

## Governing decentralised energy provision: approaches to energy transitions in Kenya

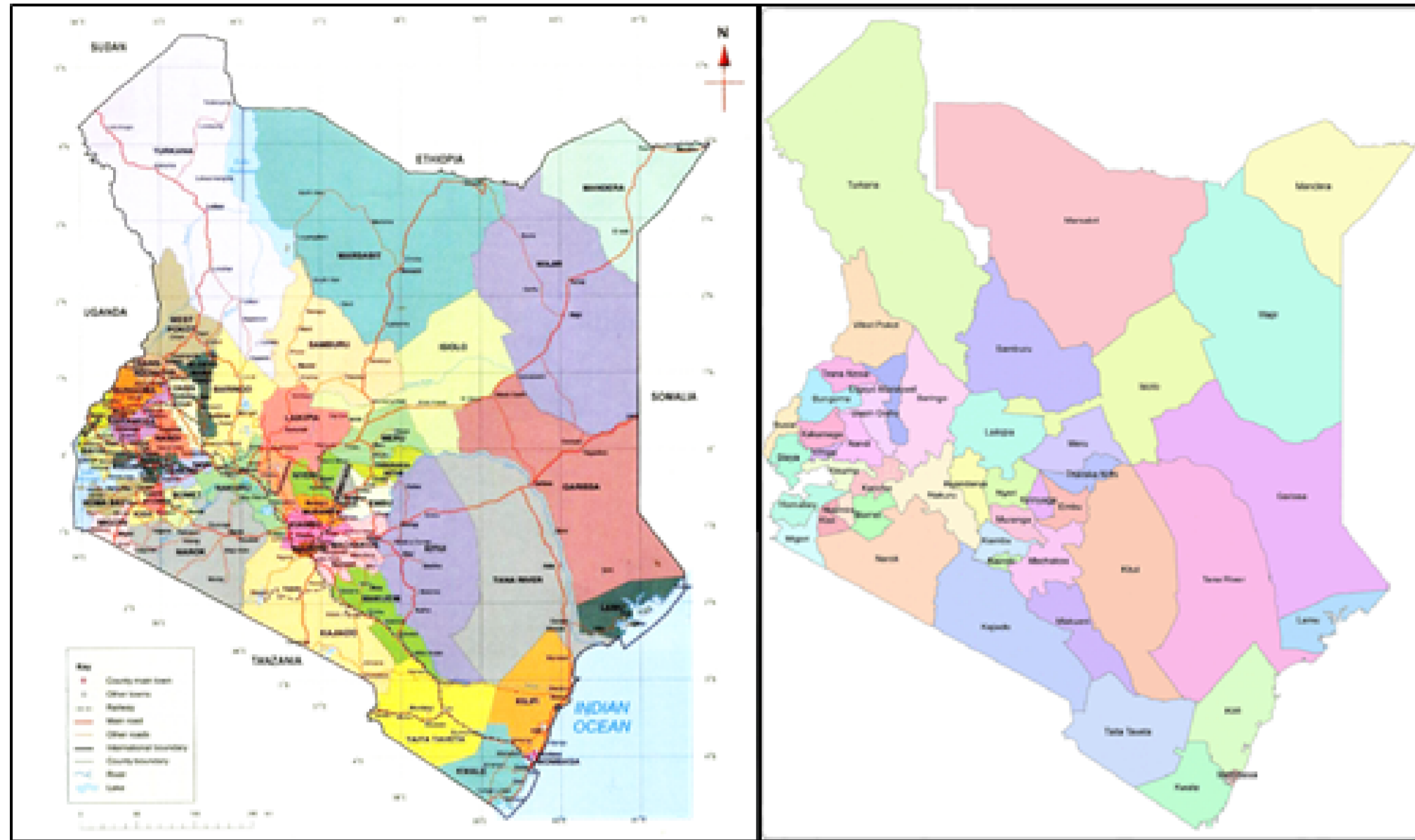


Figure 1. The 47 devolved counties of Kenya (Source: [http/Counties of Kenya](http://Counties of Kenya))

The advent of the Local Government Act of 2010 marked a sea-change in decentralization of governance in Kenya: Our work explores the implications of this for energy (the transfer of energy-related responsibilities to the county level were laid out in the, as yet, unenacted 2015 Energy Bill).

- What can Kenya learn from the roles of other local authorities in addressing energy issues as they relate to water, livelihoods and food?
- Are there specific, transferable lessons for the Kenyan decentralization process (particularly in relation to energy issues)?
- What are the key challenges for local energy governance within the current Kenyan context and how can these be overcome
- What role can decentralised energy governance play in making Kenyan energy transitions more equitable and sustainable?

## Issues Identified:

- \* National and county government roles need to be more clearly defined.
- \* Prioritization of energy and capacity levels vary significantly from county to county.
- \* County capacity building needs to be prioritised as a precursor for counties effectively carrying out their energy roles.
- \* Nationally, Kenya is awash with REs - an estimated 10,000 MW in geothermal steam alone, but energy is yet to receive widespread prominence on county agendas.
- \* **People's energy, water and food needs:** The challenge in decentralization is to think about the different energy needs of people at the local level, e.g. individual, household, SME and institutional and how these integrate with water and food, not just large scale electricity generation programmes and projects
- \* **Decentralization means to the lowest practical common denominator - Community co-design is VITAL and greatly appreciated for inclusivity**



Figure 2. READ Decentralization workshop in Nakuru, Kenya



Figure 3. Consulting the Village Energy Committee - Echareria, Mbaruk

## The Future:

“As [the decentralization of the internet] took over a decade and is ongoing, the process of energy democratization will also take a long time. We will not start to see large impacts on the energy market for some time yet. At present, the democratization of energy is in a phase that is the equivalent of [the internet in] 1996 ... Yet, we are cognizant of the potential of this trend in a way that users and developers of the Internet in 1996 were simply not.” (Pike Research, 2012)