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THE DILEMMA IN SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS IN KENYA

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Abstract

Globally, billions of shillings have been spent in communities to enhance the living situation of the people. However, one of the most critical obstacles is the extent to which the projects are able to persist despite the exit of donors, while the beneficiaries reap dividends; appreciate their participation and ownership role in the project. Apparently, it is sustainability that makes the difference between success and failure of community-based projects. Various factors such as technical, financial, institutional, economic, and social factors contribute to the failure to sustain the projects if not considered well in the project management cycle. In this paper, we provide a conceptual explanation of factors that influence sustainability of projects in Kenya, especially in the very needy communities where such projects are the only window of hope. We rely on analysis of secondary evidence from Kenya and other parts of the world. Our main argument is that a lot of money is being spent in community-based projects yet majority of such projects have generally failed to bring sustainable benefits to the target groups. The paper particularly observes that although many projects highlight elements of sustainability in their proposal stage, the actual implementation seems to lack emphasis on sustainability. The authors concentrate on socio-cultural, political, economic and technical factors and how they affect sustainability of community-based projects. This paper concludes that lack of stakeholder ownership and commitment leads to project failure. Additionally, aid support from development agencies often do not fully understand and consider socio-economic, cultural, and political factors influencing the project design, planning and implementation. As well, very limited follow-up support during implementation is tendered by these development agencies. Therefore, there is need for inclusive and viable community driven approaches to project sustainability which can be achieved through participation and involvement of all stakeholders.

Keywords: Sustainability, Community-based Projects, Kenya



1. INTRODUCTION

Project sustainability is one of the most critical challenges for all grassroots, national and international development agencies. Globally, billions of shillings have been spent in communities to enhance the living situation of the people. Aid effectiveness is a growing concern for the donor community. In the recent past, development practitioners have been focusing on efficient aid delivery to education. The shift from project mode to Sector Wide Approaches, Structural Adjustment measures to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers¹, Programmes-based Approaches, Direct Budget Support, Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks reflect this concern for reducing the fragmentation of development systems and change the way aid is delivered by shifting the balance of power (Adhiambo, 2012). While donor funding can act as a temporary driver for social change, maintaining the social change is challenging. For instance, unforeseen circumstances may threaten the initial uptake of innovative project design elements. Short funding cycles, conflict with time needed to stimulate social change; and potentially worthwhile healthy interventions may no longer be financially viable once donor funding ends.

According to Ababa (2013), development aid to Kenya stood at \$770m in 2005 and has been steadily rising since 2002, supporting several projects all geared towards development. Some of the projects have, however, been successful. However, little evidence is available on the true impact of funded programs on the lives of the poor in Kenya. One of the most critical obstacles is the extent to which the projects are able to persist despite the exit of donors, while the beneficiaries reap dividends, and appreciate their participation and ownership role in the project. Apparently, little evidence indicates that, it is sustainability that makes the difference between success and failure of community-based projects.

The concept of sustainability can be seen within time and changing social, economic and political contexts. According to Williams, (2003), sustainability is reflected in the capacity of the community to cope with change and adapt to new situations. A project that is seen as worth sustaining today may not be so in future. Notwithstanding, substantial resources have been allocated to developing and maintaining community-based programs for children, youth and families, relatively little is known about how these programs are sustained and what factors lead to their failure. Quite often, the typical community-based program has a relatively short life once its original funding base expires (Schorr, 1997). Inadequate information and understanding of what sustains community based programs has led to various researches focusing on how community projects can be sustained past their initial funding base and increase their longevity in addressing the needs of the community.

The roots of sustainable development concept can be found in the emerging environmental consciousness of the 1960s and in the identification of the link between economic development and environmental degradation and pollution (WECD, 1987). This development was closely related to the replacement of the optimism about the creation of a modern technological utopia with a new understanding of the forces contributing to the world's problems. Sustainable Development (SD) was used for the first time in the 1980 IUCN Report, *World Conservation Strategy: Living Resources for Sustainable Development*. Today, the word sustainability is frequently used in many platforms using different combinations such as sustainable development, sustainable growth, sustainable community, sustainable industry, sustainable economy, and sustainable agriculture. Sustainability is drawn from the root word "sustain" which means 'to provide conditions in which something can happen' (A & C Black Publishers, 2007).

In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (WCED, 1987). EU (2004)' defines sustainability as "the likelihood of a continuation in the stream of benefits produced by the project after the period of external support has ended." Mulwa (2010) noted that project sustainability concerns itself with the continuity of a project until it attains its set objectives.



Like other development approaches, sustainable development is about improvement of the human condition, yet unlike many of the others, it does not only emphasise economic growth, it stresses the importance of a balance between economic growth and environmental protection. The general understanding of Sustainable Development (SD) comprise two dimensions: the notion of development (to make better) and sustainability (to maintain). SD is classically explained as the balancing between environmental, economic and social aspects of development (Daly, 1996). These three aspects are frequently defined as the pillars of sustainable development.

One important difference from other macro theories of development is the underlying philosophy that what is done now to improve the quality of life of people should not degrade the environment (in its widest bio-physical and socio-economic sense) and resources such that future generations are put at a disadvantage. The emphasis on the world's poor also implies a link between environmental concerns and economic- and social development over both space and time. If earlier development theories focussed on the economy, the use of SD has thus far, in politics, practice and research emphasised its environmental dimension. Today the concept of SD has broadened its perspective, with more emphasis now being put also on the social dimension (EC, 2002).

In relation to implementation of projects, sustainability is the probability that a project shall continue long after the outside support is withdrawn. Consequently, while thinking of project sustainability, three things must be born in mind; the community, project results and external assistance. A project is sustainable if the community/beneficiaries are capable on their own without the assistance of outside development partners, to continue producing results for their benefit for as long as their problem still exists. There have been several projects funded by donors such as the World Bank, DFID, CIDA, and USAID among others, to help alleviate poverty in Kenya. Most of these projects have been designed for various communities living in Kenya. Urban and rural communities have been the centre of focus for many donor funded projects. The question that this paper seeks to answer is why these projects are not sustainable and their impact not felt after donor withdrawal?

2. METHODOLOGY

In this paper, we provide a conceptual explanation of factors that influence sustainability of projects in Kenya and other parts of the world, especially in the very needy communities where such projects are the only 'window of hope'. The focus is majorly on socio-economic, political and environmental factors and how they influence project sustainability. We rely on analysis of secondary evidence from Kenya and some selected case studies from other parts of the world.

3. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

From a sociological and anthropological standpoint, projects are primarily social interventions within a given social system, arousing social processes which change at least to some extent the social structures and institutions of this system and the social behavior of its members (Meyer, 2002). Therefore, development practitioners should ensure that the social systems adapt to the changing social trends in the community-based projects to enhance project sustainability. According to Ingle (2005), for a project to achieve sustainability, it needs to be implemented through a strategic approach. The strategic approach incorporates four main elements, future orientation: assuming things will change, and planning to maximize benefits which can be derived during and from that change; external emphasis: recognizing the diversity of the project environment and the many dimensions which impact on project outcomes, including technology, politics, society, and economics; environmental fit: planning for a continual fit between the project and its environment, including mission, objectives, strategies, structures, and resources; and process orientation: planning and management priorities evolve in an iterative cycle of conscious and deliberate learning from experience as the reality changes.

Project sustainability is a major challenge not only in Kenya, but also in many developing countries. Most projects implemented at huge amounts often tend to experience difficulties with sustainability. Donors such as the World Bank, DFID, USAID and other bilateral aid agencies have been expressing concerns on project sustainability, while the trend with implementation of projects is showing significant improvement, post-implementation sustainability is rather disappointing with very few projects being sustained.



Despite huge amounts of money spent on implementation of projects in Kenya, poor sustainability is depriving them from the returns expected of these investments. Several factors are responsible for poor project sustainability. Some factors are simple and others are quite complex. Some are within the control of the project management, while others come as external threats. This paper articulates the dilemma of project sustainability from different perspectives in the subsequent sections.

3.1 Effectiveness of Development Interventions

For a long time, development agencies have had a long standing history of implementing projects, which fail shortly after these agencies have withdrawn. Most of the interventions implemented are not effective in achieving set goals and objectives. NPA (2002) defines effectiveness as the extent to which an intervention is successful in achieving its objectives. Participatory theory states that stakeholder participation is one of the ways of enhancing effectiveness of development projects. However, this has not been the case, the community where projects are being implemented have long been viewed as a hurdle to implementing projects and historically have been engaged as little as possible. According to Greenall and Revere (1999), implementing agencies both local and international expressed several difficulties when engaging community right from the design stages to withdrawal, citing slow implementation, but Karl (2000) is of the view that development interventions will achieve their objectives if the people who are most affected are actively involved. Participation is an effective mechanism for poverty reduction capable of achieving immediate and lasting results at the grassroots level for the reason that it assures better targeting of benefits to the poor, increases the impact and ensures that the development gains are equitably distributed (Chavangi, 1995).

Chambers (1983) and Oakley (1991) aver that participation in projects ensures that the development activities are based upon indigenous knowledge and are more relevant to locals. Karl, (2000) asserts that local people understand their problems better and can therefore use their skills and resources to find flexible solutions that are tailored to suit their unique needs. Oakley et al. (1998) opines that in order for the development efforts to have sustainable changes in the poor people's lives, they must take into account local values. Generally, from the authors view, stakeholder analysis should be done to ensure all parties/actors are actively involved in all stages of project management cycle. This is in concurrence with (Rudqvist and Woodford-Berger, 1996) that the community will help to detect problems during implementation at early stages before they escalate into major sources of conflict and wastefulness. As Karl (2000) puts it, local people's judgments of what constitutes success, give a more pragmatic view about what works and what does not work. Consequently, interventions will be successful and sustainable when people have a voice in determining their objectives, to support their implementation, to evaluate their outcomes, and to make indigenous knowledge available. However, it is disappointing to note that in Kenya, most donor funded projects do not give much consideration to community participation and involvement, hence becoming unsustainable. The authors argue that the determinant factors for the sustainability of any community-based project are pre and post-implementation factors.

According to Aras and Crowther (2008), there are four aspects of sustainability, which are needed to be recognized and analyzed, and include societal influence, which measures the impact a society makes upon the corporation in terms of the social contract and stakeholder influence; environmental impact, which is the effect of the actions of the corporation upon its geophysics environment; organizational culture, which is the relationship between the corporation and its internal stakeholders and finances, an adequate return for the level of risk undertaken in pursuit of sustainable development and financial sustainability.

3.2 Institutional and Management Capacity

Attainment of any form of project sustainability is not an endeavor of a single day, but a life- long process (Wanjohi, 2010). Community based projects are complex and require multifaceted management skills (Weinberg, 2008). For project sustainability to be achieved, the institutions and management involved in project implementation from the community to the national or international levels need to be empowered in terms of information, skills and resources (human and capital) for smooth running of activities for sustainability of projects. The World Bank (2008) defines



empowerment as the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process are actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the management and institutional context which govern the use of these assets.

According to McDade (2004), good management ensures that sufficient local resources and capacity exist to continue the project in the absence of outside resources. Espinosa, et al. (2007) opines that task familiarity is important in the community based projects and this is usually linked to performance which in turn is linked to sustainability. Good management goes beyond mere skills (Kirksch, 2000) to technical and expertise required to successfully implementing the project (Little, 1993). This study argues that institutional and management capacity is a recipe to effective project implementation as it encourages participation and involvement of the community in all the processes of project implementation, hence people feeling empowered. Empowered people have freedom of choice and action, which in turn enables them to better influence the course of their lives and the decisions which affect them.

3.3 Community-Based Approaches on Project Sustainability

In the world today, community based approaches for community development, have emerged as the best tools for achieving project sustainability. According to UNHCR (2008), a community-based approach is a way of working in partnership with persons of concern during all stages of project cycle. In this paper, we define community-based approaches as strategies that extend individual needs to the community and ensure consolidation of efforts among community members in advancing their effort towards community driven projects. Community-based approaches recognize the resilience (ARC, 2001), capacities, skills and resources of people concerned, and build on these to deliver protection and solutions that support the community's own goals (UNHCR, 2008).

In an effort to analyze the performance of water systems in six countries (Benin, Bolivia, Honduras, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Uganda), Katz and Sara (1997) found that the community-based approach significantly increased sustainability. The analysis found that there exist a strong linkage between participation of the community members and sustainability of the projects. Sustainability was achieved owing to the fact that community members were able to access information, capacity build at all levels, trained in operations and maintenance, control over funds, and good quality construction.

In a different analysis by Newman et al. (2002) of eighteen rural water projects in two regions in Bolivia, they found that community-level training (for example, on cleaning water tanks, repairing water tubes, and managing user funds) was critical for improving water quality. In Zimbabwe, Cleaver (1999) found that the empowerment and long-term effectiveness of participation approaches was rather complex. Limitations of communities in mobilizing the necessary resources, either through collecting funds from community members or lobbying government officials, greatly affected project sustainability. Narayan (1995) analyzed lessons from 121 rural water-supply projects funded by different agencies in 49 developing countries and found that the participation of local communities was an important factor for project effectiveness and sustainability.

Adoption of more radical approaches in handling the theme of sustainability of community- based projects: new project sustainability models built on intrinsic sense of duty attained through individual and organizational based processes (Wanjohi, 2010). Most development workers are familiar with cases where past projects can only be located by the project buildings, now serving some other purpose, or by the piles of rusting machinery, which lead to the question of continuity and sustainability. When a community is capable of maintaining the flow of results from a project for their own good, they will always have a feel of 'we are capable' and this enhances their self-esteem or ego, and thus will be more willing to get involved in any other project than ever before.

From the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that project sustainability can be achieved if only change agents can adopt community-based approaches that embrace participation and involvement of the communities in designing, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, contribution of social capital and local leadership from the



community enhances project sustainability during and after donor withdrawal. Through this, major issues facing sustainability of community-based projects particularly project management processes, local and team leadership and financing issues can be mitigated.

3.4 Community Acceptance and Project Ownership

Community acceptance refers to more local acceptance, including associations, clubs, civic organization, public spaces, with access to public transportation, parks and arts centers (Racino, 1999). According to this paper, community acceptance is a means of understanding the needs of the community in all aspects of community development. Community members become part and parcel of every aspect and process of community-based projects that is from needs assessment through evaluation. Project ownership is the process where the community participates fully in community-based projects, accepts and owns the outcome of a project at the end and beyond the project period.

Community acceptance and project ownership promote project support by all stakeholders involved in the project, hence reducing community resistance in participation in project activities. Chappel (2005) indicates that community support increases project efficiency, which impacts positively on project sustainability. Further, Akerlund (2005) highlighted that community support increases project effectiveness as it helps to ensure that the project achieves its objectives and that benefits go to the intended groups. This paper contends that the minds and ideas of community members is the greatest resource of a community. While embracing community acceptance and project ownership, projects are geared towards sustainability.

It is estimated that 35% of improved rural water supplies in sub-Saharan Africa are non-operational and this scenario is no exception in Kenya (Ababa, 2013). Chambers (1983) points out that empowerment allows people to have access to productive resources which enable them to increase their earning and obtain goods and services that they need, and to participate in the decisions that affect them. Participatory methods can be used to guarantee the inclusion of all the stakeholders, the establishment of agreements between them, and the provision of appropriate information at each level and for different purposes. Information is a key ingredient for accountability because it is only when people know what resources are available, how they are being channelled, and how decisions are being made, that they can hold project's staff to account. When primary stakeholders can hold other stakeholders accountable, power shifts to them. Thus, the objective of improving accountability and empowerment are strongly related to each other (Cornwall et al. 2000). Participation provides an opportunity to establish new habits of control, reporting and shared responsibility in development interventions. The people's participation also helps for an improved understanding of the role of the several stakeholders involved and the limitation of technical and financial resources that exist to address the problems of the poor (Mulwa, 2010).

Where project ownership is exclusive, those in control are less likely to respond positively to the needs and ideas of the wider group. This can have a long-term impact on project sustainability. However, income generating activities need individual ownership. For example, the livelihood project for reformed street youth by Ex-street children organization (ECCO) in Kenya. From the descriptive analysis done, it was found that income generating activities cannot sustain itself because of the communal ownership; therefore, it is recommended that, the focus should be on individual ownership if viability and sustainability is to be achieved in community development projects (ECCO, 2010). Research shows that donor-led and top-down projects generally fail to bring sustainable benefits because they do not lead to stakeholder ownership and commitment. Genuine participation and ownership is not being adequately addressed if the main strategy consists of simply running workshops or briefings to let 'them' know what 'you' are doing.

3.5 Socio-cultural Acceptability

Reviewed literature has shown that social and culturally approved community-based projects eventually become sustainable. Community-based project sustainability is about creating a more just and equitable community through encouraging social and cultural diversity (Roseland et al. 2005). Any community-based project therefore, must give much consideration to socio-cultural aspects in any given project during pre and post-implementation. Sustainable



project design utilizes essential aspects of cultural identity, can serve to synthesize the past with the present for the benefit of the future (Matthews and Herbert, 2004). Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) approach should be employed during needs assessment to be able to accommodate the views of all community members in the project. According to KWAHO, a water organization project in Kenya, the sustainability of the water projects at the grassroots has been due to the strategies integrated before the projects are completed, which include sensitivity to socio-cultural factors in the communities where the project are being implemented.

Further analysis indicates that the project should be respectful and considerate of the community's beliefs, norms, and religion. Any project activity that undermines a community's socio-cultural orientation will be met with a lot of resistance and the chance of its sustainability is quite small. For instance, the case of anti Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) projects in communities of Rift Valley province in Kenya is a living testimony. Thus, it is imperative to involve the community adequately before you begin a project that is likely to brush shoulders with a community's socio-cultural system. Sustained projects will always become points of reference for other people or communities that need to undertake similar projects and thus become case studies for learning. Project sustainability is important because it helps in proper utilization of the immense resources invested in the project. Thus continuity of the project long after external support has ceased, leads to economical use of resources and avoids misuse of the same.

The authors argue that, to enhance sustainability, the community members must be seen as people who are capable of navigating their own destiny. As such, at all stages of project cycle, should be followed systematically to contribute what they have or know, share or learn what they do not know and enhance their capabilities. In this way, project sustainability enables the community to continue producing the much needed results, to ensure their most felt need is met thus, solve their problem long after the external assistance has stopped.

3.6 Integrating Project Sustainability in Project Planning

Many factors interact as individuals and organizations attempt to reconcile different responsibilities, objectives and agendas. The way in which these issues are handled affect the sustainability of the project, either fostering good working relationships between all those involved, or alienating individuals and organizations (). Local projects work best when all involved professionals and local people, feel that their concerns are being addressed. This is what ought to be done to ensure project continuity long after the departure of external assistance and answers the following question: What are the pre-requisites or conditions that should be provided or presented to attain project sustainability?

3.6.1 Capacity building

Capacity building is an essential step in preparing the community for sustainable development. It begins with the inception of the project, in that the communities are involved both directly and indirectly. Organizations can build the capacity and the experience of the community on how to manage community-based projects after donors exit. Such trainings can also be done by government, universities, research centers, and other private organizations. Community members need more knowledge and skills to cooperate and assist in setting priorities so that they can deal with the project for sustainability purposes. The authors contend that capacity building is an empowering tool that enables the community to manage challenges on their own, rather than depending on the help of the organizations or donor.

3.6.2 Funding

One of the key rudiments in project sustainability is the availability resources that are required for community-based projects. This means, selecting resources that should be available for the projected future, minimizing the possibility of project failure once it is up and running, due to inadequate essential materials. In many cases, this will mean identifying secondary sources of those materials that can be pressed into action. Inadequate funding detracts from a project's ability to be sustained (Bamberger & Cheema, 1990). However, there are many ways that funding can be linked to a project's ability to be sustained. Holder and Moore (2000) support developing local resources for enhanced sustainability emphasizing the importance of adequate local capacities to generate funds after external funding ceases.

Bossert (1990) asserts that planning for future funding needs to be in place early and needs to be continually developed during the life of the project; while LaFond (1995) discusses the need for longer initial funding periods to allow time for



sustainability to be nurtured. As a result, projects have constantly to re-invent themselves so that they qualify again for set-up funding. Some projects are trapped in this cycle; this is not only time-consuming but hinders the natural development of the project. This is where generating increasing levels of income through trading may help some community projects break from this cycle of funding dependency.

3.6.3 Community Participation and Involvement

Community involvement is an important factor for the sustainability of projects as it is the genuine involvement of local people as active participants and equal partners whose concerns and experience are intrinsic to the project's success. Community awareness and involvement in project planning and implementation are important elements in the sustainability of a project. Many scholars suggest encouraging active community participation at all levels of project design and implementation (Bamberger & Cheema, 1990) for sustaining those programs.

Locally initiated programs may be more sustainable (LaFond, 1995), so it might be necessary to develop some level of local institutional building (Bossert, 1990). Involving all relevant community leaders and agencies facilitates sustaining programs (Goodman & Steckler, 1989; Shediak-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998). The level of community support determines whether a project becomes established, how quickly and successfully it consolidates, and how it responds and adapts to meet changing needs. It is therefore important that involving local communities' starts at the identification phase, when decisions are being made about what type of project is required to address their priority need. Sustainability cannot be achieved without their involvement and support and thus, stakeholder analysis is paramount to be able to identify the key actors who should be involved in every stage of project management cycle. Stakeholders, both men and women, should actively participate, hence having the opportunity to influence the direction and detail of design and implementation. Allocating adequate time and resources for participatory analysis and responding to demand-led approaches are important ways to improve participation.

Bamberger & Cheema (1990) asserts that community participation is one of the major contributing factors for sustained community project because without the community, the project cannot stand on its own. While other factors that can be seen to make the community development project sustainable include, planning, programme operations, fact finding and research, budget allocation and analysis, public relation, human commitment, team work, location etc, all these come from the implementing organization.

3.6.4 Staff Involvement, Integration and Support

Programs and projects which integrate with and build on local management structures, have better prospects for promoting project sustainability (Mulwa, 2010). The capacity of local agencies to manage (or absorb) new structures, systems, ideas and funds is often not adequately assessed, and over-optimistic assumptions are often made. Getting the management structure right requires an adequate institutional analysis during the project formulation phase and this requires specific knowledge, skills and field time.

Adequate and effective staffing is also an important factor for sustaining community-based projects. Glaser (1981) discusses the need to involve staff in decision making; Bossert (1990) discusses the need for staff to be committed to project goals, and utilizing indigenous staff in community based projects. The lack of adequately trained personnel is a major detractor from sustaining community-based projects while providing adequate staff training for effective project delivery, supports project longevity (Bamberger & Cheema, 1990). Professionals can play a number of different roles in projects, all of which require trust and good working relationships with local people and other professionals. In order to establish good rapport professionals need time, resources and authority to invest in a project. Flexibility is critical in the way professionals interpret their own and others' roles and in the activities they and the projects undertake.

3.6.5 Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to the project's ability to adapt to community needs and contextual change, which strongly influences its ability to continue providing services. Holder & Moore (2000) noted that maintaining flexibility contributes to the sustainability of community projects while others (Shediak-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998) also support the necessity of project flexibility and adaptability. To maintain interest and support, projects have to be responsive to the changing



agendas and needs of users, volunteers and professionals. This means ensuring that the activities provided address local needs, and that all those involved with the project - volunteers and professionals - have the skills they require.

3.6.6 Networking or building partnerships

Projects that build links with different organizations are more likely to be sustainable. They support and learn from each other, and are able to exploit others' agendas, for example, for new funding opportunities. It has also been found to be essential for the long-term survival of community-based programs. Many researchers including (Bamberger & Cheema, 1990; Lefebvre, 1990; Lerner, 1995) have found that creating conducive environment for collaboration contributes to a program's continuation and that these collaborations need to include all relevant community leaders and agencies and active community participation at all levels.

3.6.7 Government Standards and Policy Support

Project sustainability requires compliance with current standards in which such standards are often determined by considering governmental regulations relevant to the project as well as the production and distribution of safe and quality goods or services by the organization that is steering the endeavor. Attention is usually paid to consumer wants and needs as a way of determining if the results of a project will likely to be attractive enough to generate demand that will continue for an appreciable period of time. Unless all these elements are present, then project sustainability may be difficult to achieve.

3.6.8 Environmental Protection

Environmental sustainable development can be seen as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WECD, 1987). Environmental sustainable development is strengthened if environmental issues are considered at all stages of the project cycle. Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is often a key tool for strengthening the environmental sustainability of programs and projects. The main concern is that programs and project should not over-exploit non-renewable resources, deplete the productive capacity of the soil, or damage the biophysical environment in such ways that future generations will be demonstrably worse off as a result. Environmental protection is the extent to which the project will preserve or damage the ecological environment and therefore, support or undermine achievement of long term benefits.

On the sustainability of the project, it can be recommended that, the major factor is to involve the community in all the stages as this will give them the capability to control and implement the project. This will also enable them to have the capacity to sustain such community-based projects without the support from the external partners.

4. SCENARIO OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Foreign development assistance in Kenya has been a move towards addressing the underlying causes of poverty. A recent manifestation is the move towards sustainability, which stresses community mobilization, education, and cost-recovery (Thematic Group, 2005). Converse to this, majority of community development projects in Kenya faces challenges of sustainability. In Kenya, (NETWAS International, 2009) notes that provision of water and sanitation services through projects is one thing and maintaining the services is quite another. Evaluations and assessments done a few years after commissioning of various WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) projects in developing countries, of which Kenya form part, come with the dismal report that the project is 'dead', or it is performing far below par.

Despite the Kenyan government effort of setting ambitious targets to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation facilities to 85% of the population by 2015 and 100 % by 2025 in line with MDGs, the country still faces considerable challenges in reaching the water and sanitation Millennium Development Goals (USAID/Kenya). According to the Joint Monitoring Programme's 2012 progress report, access to safe water supplies throughout Kenya is 59 percent with access in rural areas remaining as low as 47 percent.



A few water projects that have become sustainable, is due to the strategies integrated before the projects were completed which included, effective mobilization of communities through sensitization and training to achieve ownership; collaboration with various stakeholders (the government, local leaders, politicians and the target communities) in the project sites that ensured actual implementation of projects and continuity of those projects when implementing agencies pulled out of the area; application of appropriate technologies; gender considerations that empowered women to handle community projects; Environmental impact considerations into a project; sensitivity to socio-cultural factors in the communities; capacity building for communities and effective monitoring and evaluation. Other factors include effective networking with all stakeholders.

In another scenario in Zambia, as part of making the farmers sustainable after donor pulling out, World Vision made the condition of payment of the loans very flexible to give the farmers' time to raise produce more for their sustainability. This was done in form of revolving loans (World Vision, 1999). The way in which the community was made sustainable was through the formation of farmer's groups. The groups formed a committee, which was made to work in partnership with Agricultural Extension Officers from the Ministry of Agriculture. This committee was expected to take up the leading role in agricultural matters concerning farmers in the area.

Two types of agricultural revolving loans were given to the community by the project in Pigs and goats. The project gave pigs and goats to the community during the 1998/99 agricultural season and nineteen (19) farmers benefited from the loans. Each beneficiary of the goats revolving loan scheme was given two female goats, one male and those from the pig scheme were given one female and one male (Kabungo, 2001). The community members who were involved in these agricultural revolving loans were put in groups and some committees were formed to monitor on usage of loans. The main purpose of this loan was to increase the number of livestock of the beneficiaries. The loans were meant in such a way that, they were rotating from one community beneficiary member to the other. The goal was that once the animal breed, the first beneficiary had to give the male and female animal to the next beneficiary, as this was to continue up to the last beneficiary in a group.

The sustainability of this project was left in the hands of the community people as they were given all the powers to run the project. The loan was made self-sustaining, and the only task the beneficiaries had was to care for the animals properly. This agricultural revolving loan had its own risks especially that it was dealing with animal lives which meant that there was no control for natural death in that such death can be seen as a factor which can contribute to the failure of sustainability of the project. For the health of the animals, the projects had to put up the dip tanks to control the tick-borne diseases. As for sustainability purposes, the projects partnered with the veterinary department to take up the leading role in the control of the diseases. For example in Luchena community development project in the same country, the project had to make an agreement with the Government. In the agreement, the government of Zambia was to provide the dipping chemicals through their Veterinary Extension workers (Kabungo, 2001).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the forgoing discussion, it can be said that project sustainability is the continuous existence and delivery of services to the community members after the external support has ceased. For a project to be sustainable, a multi-dimensional attributes of sustainability that is social, cultural, economic and environmental pillars have to be considered. A meticulous sustainability analysis is needed at the time of formulation of a project to integrate sustainability pillars such as community involvement, credibility, capacity building, local staff involvement, shared ownership, networking, responsiveness, and socio-cultural perspectives.

The authors recommend that it is important to have community members identify their own needs, analyze the factors that lead to the needs, and draw up community Action Plans (CAP) to address them. Furthermore, respect for and the use of community's inherent knowledge and capacities allow the community to cultivate innovative approaches to address their own problems. Finally, before the implementing agency hands over the project to the community, it should design exit plan and sustainability plan to promote continuity of the project after the agency has left. After the implementing



agency has left the project is now left to the community to spearhead it and the sponsors should only come in for technical guidance as project sustainability is dependent much on the community's full participation.

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