INFLUENCE OF STAKEHOLDER'S PARTICIPATION ON SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN FUNDED PROJECTS IN CAROLINA FOR KIBERA

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ABSTRACT

The women development projects contribute significantly to uplifting the standard of living of the projects' beneficiaries. Such development projects are rarely sustained and mostly collapse shortly after the termination or withdrawal of NGOs or donor support. The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of stakeholder's participation on sustainability of women funded projects in Carolina for Kibera. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The study population consisted of 74 members of the NGOs, 10 project managers, 10 finance officer and 10 project coordinators and 33 medical staff and 11 support staff. Data collection methods included questionnaires. Data from the questionnaires were analyzed using quantitative methods and the data representation was in form of graphs and pie charts. The study used questionnaires of which 51 respondents returned the questionnaires. On the primary data, questionnaires were used to collect data. The researcher administered the questionnaires individually to all respondents. The quantitative data in this research was analyzed by descriptive statistics using statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics included frequency, and percentages to profile sample characteristics and major patterns emerging from the data. The study found that stakeholder's participation was indeed very important for sustainability of women funded project. The study concluded that the trends put into place in a-bid to sustain projects had greatly improved over the years.

Key Words: *Stakeholder's Participation, Sustainability, Women Funded Projects, Carolina for Kibera*

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the concept of project sustainability has varied widely and broadened in scope.

According to IFAD strategic Framework 2007 – 2010 (IFAD, 2007), project sustainability ensures that institutions supported through projects and the benefits realized are maintained and continue after the end of the project. According to IFAD's office of Evaluation, sustainability entails determining whether the results of a project will be sustained in the medium or even long term without continued external assistance.

Sustainability is however measured based on the four essential dimensions. The first dimension is Institutional sustainability. This assess whether the functional institutions will be self-sustaining after the project ends. The second dimension is household and community resilience. This assess that the communities are readily able to anticipate and adapt to change through clear decision-making processes, collaboration, and management of resources internal and external to the community. The second dimension is environmental sustainability. In this dimension, an environmentally sustainable system must maintain a stable resource base, avoid overexploitation of renewable resources and preserve biodiversity. The fourth dimension is structural changes which assess that poverty issues are addressed.

Sustainability then involves sustaining free markets and human knowledge capacities. There has been various definition of sustainability by numerous authors in the literature. For example, according to Stephens and Smuts (2001) project sustainability refers to the ability of the project to continue with its intended impacts either after community or beneficiary take over or withdrawal of the donor support while Chapman et al., (2006) define sustainability as the ability of an activity or system to persist. The definition adopted in this study was given by IFAD in 2009 which defined sustainability as

ensuring that the institutions supported through projects and the benefits realized are maintained and continue after the end of the project (IFAD, 2009).

In Kenya, the NGOs funding women development projects are key actors in eliminating discrimination against women and promoting gender equality. According to Al-Mashari (2003), a project is an undertaking carried out by an organization of people dedicated to a specific purpose or objective. NGOs are essential to the implementation of the women development projects, in both their front-line work and through their campaigning and lobbying activism. They have made significant contributions to changing and transforming legislation, policy and public perceptions. Advocating on behalf of service beneficiaries remains an important function of the women's development sector (Republic of Kenya 2010).

With low levels of representation of women in public life, the NGO sector is one of the main mechanisms by which women's needs, experiences and aspirations are voiced to Government (Ranis, Stewart & Ramirez, 2000). Monitoring and evaluation is a combination of two processes which are different yet complementary (Gorgens and Kusek,2009) it is a process of systematically collecting and analyzing information on ongoing project outcome and comparison of project outcome, its impacts against the project intentions (Hunter,2009). It is made up of for interlinked sections which are setting up, implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems, involvement of the project stakeholders and communication of the results (Guijt et.al 2007). Bricens,(2010) noted that monitoring and evaluation system should be independent ,credible and socially legitimate.

It should be able to influence policymaking from recommendation of lessons learned as well as be sustainable to overtime for it to be responsive to the needs of the stakeholders. The researchers choose

Embakasi south sub county since it has a number of woman development projects funded by NGOS. In addition, most women based projects usually have a short lifespan after the termination of NGO's support (Republic of Kenya, 2010). There is need to ensure that the women development projects funded by NGOs become sustainable and have a long-term positive impacts to the community. Hence the study seeks to establish the determinants of project sustainability of the women development projects funded by NGOs in Embakasi south, sub county.-Nairobi County.

Statement of the Problem

Sustainability is a measure of an organization's ability to fulfill its mission and serve its stakeholders over time while meeting the current needs and without comprising the future. This is about maintaining and continuing programs/services after the grant funding period has expired. It means the investment made into a program will offer the community and stakeholders long-term value and doesn't always means a program will continue void of changes or modification (Gitonga. 2013). Sustainability means having supported projects becoming viable to the community resources, it does not mean starting over with the next available.

Sustainability of donor funded projects is critical to community growth and development continuity of the benefits. Across all continents, NGOs and donor funding are increasing though sustainability of the benefits is not guaranteed. Project development is inseparable from the aspiration to freedom and democracy in the international society. (Lock,D. 2009).

However according to (Karl Cushing 2002) Project go belly up for all sorts of reasons. The project manager given a methodology such as Prince 2, and other technical tools to use which they fail to study the basic principles of the project management, the leadership, the suppliers and the stakeholders can all

provide sources of fail. Another common problem is lack of commitment. Too many project managers are forced to manage projects in addition to their regular tasks. This spells disaster for a project, says Goodman. In addition the level of control put into the hands of the IT staff. They are often expected to make major decisions that should come from the sponsors of the project. (Maylor,H. 2002)

Garmus and Herron (2000) NGOs" integrate micro and macro-level actions in their project and activities support vulnerable communities but they are constrained by limited financial resources. Insufficient financing leads to poor maintenance and project failure. This has been necessitated by donors not falling through with pledges. In addition, some projects and programs are subject to political considerations and foreign policy. Funded projects can no longer be considered an ad hoc activity, neither can sustainability be based on the whims and agendas of a few so called major funders.

The bottom line is there is no surefire way to ensure that a project will be sustainable or successful. Most of these projects are rarely sustained while most of them terminate their operation after the withdrawal or termination of NGOs funding. There is need to ensure the sustainability of the women projects since they not only improve the social welfare of the women but also have a significant contribution towards economic development of the area.

A number of studies have been conducted on the sustainability of women funded project. However, looking at the previous studies it is evident that, despite previous studies focusing on sustainability of women funded project, none has focused on the sustainability of women funded project on the context of stakeholder participation on sustainability of women funded projects in Nairobi County. This had created a shortage in empirical evidence and studies on the local scene which poses a knowledge gap which this study sought to fill. Therefore, the study

meant to investigate the influence of stakeholder's participation on sustainability of women funded projects in Carolina for Kibera.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to establish stakeholder's participation on sustainability of women funded projects in Nairobi County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

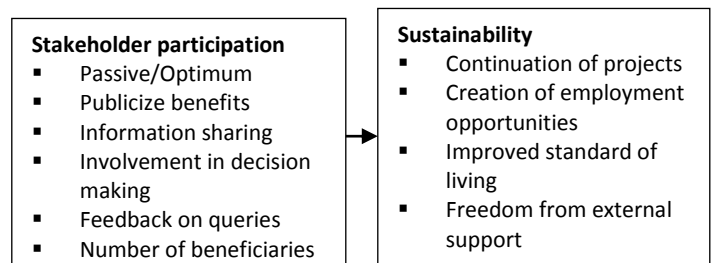### Theoretical Literature

The Stakeholder Theory

Ian Mitroff (1980) proposed the stakeholder theory in his book 'Stakeholders of the organizational mind' as one that puts as a primary managerial task the charge to influence, or manage, or balance the set of relationships that can affect the achievement of an organization's or institution's purpose. Stakeholder theory is a managerial concept of organizational strategy and ethics (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman & Evan, 1990). This theory posits that active stakeholder participation in any development project is very essential and supportive to the beneficiary community. Without community participation it is not possible to determine what are the problems, constraints, and local desires for a given community. According to Harvey and Reed (2007), participation of project beneficiaries" is of great essence in that it boosts the sense of ownership among members. This is important in ensuring that projects are operated and maintained after the implementation phase. In this theory focus is given on the participation of beneficiaries in project identification, formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in the donor funded development projects. Community participation is attained through collaborative or joint involvement of project beneficiaries and the implementing agencies (Khwaja, 2004).

Concepts concerning community participation offer one set of explanations as to why the practice of community engagement might be useful in addressing the physical, interpersonal, and cultural aspects of individuals" environments. The real value of participation stems from the finding that mobilizing the entire community, rather than engaging people on an individualized basis, leads to more effective results (Braithwaite et al., 1994). Simply said, change "... is more likely to be successful and permanent when the people it affects are involved in initiating and promoting it" (Thompson et al., 1990). In this research, stakeholder participation at all levels is very critical to achieve project sustainability. The role of partners reflects the growing trends of NGOs to work with government, donor and provide sector on joint activities such as provision.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the on-going donor funded projects. The participation of all the stakeholders in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will foster ownership, accountability and sustainability of project benefits after the donors and NGOs leave. In addition, planning on how funds will be used for various activities should involve stakeholders to ensure transparency, accountability and also reduce conflicts arising from project expenditures. Further, monitoring and evaluation by all stakeholders encourages ownership of outcomes, benefits and failures by all.

Conceptual Framework

Stakeholder participation		Sustainability
▪ Passive/Optimum ▪ Publicize benefits ▪ Information sharing ▪ Involvement in decision making ▪ Feedback on queries ▪ Number of beneficiaries	→	▪ Continuation of projects ▪ Creation of employment opportunities ▪ Improved standard of living ▪ Freedom from external support

Independent Variable   Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2019)

Stakeholder Participation

Sinclain (2004) noted that participation is a multidimensional and complex concept. It has many forms and can take place in different stages of a project cycle and at different levels of society a long a continuum from contribution of inputs to pre-determined project to information sharing, decision making partnership and empowerment (Karl, 2000). According to Ayuso et.al (2012) when communities are involved in project initiation, and implementation. There is the assurance of sustainability subject to some conditions unlike when they have no idea about the project or when it is imposed on them.

Musa (2000) noted that Community participation ensures project sustainability because through participation, communities develop skills of collective action, maintenance and sustainability. Passive participation implies participation as a contribution to the implementation of a project without any control over resources and decision-making. The external agents have assumed their roles as teaching the participants the solution to their problems. Bigdon & Korf (2002) have categorized passive participation as a means. This implies participation is used only as a tool to achieve better project outcomes and equity or improve project sustainability by developing ownership of the people concerned (Bigdon & Korf, 2000) Vos,2006)

Additionally participation as a means can be seen as a form of mobilization to get things done which could still be a state directed top-down mobilization, sometimes enforced to achieve specific objectives (Bigdon & Korf, 2002). This type of participation has also been called participations involving (Clyons, et.al 2001) contribution, manipulative consultation up to functional participation, instrumental, nominal cosmetic or pseudo-participation (Vos, 2005)

 The other form is interactive participation. The process aimed to enhance community participation. Participation and leadership particularly for women

functional participation takes into consideration formal interest groups for greater bargain, committees are often formed and the participants regularly engages in the decision-making. The ideas and decisions are generated from stakeholders especially the project beneficiaries and lastly it involves in objective and goal setting activities in the group. There is the optimal level of participation. There is room to raise the participation content, and analyses the effectiveness of   participation and seeking ways of control over the operation, it involves a formalized and documentary.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey design. The design was appropriate for this study since it allowed the researcher to show the factors influencing sustainability of women funded projects. Kothari (2004), note that, a research design appropriate must be flexible enough to provide opportunity for considering different aspects of a problem under study. The target population comprised of 74 members of staff of Carolina for Kibera NGO who were the stakeholders relevant to this study (Staff Records, 2018). This study adopted a census method of collecting data. This research work used structured and unstructured questionnaires as a data collection instrument. Questionnaires were used since according to Cooper and Schindler (2008), they are effective data collection instruments that allow respondents to give much of their opinions in regard to the research problem. Data was coded in SPSS version 23 and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive analysis, the study used charts, tables and bar graphs to present respondent general information.

RESULTS

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The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with given statements on stakeholder's participation on sustainability of women funded projects on a five point Likert scale of 1-5 where 1 is strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3-don't know, 4-agree and 5- strongly agree. The study results in Table 1 indicated the extent of agreement by the respondents on stakeholder's participation on sustainability of women funded projects.

Table 1: Stakeholders Participation

Statement	S.D	D	D.K	A	S.A	Mean	Standard Deviation
Optimum participation.	0.0%	5.9%	9.8%	45.1%	39.2%	4.1765	0.8416
Publicize benefits.	2.0%	3.9%	3.9%	76.5%	13.7%	3.9608	0.7200
Information sharing	3.9%	2.0%	5.9%	70.6%	17.6%	3.9608	0.8236
Decision making.	7.8%	35.3%	2.0%	39.2%	15.7%	3.1961	1.2964
Feedback on queries.	5.9%	2.0%	25.5%	35.3%	31.4%	3.8431	1.0839

Optimum participation

The respondents were asked to state to what extent optimum participation helps in sustainability of women funded projects. 5.9 %(n=3) and 9.8 %(n=5) disagreed and disagreed respectively while 45.1 %(n=23), 39.2 %(n=20), agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that optimum participation of members would help in sustainability of the project.

Publicize benefits

The respondents were asked to state to what extent does publicizing the benefits of the project help its sustainability 2.0 %(n=1) and 3.9 %(2) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively while 3.9 %(n=2), 76.5 %(n=39),& 13.7% (n=7) didn't know, agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that publicity of the projects benefits would help in sustainability of project.

Information sharing

The respondents were asked to state to what extent does sharing of information help in project sustainability3.9 %(n21) and 2.0 %(1) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively while 5.9 %(n=3), 70.6 %(n=36), & 17.6% (n=9) didn't know, agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicates that most of the respondents agree that sharing of information will help in sustainability of project.

Decision making

The respondents were asked to state to what extent the involvement of members in decision making helped in sustainability 7.8 %(n=4) and 35.3 %(18) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively while 2.0 %(n=1), 39.2 %(n=20), & 15.7% (n=8) didn't know, agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that involving members in decision making would help in sustainability of project.

Sustainability of Women funded projects

The respondents were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with given statements on sustainability of women funded projects on a five point Likert scale of 1-5 where 1 was strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3-don't know, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree. The study results in Table 2 indicated the extent of agreement by the respondents on sustainability of women funded projects.

Table 2: Sustainability of projects

statement	S.D	D	D.K	A	S.A	Mean	Standard deviation.
Continuation of projects	0.0%	2.9%	7.8%	45.1%	40.2%	4.186	0.8416
Creation of employment	2.9%	25.5%	49.1%	49.1%	15.8%	3.4314	1.1705
Improved standards	11.8%	11.8%	10.8%	35.3%	29.4%	3.5882	1.3442
Freedom from external support.	2.0%	35.4%	0.0%	51.0%	11.8%	3.3529	1.0631

Continuation of projects

The respondents were asked to state to what extent continuation of the project would help in its sustainability. 2.9 %(n=3) and 7.8 %(4), disagreed and didn't know respectively while 45.1 %(n=22), 40 % (20), agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that continuation of the project would help in its sustainability of project.

Creation of employment

The respondents were asked to state to what extent creation of employment within the project would help in its sustainability. 2.9 %(n=3), 25.5 %(n=13), 7 %(n=3) disagreed agreed and didn't know respectively while 49.1 %(n=26), 15.8 %(8), agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that creation of employment within the project would enhance its sustainability.

Improved standards

The respondents were asked to state to what extent improved standards would help in sustainability of the project. 11.8 %(n=6), 11.8 %(n=6), 10.8 %(n=35), strongly disagreed, disagreed and didn't know respectively while 35.3 %(n=18) and 29.4 %(n=14), agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that improved standards within the project would enhance its sustainability employment within the project would enhance its sustainability.

Freedom from external sources

The respondents were asked to state to what extent freedom from external sources helped in sustainability of the project. 2.0 %(n=1) and 35.4 %(n=18), strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, while 51.0 %(n=26) and 11.8 %(n=6), agreed and strongly agreed respectively. This indicated that most of the respondents agreed that freedom from external sources would help in sustainability of project.

SUMMARY

Stakeholder's Participation

The researcher sought to investigate the influence of stakeholder participation in project sustainability. The findings of the study based on the questionnaires' results and observation showed that users were not fully involved in the whole project and the management did not explain how one could become an active member. They were mainly just required to carry out their duties.

CONCLUSION

Stakeholder participation is very key as it reduces dissatisfaction with the end product and ensures that every member of the project feels like they are important because of their involvement in the decision making. It also ensures that all members of the project are aware of the project development and what to expect in the end, hence sustainability of the women funded project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important for the project managers to ensure that stakeholder analysis is the first diagnostic tool and the first step in project. It helps clarify which people and organizations are directly or indirectly involved in or affected by a specific development problem. It helps in identifying which groups may oppose the project strategy and subsequently obstruct project implementation.

Recommendations for further studies

Further research should be undertaken on the following areas: influence of sources of funds in supporting the sustainability of women funded project. This is because financial sustainability is key to sustainability of projects, to and also further studies should be carried out on monitoring and evaluation because is part of a continuous process of learning and improvement that enables one to assess the performance of the project. This is because the study findings on each and every research question indicate just a mere extent of agreement that they influence the sustainability of projects.

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