confirmation and changed the sequence of questions as they wished. Furthermore, it enabled the

flexibility of the interview schedule to delay or postpone the timing when deemed necessary and allowed the researcher to take notes during the session.

Interview notes (transcripts) and other hard copies of secondary data collected were carefully handled and stored with respect to their physical integrity and locked in a safe environment in a filing cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Electronic devices such as a computer and recording devices used in the storing and analyzing of the data were protected by a password, and questionnaires were assigned codes to avoid potential exposure of the identity of participants and their responses (Roberts, (2010). At the end of the study, all materials were destroyed when the final dissertation and corrections were approved by the university.

Data Analysis

To make sense of the data as recommended by Roberts (2010), data must be reviewed and interpreted so that the researcher deducts conclusions that inform the community of practitioners and scholars on the current complexity of the problem under study. An appropriate analysis of data and interpretation must be done to enlighten the body of knowledge that the research is expected to contribute. The researcher took precautionary measures to avoid losing valuable data. It was surprising how data from 18 participants produced voluminous data in the form of words. Interview notes, transcripts, and follow-up e-mails for additional data or clarification generated a lot of information that suggested detailed analysis.

As a general guideline, the researcher remained unbiased and stuck to academic honesty through the research process, avoiding bias in analyzing and interpreting the results by choosing an appropriate method of measurement to enhance the significance of

the outcome and observing strict respect of the data integrity to avoid distortion of the evidence (Roberts, 2010). The researcher proceeded on the data analysis through three concurrent steps: data reduction, data display, and classification (Silverman, 2000). The researcher compressed data (e.g., tables) for manageability, easy reading, and comparisons of trends.

Lofgren's (2013) guidelines on data analysis was used in this study considering the nature of data that were collected. This method of data analysis followed these steps.

The first step was reading the transcripts-by quickly browsing through all transcripts, making notes about first impressions, and rereading again the transcripts one by one carefully and line by line.

The second step was to proceed to coding or indexing by labeling relevant pieces. This was done by labeling relevant words, phrases, sentences or sections, actions, activities, concepts, differences, opinions, processes, or everything that was relevant. In the coding process, the researcher spotted which information was relevant because it was repeated by several participants or there were sentences explicitly stated by participants as important. Also, the researcher paid attention to surprising insights that emerged during interviews and secondary data analysis, things relevant to published journals and books in the literature review, statements that invoked the theory, or a concept relevant to the topic.

In the third step, the researcher reduced the number of codes by deciding which codes are the most important then creating categories or themes by bringing together several codes that conveyed a unified concept or meaning.

The fourth step consisted of labeling categories and deciding what are the most relevant and establishing how they are connected to each other. These categories and the connections between them are the main results of the study. It is new knowledge about the world from the perspective of the participants in the study. Eventually, it is important to assess whether there is hierarchy among the categories, decide whether one category is more important than the other, and then write up findings.

Under findings, the researcher described categories and how they are connected using a neutral voice. In Chapter 5, the researcher discusses the interpretation of the findings by considering examples; direct quotes from findings, supporting them empirically; insights from published studies in scientific journals by scholars, in theories, in concepts from public administration; and other relevant concepts. In concluding, data collection went well without disruption that could affect the results.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers concerning property tax policy implementation in the city of Kigali (Rwanda). The focus of the study was to understand how policy content (statutes and other policy decisions), political acceptability, and institutional capacity impacted property tax policy implementation activities since the fiscal decentralization in 2003.

This study was conducted using semistructured interviews with policy makers (council members), implementers (tax collectors, administrators), civil society representatives, and executives from the Private Sector Federation of Rwanda and the national tax authority (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2011). In addition, the study perused secondary data analysis reviewing valuable official documents and other credible written sources such as local newspapers, policy papers, council minutes, institutional annual reports, and data from various social media channels.

Policy content (statutes and other policy decisions), political acceptability, and institutional capacity were examined based on variables outlined in the conceptual framework in Chapter 2. The following sections present the research findings in two parts: (a) interview findings by research question on one side and then-(b) key findings from secondary data analysis.

Interview Findings

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of policy content in the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

This question assessed the elements of policy content such as policy logic and policy goals and whether policy provided an enabling environment for implementation such as funding mechanism, provision of incentive to implementers, outlined performance measurement such as measures of accountability, reporting, and performance indicators. Findings indicate that, in the city of Kigali (CoK), participants at the executive level realized that the culture blurred policy and implementation. This study suggests that symmetry between culture and policy obstructs fairness of policy and implementation. Findings show that in the CoK, the Rwandan traditional land management policies are at odds with property tax policies and their implementation. The fact that a specific family has owned each piece of land since ancestral time, without any form of taxation, raises the question of whether the government should this time levy tax on land inherited from grandparents. This was postulated by all respondents, expressing the opinions of taxpayers. Respondents recognized that there are many who possess land and buildings without any or enough monetary revenue to pay taxes on them for diverse reasons.

This asymmetric positioning between the will of the decision maker at the top on one side, and taxpayers and implementers on the other side, denotes an absence of stakeholders' engagement in policy making (choice, formulation, and adoption), which

causes dislocation between the will of the legislator and the taxpayers' concerns about his or her ability to pay. This dislocation suggests that respondents (tax collectors and others) causes misunderstanding, confusion, fear, and resentment among taxpayers, thus raising concerns of fairness of the property tax policy statute and other policy decisions in the CoK.

Tax collectors who started with property tax policy implementation in 2003 disclosed the policy clarity at the top versus ambiguity of taxpayers and implementation. Two former mayors, participants in the research, perceived that policy goals were and still are clear in the eyes of decision makers (at the central government level) but remain ambiguous in relation to taxpayers and implementers. A policy analyst among the participants observed,

Clarity of goals at the top is dependent on the fact that the draft laws are made by technocrats at the (central) ministerial level, following the central government's overall development goals and projection of revenues and expenditures to that end.

During the early phase of implementation, property tax enforcement was difficult, almost impossible because of the absence of basic data on tax base (taxable properties) inconsistencies such as unprepared taxpayers, lack of resources, unclear procedures of enforcement, and impossibility for tax collectors to solve technical issues at hand. Perplexed, tax collectors attested that they have lost purpose for their actions. Second, tax collectors reported that there was ambiguity of policy as implementers and taxpayers were not persuaded about how this would promote their welfare versus how it would affect their properties and the guarantee of fairness of this new program.

A former executive in the CoK stated that “the ambiguity of policy caused lack of direction and sapped tax collection efforts at the beginning.” It appears that while implementers submit to the authority of the laws, what matters most is their commitment. The ambiguity of policy proves to be the enemy of effective implementation.

There were difficulties in drafting property tax policies not only because of lack of expertise in newly formed local governments but also because of lack of useful models and success cases to lead the way. Borrowing and applying another country’s policies without appropriate adaptation was a false strategy. As stated by a former senior manager in the CoK,

In 2003, property tax policies were born out of urgency to mobilize revenues for newly-formed local governments. The policy was emulated on the property tax policies of Uganda and was implemented without appropriate accommodation to the local environment in the city of Kigali.

Based on findings, a legal instrument that works best in a given implementing environment (Uganda) may not work in a different environment (Rwanda). Historical, socioeconomic, and political environment plays a vital role; thus, adapting policies to local implementing environments could promote effective implementation.

Another source of ambiguity found was that several taxpayers do not have the ability to pay taxes without clear knowledge of who should address problems related to property taxation. Respondents (tax collectors and council members) interviewed revealed a generalized social anxiety among taxpayers unable to pay their tax liability for various reasons. They possess land, buildings, and/or improvements but do not have any monetary income to pay property taxes on them. This ambiguity raises concerns over the

risks to low-income earners and the poor losing their properties to the wealthy during public sales of delinquent properties as a measure of enforcement. This is an issue of fairness and equity of a policy and its implementation.

Pioneers of property tax policy implementers at the level of the CoK stressed that a political feasibility study and an action plan would be good instruments to navigate the complexity of property tax implementation. Respondents supported the political feasibility study and action plan as a tool that can save time, effort, and resources for property tax policy implementation. It was found that the CoK acted solely at the beginning. The political feasibility study examined potential actors' motives, beliefs, and resources that could have set the implementation to a right start and an action plan that could have developed a set of strategies or a course of action to implementing property tax in the CoK. Tax collectors' respondents believed that a feasibility study could have helped in avoiding costly missteps, reducing the trial-and-error period in the policy implementation. Thus, careful planning is necessary, and based on its complexity, failing to plan property tax policy implementation is planning to fail.

Former executives at the district level in the CoK denoted that the government and taxpayers had asymmetry of goals vis-a-vis property taxation policy. The findings show disparities between an overambitious government that sets ambitious social and economic development goals without ample efforts and time to persuade beneficiaries and implementers about the details of their participation. A former executive in the CoK administration stated,

The central government has a clear vision, with intelligible definition of policy goals and strategies to that end but the citizens seem slow to understand or to

establish the correlation of what the government aspire to achieve and taxpayer's contribution to the collective project.

Tax collectors at the initiation of property tax policy in CoK perceived that lack of initial funding is a denial of implementation. During an interview, a former executive in the CoK administration disclosed that “the government had issued property tax policy to implementers with no budget allocation for implementation.” Shortage of initial funding had taken away any opportunity for effective implementation. Without a resolute political will and investment of resources, property tax policy implementation appears impossible.

A director of finance and administration in one of the districts under CoK stated that at the beginning “the city of Kigali neither its districts made provisions for financing operations leading to property tax policy implementation as collected revenues collected were consumed by priority expenses such as salaries, security, safety and education.” The CoK and its districts had no budget line earmarked for property tax implementation financing. Shortfall in money among others caused technical implementers to lose enthusiasm for implementation, thus lengthening the period of trials and errors.

Tax collectors facing taxpayers' grievances during tax enforcement find that the *Ignorancia Juris Non Excusat* principle can be unfair to illiterate taxpayers. The principle that ignorance of laws excuses no one (*ignorancia juris non excusat*) can be an instrument of brutality in an illiterate society when no measures of fairness are provided. Respondents in the study voiced concerns over delinquent taxpayers unable to liquidate their tax bills for various reasons (ignorance of laws, pending waiver request because of inability to pay, force majeure, etc.).

Many decision makers and implementers alike indicated that there are many details in the law that taxpayers are not aware of. As a result of experience, tax collectors at the grassroots level (Umurenge) discern that an enforcement that does not assume limited understanding of policy by an ordinary Rwandan taxpayer does exacerbate the unfairness of the process. They intimated that the only message during management meetings is to collect more revenues, but no space is allocated to listening to the constraints of the taxpayers in relation to property tax laws, compliance mechanism, and the hurdles of the tax collectors in handling unhappy taxpayers.

Field tax collectors revealed that even taxpayers with formal education do not know much about their rights with regards to waiver of tax liability, tax appeal procedures, accruing penalties, and so on. Therefore, they are concerned about the future of several taxpayers who accumulate tax debts and are at risk of losing their properties when the tax authority decides to proceed to penalties and ultimately to foreclosure.

Tax collectors admitted that they do not comprehend some basic legal elements of the policy and thus are unable to educate taxpayers. In their comments after individual interviews, two field tax collectors admitted that they did not know that the tax base extends on buildings and/or improvements and/or the details regulating exemption.

To validate these statements, the researcher presented a copy of the recent policy and discussed Articles 28 and 31 with these tax collectors. They expressed coming in touch for the first time with the provisions of Article 31 of the recent reformed law providing waiver of liability under various conditions, inter alia, that (a) a taxpayer who provides a written statement to the tax administration justifying that he/ or she is totally indebted so as a public auction of his or her property would yield no result, and (b) that a

taxpayer proves that he or she is not able to pay immovable properties. The tax administration judges the validity of the application and files a report to the district executive committee who submits it to the district council for decision. In an informal debriefing, two district council members who had participated in the study admitted to not being aware of such a privilege and the legal authority for the city council to grant exemptions to deserving property taxpayers.

Article 28 stipulates that objection or appeal against assessed tax does not relieve the taxpayer of his or her obligation to pay the assessed immovable property tax. He or she must pay the total amount of assessed tax within the time limit.

The two tax collectors and council members engaged in this discussion indicated to their best knowledge that no property tax related foreclosure was on record. In separate interview sessions, representatives of the Private Sector Federation of Rwanda and the civil society organizations raised concerns on the confusion and panic roaming among mid- to grassroots-level stakeholders to how enforcing delinquent property taxpayers by courts will be executed and its consequences on affected taxpayers and the broader community in general. Respondents perceived that vigorous enforcement could move several families from being relatively self-sustainable to vulnerable, leading them to depend on governmental aid, which is virtually insignificant.

From early stages of property tax implementation in the CoK to the time of this study, some aspects of enforcing the property tax policy have become impractical. First-level enforcers (tax collectors) face hardships when dealing with inconsistencies of data, social pressure, lack of appropriate legal and administrative infrastructure, and grappling

with personal conviction with regard to lack of discretion on addressing taxpayers' concerns.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of political acceptability on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

This question assessed from policy makers and implementers how receptability of policy among stakeholders versus conflicts, continued or fading political support during implementation, and conflicting political interests have impacted policy implementation. It also inquired whether there were extra measures of promoting policy acceptability by way of policy analysis and social marketing. Furthermore, it evaluated existence of issues in network coordination, opportunities for collective learning among stakeholders of implementation, and how all of these factors impacted the property tax in the CoK.

Findings demonstrate that tax collectors and council members perceived that cultural capital was a stronghold against property tax policy acceptability. The findings of this study attest that cultural capital (meaning attitudes, values, and aspirations) is a key concept in determining implementation effectiveness. It influences the behavior and actions people decides to embrace and how fast this can be accomplished. Because of its novelty as a concept in Rwandan culture, beliefs and traditions of taxing property caused disillusionment across society of lawmakers, taxpayers, and implementers.

Respondents asserted that many taxpayers submit to the legal authority to avoid costly consequences of vigorous enforcement, not by conviction. As stated previously, people have difficulties in understanding why they should pay tax on land they inherited

from their parents and question the rationale of paying tax on land and buildings that do not procure a flow of monetary income. This asymmetric relationship between policies and the conviction of the taxpayer is caused by the low political acceptability and difficulties of implementation. For instance, as tax on building or improvement value is coming, respondents testified that families with more properties are looking into distorting the tax base to avoid tax by donating these properties to their children to make the property become a “primary residential house,” which is tax-exempt by laws.

Tax collectors’ and decision makers’ experiences brought them to realize that at some point the inability to pay is at odds with property tax implementation in the CoK. In the CoK, the inability to pay puts many taxpayers in a never-ending accumulation of tax debts and causes low political acceptability. Respondents stated that the principle of tax compliance is legitimate but that current concepts of property tax reform in the CoK, including tax base, tax rate, and enforcement mechanisms can be seen as brutality against the social and economic stability of some of the citizens. One former mayor and other tax collectors stated that “there is a generalized panic and anxiety among the citizens fearing losing their properties in the process” while one former department manager in retirement stated,

We will sell out and leave this country if no revision is made on the recent property tax laws, those of us in retirement we don’t have extra monetary income to pay taxes on properties that do not yield tangible income beyond money that covers our medical and other basic expenses.

Tax collectors at the CoK level learned that continual voiced political support is critical to implementation. A consented, consistent, collective, uniform, and publicly

voiced political support is key to sustaining property tax policy implementation. The government of Rwanda wishes to become financially self-reliant or less dependent on foreign aid shortly. Each interviewee recognized that the central authority wants to maximize revenue collection at all levels to that end. The interviews and document data analysis show that political will is stronger at the central government (source of major decisions) but weak at the implementation level.

While well intentioned, the government of Rwanda is missing enough persuasion campaign and participative approach on essential policy choice. Tax collectors among the respondents stated that they have never seen central-level or midlevel decision makers attending town hall meetings to engage citizens in debates about the property tax reform. Outreach visits by some members of parliament seem not to reach enough audience. Representatives of the civil society speculated that debates most often come late when opportunities to alter the intentions of the policy have vanished, and thus come later as grievances when laws knock on taxpayers' doors for enforcement.

Asked about potential political conflict because of this policy inconsistency, respondents did not want to use the term *political conflict*. However, between the lines, complaints against the top-down, decision-making process on popular policies can be translated as a covert conflict between the central authority, taxpayers, and implementers. This situation translates to the inappropriate choice of the policy-making model. During interviews, council member and tax collectors alike pointed out that the lack of government social marketing is a setback to taxpayers' involvement. In this study's interview, participants reported that there is a non-negligible section of Rwandans who do not establish a connection between socioeconomic development with citizens'

obligations to pay taxes. Tax collectors and decision makers find that there is a dependency syndrome that still exists in people's mindsets, because most citizens expect public goods without thinking about funding mechanism.

Council members who were participants in this study (in the CoK) and some tax collectors perceived that some local government authorities equally nurture such mindsets, which explains the reasons why at times they do not perceive the necessity of marketing what they do; or choose friendly relationships with taxpayers in lieu of enforcing property tax laws. There is need for a cultural change dialogue extended to leaders and citizens alike at all levels of Rwandan society to promote citizenship and government accountability. This mindset may have roots in the long tradition of former centralized governance with less citizen's involvement in the political process and foreign aid role. One analyst participant recommended governments at various levels to hold public accountability debates to say what they have done with tax money; this way citizens can be educated on the fact that they are served with the money they pay. Participants in the study expressed support for self-reliance projects, and seeing this as the highest value in Rwanda tradition, they urge the government to rally taxpayers to get involved in this self-reliance project asking their contribution and presenting results of the progress made.

The finance professionals in the districts highlighted that the silo approach in property tax policy implementation was a wrong way to implementation at the outset. Inclusive and collaborative governance is the approach to closing key missing links in property tax policy implementation. One of the paramount findings of this study was that inclusive collaboration is key to implementing complex policies such as property tax.

The findings show that several stakeholders could have helped speed up the process of implementation if a right collaborative scheme had been thought out in the planning phase of property tax implementation.

The research findings further pinpointed the importance of effective coordination in the property tax policy implementation network. A former executive committee member in the CoK stated that “each district, even each tax collector has to figure out his/her way to collect taxes.” He added that “there was a lack of a cohesive approach, accountability for action, and outcomes among stakeholders.” Two former mayors of districts in the CoK and a former executive officer in the CoK stated that if the city council had appointed a semi-independent program coordinator or fixer entrusted with legal and managerial authority and budget, implementing property tax policy in the CoK could have moved faster than it did.

Field tax collectors reported confrontations with unresponsive taxpayers because of lack of awareness of their civic duties and responsibilities. These taxpayers claimed that they were not aware of important decisions regarding critical elements of tax policy, notably the tax base, tax rates, and enforcement. They expressed frustration over tax base, tax rate, and the process of property tax administration. Tax collectors believed that the tax base (assets on which tax applies) and tax rate (the percentage of income on which the tax applies) are determinant and sensitive elements in property taxation and should be consulted and widely explained to the public with an emphasis on taxpayers.

From the respondents' point of view, the tax base and tax rate are elements of contention in the property tax laws. They believe that those things should be decided based on the broad consultation as a result of the participation of interest groups,

including taxpayers, decision makers, and civil society organizations. Tax collectors sense that they themselves must be part of the game because they possess practical experience with people's reactions prone to affecting tax compliance.

Tax collectors' experiences have taught them that the tax base and tax rates are double-edged instruments. Tax collectors perceived that while these elements determine the amount of revenue that public administration collects, they are key elements of political acceptability among stakeholders who have an impact on policy implementation. They found that these elements coupled with unfairness in tax administration have potential to engender social and economic distortions if not dealt with tactfully.

The executive in the CoK reported that there was a missing opportunity for policy and organizational continual learning. Former executive officer and tax collectors at CoK indicate that because of a lack of prior experience, the property tax system in the CoK has not created the space for much needed collective and continual learning among stakeholders. Implementers (tax collectors) of property tax policies in the CoK said that actors in the implementation were distant from each other, the districts, in the CoK, had conflicts over revenue sharing, and the grassroots organizations were in conflicts most of the time thus have not had the opportunity to discuss lessons learned to correct course and advance implementation collectively.

Based on their experience, implementers pointed out that constant feedback among stakeholders from taxpayers to implementers and from implementers to the decision makers, and so forth, is the cornerstone for advancing property tax policy implementation. Implementers deplore that first-hand lessons of implementation did not adequately serve their purpose because of lack of a forum for discussion, among

stakeholders. Property tax policy implementation as a never-ending process, and tax collectors find that implementers and policy makers must exchange information between each other, learn and assist one another, and make changes together.

This researcher found that the process of property tax implementation produces valuable experiences and must prompt continual feedback along the way by the process in which agents of implementation are required to transmit messages to principles at the higher-level of policy making and vice versa. Property tax implementation responds to the third generation of implementation theory. It argued that implementation behavior varies predictably depending on the attributes of the policy, organizations, and the environment in which implementation decisions and actions take place.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions and experiences of practitioners and decision makers in the CoK concerning the impact of the institutional capacity on the implementation of property tax policy since its decentralization in 2003?

This question assessed efforts for policy integration into the CoK and partners' organizational structure and other factors such as leadership and human skills, consistent annual budget line, and the availability and use of appropriate technology and assets impacted by property tax implementation in the-CoK. Findings are discussed in the following sections:

The director of finance and the tax collectors' supervisors at the district level consider personnel without skills and incentive as numbers without meaning. A former tax collection professional at the CoK and finance administrators in districts revealed that employees at the CoK and district tax collectors took on additional responsibility of

implementing property tax without any form of incentive. They deplored that the CoK has not put in place a plan to incentivize districts and the city staff, who took on the considerable work of implementation in addition to their existing job description.

Without competent, experienced staff available with technical expertise in property tax administration, giving tax collectors more responsibility to implement a complex policy such as property tax without incentive was a wrong way to implementation. Organizations and the people in them are at the forefront of implementation and must take purposeful action to implement policies; thus, they must receive support and incentive for implementation. The CoK management ignored that policies do not implement themselves and that motivating employees for a specific policy conveys a message of priority attached to it among other programs under implementation.

There are methods of incentives. Allocating allowances, establishing rules for conditional job promotion trainings, establishing conditional grants to local governments, providing a stimulating work environment, providing adequate and robust information technology systems in a workplace, and opportunities for participation in decision making are among other incentives that provide affirming environments to implementers.

Chief tax collectors and decision maker respondents voiced that, in earlier years of implementation, there were concerns over corruption, stating that lack of motivation had induced corruption among employees and grassroots authorities as they were involved in manual and door-to-door tax base assessment and in the handling of public money. Frontline employees, especially those with traditional civil service protection, have often shown less commitment in implementing property policy because of lack of motivation and social, economic, and technical difficulties associated to its

implementation. They commended that with the introduction of technology and collaboration corruption has declined substantially and technical difficulties have subsided.

Implementers in the CoK perceived that deficient policy integration obstructs implementation. According to tax collectors, “Property taxation in the city of Kigali had started in a ‘vacuum,’” and “the implementation of property tax started haphazardly without thorough preparation.” In early start, uncertainties about steps to follow as well as a lack of organizational integration, assignment of responsibility, and incentive for implementation, and lack of budget constituted a sin to policy integration. One respondent, a former executive in the-CoK, deplored failure of the CoK to design structure and resources to accommodate the new policy. He realized that “the implementing organization must put in place a structure for policy integration, receive money for implementation, establish managerial accountability, and leadership to take charge of policy implementation.” Tax collectors stated that soon after implementation had started, the heaviness and complexity of the property tax policy implementation caused institutional and staff fatigue, leading staff to feel inadequately equipped to produce outcomes.

In the early phases of implementation, the CoK had not done any organizational restructuring, created new units or departments to accommodate property tax implementation, planned a budget, appointed leadership, recruited staff, or acquired essential assets and technology to implement tasks connected to the new policy. All of these elements are interconnected, and each one holds weight in the attainment of

effective implementation. Therefore, all must be available and work together to form a convenient integration of policy implementation.

Former mayors of districts and district chief tax collectors discerned that turnover of leadership and human resources have at times disrupted property tax implementation. In the past 15 years, the CoK has had five mayors with an average of 3 years for each mayor's term in office. Current and former staff of the CoK respondents in this study expressed that the frequent changes in leadership impeded the momentum of property tax implementation in the city. The commitment to property tax policies depends on the commitment of the mayor. A change in leadership affects policy implementation, which is dependent upon the attention that the leader puts on the policy. The respondents felt that frequent changes in leadership at the city level decreased the momentum of implementation.

Tax collectors at the CoK and its districts realized that continued financial allocation is key to continued effective implementation. Findings in this study show that there was no commitment of budget to the implementation of property tax. They demonstrated that money is the fuel of implementation; therefore, failure to allocate funds is a denial of implementation. Tax collectors participants have learned that the high cost of property tax policy implementation is because of its complexity. Its administration includes several operations. Implementing property tax requires careful planning and a substantial investment of resources to succeed. It demands long-range planning, sustained political support, and adaptive learning for the long haul.

Investing in property tax implementation is strenuous. While implementation of various policies yields outcomes along the way, property tax requires long-term planning

and a considerable amount of investment before the institution can start to see any results. Such a broad decision requires courage and mental preparation on the part of the employees and institutional readiness, resilience, careful planning, and the availability of money. Lack of initial funding for implementation is one of the problems that slowed down the project of property tax implementation in the CoK.

A former executive in the CoK recognized that the city allocated an insignificant budget for property tax policy implementation. Lack of enough resources became and remain, so far as of the time of this study, a hindrance in-the-CoK property tax implementation. A former chief of the tax collectors in the CoK reported that because of a budget deficit, the CoK did not spare funding for property tax implementation in the eyes of pressing expenditures such as education, city staffing remuneration, waste collection and treatment, and security and infrastructure maintenance, which absorbed almost the totality of the available budget, thus not allowing the opportunities for administrators to invest in programs that yield sustainable results in the long run such as property tax. For implementers, when there is no allocated budget, they indirectly conclude that property tax is no longer at the top of the priority among other policies, leading to cutting down commitment to the execution. Delays in money allocation convey a political message that other policies have taken precedence.

As a result of experience, decision makers and tax collectors witnessed that modern technologies have created an unexpected breakthrough. Findings show that the use of emerging technology has drastically revolutionized property tax collection in the CoK over the last 15 years, and mainly in the last 3 years (2015 to 2018). While property tax administration implies collecting and computing large volumes of information,

defective information management and computing can shut down the system of property tax administration. Through the partnership, stakeholders came up with new technologies that revolutionized the tax administration system since 2015. Extending collaboration to commercial companies such as banks as well as information communication and technology (ICT) companies has brought tremendous change by streamlining property tax administration systems.

The use of aerial photography with aircraft coupled with physical verification with citizens and land committees at local levels improved the landownership data drastically. The accuracy has shifted from 45% to 70% according to land center officials at Gasabo district. This project has boosted establishing land lease tax base exponentially and streamlined the system of land management and tax administration.

Current chief tax collectors at the district level commended the introduction of technologies. Their use has eliminated delays and curbed corruption at all levels in the property tax administration and increased customer satisfaction, eased prompt reporting and accountability, and subsequently contributed in increasing tax revenues in the CoK.

Secondary Data Findings

Secondary data analysis reviewed valuable official documents of CoK council minutes and other credible written sources such as local newspapers, policy papers, annual reports, and live TV interviews and online government-run and private news channels on YouTube. Government newspapers praised property tax and expressed government intention of increasing local revenues recognizing property tax as a great potential for local government revenues. Reporters also raised the difficulties and the failure of districts to enforce property tax, and private media expressed concerns of the

proposed reforms toward the inability of taxpayers to pay and the ignorance of the citizens, voicing out an inappropriate policy. All sources called for a fairer policy and equitable implementation.

Research Question 1: Policy Content Impact on Property Tax Implementation

Through media archives and interviews, consumer rights representatives and taxpayers expressed hope that the president of the Republic of Rwanda will repeal the law because it goes against the social and economic stability of several families. Former and current council members appealed in one way or another for a mechanism of appeasement in the property tax enforcement. They perceived that enforcing these reforms without appropriate measures of fairness in policy and administration put at risk of losing properties rights to a segment of the population, relegating them to be part of the vulnerable group and therefore, a burden to the government.

Statements demonstrate that in the application of laws, tax collectors recognize the indiscriminant enforcing of property tax laws without regard to inconsistencies in the policy, its application, taxpayer grievances, and overall consequences on the taxpayer is unfair. In a radio interview with a journalist, one executive in charge of local government finances in the Rwanda Revenue Authority said, “As long as taxpayers don’t prove their exemption certificate from respective districts councils, we will continue enforcing tax on their properties.” This statement shows a contradiction between tax authority at the national and local level of implementation. While field tax collectors (lower level) side with vulnerable taxpayers, the national policy level is driven by seeing increases in revenue figures.

Research Question 2: Political Acceptability Impact on Property Tax

Implementation

Representatives of consumer rights caution about unfairness of recent reform of property tax policies. In a coverage of the parliament debates, Karuhanga (2017b) reported, in *New Times*, statements of some members of parliaments who demonstrated concerns about property tax laws and advocated for careful reforms. The chairperson of the Standing Committee on National Budget and Patrimony cautioned that amendments in the draft law had better be realistic and reflect the reality of the country's tax base. Another member of parliament said "taxpayers, especially unemployed home owners in the city, need not to be squeezed. Another said blatantly that these taxes are high" (Karuhanga, 2017a, para. 15). Citizens expressed concerns over some distortion that could occur in society. In an interview with the newspaper, one said, "The enforcement of this law will force landlords to increase rent, then it is not fair" (Mugisha, 2014, para. 6). Mugisha (2014) reported that the director general of Rwanda Housing Authority supported the enactment of property tax while also seeking to encourage the private sector to set up affordable housing.

In the public debate captured on social media, one influential member of parliament voiced disapproval against the property tax policy in the following statement: Why are we transforming citizens who can socially and economically sustain themselves into vulnerable category? Making them and their children a burden for the government today and in future (Rugali Ngali, 2018). This statement among others demonstrates the unfairness of the property tax reform vis-a-vis the citizens. It contradicts principles of fairness, efficiency, and equity, which are pillars of a sound public affairs management.

In televised debate and social media (Rwanda TV, 2018), the representatives of Transparency International and Rwanda Consumer Rights voiced that even though this top-down approach to policy making led to progress in property taxation in Rwanda, there is a need for policy adjustment as it procures results in a way that is detrimental to social and economic prosperity of citizens. They call on the government to engage the citizens in ongoing negotiations when making social policies susceptible to engendering far-reaching and long-lasting socioeconomic impacts such as property tax.

During a parliamentary committee debate (Flash TV Rwanda-Official Channel, 2018) on property tax policy reform, a congresswoman and others strongly disapproved of the provisions of the recent proposed reform. The congresswoman stated that “it is good to learn what American and British are doing in taxing wealth including property tax, but we need to assess how an ordinary Rwandan citizen thinks and his level of social and economic standing” (Flash TV Rwanda-Official Channel, 2018, n.p.).

In a televised debate on Rwanda TV (2018), a representative of Transparency International Rwanda described the law on property tax reform as “a dictate” from the government to the citizens and expressed concerns that this law will not be implementable. On his behalf, the representative of the Rwanda Consumer Rights voiced concerns that this “law does not reflect the ability to pay of most Rwandans” (Rwanda TV, 2018, n.p.).

Research Question 3: Institutional Capacity Impact on Policy Implementation

Newspapers close to the government report that local governments did not have the capacity to enforce property tax. The *New Times*, a newspaper close to the government, reported that property tax holds great potential that could amount to 30% of

total revenue collection in the CoK but deplored that revenue from property tax in Rwanda has achieved very small increases each year and sometimes decreases leaving local governments short of finances (Mugisha, 2014). It is believed that districts have failed to enforce property laws because valuation of properties is expensive while only about 1,000 people in the whole of Kigali are registered (Mugisha, 2014). Mugisha highlighted that “property tax laws have been dormant since 2002” (para. 2). Property tax law was met with skepticism, with several tenants fearing that their landlords could shift the burden to them by increasing rent fees.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS

As outlined in Chapter 1, this study was concerned with gaining an in-depth understanding of the implementation of property tax policies in practice in the city of Kigali (CoK), the capital city of the Republic of Rwanda. It investigated underlying relations that shape implementation, seeking to understand how policy content (statute and other policy decisions,-Research Question 1), political acceptability of policy among actors (Research Question 2), and institutional capacity (Research Question 3) impact property tax implementation in the CoK.

This was a qualitative study based on three research questions summarized in the previous paragraph. It used purposeful sampling in the population of policy makers and professionals of property tax policy and practice in the CoK and districts under it. The study also brought out opinions from private sector and community organizations (consumer rights). The data were collected using semistructured interviews and secondary data analysis.

The study sought to capture experiences and perceptions of 18 participants who included seven local council members (decision makers), nine implementers (tax collectors), one executive of the chamber of commerce of Rwanda, and one representative of community organizations. Secondary data were collected from institutional reports, council meeting minutes, but mostly from newspapers online and in print, government and private's news outlets (TV and radio), and social media sources.

This chapter discusses the results of the study in two major sections. The first section presents important observations among other crucial phases of property tax policy implementation, vital pending issues in the implementation in the CoK, and significant

lessons learned. The second section outlines recommendations to improve policy content, increase property tax policy political acceptability, and building in demand institutional capacity for an effective property tax implementation.

Important Observations

Critical Phases in Property Tax Policy Implementation in the CoK

The findings of the study on property tax policy implementation in the CoK show that during the last 15 years, the policy implementation progress and reforms have occurred in three sequences. These sequences mark three critical phases in property tax implementation in Kigali.

2003-2013. A period during which the CoK and districts under it have acted in isolation. It was a decade of trial and error, characterized by manual and door-to-door tax administration. This period was characterized by a deficit in tax-base information, lack of taxpayer's registry, manual door-to-door tax administration without use of technology, policy integration difficulties because of taxpayers' and implementers' confusion, strong cultural opposition, and low acceptance of policy as a new concept of taxation.

Further, during this period the CoK had acted alone, and there were conflicts among the council members over the policy. Even the CoK was in conflict with its districts over revenue sharing. Publicly, there was a divide among majority council members and the mayor over ideas of contracting private companies to conduct surveys and execute requisite ground technical work (i.e., survey and geospatial data) to establish tax base data.

The-CoK and its districts were technically unprepared for the task while also facing social and political resentments. This situation led to fading enthusiasm at the

outset of property tax implementation. It became a stalled implementation. During this period, only taxpayers with land titles, mainly industrial properties and other sizeable businesses, paid land lease tax to protect their properties and business rights.

2013-2015. A period of experiencing consolidation marked by attempts to reform policy. It was a period of retreat and partial learning. Among other things, the CoK realized the necessity for collaboration and sought out stakeholders and negotiating terms for that purpose and introduced computers in the management of the data. Urged by the central government, the CoK reaffirmed the political will to make property taxation work.

The CoK proceeded to reform policy, open public-private partnership (PPP) agreements, and negotiate deals with Rwanda Revenue Authority, private banks, and information communication and technology (ICT) companies. During this period, there were still pending issues related to availability and accuracy of tax base data and performance indicators and reporting.

2015-2018. A period of vibrant momentum. Collaboration brought in significant innovation and introduced use of cutting-edge technology. The CoK started digitizing customer services through Rwanda Revenue Authority network. Tax base information expanded following the data supplied by aerial land survey by Rwanda Land Management and Use Authority (RLMUA) in its national land policy reform project conjointly funded by the Government of Rwanda and the British Department for International Development. There was initiation of easy access to data by individual taxpayers using simple technologies such as texting, log in on smartphones and individual computers for tax e-filing, and assessment verification and e-payment. This

was a period of breakthrough, enthusiasm, and positive momentum in the implementation of property tax.

Key Pending Issues in Property Tax Implementation in the CoK

While many aspects in property tax implementation in the CoK needed improvements, there were two major pending issues that CoK and its partners had to tackle. First, from 2003 to 2018, CoK had not been able to collect tax on buildings and improvements because of lack of tax base information. They only succeeded in taxing land. As a reminder, CoK property tax is levied on (a) the market value of a building and (b) the surface of a plot of land. In a recent reform in 2016, the tax on the value of buildings and improvement was deferred once again for 4 more years because of lack of data. The enforcement of this segment of property tax was deferred at every policy reform since 2003. The city is unable to conduct valuation of buildings and improvements. The director of administration and finance in one of the districts reported that the city of Kigali is not yet prepared to levy tax on buildings and/or improvements due to lack of information on the taxable properties. The city is only able to levy tax on plots of land, because these are easy to measure, and the data supplied by aerial photography from the land reform project by Rwanda land management authority have exponentially increased volume and accuracy of data on land tenure. According to the director of administration and finance DAF, available estimates suggest that property tax revenues collection on land lease was at 85% at the time of this research [?].

Second, it is difficult to obtain detailed and statistical data as indicators of performance. Statistics and detailed information about available taxable properties, taxpayers, and revenues collected are important to evaluating implementation programs.

These are important for planning, managing, and public accountabilities. In the same vein, CoK and its districts maintain both digital and manual systems that cause problems in synchronizing information.

Key Lessons Learned

This research revealed that property tax implementation is “change management.” Through analysis of interview data and documents analysis, the fact emerges that property tax implementation is a complex process requiring changing systems in organizations, people in them, behaviors and attitudes of taxpayers and other stakeholders, elected and nonelected officials, and taxpayers. Therefore, property tax policy implementation implies change management when reinventing systems and organizations and changing behaviors of people in them to accommodate implementation.

Property tax implementation is complex, multifaceted, and inherently multidisciplinary. It combines policy, politics, and management. It involves making policy choice (definition of taxable base, tax rate, tax payer, and exemptions), requires lengthy planning, and detailed data collection (i.e., property identification, valuation, tax assessment, billing, notification, tax appeal, and enforcement). Thus, it calls for multiple expertises (i.e., policy analysts, urban planners, land use, valuers, tax collectors, accountant, law enforcement, and courts of laws). Property tax implementation is more complicated than many leaders, managers at central and local governments, and external actors realize.

Implementing property tax is socially delicate, economically costly, and politically demanding. Making decisions that affect individual property rights raises

tensions among the public, especially in developing countries when the concept of property tax is a novel concept at odds with tradition and culture and where acquiring property is a result of much sacrifice. Many cases in the CoK show that owning property means wealth but is not an indication of cash flow. This is particularly true in social and economic environment employment markets that are volatile and marked by high unemployment and limited access to capital investment.

Property tax is economically costly because of the planning and preparatory work for data collection, and the cost for its administration (human, assets, and technology) requires a huge investment of money before revenues start flowing in government treasury. It becomes difficult for local governments to invest limited revenues they collect over a lengthy period of time when they are faced with urgent social expenditures. Property tax is politically demanding in developing countries because it implies tough decisions to make it work, vexing voters in the process and putting political careers at stake.

It is important to secure a firm political commitment and use strategic planning and management to be able to navigate uncertainties. It is imperative to collaborate for resources and political acceptability of policy, engaging in intensive, persuasive communication, continual open and collective learning, policy redesign, and reimplementation.

Based on the general literature, theory, and practical findings in this study, there are recommendations for the CoK. These recommendations can be experimented in other cities in developing countries with similar property taxation issues.

Recommendations

Research Question 1: Improving Policy Content

A good policy content lays a foundation for its implementation. An appropriate policy content (statute and other policy decisions) must be seen as fair in the eyes of implementers and the people it is called to serve. It must outline clear goals aimed at solving societal problems, and it must convey clarity, consistency, efficiency, credibility, and believability toward the implementers and contributing stakeholders. In addition, it must ensure coverage of all-important areas of enforcement, provision of initial funding, safeguards fairness of policy, and administration inter alia mechanism of handling taxpayers' grievances.

The 2002 statute and later amendments in 2011 and the recent Law No. 75 of September 2018 on property tax policy omitted vital elements, making it to be misaligned with the implementing environment. In addition to lack of budget, expertise, and appropriate organization structure, the policy has omitted regulating detailed sequences of property tax policy implementation in the CoK. These inconsistencies caused issues of low policy legitimacy, uncertainties among implementers, low motivation in the early stages, and missed opportunities for straightforward implementation. Thus, there are suggested recommendations to improving policy content for an effective implementation.

To improve policy content, policy makers and analysts must think fairness of policy and administration earlier in the formulation. At all stages of the policy cycle, from policy formulation to implementation, fairness should be the guiding principle. Fairness must weigh in when deciding on tax base, tax rate, and putting in place the infrastructure and mechanism for tax administration. Tax base must be accurate and

reasonable, tax rate flexible, rules of enforcements equitable, and an adequate organizational structure to accommodate all concerns of taxpayers must be in place.

Listening to stakeholders and taxpayers is paramount.

The contradiction between property tax measures of enforcement and taxpayers' "ability to pay" is an important issue of fairness. Even though property tax is reportedly an equitable tax because it applies to a value of real estate supposedly calculated on ability to pay (wealth), if the individual taxpayer's socioeconomic conditions are not factored in, the principle of fairness is compromised.

I agree with Mark and Carruthers (1983) that housing value may not be a good measure of a household's ability to pay. Wealth is a stock and income is flow, and the imbalance justifies the taxpayer's ability to pay. One should explore the relationship between housing values and household income.

Another way to improving policy content is to review the content in light of the socioeconomic conditions of the Rwandan people. The inability to pay at odds with enforcement puts several taxpayers in a never-ending accumulation of tax debts, aggravating the issue of socioeconomic stability of the citizens. The CoK should consider reassessing socioeconomic conditions of its residents, listening to taxpayers to readjust important key elements of property tax such as tax base, tax rate, and putting in place a workable regime of exemption for those falling in the needy category.

Interviews with tax collectors revealed that in some circumstances, lack of fairness of laws have compelled implementers to take the side of taxpayers, choosing to be become indifferent to enforcement measures and leaving taxpayers accumulating tax

debts in government records. This is an issue that must be urgently addressed by decision makers.

Another point to improving policy content is to offset cultural blocks. During the planning, a policy analyst must examine opportunities for cultural dialogue. The findings of this study postulate that culture is an active factor in policy making and implementation. This validates Daniells' (2014) study on the mutual impact of culture and policy, which states that "the culture affects policy and policy affects culture" (p. 1), and policy shapes human behavior; thus, policy making must include cultural change efforts from the existing to the desirable. Shifting Rwandans' perception from private land ownership to a publicly directed use of land and imposing tax on family land has been and still is a hassle in taxpayers' minds. In planning for property tax implementation, social and cultural factors must be considered as well as the strategies to deal with it. Daniell (2014) emphasized that "having a solid understanding of cultural elements that affect the policy change could help policy makers shape more acceptable public policies, which produce a culturally desirable outcome" (p. 1).

There is a need for social conciliation between policies and cultural norms. Persuading residents (change agents) and inviting them to serve on the outreach campaigns could serve to eliminate unnecessary fear about these programs. Sandfort and Moulton (2015) realized that "culture shifts implementation activities" (p. 255). They urged policy analysts to consider the influence of authority and culture that bind the implementation setting when exploring potential frames. Implementation demands that actors engage each other in change processes (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015).

Improving policy can also reduce the decision joints and improve cross-level communication in a network. A result of this study, facts demonstrate that the top-down mode of formulating and implementing is not conducive for property tax policy. One must use tools of participative democracy from the design to implementation of the policy, considering the communication model. As evidenced in this study, making decisions unilaterally at the top level (top-down model) leads to inadequate policy content, creating unfairness and difficulties of implementation. Failing to engage stakeholders led to low voluntary compliance, poor political acceptability, and weak enforcement. Vigorous communication and coordination between policy makers, implementers, and interest groups are important for implementation. There was a lack of persuasive communication by decision makers and administrators on regular and consistent key policy messages, stressing the importance of implementing property tax policy. Political will and support expressed at the top without taxpayers' and implementers' involvement become difficult to implement because of the incongruences with the implementing environment. Policy should obtain implementing-level support for ease of implementation.

For an effective approach in property tax implementation, the government should use a participative democracy approach for fairer and implementable policies. Critical elements of fiscal policy (tax base, tax rate, and fairness of administration) should be decided with the involvement of key players, and decisions should be informed by a socioeconomic and political factor. As depicted previously, policy makers', implementers' (tax collectors), scholars', and other interest groups' opinions must work together to define balanced strategies. In the process, the participation of implementers is

paramount as they are experts in handling taxpayers' reactions. They can predict or anticipate responses from the community and can accurately project levels of policy support.

As evidenced in this study, implementing property tax policy in the CoK demands forming and maintaining partnership with other relevant stakeholders. The CoK will have to expand the collaborative work to embark on levying tax on building and improvements deferred during the 15 years. Through public-private partnership, the CoK could acquire actors with requisite capacity in conducting large-scale valuation, information management, and other required support services. However, considering existing problems in property tax implementation, the problem will definitely exacerbate the socioeconomic distortions; thus, it should call the political attention of the government. It is well advised to conduct a political feasibility study.

According to Meltsner (1972), a political feasibility study is one way to bridge the gap between the desirable and the possible. Mapping alternative policy politics during policy analysis could likely produce implementable policies. Identification of actors, their beliefs, motivations, resources, and the sites of interactions can assist in identifying who can do what, when, with whom, and how in the implementation of policy. Such a study could lead to fairer policy alternatives, which garner greater political acceptability, and thus be implementable, saving time, lost efforts, and money to the CoK.

This study demonstrated that top-down mode of decision making complicates implementation. Literature and practical facts in the study showed that street-level bureaucrats' discretion is a driving force behind policy implementation. Their choice to support or not determines success or failure of implementation. This is a vital group in

implementation management because they translate policy from text to public good; they not only possess experience handling citizen's issues, but also possess experience on informed policies that work. For future reform, I recommend that the CoK and stakeholders-give a forum to implementers including field tax collectors. Their opinions can amend current and future policies for effective implementation.

As stated previously, property tax administration is complex and is enclosed with lengthy, multidisciplinary, and multifaceted technical preparations. Prior planning and using strategic management are tools to navigate uncertainties. The absence of a clear policy direction that verbalizes the policy processes, expectations of key players, institutional practice, and appropriate organizational structure has negatively affected implementation in the past. In its work ahead, it is essential for the CoK to adopt a strategic planning approach evaluating weaknesses, capitalizing on existing strength, and spotting potential resources to forge the path to making property taxation an efficient program for both the government and the citizens. Thorough preparation could have helped CoK to save money, effort, and time.

Weimer and Vining (2017) urged policy analysts to be strategic in planning implementation. They pointed out that a good policy design must be based on realistic predictions of responses of those who must provide essential elements during implementation. Elbanna, Andrews, and Pollanen (2016) saw the strategic plan as a course of action to achieve long-range goals, generally up to 5 years. They added that formal strategic planning can play a crucial role in determining strategies of implementation for success. During strategic planning, policy makers have the

opportunity to amend weaknesses in the existing policies for a better and more productive implementation.

Mintzberg (2000) justified strategic planning saying that it can vastly improve the prospect of implementation success because it rationally invests resources in formulating good plans). Bryson (2011) argued that the strategic planning process reassures stakeholders and increases legitimacy of the outcome and organizations. Poister (2010) contended that strategic planning and analysis and subjective evaluation of values, goals, and priorities to chart a future direction to ensure an organization's vitality, effectiveness, and ability-adds public value. Elbana et al. (2016) explicated further that as strategic management allows for more time and effort to be devoted to analyzing the internal and external environments and developing and evaluating strategic options, this gives managers confidence that the outcome of the process will be positive.

Research Question 2: Increasing Policy Political Acceptability.

Receivability of policy is crucial for its implementation. Findings in this study revealed the necessity to educate taxpayers on civic duties and responsibility, including tax morale. Explaining the rationale of fiscal policies and enforcement procedures to taxpayers is important to elicit voluntary compliance by taxpayers. Implementing property tax in a developing country is challenging because of the high rate of illiteracy among taxpayers. A policy analyst must plan for extensive tax morale education, using diverse knowledge and sharing methods and available tools tailored to various segments of taxpayers.

The government needs to educate the taxpayer in vital connection between economic development and taxation, budget processes, rights and obligations of the

citizens and to raise their interests to regularly receive news about essential policy reforms. As witnessed by tax collectors when the principle “Ignorance of laws is no excuse” is applied to an ignorant taxpayer—who is unaware or unable to get legal representation, it becomes an instrument of brutality. Educating and listening to the citizens could prevent some causes of unfairness.

The CoK has also encouraged streamline land use and the property tax appeal system. This study revealed that downstream issues in a policy arena disturb further developments of policy in the field. Substantial problems in policy do affect close areas, that is, the case of land use, planning, land development, utilities, and property tax. Once asked to comply in one area, taxpayers evoke the other. The CoK’s administration government should work with stakeholders and providers to elaborate an integrated approach to address these problems comprehensively.

During interviews, tax collectors quoted taxpayers raising the issue of the 5-year delay in the issuance of construction licensing and permit, questioning the request from the tax collect for property tax compliance. Tax collectors reported numerable grievances about land management in general in the CoK. An expert committee on land use and related services including property tax could think of a collaborative approach to streamline data and services.

Real property development and land and housing market conditions evolve constantly, and to some extent they must follow real property taxation. Stakeholders in the property tax network must learn collectively in a continuum of sharing information intensively with transparency to ensure maintenance of a healthy relationship in the policy network. Thus, the decision-making process must be flexible to enable swift

adjustments on policy (redesign) and administration, including customer satisfaction.

Sandfort and Moulton (2015) wrote, “Implementation practice is learning and continuous improvement” (p. 260).

Notably, findings demonstrate that taxpayers have unrealistic representation of public finances and how the government uses them. It is a source of distrust. Public managers are encouraged to promote government action and accountability. Public accountability improves political acceptability of a policy and sets a strong foundation for a trustful relationship between the government and the citizens.

The CoK council must conduct campaigns to inform the public what it does, how it does it, and what it intends to achieve in the short, medium, and long term. Marketing the government’s achievements by linking them back to taxpayer’s participation helps citizens feel connected to the government project, this way increasing political acceptability.

Equally, taxpayers should be taught to hold their representation accountable. Taxpayers should be educated about their civic responsibility and taught to use available political tools to make their representatives (council members) more accountable.

Research Question 3: Improving Institutional Capacity

Institutional capacity is critical for property tax implementation. Without organizational capacity, implementation is stalled. Policy makers must provide an enabling environment for an effective implementation. This section outlines some strategies that the CoK could embrace to strengthen its implementation capacity.

Appropriate policy integration structure must be put in place through organizational restructuring, creating a new agency, designating leadership and allocating

resources (human skills, pledging budgets, and assets), acquiring cutting-edge technology, and putting in place a system of incentive. These are essential decisions to strengthening institutional capacity towards effective implementation.

In implementing property tax, one must collaborate. Collaboration has proven to be able to resolve faster, with less hassle, problems of institutional capacity for implementation. In addition, collaboration facilitates acceptability of policy through stakeholders who support it and advocate for it.

To be more effective, the collaborative must grow. Review of the sequences of property tax policy implementation demonstrated that in the CoK, the collaboration had to evolve with time, opening doors to more stakeholders with specific expertise and resources. New technologies emerged on the market and came in to enhance property tax administration in the CoK. For this reason, the CoK has to keep the collaborative open, looking out for expertise, resources, and specialized assets available in public and private organizations capable of spurring implementation to higher levels of effectiveness.

In this study, I found that the introduction of the Rwanda Revenue Authority in the collaboratives in 2015 proves that one prominent stakeholder with requisite expertise and technology can create a breakthrough and unlock implementation. Besides, the introduction of private companies in the collaborative in 2015 immensely improved tax administration, especially information management.

Another recommendation to the CoK to building institutional capacity is to keep the public-private partnership (PPP) open to innovative partners with new ideas and resources running property tax administration as a business and putting cost effectiveness into consideration.

Property tax implementation in the CoK has seen a tremendous boost through PPP during the last 5 years of implementation. Partnerships between the-CoK, its districts, RLMUA, ICT companies, commercial banks, and Rwanda Revenue Authority exponentially helped in improving property tax administration. Therefore, I recommend that CoK keep the-PPP open to innovative partners with new ideas and resources.

There are diverse sectoral issues to address to push forward policy implementation with efficacy. This study recommends that sectoral experts' groups continue working on specific pending issues that need improvement. Managing a property tax system requires continued iteration; thus, I recommend that the CoK set up sectoral committees to work on specific pending issues. Technical groups should continue working on building and improvements valuation, public information, human skills and technology and assets, and enforcement and conflict management. Taxpayers' services and others could be the best way to stimulate strategic thinking on specific issues and come up with innovative solutions.

The role of courts of law is an urgent matter. At the time of this study, courts of law's role in property tax enforcement has not been developed. While addressing issues of data accuracy and fairness of policy and process in general, the city government should work with legal experts and relevant judiciary administration to develop appropriate legal procedures to deal with taxpayers' compliance in courts of law.

Considering potential social and economic consequences of these legal actions, there should be a mixed-experts committee conducting a comprehensive social, economic, and political review. This committee with expertise in various fields would

come up with a proposal on the legal enforcement of property tax issues in the city weighed on key factors of the implementing environment.

Coordination is paramount in implementing property tax policy. This study demonstrates that implementing property tax policy implies huge volume of multifaceted nature (technical, social, and political) and demands huge investment of money and diverse expertise that a single organization can assemble. Involved private parties (Valuation, information technology companies) are driven by profits and public agencies by their respective interests. To have a balance of interests, effectiveness of implementation, and fairness of the process toward the taxpayer, tax implementation complexity requires a knowledgeable fixer to ensure coordination.

A fixer has to be free enough from other responsibilities to ensure the coordination of actors, navigate political bargains, advocate for the budget and political support, pledge inputs from stakeholders, and play an advisory role to the city council and be able to lobby higher levels of government for necessary policy reform. The CoK should consider appointing a fixer with legal authority to make decisions—someone who can gain political support and use coercive force to assemble support to advance implementation and repair damages in the process. Because of many responsibilities, the CoK mayor's office is not adequately free to handle additional responsibilities.

Among other responsibilities, a fixer can assist the CoK council in assembling inputs from various technical units, conduct assessments of the social and economic environments of taxpayers, provide advice on tax base, tax rate, and fairness of enforcement, and provide expert opinions to the council. A fixer can reconcile discussions on critical issues such as bridging policy making, implementation, and

interests of the citizens, and facilitate continual adaptation and learning in the continuum of implementation.

In the CoK, the fragmentation of the implementation structure adversely delayed implementation. Instead of having various units working under different chains of command and control, integrated systems of implementation should have prompted straightforward implementation. A fixer could play a role in bringing various stakeholders to compliance, convincing the council to pledge enough resources, and proposing a course of action that could improve cooperation.

High turnover of technical staff and leaders saps implementation action. It is crucial to establish a stable local government public service to compound institutional and individual staff learning. It is important to put in place a local government public service to develop skilled professionals and depoliticize local government staffing. One key point is to establish a labor retention strategy and curb high turnover.

The CoK must allocate a regular budget line to improve property tax implementation systems. Money serves as a fuel for implementation. Providing funds is an incentive to implementers and political support to the program. Appropriate budget will empower organizational units to acquire competent human skills, suitable workplaces, cutting-edge technology, and assets that advance implementation.

To cut down loss and save time in implementing property tax policy, the study recommends a policy analyst to engage ICT experts early in the implementation activities. These professionals can identify suitable technologies on the market capable of triggering breakthrough in various phases of property tax cycle.

The sequence of events of implementation shows that the issue of institutional capacity can gradually be resolved or strengthened through strategic collaboration during implementation. Thus, the collaborative arrangement must remain open for more public and private organizations capable of contributing missing input for more effectiveness in the property tax policy implementation. Collaboration is a key concept in property tax implementation that not only improves the institutional capacity but also improves the policy content and political acceptability of the policy.

Linking Findings With Theory

Property tax follows the third generation policy implementation theory based on the communication model advocated by Goggin (1990). The main characteristics of this approach are twofold: implementation implies continual communication between policy makers and implementers and implementation is a learning process in which all stakeholders work together, communicate feedback, improve policies, and implement conjointly and continually (Goggin, 1990).

The third generation is separate from the first generation, which uses the top-down approach incongruent with property tax implementation as evidenced in the findings. In addition, using a bottom-up approach based on citizens' inputs in tax matter may produce soft policies with insignificant results, lacking rigor for revenue generation and effective implementation. Thus, the communication model is the appropriate theoretical approach to use in property tax implementation because it allows stakeholders to learn together from each other, reforms, redesigns policies, and reimplements in the process.

Property tax implementation through collective learning resists the temptation to opt for either top-down or bottom-up approach; instead, it synthesizes both approaches into a more multilevel approach, incorporating a concept of policy learning and its corollary policy redesign or reformulation (Goggin, 1990). Communicating feedback among all stakeholders from taxpayers to implementers and implementers to policy makers engaging active, constant, and continual collaboration and exchange of messages is key to learning and redesigning of policy for the overall effectiveness of property tax implementation. Feedback is an essential component of a communication model as well as in property tax policy implementation as evidenced by findings in the case study in the CoK.

As evidenced by this case study and based on scholars who brought about this concept, policy implementation theory implies a range of political and administrative behaviors directed toward putting a policy in place. It is a dynamic process that unfolds over time, generating a change of tone during implementation, following a set of activities that take place during the life of the program and not just during its startup (Goggin, 1990). All these elements corroborate what the practice of property tax implementation demands and uses. Finally, scholars of third generation policy implementation theory emphasized the importance of extensive communications between stakeholders to decode messages, learn from implementers, provide feedback, learn interactively, and eventually redesign the policy and make a course correction on implementation. As this study revealed, property tax implementation in silo in the CoK has yielded few results. Trial and error used for 10 years created a breakthrough when the city opened collaboration with other partners using intensive communication among

stakeholders, learning interactively, and making necessary adjustment to the policy and reform on administrative processes. Thus, the best way to implement property tax is to follow principles of the communication mode of the policy implementation theory.

Limitation of the Study

Property tax implementation is complex, costly, and multifaceted. Developing countries fail to implement it because of lack of infrastructure, expertise, and money. The first limitation is that few reference studies on the topic exist on the African continent. Second, property tax policy and administration imply multiple influences in different directions from taxpayers themselves to businesses, investors, elected and nonelected officials, civil society, the central government, and others. This study involved 18 participants including practitioners (tax collectors and managers in local governments), policy makers (council members), and interest groups. Findings have at times pointed fingers at the central government's behaviors and measures in property tax policy design and their negatives and positive influence; thus, this study lacks a response or a reaction of the legislator at the central government to explain what were his motives and principles when designing current property policy, what are his strategies to respond to taxpayers' grievances and policy-related backlash, and how he intends to address potential social and economic distortions associated to it. Third, it would have been beneficial to have figures of revenue growth over the previous 15 years to have a comparative picture of the progress made, but there was no centralized database to access this data. The request for release of data on revenues had not met favorable responses until data analyzing and writing of the final report.

Study Contribution

During the process of the literature review, this study found that there was a lack of studies concerning property tax implementation in the CoK in Rwanda and other developing countries. One analytical report based on these problems has been written, emphasizing issues based on casual observations. This report reached simple views as to the difficulties of implementing property tax, mostly referring to institutional capacity. The theoretical and empirically grounded approach in this study helped me as the researcher to comprehensively understand the intricacies of property tax implementation from policy formulation to implementation and to be aware of policy content, political acceptability, and institutional capacity variables that count in the property tax policy implementation in developing country environments. Because of this research study, professionals in public finance and local government management will understand how to create a program for property tax implementation, plan sequence of actions, tools for planning, detailed steps to follow, and techniques of public sector management to apply for effective policy implementation. This study revealed the importance of cultural dialogue when intending to implement a major policy and the importance of the principle of fairness in the process of policy design and administration.

This study provides a comprehensive overview of socioeconomic, political, and managerial issues associated with property tax policy implementation. Previous studies focused on strategies to substantially increase local revenues but without providing an explanation. In addition, previous studies provided simplistic recommendations such as boosting and tapping into potential revenue equitably and raising property rates in the CoK because they are low compared to international rates. Such recommendations could

not apply considering complex issues underlying property tax policy implementation, including accuracy of data, fairness of administration, social and economic issues (inability to pay, culture and policy asymmetry), and political acceptability (land policy and property taxation controversy). A high tax rate applied to false data upsets taxpayers and destroys tax morale. Other recommendations included achieving revenue goals via broadening the tax base by introducing a combination of value-based and area-based fixed asset tax, but increasing tax rates cannot move property tax implementation forward because, as previously stated, there are strong underlying social, economic, and political factors that are determinants beside institutional capacity. This study has contributed knowledge in those crucial areas that matter to property tax implementation.

Further Studies

This study could set the foundation for the next phase of implementation 10 years down the line. Further studies could be conducted in the areas of social and economic impact (negative and positive) of property tax implementation on families' welfare in Rwanda or other developing countries. Further studies could also be conducted on technologies for the property taxation cycle and problems of property tax enforcement in a poor social economic environment.

Conclusion

The study of the experiences of practitioners and policy makers in property tax policy implementation in the-CoK demonstrates that property tax implementation in developing countries is problematic. It is highly political, socially sensitive, economically costly, and politically demanding. In addition, cultural constraints, the lack of adequate infrastructure, expertise, and appropriate technology are strong barriers to

property tax implementation programs in developing countries. A huge investment of money over a long period of time is required before local governments can see money start flowing. This discourages local governments from putting money into property tax implementation because the little budget available is consumed by expenses related to urgent social programs. Therefore, local governments do not have funds to invest in long-term programs such as property tax. For these reasons, property tax is low on the priorities list, not because local governments do not know its value as a revenue source, but because it demands a substantial prior investment of resources that are not available. Instead, local governments resolve to depend on intergovernmental grants or foreign aid.

This case study demonstrates that there is space for hope. The CoK has made tremendous progress over the last 15 years, and this study has collected valuable lessons that will help the city improve future implementations or inspire other developing countries to emulate the practice. Peculiar complications of implementing property tax in the CoK are an emanation of the unplanned urbanization since the creation of the city itself. Problems in property tax administration in CoK are associated with what happened in the past with the city's urbanization rather than what is occurring presently. From its creation, the CoK was developed in anarchy without organized urban planning. Thus, people have always found ways to acquire plots of land on their own and have elevated constructions without any formal technical licensing, standard requirements, or official registration. This has been an issue for many years, which resulted in the establishment of slums in many parts of the city.

Political will is the *sine qua none* enabler of property tax implementation. Without it, progress is impossible. Political will is key to unlocking the process. Pushing

implementation through resource constraints, cultural resistance, unprepared organizations and employees, and compelling stakeholders to cooperation in uncertainties requires political determination even to bring culturally biased taxpayers to compliance.

Fairness is the cornerstone of an effective property tax implementation. It is the pillar of the process from policy formulation to implementation and to redesigning policy in the process. Fairness of policy and administration is necessary for political acceptability of the policy among stakeholders, which positions the policy to gain political support and gather necessary resources from agencies for implementation. Furthermore, educating people is paramount in societies where people are illiterate. Keeping in mind that applying enforcement authority of laws to uneducated taxpayers under the principle that *ignorance of laws is not excused* can be a tool of brutality.

It is commendable to use strategic management to help navigate through uncertainty and complexity of property taxation operations. Careful and strategic planning with all significant stakeholders is paramount to a good start. It helps to build alliances at the outset, understand the complexity of the operations, and navigate through them. Strategic management provides the policy analyst with a reasonable estimate of the associated costs and who the key players could be.

Collaboration is the only way. Going alone can only lead to frustration, delays, and insignificant results as was the case of the CoK and its districts during the first 10 years of trial and error. Later, when CoK opened the collaborative to specialized agencies such as the Rwanda Revenue Authorities and then to the commercial banks and private companies, the system unlocked, data management was streamlined, services online became available, and accurate records of land information became available.

Collaborating with other government and private agencies through PPPs from the beginning is a suitable strategy to stop delays. Coordination is paramount in the collaborative. It is vital to have strong coordination that can navigate the political environment, coerce stakeholders to pledge contributions, address taxpayers' key concerns, and play an advisory role for decision makers. During implementation, one must commit to learning and must change with others in a continuum.

For greater fairness and efficiency, one must continually invest in the accuracy of the database (tax base). It is important to proceed incrementally and start with low tax rates on rough data, and then increase rates gradually as reliable data are collected. In addition, it is important to recruit good people, train them, retain them and incentivize them, and provide them with options in the implementation decisions.

Conducting systematic valuation of the taxable properties in the CoK should not be the sole responsibility of the city; rather, it must become a national priority as the practice in the city could serve as a case study for the necessary reform of property taxation in the country. Thus, the central government should join hands and invest in resources in the process.

The next step is to appoint a fixer among existing managers or recruit one with outstanding expertise and political agility. Another critical element is the establishment of a panel of experts with diversified but complementary technical knowledge to progressively think and direct property tax administration and advise the council on decisions. This panel would comprise an economist, the local government, public finance, an urban sociologist, a lawyer, a law enforcement representative, a policy analyst, and an information technology expert.

This panel of experts would carry out continued strategies to improve property tax administration. Based on the challenges at stake, this panel of experts could be divided into two working groups: (a) a group in charge of broadening the tax base that would elaborate on an action plan to reform systems of property tax identification, assessment, and establish a reliable database; and (b) a group to investigate property tax enforcement mechanisms that would elaborate a set of procedures from public awareness to auction notifications, litigations, enforcement by negotiations, mediations, and tax credit establishment. Similarly, there is a need to work with courts of law and law enforcement to improve the law enforcement mechanism in property tax administration. This working group could provide expert opinions on dealing with delinquent taxpayers and other legal issues that may arise during property tax administration. Vital steps for further and sustainable reforms include policy statute that continues building political acceptability through stakeholders' engagement in the dynamic of negotiation in the property tax cycle, building necessary political policy, and provision of institutional capacity including budget support and streamlining enforcement mechanism. At the time of this study, it is surprising to note that courts of law do-not have a role to play in the enforcement mechanism.

Voiced public political support is determinant to policy implementation. To advance implementations, policy makers should publicly express their support through regular speeches, administrative acts enforcing property tax, public campaigning, issuing by laws or public hearings on issues of property tax policy, and calling publicly taxpayers to compliance.

REFERENCES

- Bahl, R. W. (2014). *Fixing the property and land tax regime in developing countries*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237305865_Fixing_the_Property_and_Land_Tax_Regime_in_Developing_Countries
- Bahl, R. W., Martinez-Vazquez, J., & Youngman, J. M. (2008). *Making the property tax work: Experiences in developing and transitional countries*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
- Bardach, E. (1978). *The implementation game: What happens after a bill becomes law*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bell, M. E. (1999). An optimal property tax: Concepts and practices. Retrieved from The World Bank website: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/382921468320949025/An-optimal-property-tax-concepts-and-practices>
- Bird, R., & Slack, N. (Eds). (2004). *Handbook of land and property taxation*, Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar.
- Blair, R. (2002). Policy tools theory and implementation networks: Understanding state enterprise zone partnerships. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12(2), 161-190. <http://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a003528>
- Bryson, J. M. (2011). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations a guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Carter, D. P., Weible, C. M., Siddiki, S. N., Brett, J., & Chonaiew, S. M. (2015). Assessing policy divergence: How to investigate the differences between a law

- and a corresponding regulation. *Public Administration*, 93(1), 159-176.
- <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12120>
- Christensen, T. (2007). *Organization theory for the public sector: Instrument, culture and myth*. London, England: Routledge.
- City of Kigali. (2002). *Kigali Economic Development Strategy*. Retrieved from <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/5398/2693.pdf?sequence=1>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Daniell, K. A. (2014). *The role of the national culture in shaping public policy: A review of the Literature*. Retrieved from <https://coombs-forum.crawford.anu.edu.au/publication/hc-coombs-policy-forum/4543/role-national-culture-shaping-public-policy-review>
- deLeon, P., & deLeon, L. (2002). What ever happened to policy implementation? An alternative approach. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12(4), 467-492. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a003544>
- Derthick, M. (1972). *New towns in-town, why a federal program failed states*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- Dillinger, W. (1991). *Urban property reform: Guidelines and recommendations*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Dye, R., F., & England, R. W. (2010). *Assessing the theory and practice of land value taxation* (Policy Focus Report PF025). Retrieved from <https://www.lincolninst>

.edu/sites/default/files/pubfiles/assessing-theory-practice-land-value-taxation-full_0.pdf

Dye, T. R. (2008). *Understanding public policy* (12th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Elbanna, S., Andrews, R., & Pollanen, R. (2016). Strategic planning and implementation success in public service organizations: Evidence from Canada. *Public Management Review*, 18(7), 1017-1042.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2015.1051576>

Flash TV Rwanda-Official Channel. (2018). *Low level taxpayers demand the government to review communication of policies to the citizens* [Video webcast]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Od2Nxx32lKc>,

Flipp, C. (2014). *Case study* [Video webcast]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuG8AzK9GVQ>

Goggin, M. L. (1986). The “too few cases/too many variables” problem in implementation research. *Western Political Quarterly*, 39(2), 328-347.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/106591298603900210>

Goggin, M. L. (1990). *Implementation theory and practice: Toward a third generation*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Goodfellow, T. (2015). *Taxing the urban boom: Property taxation and land leasing in Kigali and Addis Ababa* (Working Paper 38). London, England: Institute of Development Studies.

Hambleton, R. (1983). Planning systems and policy implementation. *Journal of Public Policy*, 3(4), 397-418. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0143814x00007534>

- Hjern, B., & Hull, C. (1982). Implementation research as empirical constitutionalism. *European Journal of Political Research*, 10(2), 105-115.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1982.tb00011.x>
- Howlett, M. (2018). Moving policy implementation theory forward: A multiple streams/critical juncture approach. *Public Policy and Administration*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0952076718775791>
- Jibao, S., & Prichard, W. (2016). Rebuilding local government finances after conflict: Lessons from a property tax reform programme in post-conflict Sierra Leone. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 52(12), 1759-1775.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2016.1153073>
- Karuhanga, J. (2017a, December 1). Government targets more revenues under new immovable property law. *New Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/224629>
- Karuhanga, J. (2017b, December 11). How realistic are proposals in property tax bill? *New Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/225365>
- Kelly, R. (2000). Designing a property tax reform strategy for sub-Saharan Africa: An analytical framework applied to Kenya. *Public Budgeting & Finance*, 20(4), 36-51. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0275-1100.00028>
- Khan, A., & Khandaker, S. (2016). A critical insight into policy implementation and implementation performance. *Public Policy and Administration*, 15(4), 538-548.
<https://doi.org/10.13165/VPA-16-15-4-02>
- Kingdon, J. W. (2014). *Agendas, alternatives and public policies*. Harlow, Essex, England: Pearson Education.

- Kopanyi, M. (2014, March). *Financing expansion and delivery of urban services: International experiences and Rwanda challenges* (Working Paper). International Growth Center. Retrieved from <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Kopanyi-2014-Final-2-0.pdf>
- Kopanyi, M. (2015, February). *Enhancing own revenues of decentralized entities in Rwanda: Policy challenges and-options in reforming the fixed asset tax system* (Working Paper). International Growth Center. Retrieved from: <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Kopanyi-2015-Working-Paper.pdf>
- Law No. 17/2002. (2002, May 10). Retrieved from <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/5211/2514.pdf?sequence=1>
- Law No. 17/2002. (2003, May 15). Law determining sources of revenues for districts and the city of Kigali [Rwanda]. Retrieved from <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/5211/2514.pdf?sequence=1>
- Law No. 75/2018. (2018, July 9). Law determining the source of revenue and property of decentralized entities [Rwanda]. Retrieved from Official Gazette website: <https://rwandalii.africanlii.org/sites/default/files/gazette/OG%2Bno%2B44%2Bof%2B29%2B10%2B2018%2B1.pdf>
- Linden, R. M. (2010). *Leading across boundaries: Creating collaborative agencies in a networked world*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lipsky, M. (1971). Street-level bureaucracy and the analysis of urban reform. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 6(4), 391-409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107808747100600401>

- Lofgren, K. (2013). *Qualitative analysis of interview data: A step-by-step guide* [Video webcast]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRL4PF2u9XA>
- Maity, S. (2016, April 25). Capgemini accelerates digital transformation at city of Kitchener with customer information system for property tax and utility operations. Retrieved from <https://www.capgemini.com/news/capgemini-accelerates-digital-transformation-at-city-of-kitchener-with-customer-information/>
- Mark, J. H., & Carruthers, N. E. (1983). Property values as a measure of ability-to-pay: An empirical examination. *The Annals of Regional Science*, 17(2), 45-59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01284380>
- Martin, I. W. (2015). What property tax limitation does to local public services. *UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment*. Retrieved from <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/6m424759>
- Masengo, F., Ngoga, T. H., & Ingabire, E. (2014, December). *Land tenure reform and local governments revenues in Rwanda* (Policy Research Brief No. 3). Retrieved from https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/USAID_Land_Tenure_Rwanda_Policy_Research_Brief_No-3.pdf
- Matland, R. E. (1995). Synthesizing the implementation literature: The ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 5(2), 145-174.
- May, P. J., & Winter, S. C. (2009). Politicians, managers, and street-level bureaucrats: Influences on policy implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 19(3), 453-476. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum030>

- Maynard-Moody, S., & Herbert, A. W. (1989). Beyond implementation: Developing an institutional theory of administrative policy making. *Public Administration Review*, 49(2), 137-143. <https://doi.org/10.2307/977333>
- Mazmanian, D. A., & Sabatier, P. A. (1983). *Implementation and public policy*. Chicago, IL: Scott Foresman.
- Mazmanian, D. A., & Sabatier, P. A. (1989). *Implementation and public policy with a new postscript*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Meier, K. J., & McFarlane, D. R. (1995). Statutory coherence and policy implementation: The case of family planning. *Journal of Public Policy*, 15(3), 281-298. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0143814x00010059>
- Meltsner, A. J. (1972). Political feasibility and policy analysis. *Public Administration Review*, 32(6), 859-867. <https://doi.org/10.2307/974646>
- Menzel. (2011). Need more info; cited on p. 119.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. (2011). Fiscal decentralisation strategy. Retrieved from http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/LG_Districts/Fiscal_Decentralisation_document/Fiscal%20Decentralization%20Strategy.pdf
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. (2018, February2). New property tax law will promote efficient land use and local manufacturing. Retrieved from http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/index.php?id=12&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=679&cHash=f5143b643ca842eb49ea8c1b1df5a11f

- Mintzberg, H. (2000). *The rise and fall of strategic planning*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Monkam, N. (2011). Property tax administration in Francophone Africa: Structures, challenges, and progress. *Public Finance and Management*, 11(1), 48-81.
- Mugisha, I. (2014, June 5). Government to enforce payment of property tax. *New Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/read/75833>
- Mulgan, G., & Lee, A. (2001). Better policy delivery and design: A discussion paper. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228974643_Better_Policy_Delivery_and_Design_A_Discussion_Paper
- Nakamura, R. T., & Smallwood, F. (1980). *The politics of policy implementation*. New York, NY: St. Martins.
- National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. (2012). *Fourth Population and Housing census - 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.statistics.gov.rw/survey-period/fourth-population-and-housing-census-2012>
- National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. (2016). *Demographic and health survey 2014/2015-final report*. Retrieved from <http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publication/demographic-and-health-survey-20142015-final-report>
- Newell, C. (2004). *The effective local government manager*. Washington, DC: International City/County Management Association.
- Newell, C. (2008). *Managing local government: Cases in effectiveness*. Washington, DC: ICMA Press.
- Nicolaides, P. (2012). Administrative capacity for effective implementation of EU law. *EIPAScope*, 2012(1), 5-11. Retrieved from <http://aei.pitt.edu/43465/>

- O'Toole, L. J., Jr. (1983). Interorganizational co-operation and the implementation of labor market training policies: Sweden and the Federal Republic of Germany. *Organization Studies*, 4(2), 129-150.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/017084068300400202>
- Olowu, D. (2002). *Property taxation and democratic decentralization in developing countries*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ids.ac.uk/gdr/cfs/pdfs/Olowu2.pdf>
- Poister, T. H. (2010). The future of strategic planning in the public sector: Linking strategic management and performance. *Public Administration Review*, 70(s1), s246–s254. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02284.x>
- Pressman, J. L., & Wildavsky, A. (1984). *Implementation: How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; or, why it's amazing that federal programs work at all, this being a saga of the economic development administration as told by two sympathetic observers who seek to build morals on a foundation of ruined hopes*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Roberts, C. M. (2010). *The dissertation journey: A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing, and defending your dissertation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Robichau, R. W., & Lynn, L. E. (2009). The implementation of public policy: Still the missing link. *Policy Studies Journal*, 37(1), 21-36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2008.00293.x>
- Rugali Gali (2018, August 9). *Baratakambira Paul Kagame ngo ahagarike izamukany'imisoro ku mitungo, ubutaka n'inzu zo guturamo*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMX1jReDIws>

- Rwanda Ministry of Local Government. (2012). National decentralization policy (revised). Retrieved from http://www.kigalicity.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/Documents/policies/Revised_Decentralisation_Policy_for_Cabinet_30_01_2013.pdf
- Rwanda Ministry of Local Government & Social Affairs. (2001) *National decentralization policy*. Retrieved from http://www.kigalicity.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/Documents/policies/Decentralisation_Policy__2001.pdf
- Rwanda TV. (2018, December 11). *Civil society and Rwanda revenue authority debates on issues of the property tax reform* [Video webcast]. Available from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6Vn-6dnzO0&dt=126s>
- Sandfort, J., & Moulton, S. (2015). *Effective implementation in practice: Integrating public policy and management*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sandström, A., Crona, B., & Bodin, Ö. (2014). Legitimacy in co-management: The impact of preexisting structures, social networks and governance strategies. *Environmental Policy and Governance*, 24(1), 60-76.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1633>
- Scheberle, D. (2004). *Federalism and environmental policy: Trust and the politics of implementation*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Sepulveda, C., & Martinez-Vazquez, J. (2012.). Explaining property tax collections in developing countries: The case of Latin America. In G. Brosio & J. P. Jimenez (Eds.), *Decentralization and reform in Latin America* (pp. 172-222). Cheltenham, GL, England: Edward Elgar. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781781006269.00013>

- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical research*. London, England: Sage.
- Trasberg, V. (2004). Property and land taxation in the Baltic states. *Journal of Property Tax Assessment and Administration*, 1(2), 31-43.
- Tummers, L. (2011). Explaining the willingness of public professionals to implement new policies: A policy alienation framework. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 77(3), 555-581.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311407364>
- Tummers, L., & Bekkers, V. (2014). Policy implementation, street-level bureaucracy, and the importance of discretion. *Public Management Review*, 16(4), 527-547.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2013.841978>
- Tummers, L., Steijn, B., & Bekkers, V. J. J. M. (2012). Explaining the willingness of public professionals to implement public policies: Content, context, and personality characteristics. *Public Administration*, 90(3), 716-736.
- Tummers, L., Vermeeren, B., Steijn, B., & Bekkers, V. (2012). Public professionals and policy implementation. *Public Management Review*, 14(8), 1041-1059.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2012.662443>
- Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2017). *Policy analysis: Concepts and practice* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- The World Bank. (2017). *Rwanda—First programmatic energy sector development policy financing project* (Report No 120612). Retrieved from
<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/321321512356422171/Rwanda-First-Programmatic-Energy-Sector-Development-Policy-Financing-Project>

- Wynter, C. B. (2014). *Property tax administration in practice: A case study of Portmore Municipality, Jamaica*. Retrieved from <https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10871/17580/WynterC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Youngman, J. M. (2016). *A good tax: Legal and policy issues for the property tax in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions/Guide for Participant

1. What are three major constraints in the implementation of property tax policy in the city of Kigali?
2. How did the property tax statute (law and other policy decisions) exude principles of efficiency, equity and fairness to you and other stakeholders?
 - b) Were policy clear goals, with convincing evidences that it will achieve result that solve societal problems?
 - c) What were the implementers perceptions in the first months of implementation and afterwards How this has impacted the overall implementation?
3. Did policy provision allocate enough initial funding (money) for implementation?
4. How do you assess the cost of property tax and its impact on implementation in CoK?
How could have been done differently?
5. Has the property tax policy come with personal incentive (allowances, job promotion, job security) do you think this has any impact-on policy implementation?
6. How do you assess political conflict over property tax policy during implementation?
How has this impacted implementation? What do you recommend for future implementation?
7. Has there been emerging political, social or economic events that took away priority over property tax during implementation? Can you describe the case and how this has impacted implementation? What do you recommend for the future?

8. How do you assess conflict of power among implementing partners over policy and how did that impact implementation? What do you recommend for the future?
9. Did property tax implementation political support eroded during implementation? why and how this has impacted the overall implementation?
10. How do you assess the traffic of influence or political transaction by local leaders in the implementation of property tax in CoK and how can this be improved for future improvement?
11. What is your experience or perception of the role of political feasibility study in improving implementing property policy in CoK? What could be the best option for future implementation?
12. What is your perception on how coordination of actors worked during property tax implementation? The role of “fixers”, what would be the best scenario to improve this area?
13. Has implementation suffered lack of coordination. How do you assess coordination, its importance and how it impacted the implementation of property tax in CoK, what could be done for the future?
14. Has the implementation of property tax in CoK use continual exchange of feedback between implementers and policymakers and other stakeholders? Was there an opportunity to learn and improve together the process of implementation?
15. How do you assess the effort to accommodate the property tax implementation into the existing structure of administration and how this has impacted implementation?

16. How do you assess quality and stability of leadership and human skills in the implementation of property tax in CoK and how these 2 factors influenced implementation? What could be the ideal scenario? What do you recommend for future phases of implementation?

17. Did the program receive continued financial support during implementation?

18. How do you assess the availability and the use of technology and required assets in the property tax implementation in CoK? How this could have been better? What do you recommend?

APPENDIX B

Key Sequences of Property Tax Reform in the City of Kigali

Period	Key characteristics	Observations
2003-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deficit in Tax-base data, no taxpayer's registry - Manual, door to door tax administration - Novel concept of taxing property, - Misunderstanding and strong cultural opposition among taxpayers - Emulating Uganda's property tax policies without key adaptation. - New administrative entities born out of the territorial reform under the decentralization policy implementation. - New elected local leaders without experience in property tax administration. - Transfer of tax authority to local Governments (CoK and Districts) from Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning (2018) - Sole stakeholder (the city of Kigali and its Districts <i>acting alone</i>) - Conflicts over revenues sharing (CoK/Districts) - Experimental implementation by trial and error. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only taxpayers with <i>land Titles</i> pay land lease, mainly bid businesses/industries - No data on taxable properties (tax-base) - Tax-base building difficulties (complex task, budget, no expertise) - COK and Districts disillusionment (social , economic and political resentments) and technically unprepared local Governments. - Fading enthusiasm. - Stalled implementation. - Manual and door to door - Rough flow of data on landownership - Negligible increase in property tax revenues based on rough manual data and estimates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergence of a need for building a tax-base - First attempt and to contracting out a private company for geospatial data collection - Councilmembers oppose the cost and failure to deliver due to unprepared terrain (rising social, economic and political resentments) - CoK initiates mixed Tax Administration Committees established at Districts level, unable to function due to unfavorable. 	
2013-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partial evaluation of the program Implementation - Implementation feedback and emergence of ideas for open collaboration. - Reaffirmation of political will and support to property taxation. - Preparation to relaunching the implementation - 2nd Policy reform to accommodate collaboration - Working on PPP (Public-Private Partnership) - Agreements negotiation with RRA, Private Banks, ICT companies... - Launch of digitalization of data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing other strategies for implementation - Identification of potential stakeholders in the implementation - Negotiating terms for collaboration. - Collaborative arrangements developed through partnership - Pending issues of data accuracy and management (unmatching landownerships, rough estimates of values, not reflecting past payments records). - Fortunate occurrence of data from aerial land surveys by the RLUA.
2015-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sudden availability of data on landownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digitalization and manual system in force simultaneously (online

	<p>from nationwide aerial land-survey by Rwanda Land Management and Use Authority and the British Department for International Development.</p>	<p>data entry, submitting notification letters to taxpayers, door to door reminder).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To this date no postal/mail system - Taxpayer access to digital billing and payment by log into taxpayer Individual account.
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------