

INFLUENCE OF PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS IN MANDERA COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The purpose of the project was to establish the influence of project monitoring and evaluation on the sustainability of community-based projects in Mandera County. The study utilized descriptive research design. The target population for this study were 2500 different individuals with some interest on projects within Mandera County. Simple random sampling was used to obtain the sample. Questionnaires were used to gather data. Validity was tested from side to side the capability of the analysis tools to the extent which they are believed to compute. For reliability the questionnaires were split into two, administered on participants and the results correlated mathematically through use of spearman correlation to determine the level of consistency other results. A research permit was obtained from National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI). The questionnaires were coded once data is collected from the field. Cleaning of the data done then explanatory figures were expended to analyze the statistics through means and correlation of valuables to establish the relationship between sustainability and monitoring and evaluation. On project monitoring and evaluation influencing the sustainability; the study revealed that 63.8 percent of the respondents indicated that monitoring was carried out yearly. The results did not agree with those of all the program officers who noted that monitoring was carried out monthly during the implementation. There is a strong positive correlation between project monitoring and evaluation and sustainability of community-based project. The study concluded that respondents were aware of monitoring and evaluation being carried throughout the year and monthly respectively. The study recommended for need for all community members to participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the project as implementation is taking place since this would help them realize the set goals of the project.

Keywords: *Monitoring and Evaluation, Sustainability, Community-based Projects*

INTRODUCTION

Although monitoring and evaluation is also important for project sustainability, it has been taken for granted in most projects. According to China & Kamande (2021) monitoring and evaluation

is a significant way of benchmarking the crucial progress of the project while envisioning the objectives of the project. This will help to gather information that would help the management person to evaluate how well the objectives have been achieved. Mukaria (2021) found that monitoring and evaluation helps to evaluate how the resources were allocated to the project activities, how much was achieved how much training was done and how errors that were encountered were dealt with. Shabani (2020) notes that for donors to evaluate the sustainability of the project, monitoring and evaluation is carried out considering three areas that is its usefulness, efficiency and outcome. This phase of the management of the project ensures success of projects and their sustainability. Shabani (2020) also notes the process is faced with challenges of unclear monitoring and evaluation system that may affect the outcome of the project sustainability in the community. Hence the importance of adjusting the monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the project sustainability. In Mandera, monitoring and evaluation system have been applied in the tracking of the implementation and continuity of the community funded project sustainability.

Statement of the problem

There has been lack of sustainable development as a result of not creating awareness within the community on the developmental project that are about to be implemented. This is a failure of the government and other stakeholder involved in the different community projects. This lack of community participation has led to some project that are failed since the members of the community do not own the project upon their completion. The investors lack visibility study of the viability of the project before investing (Wasilwa ,2015). The dwindling community support led to unsustainable projects which are left for a few persons to benefit from. The community capital contribution is not given since the community does not understand the importance of the said project. This calls for the evaluation of the sustainability of such project when it does not address the problems facing the community. Hence, the need for the monitoring and evaluation of the community-based project to ensure sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For project sustainability, it is important to look at the project cycle. According to Mwebia & Yusuf (2022) there different steps that are followed through the standard community project which include identification, design/ planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Hence, the need to incorporate all the stages to ensure the success of the project. There are different unique issues that project management go through which include project conceptualization, identification and substantial impact on sustainability can be included. The study identified that environmental effects have to be looked at when planning the project in the area where it is hosted. For the project to be environmentally fit it is important to look at different factors that would affect the outcome these are the policies, politics and weather among others.

Sustainability is often essential when the intended projects follow its significant intention. The frequency of monitoring and evaluation could also have an impact on the project sustainability. Amadi (2017) argue that the introduction of the intention and preparation on the community-based project is the most significant part. This ensures that the project will learn through the different stages and even in completion it will still be able to remain sustained. The success of the project is therefore influenced by the project design, initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the involvement of the community.

Baum (2021) found that sustainable development is usually presented in different dimensions. The dimensions include social, economic and environmental which is divided into three core pillars which include a long-term development perspective, human needs, culture or ethics are sometimes extracted as standalone dimensions of sustainable development and sometimes there integrated in three development perspective, human needs, cultures or ethics with three dimensions (Diemer, 2017).

Community based programs are social interventions aimed at initiating social processes that are to bring transformation in the existing social structures and institutions while also influencing the behaviour of the members of the community. The sustainability is usually acknowledged with the inconsistent of its multiple dimensions and stakeholders' involvement (Ceptureanu, Ceptureanu, Luchian & Luchian, 2018). This means sustainability is the ability for something to continue functioning overtime through emphasize of continuity of specific program components. The enhancement of community capacity, institutionalization of the program ability to continuously address issues affecting the community.

Ceptureanu, Ceptureanu, Luchian & Luchian (2018) argues that there are different indicators that are constituted in sustainability in community-based programs such as at individual levels which emphasizes benefits for individuals after the initial program funding ends. Through the organizational-level which focuses continuation of program activities within the host organization and community-level indicators which are sustained through the concentration of the sustainable capacity for the community to develop and delivery programs. They also noted that the sustainability of the community-based programs that cannot be approached unilaterally given that they are not traditional projects that is important to understand their distinguishing features. These include reliance on community-based approach which enables partnership with community members to leverage their capabilities and resources effectively in solving problems and supporting community goals.

Dotsenko, Ezdina, Khasanova & Khasanov (2021) argues that there are many benefits accrued from sustainable development. These leads to balanced development within the ecosystem where the project is found. This is especially where their formal institutions that are able to enforce rules and regulations of the programs. The study found that the macroeconomic indicators with high level and quality of life within the populations shows factors f sustainable development. They create opportunities that help the interaction between the society and nature.

Mwembia & Yusuf (2022) noted that project lifecycle is characterized with different phases that is from the initiation, to their completion. The phases between transition and transfer from the one management to the other that is a government to the community. They found that the project implementation could have a universal management that is shared. This means that the community and the project development team are united to manage the affairs of the project hence making it have a continuity after the transition. They also added that the projects create a dynamic context between the stakeholders through the different phases. Ceptureano, Ceptureano, Luchian, & Luchian (2018) argued that there are different areas to be considered within the different phases which include the methods to be used to help the community get education on the way they will run the project. This education should be continuous to ensure that the community members are aware of all areas that are necessary for project continuity. Hence bringing the community to the management of the project and they are also motivated to learn how to run the daily activities of the project. Even when faced with difficulties the community have the potential to reach out to the project managers to help them understand how to maneuver through the challenges.

According to Munene & Severina (2020) community participation in identifying the what they require is important since they get involved in improving their lives. This would also ensure that they own up the project once complete since they were able to identify with it. It also ensures that the community members are able to give feedback and also get solutions to the challenges the project is facing during implementation. This increases the community spirit of participation and volunteering to ensure the interest of the community is no opposed within the project life. It will also ensure the community members have confidence with the project and they will gain knowledge on the daily doings within the project.

During inspection of the project for sustainability members of the community participate in giving information that would help in improving different areas of the project to ensure the design is as it was planned when the project was identified. This reduces the stalling of the project during implementation stages since the community is in support of the project (Munene and Severina, 2020). This then calls for the project implementors to ensure they bring the community on board to make sure that it becomes a success through parting in the both project implementation and operations. This will help the community to gain knowledge on how to prepare and additional features required by the project. The community will also be able to contribute resources that would help the continuity of the project once complete.

METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive research design. The study targeted a population of 2600 comprised of project managers, project teams, sponsors and the community members benefiting directly from the projects. This study picked ten percent of the total population that were used among the projects in Mandera County. Names of all the persons within the projects were written down on a piece of paper. The researcher used simple random sampling and handpick the papers of the names of persons who participated in the study. A questionnaire was used to gather information for this study. A pilot study was used to conduct a pretest of the tools and all the ambiguous questions that were found in the questionnaires were collected. The researcher obtained permission from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) to carry out the research. The letter indicating the permit was sent some letters to the respective organization which were sampled. The questionnaire was coded once data was collected from the field. Cleaning was also done then explanatory figures were analyzed. The analysed data was presented in frequency, percent, means, mode and standard deviation. The interpretation of the data was carried to give meaning to the information gathered. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program was used due to enormous quantity of data. Pearson's moment product correlation was used to determine the relationship between variables such sustainability of the community project and participation in implementation and, monitoring and evaluation. The findings were presented in frequency tables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Frequency of Monitoring done

The role of monitoring is to keep assessing the programme according to the time frame while evaluation is to determine systematical and objective relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of activities in right to the project. This study sought to establish the frequency the project was monitored.

Table 1: Frequency Monitoring done

	Frequency	Percent
Monthly	30	12.8
Yearly	150	63.8

Occasionally	10	4.3
Never	45	19.1
Total	235	100.0

Majority of the respondents (63.8%) indicated that monitoring was done yearly while 19.1 percent indicated it was never done while 12.8 percent indicated it was done monthly and 4.3 percent was done occasionally. This implies that monitoring in majority of the programs was carried. The programme officers did not concur with the results of the respondents since they indicated that monitoring was carried out monthly during the project implementation and since the projects have grown monitoring is carried out once per year. The results concur with Kiogora (2016) who notes that implementation was also scrutinized when the project was monitored. The results also concur with Mukaria (2021) who found that monitoring and evaluation is a way of getting feedback that has a considerable optimistic result on the success of such project.

Implementation of the planned activities as stipulated in the quarter plans

The assessment performance plans help to assess the overall progress of the plan in order to identify key issues and changes required to ensure the planned activities are effectively implemented. This study sought to rate on a scale of 1-10 the implementation of the planned activities as stipulated in quarters plans.

Table 2: Responses on the implementation of the planned activities

	Frequency	Percent
Score 1-4	135	57.3
Score 5-7	105	44.7
Score 8-10	5	2.1
Total	235	100.0

A majority of the respondents (57.3%) scaled the implementation of the planned activities in quarter's plans at the score of 1-4 while 44.7% of them scaled the planned activities at 5-7 and 2.1 percent scaled the planned implementation activities at a score of 8-10. This implies that the highest number of respondents scored 1-4 on implementation of the planned activities within a quarter. This may mean the community felt that the implementation was taking longer than expected to measure sustainability. The program officers on the other hand had a score 5-7 and score 8-10 meaning that they felt they had implemented the program as expected for each quarter.

Correlation Analysis

The study was also to examine the correlation between the variables using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

Table 3: Correlation analysis

		Project monitoring and evaluation	Sustainability of community based project
Project monitoring and evaluation	Pearson Correlation	1	.856**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
	N	235	235
Sustainability of community-based project	Pearson Correlation	.856**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Table 3 shows that there is a strong positive correlation between project monitoring and evaluation and sustainability of community-based project ($r=0.856$, P-value 0.000). The correlation is statistically significant with a significance value of less than 0.01 at 99% level of confidence, which may imply that an increase or decrease in one variable does significantly related to an increase or decrease in the second variable.

Conclusions

On project monitoring and evaluation, the study can conclude that respondents were aware of monitoring being carried out years and monthly respectively. They also were able to score the monitoring process a score board of between 1-4 as well as another group put the score at 5-7. Evaluation was also carried out with mid-term and impact evaluation being prominent. There is a strong positive correlation between project monitoring and evaluation and sustainability of community-based project.

Recommendations

There is need for the community to be encourage to participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the project as implementation is taking place since this would help them realize the set goals of the project.

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