

Influence of Stakeholder Participation on Sustainability of Community Development Projects Implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

Plan International Kenya noted in an evaluation that the sustainability of community development project is poor, with one of the causes being established as weak participation by stakeholders, the level of stakeholder engagement was however not clear. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of stakeholder participation on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The researcher targeted three people in each of the 51 organizations partnering with Plan International; this gave a population of 153 people. Using Sekeran (2003) sample determination the sample size was determined as 113 respondents. Simple random sampling was used to select the 113 respondents. Pilot testing was done with 15 respondents from Rangwe Sub-county. Data validity was tested by using the Content Valid Index (CVI). The test re-test method was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulation and chi-square p-value significance test. It was established that there was a weak but significant negative association between passive participation among stakeholders on and sustainability of community development projects $r = -0.043, p = 0.000, CL = 95\%$. It was also established that there was a moderate significant positive correlation between interactive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects $r = 0.365, p = 0.000, CL = 95\%$. A moderate significant positive correlation between the influences of functional participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects was established $r = 0.455, p = 0.000, CL = 95\%$. There was a moderate significant positive correlation between the influences of optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects $r = 0.382, p = 0.000, CL = 95\%$. It was recommended that Plan International needs to

reduce the extent of engaging stakeholder passively, enhance the extent of interactive participation, strengthen functional participation among stakeholders and reinforce optimal participation to enable greater efficiency and effectiveness of programming as well as accountability among the stakeholders, this will be an assurance for project sustainability.

Keywords: Stakeholder participation, passive participation, interactive participation, functional participation, optimum participation, sustainability of community development projects.

Background to the Study

Stakeholder participation is a major concern regarding the sustainability of community development projects, and that the international community continuously pushes the less developed world to engage community members in discussing issues that affect their wellbeing. The World Bank and the United Nations emphatically state that the development agencies have a crucial role in promoting community involvement approaches, specifically the bottom-up approach is crucial for project performance and sustainability (Bal, Bryde, Fearon, & Ochieng, 2013). The approach is preferred to the top-bottom approach because it facilitates implementation and makes the community members feel that they are part of the project and own the process.

Stakeholder participation is a prerequisite to a perfect delivery of project outcomes since a well-management community engagement process assists the participants to work towards increasing the wellbeing of humans, while reducing negative environmental influences, and scaling up economic sustainability of projects (Maina, 2013). Stakeholder participation should, therefore, be adopted a core ingredient in any sustainable development project (Golicha, 2010). It is crucial for governments and international agencies that implement community projects, and can adopt different participation approaches to make sure that they succeed in their project goals.

Passive participation allows the community members to assume a full role of looking for solutions to their problems. External agents implements projects without necessarily having any control over decision-making and resources. Their tasks are reduced to teaching the community members appropriate ways to look for solutions to their own problems (Boon, Bawole, & Ahenkan, 2012). The intention of the external players is to legitimise their participation in the project while the community members charge of receiving and paying attention to suggestions the external agencies propose.

Interactive participation allows people to take part in joint analysis, designing action plans, and strengthening local institutions (Chifamba, 2013). The process makes participation viewed as a right and not a mere means to attain project goals. It involves interdisciplinary methodologies that adopt multiple perspectives, systematic, and structured learning approaches to produce positive and empowering influences which improve performance and sustainability of community development projects.

Functional participation is more action-oriented towards achieving project goals. For example, participants can form groups to discuss ways of cutting down costs involved in project implementation (King'ori, 2014). High costs are likely to compromise the sustainability of development projects, and that they should be minimised. The involvement gives every

member a chance to present evidence and opinion considered necessary for the decision-making process (Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega, 2015).

Optimum participation enables allows community members to participate in the development projects by taking initiatives independently of the external agencies to change systems (Ofuoku, 2011). Although the community stakeholders maintain contacts with the external actors for resource-help and technical expertise, they retain the control over the manner in which resources are used (Ayuso, Rodríguez, Castro, & Ariño, 2011). However, a lack of optimum engagement of community member is cited as a major cause of poorly performing and unsustainable projects often witnessed in the less developed countries (Masanyiwa & Kinyashi, 2008).

In 2014, Plan International conducted an evaluation of its community development projects and realised that the projects barely go beyond six months when funding stops (Plan International ,Homa Bay PU, 2014). The situation is wanting since Plan International activities in Nyanza region are concentrated in three poverty-stricken units of Homa-Bay, Kisumu, and Bondo (Plan International ,Homa Bay PU, 2015). Better performance and sustainability of community projects in these areas are key to the wellbeing of the households who live below the poverty line, and this can only be achieved through the effective participation of the stakeholders.

Statement of the problem

A study by Plan Kenya (2014) noted in its evaluation that the sustainability of community development projects in Homa Bay Town Sub-county was poor, with one of the leading causes being weak participation by stakeholders. The evaluation in in Homa Bay Town Sub-county did no pay attention to the levels of participation and how it affects project sustainability, this is important because according to Pretty (1995) opined a relationship between the two variables. Plan Kenya acknowledges that the levels of participation of its stakeholders in in Homa Bay Town Sub-county remains unknown, and attempt have been made to establish this through qualitative approaches with little success. According to Scoones (2007), weak sustainability of projects is a challenge to organization competitiveness and effectiveness in fundraising from donors. He noted that project sustainability is of great interest to donors.

An evaluation by Plan Kenya (2013) showed inefficiency of child protection projects in in Homa Bay Town Sub-county where sustainability could not be traced after six months of project closure despite an expenditure of 12 M in a period of one year. Another study by Plan Kenya (2015) notes that there was increased competition for funds among NGOs in Homa Bay Town Sub-county and therefore need to demonstrate competitiveness through sustainability of projects. Sponsorship funds have dwindle and Plan Kenya is currently downsizing through a restructuring process.

This was a huge investment whose expenditure would only be justifiable if the projects are able to generate benefits to the primary beneficiary long after the project closes. The researcher did

not identify any study that assesses the level of participation and how it affects project sustainability.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of stakeholder participation on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Objectives of the study

The study sought to address the following objectives:

- i) To determine the influence of passive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- ii) To examine the influence of interactive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- iii) To establish the influence of functional participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- iv) To investigate the influence of optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County

Study Hypotheses

- i) There is no significant relationship between passive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- ii) There is no significant relationship between interactive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- iii) There is no significant relationship between functional participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County
- iv) There is no significant relationship between optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County

Conceptual Framework

The study was guided by the following conceptual framework:

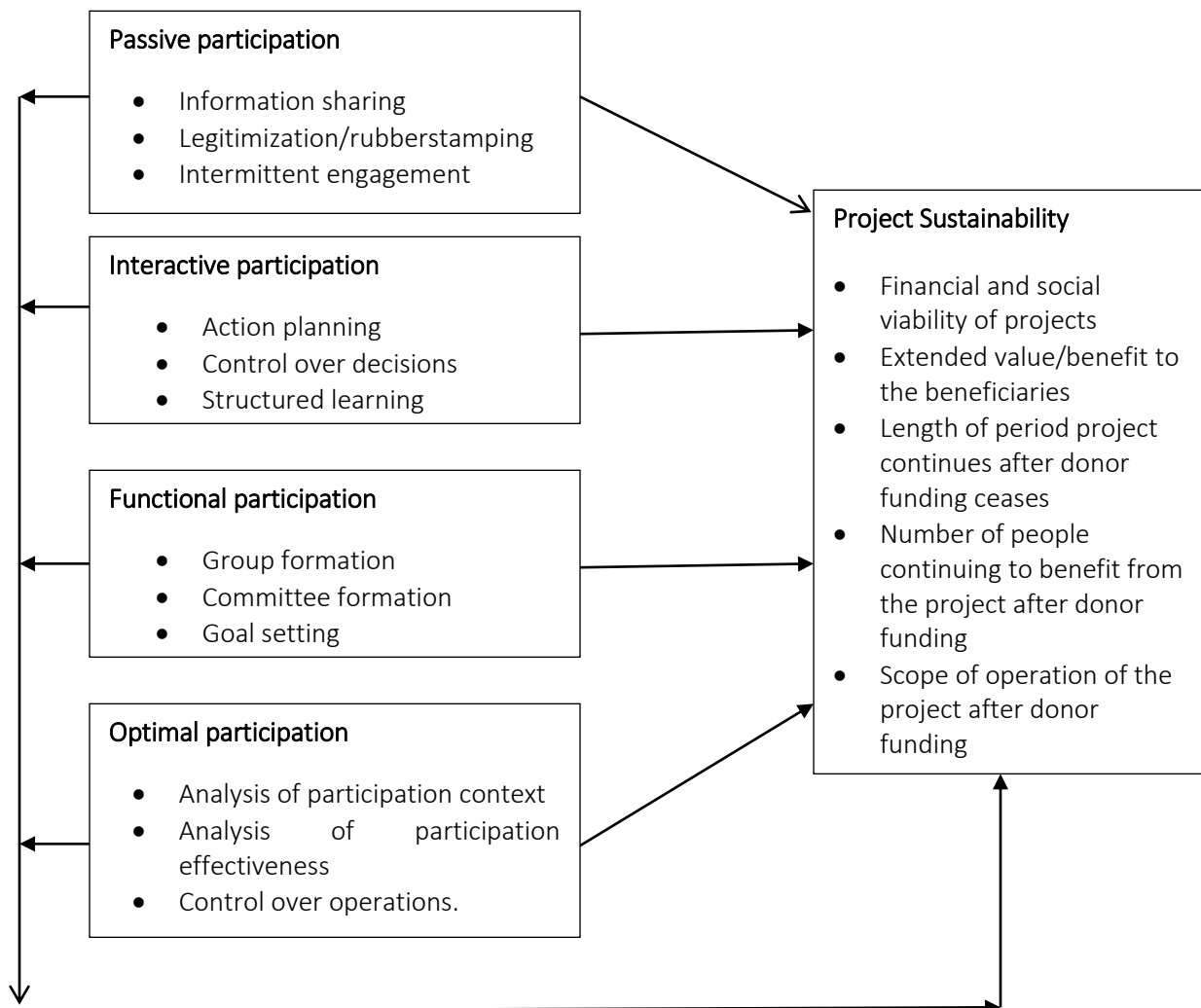


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the ladder of participation by Arnstein (1969), the theory was first explicated in the seminal theoretical work on the subject of community participation. The particular importance of Arnstein's work stems from the explicit recognition that there are different levels of participation, from manipulation or therapy of citizens, through to consultation, and to what we might now view as genuine participation, i.e. the levels of partnership and citizen. The limitations of Arnstein's framework are obvious. Each of the steps represents a very broad category, within which there are likely to be a wide range of experiences. For example, at the level of 'informing' there could be significant differences in the

type and quality of the information being conveyed. Realistically therefore, levels of participation are likely to reflex a more complex continuum than a simple series of steps. The use of a ladder also implies that more control is always better than less control. However, increased control may not always be desired by the community and increased control without the necessary support may result in failure.

Empirical Literature

The researcher reviewed literature in line with the study objectives:

Passive Participation and Sustainability of Community Development Projects

Passive participation implies participation as a contribution to the implementation of a project without any control over the resources and decision-making. In passive participation, the external agents have assumed their role as teaching the participants the solutions to their problems (Gonzalez, 1998). The interest of the external agents is only to legitimize their existence in the project without any intention to really involve the participants (White, 1996). Meanwhile, the participants assume their role is to be receptive and attentive to the suggestions of the proponents (Gonzalez, 1998).

Golicha (2010) did a study to find out the extent of stake holders participation in the formulation of donor funded education project in Garissa district. The study intended to establish factors enhancing or inhibiting participation of stake holders and their impacts on the project. The researcher found out the level of participation of the stakeholders was not adequate in the most important stages of project formulation, design and implementation.

According to Chifamba (2013), community participation is widely viewed as a basic operational principle of rural development, although debates about this concept are fervent. Beneficiaries of community development have been seen as consumers of service, and their role in rural development has been accorded less importance. Community participation has been limited to consultation, thereby shifting the creative capabilities and potential community members at all levels of the society. Chifamba (2013) used a descriptive case study design to collect primary data in addition to secondary data. The findings revealed that there is relatively low degree of community influence or control over projects in which community members participate, especially given that the services are controlled by people or who are not poor or recipients of services.

Masanyiwa and Kinyashi (2008) conducted a study on the Analysis of Community Participation in Projects Managed by Non-governmental Organizations: A Case of World Vision in Central Tanzania. The study established that 'community participation' in the study programmes takes on different forms in different stages of the project cycle. Despite the time difference between the old and new programme, the nature and extent of participation for the Most of local communities in both programmes is generally limited to information giving, consultation and contribution. Local communities are generally not actively involved in decision-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes. Key factors identified as facilitatory in

promoting stakeholders' participation are the NGO's long term commitment in working with the poor, staff with knowledge and skills on participatory approaches, continuous community sensitisation and mobilisation, and perceptions that interventions being implemented are addressing participants' needs. Poverty was seen to be main factor limiting local communities' participation. Other factors are contradicting policies and approaches of different agencies working in the same area, non-flexible organisational policies, poor community leadership and dependency syndrome.

Based on these findings, it is concluded that participation of local communities in World Vision Project interventions is generally limited to 'contribution' and therefore not 'empowering' to the local communities to take control of the development process. The researchers recommend some changes in terms of management structures and human capacity to help widen the scope of participation for local communities. This study also focused on passive participation variable but it failed to incorporate effective, function and optimum participation variables, which are of interest to the researcher.

Interactive Participation and Sustainability of Community Development Projects

According to Lennie (2005), participatory evaluation methodologies are considered to produce many positive and empowering impacts. However, given the complex power, knowledge and discursive issues involved and other factors, use of these methodologies can have contradictory effects. He presented results from the implementation of a process that aimed to build the capacities of people in two Australian rural communities to evaluate their local communication and information technology (C&IT) initiatives. The 'learners' process used participatory action research and participatory evaluation methods, and took an inclusive 'whole of community' approach. The process aimed to enhance community development and to facilitate community empowerment, participation and leadership, particularly for women. Rigorous analysis of the impacts of the project found that it was effective in producing various degrees of social, technological, political and psychological empowerment. However, some corresponding disempowering impacts were also identified. The strengths and limitations of this evaluation capacity-building process and the lessons learned are considered. This study concentrated on effective participation, but it little attention was paid to the variable of functional participation. Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega (2015) emphasized that 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.

The authors provided 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. They rely on analysis of secondary evidence from Kenya and other parts of the

world. Their main argument is that a lot of money is being spent in community-based projects yet most of such projects have generally failed to bring sustainable benefits to the target groups. The study particularly observed 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 study concluded 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. This study focused on control variables, including, socio-cultural, political, economic and technical factors, with little focus to effective participation variable, which forms a critical component of the researcher's work.

Functional Participation and Sustainability of Community Development Projects

Khwaja (2004) uses primary data on development projects in Northern Pakistan to provide empirical support to illustrate the effects of community participation on project performance. His findings do provide evidence supporting the theoretical claim, that greater community participation in non-technical decisions is associated with higher project outcomes. Katz and Sara (1997) analyse the performance of water systems in a variety of countries. They find that the performance of water systems were markedly better in communities where households were able to make informed choices about the type of system and the level of service they required, and where decision making was genuinely democratic and inclusive. In contrast, projects which were constructed without community supervision and where project management was not accountable to the community, tended to be poorly constructed by private contractors.

A study of 121 rural water supply projects in 49 countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America found that participation was the most significant factor contributing to project effectiveness and maintenance of water systems. According to the study, it was when people were involved in decision-making during all stages of the project, from design to maintenance that the best results occurred. If they were just involved in information sharing and consultations, then results were much poorer (Narayan, 1995).

Over the past three decades, many development projects and programmes have failed where activities have been designed with little or no reference neither to people's needs or priorities, nor to their knowledge and skills. An evaluation of 25 projects sponsored by the World Bank reported that 13 of them had been discontinued a few years after financial assistance had ended. Lack of attention to participation and to local organisation-building when the projects were formulated and implemented appeared to be the main cause (Zazueta, 1994). This study focused on the variable of functional participation, with little concentration on the variable of optimal participation.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) involves the community in soil and water conservation. Where there has been collaboration between professionals from various departments, combined with interactive participation with rural people, once again the impacts have been substantial (MoA 1988-95). Findings show that where there is mobilization of the community, strong local groups, committed local staff and collaboration with other departments in multi-disciplinary planning and implementation, then within two years there are clear benefits. These include increases in agricultural productivity, diversification into new enterprises, reductions in resource degradation, improvements in the activities of local groups, and independent replication to neighbouring communities. These improvements have occurred without payment or subsidy, and so are more likely to be sustained.

Khisa (2012) in his study established that withdrawal of donor funding affects project sustainability and development. In the event that donor funding was withdrawn, most (41%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the project would cease operating, 33% pointed out that project would be affected significantly, 18% indicated that project would be not effect at all while 8% were of the opinion that project would continue normally. Khisa also established that financing affects sustainability and performance of the project. From the findings Most (59%) of the interviewed respondents pointed out that financing affects project sustainability at a very great extent, 28% at a great extent while 13% reveled that financing affects project sustainability at moderate extent. This illustrates that poor misuse of the funds allocated for project sustainability, adequate fund and embezzlement of funds may hinder sustainability of the project.

Optimum Participation and Sustainability of Community Development Projects

Ofuoku (2011) conducted a study to assess the effect of community participation on sustainability of rural water projects in Delta Central Agricultural Zone of Delta State, Nigeria. The study was concentrated in the rural settlements where water projects were executed. The community citizens were rarely often or always involved in the various stages of the projects as the community development committees' executives represented the communities. In most communities, the water projects were funded by the respective communities and other bodies. Those jointly funded were highly sustainable than those solely funded by governments. The various communities were mostly organized through formation of community development committees, weekly meetings and formation of social groups. There was a significant relationship between participation and sustainability of water projects ($r\text{-cal} = 0.652$ and $r\text{-critical} = 0.632$). This study concentrated on functional participation, with a little focus to optimal participation, which the researcher could explore to fill the literature gap.

Mwobobia (2011) conducted a study to evaluate the influence of local community in Project Planning on the sustainability of projects in Embu County, in Kenya's Eastern province. The study revealed that individuals involved in coming up with objectives of the project are the project managers, project sponsors and project workers. The community members are never involved in this exercise and that the specifications of the projects are not written in

consultation with the community members. This meant that there was lack of clear link between projects standard/ specifications and the needs or expectations of community members' in projects within Embu County. It was also concluded that community members are never adequately involved in resource mobilization for the execution of the project. The few resources they contribute in small quantities are man-power, raw materials and financial resources. This has led to negative effects on the sustainability of projects within Embu County.

Study Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, the approach was quantitative in nature. The population of the study was the approximate three staff from each of civil society organizations and the community based organizations working together with Plan international in the implementation of community development projects in Homa Bay Town sub-county. It is estimated that plan has actively engaged three/staff from the partner organizations. Information obtained from Plan International revealed that they work with a total of 51 partner organizations in the day-to-day implementation of various project activities. The researcher targeted three people in each of the 51 organizations; this gave a population of 153 people/staff.

The study applied Sekeran (2003) sample determination table to determine the sample from the population. Given a population of 153 people, the sample size according to the pre-calculated table by Sekaran was 113 respondents. The researcher therefore picked the 113 respondents from the partner organizations. The researcher applied a simple random sampling to select the 113 respondents. The researcher developed a sample frame list of 153 people from the 51 organizations who have often represented their organization in stakeholder for with Plan International . The selection criteria was such that those staff/volunteer who have been partnering with Plan International in the implementation of community of community development projects six months preceding the study was eligible. This is to ensure that the respondents have adequate knowledge to respond to the questions. The researcher then used SPSS to randomize the names and pick 113 names; they were then be approached for administration of the questionnaire. The study used questionnaires to collect primary data. The study conducted a pilot-testing of the tools in the nearby Rangwe Sub-county, the researcher picked 5 organizations (15 respondents) that partnered with Plan International, which constituted 10% of the sample size.

The validity of the data collections instruments was tested through Content Valid Index (CVI). To achieve this, a copy of the questionnaire was distributed to the supervisors and field experts to rate the relevant items/questions in relation to the research objectives, the relevant questions were then be divided by the total number of items. Validity was be tested as follows: $CVI = \text{Relevant Items} / \text{Total Number of Items}$. Fisher (2004), indicates that for a research instrument to be valid, the CVI should be more than or equal to 0.7. The CVI for the study was calculated to be 0.76, this was an indication that the instrument would capture what it was intended for. The test re-test method was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. This involved administering the same questionnaires twice to 10 respondents in Homa Bay and

correlating their responses independently. A coefficient of 0.7 and above would mean that the research instruments are reliable hence a display consistence in the research finding. The reliability test produces a coefficient of correlation of 0.81, this meant that the data collection instruments were reliable enough to give consistent findings.

The researcher sought permit from the National Committee of Science, Technology and innovation, a letter of transmittal was also be obtained from the University of Nairobi and a subsequent one from Plan International, Homa Bay Program Unit. Upon visiting each location of implementation and organizations, the respondents was identified, introduction about the study was done and their informed consent to participate in the study was sought. All the instructions on how to complete the questionnaire were made clear to the respondents. The researcher observed also observed the other ethical considerations such as no harm to respondents, confidentiality and beneficence. The researcher dropped the questionnaire and make an appointment to pick the questionnaires after two days. Upon the third day after delivering the questionnaire the researcher visited the respondents and pick the questionnaires. On-spot checks was done to the questionnaires to confirm whether they are completed well and accurately. Any question or clarification was done on any answer that is not clear. The researcher thanked the respondent for having participated in the study upon verifying that everything is fine.

Once data is collected, it was checked for completeness, edited and cleaned. This involved making call backs for the questionnaires not filled in correctly. Quantitative data from the questionnaires was coded and then entered into the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) software for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulation. Chi-square p-value was used to test the significance of relationships between the independent and the dependent. The Spearman rank correlation co-efficient was used to test the direction and the magnitude of the relationships, this is because the researcher is using ordinal scale of measurement; the Likert Scale.

Study Findings

This section analyzes the data collected from the respondents, presents and interprets and discusses it in line with the study objectives. The respondents were given several 5 point Likert Scale questions to respond to 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly Agree. The responses 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree were aggregated to disagree and 4-Agree and 5-Strongly Agree aggregated to a new category, Agree. The mean was calculated and interpreted. The results were as shown in Table 1

7.1 Passive participation and sustainability of community development projects

This section presents, interprets and discusses findings in relation to the first objective of the study :To determine the influence of passive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Table 1: Opinions on passive participation and sustainability of community development projects

Most of the respondents stated that Plan International gave them an opportunity to give their

Statements	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Mean	SD	P-value
Plan gives us an opportunity to give our opinion on what projects are to be implemented, how and with who	24(23.3%)	14(13.6%)	65(63.3%)	3.35	1.161	0.032
Plan only shares with us information on decisions already taken	37(35.9%)	16(15.5%)	50(48.6%)	3.36	1.275	0.012
We are often engaged to legitimize/rubberstamp decisions already takes as opposed to actively participating in the same	45(43.7%)	21(20.4%)	37(35.9%)	3.47	1.074	0.000
The engagements are often intermittent engagement and only happens when Plan deems necessary	32(31.1%)	20(19.4%)	51(49.5%)	3.57	1.231	0.000
Our opinions on choice of project and manner of implementation rarely counts	36(35%)	22(21.4%)	45(43.7%)	3.55	1.210	0.036
Averages	35(33.8%)	19(18%)	49(48.2%)	3.46		0.016

views on what projects are to be implemented and with who at 65(63.3%), 24(23.3%), stated that Plan did not give them an opportunity to give their views on what projects are to be

implemented, how and with who with the minority at 14(13.6%) were undecided. The findings of this study is divergent to those of Mwobobia (2011) who established that community members are never adequately involved in resource mobilization for the execution of the project. Consequently they contributed minimally; small quantities are man power, raw materials and financial resources. This has led to negative effects on the sustainability of projects within Embu County.

It was popular among the respondents at 50(48.6%) that Plan international only shares with them information on decisions already taken, 37(35.9%) stated that Plan international does not only share with them information on decisions already taken with the minority at 16(15.5%) not decided whether Plan international only shares with them information on decisions already taken or it does share with them before decisions are taken. The findings of the study diverge with the findings of Mwobobia (2011) who established that specifications of the projects are not written in consultation with the community members and that their decision were not taken into account.

Most of the respondents at 45(43.7%), stated that they are not often engaged to legitimize/rubberstamp decisions already takes as opposed to actively participating in the same, 37(35.9%) stated that they are often engaged to legitimize/rubberstamp decisions already takes as opposed to actively participating in the same with the least at 21(20.4%) undecided. The findings of the study diverged with the assertions of Chifamba (2013), beneficiaries of community development have been seen as consumers of service, and their role in rural development has been accorded less importance. That community participation has been limited to consultation and rubberstamping of decisions already taken.

It was popular among 51(49.5%), respondents that the engagements are often intermittent engagement and only happens when Plan International deems necessary, 32(31.1%) were opposed and the minority at 20(19.4%) undecided. The findings of the study showed that the stakeholders are not adequately engaged this converges to the findings of Golicha (2010) who established that the level of participation of the stakeholders was not adequate in the most important stages of project formulation, design and implementation. This would have a negative effect on the project sustainability.

Most of the respondents at 45(43.7%) stated that their opinions on choice of project and manner of implementation rarely counted, 36(35%) stated that their opinions on choice of project and manner of implementation counted and the least at 22(21.4%) undecided. Overall, Most of the respondents at 49(48.2%), Mean=3.46, $p=0.016$) agreed that aspects of passive participation was present in their engagement with Plan International. The findings of this study converged with the assertions of Chifamba (2013) that Community members are usually going through an empty ritual of participation, thus they have no real power to influence the outcome of community development projects ;this is strong indication of passive participation.

Correlation between passive participation and project sustainability

The researcher did a spearman correlation between passive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The results are as shown in Table 2

Table 2:Correlation between passive participation and project sustainability

			Project Sustainability	Passive participation
Spearman's rho	Project Sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.043
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	103	103
	Passive participation	Correlation Coefficient	-.043	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	103	103

It was established that there was a weak but significant negative association between passive participation among stakeholders on and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County Spearman's rho=-0.043,p=0.000,CL=95%.This meant that the more the stakeholders participated passively the less sustainable the projects were.

Hypothesis testing between passive participation and project sustainability

The study tested the H_0 : There is no significant relationship between passive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. This was done at 95% confidence level. The critical value=366.97,this was< the Chi-square (X^2)= 480.372(p=0.000), therefore we reject the H_0 and assume the H_1 : There is a significant relationship between passive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Interactive participation by Stakeholders and Project Sustainability

This section presents, interprets and discusses findings in relation to the second objective of the study: To examine the influence of interactive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County

Table 3: Opinions on interactive participation and project sustainability

Statements	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Mean	SD	P-value
Our interaction with Plan is often engaging and collaborative	10(9.7%)	3(2.9%)	90(87.3%)	3.95	1.033	0.000
We have control over decisions whenever we engage with Plan	40(38.8%)	14(13.6%)	49(47.5%)	3.09	1.408	0.000
Whenever we pass a decision, it is often upheld and implemented by Plan	26(25.2%)	17(16.5%)	60(58.2%)	3.45	1.186	0.000
Our engagement with Plan is systematic and promotes structured learning	11(10.7%)	11(10.7%)	81(78.6%)	3.97	1.033	0.000
We are often engaged by Plan in all that they do with the project beneficiaries	28(27.2%)	12(11.7%)	63(61.2%)	3.29	1.355	0.000
Average	23(22.3%)	11(11%)	69(66.7%)	3.55	-	0.000

It was popular among (90(87.3%)) of the respondents that their interaction with Plan International was often engaging and collaborative, 10(9.7%) stated that their interaction with plan international did not often engaging and un-collaborative with the minority at 3(2.9%).The findings of this diverge with those of Masanyiwa and Kinyashi (2008) who established that participation was not engaging ;the nature and extent of participation for the Most of local communities in both programmes is generally limited to information giving, consultation and contribution. That local communities are generally not actively involved in decision making, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Most of the respondents at 49(47.5%) stated that they have control over decisions whenever they engage with Plan International, 40(38.8%) stated that they did not have control over decisions whenever they engage with Plan International and the least at 14(13.6%) undecided .The findings of the study was supported by those of Chifamba (2013) who revealed that there is relatively low degree of community influence or control over projects in which community members participate, especially given that the services are controlled by people or who are not poor or recipients of services. This compromised the sustainability of community developments projects.

It was also popular among 60(58.2%), respondents that whenever they pass a decision, it was often upheld and implemented by, 26(25.2%) stated that whenever they pass a decision, it was not often upheld and implemented, with the minority at 17(16.5%) undecided. This differed with the findings of Masanyiwa and Kinyashi (2008) who did a study on World Vision Project interventions and established that that participation was is generally limited to 'contribution' and therefore not 'empowering' to the local communities to take control of the development process. The communities were not able to make decisions or if they did, it was not taken seriously.

Most of the respondents at 81(79.6%), stated that their engagement with Plan International was systematic and promotes structured learning with the minority both at 11(10.7%) stated that their engagement with Plan International was not systematic and does not promote structured learning same other 11(10.7%) respondents were undecided.

Most of the respondents at 63(61.2%), stated that they are often engaged in action planning by Plan and in all that they do with the project beneficiaries, 28(27.2%) had a contrary views while the minority at 12(11.7%). The findings of the study contradicted those of Mwobobia (2011) where it was established that stakeholders were not involves in some aspects of the project cycle. Community members were not involved in monitoring process. This has led to late completion of projects, inefficiency use of project resources and lack of satisfaction of client (community members) in all aspects expected. This has led to negative effects on project sustainability. Overall, preponderance of the respondents at 69(66.7%), Mean=3.55, $p=0.000$ were for the idea that various aspects of interactive participation was present in their engagement with Plan.

Correlation between interactive participation and Project Sustainability

The researcher did a spearman correlation between interactive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The results were as shown in Table 4.

Table 4:Correlation between interactive participation and project sustainability

			Project Sustainability	Interactive participation
Spearman's rho	Project Sustainability	Correlation	1.000	.365**
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	Interactive participation	N	103	103
		Correlation	.365**	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	103	103

It was determined that there was a moderate significant positive correlation between the influence of interactive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. Spearman's rho= 0.365, p=0.000, CL=95%.This meant that the interactive participation of the stakeholders influenced the sustainability of community development projects.

Hypothesis testing between interactive participation and project sustainability

The study tested the H_0 : There is no significant relationship between interactive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. This was done at 95% confidence level. The critical value=347.79,this was< the Chi-square(X^2)= 630.254 (p=0.000), therefore we reject the H_0 and assume the H_1 : There is a significant relationship between interactive participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Functional participation by stakeholders and project sustainability

This section presents, interprets and discusses findings in relation to the third objective of the study: To establish the influence of functional participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Table 5: Opinions on functional participation and project sustainability

Statements	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Mean	SD	P-value
We have been able to form interest groups through which we engage with Plan for greater bargain	26(25.3%)	10(9.7%)	67(65.1%)	3.46	1.327	0.000
We have at times formed committee through which we engage with Plan for greater bargain	19(18.4%)	10(9.7%)	74(71.8%)	3.66	1.201	0.000
Our engagement with Plan is alive and we are able to engage anytime we feel there is need	14(13.6%)	18(17.5%)	71(69%)	3.81	1.138	0.000
Ideas and decisions on what Plan does generated from the stakeholders and especially the project beneficiaries	25(24.3%)	11(10.7%)	67(65%)	3.49	1.267	0.000
We are engaged in objective and goal setting activities in the organization	25(24.3%)	13(12.6%)	65(63.1%)	3.44	1.218	0.000
Average	22(21%)	12(12%)	69(67%)	3.57		0.000

Most of the respondents at (67(65.1%)), stated that they have been able to form interest groups through which they engage with Plan for greater bargain, 26(25.3%) stated that they have not been able to form interest groups through which they engage with Plan for greater bargain and the least at 10(9.7%) undecided. Zazueta, (1994) observed that over the past three decades, many development projects and programmes have failed where activities have been designed with little or no reference neither to people's needs or priorities, nor to their knowledge and skills. Stakeholders have therefore devised mechanisms of having greater voice by forming interest groups

It was also popular among Most of the respondents at (74(71.8%), Mean=3.66, SD=1.201) that they have at times formed committee through which they engage with Plan for greater bargain, 19(18.4%) stated that they have not formed committees through which they engage with Plan for greater bargain and the least at 10(9.7%) undecided.

Most of the respondents at 71(69%), stated that their engagement with Plan was alive and they are able to engage anytime they felt there was need, 18(17.5%) were uncertain, the least at 14(13.6%) stating that their engagement with Plan was not alive and they were not able to engage anytime we feel there was need.

It was popular among 67(65%), that ideas and decisions on what Plan did was generated from the stakeholders and especially the project beneficiaries, 25(24.3%) stated that ideas and decisions on what Plan does was not generated from the stakeholders and especially the project beneficiaries and the minority at 11(10.7%) unsure. The study by Mwobobia (2011) identified a gaps in the involvement of stakeholder in generating project ideas and recommended that there is a need to involve the community members at all phases of the project from the formulation, to planning, to implementation and finally to clean up phase of the project. That the 'stakeholder need analysis' need to be conducted to all projects to determine the needs and expectations of all the stakeholders including the community member through their participation.

Most of the respondents at (65(63.1%), stated that they are engaged in objective and goal setting activities in the organization, 25(24.3%) stated that they are not engaged in objective and goal setting activities in the organization with the minority at 13(12.6%) undecided. The findings of the study diverged with the findings of Mwobobia (2011) that individuals involved in coming up with objectives of the project are the project managers, project sponsors and project workers. The community members are never involved in this exercise. Overall, A larger population of the respondents at 69(67%), Mean=3.57, $p=0.000$), stated that various aspects of functional participation was present in their engagement with Plan.

Correlation between functional participation and Project Sustainability

The researcher did a spearman correlation between functional participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The results are as shown in Table 6

Table 6:Correlation between functional participation and project sustainability

			Project Sustainability	Functional participation
Spearman's rho	Project Sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.455**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	103	103
	Functional participation	Correlation Coefficient	.455**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	103	103

It was found out that there was a moderate significant positive correlation between the influences of functional participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. Spearman's rho= 0.455, p=0.000, CL=95%.This meant that the interactive participation of the stakeholders influenced the sustainability of community development projects. The findings of the study converges with those of Khwaja (2004) that greater community participation in non-technical decisions is associated with higher project outcomes and sustainability.

Hypothesis testing between functional participation and project sustainability

The study tested the H_0 :There is no significant relationship between functional participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. This was done at 95% confidence level. The critical value=347.79,this was< the Chi-square(X^2)= 642.258 (p=0.000), therefore we reject the H_0 and assume the H_1 : There is a significant relationship between functional participation among stakeholders and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

Optimal participation by stakeholders and project sustainability

This section presents, interprets and discusses findings in relation to the third objective of the study: To investigate the influence of optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County

Table 7:Opinion on optimal participation and project sustainability

Statements	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Mean	SD	P-value
We often have room to analyze the participation context	25(24.3%)	19(18.4%)	59(57.3%)	3.35	1.161	0.000
Together with Plan, we often do an analysis of participation effectiveness and seek ways of improving it	26(25.3%)	48(46.6%)	63(61.2%)	3.36	1.275	0.000
In our engagements with Plan, we are given a certain degree of control over the operations	17(16.5%)	23(22.3%)	63(61.2%)	3.47	1.074	0.000
Our engagement with Plan is formalized and documented with roles well defined	21(20.4%)	18(17.5%)	63(61.4%)	3.57	1.231	0.001
Our opinions are respected and we engage as equal partners even when our resources base is varied	22(21.3%)	24(23.3%)	57(55.4%)	3.55	1.210	0.000
Average	21(20%)	24(23%)	58(57%)	3.46		0.000

Most of the respondents at (59(57.3%)), stated that they often have room to analyze the participation context, 25(24.3%) stated that they often lack room to analyze the participation context the least at 19(18.4%) undecided.

It was popular among 63(61.2%), of the respondents that together with Plan, they often do an analysis of participation effectiveness and seek ways of improving it, 48(46.6%) undecided and the minority at 26(25.3%) stated that together with Plan, they don't often do an analysis of participation effectiveness and seek ways of improving it.

Most of the respondents at 63(61.2%), stated that in their engagements with Plan, they are given a certain degree of control over the operations, 23(22.3%) undecided and the least at 17(16.5%) stated that in their engagements with Plan, they are not given a certain degree of control over the operations. This presented a good opportunity for better development outcomes and sustainability of the projects. A study by Narayan (1995) established that it was when people were involved in decision-making during all stages of the project, from design to

maintenance that the best results occurred. If they were just involved in information sharing and consultations, then results were much poorer.

Most of the respondents at 63(61.4%), stated that their engagement with Plan was formalized and documented with roles well defined, 21(20.4%) stated that their engagement with Plan was not formalized and documented with roles not well defined and the minority at 18(17.5%) uncertain.

It was popular among 57(55.4%), that their opinions are respected and are engaged as equal partners even when their resources base is varied, 24(23.3%) undecided, 22(21.3%) stated that their opinions are not respected and are not engaged as equal partners even when their resources base is varied. The findings of the study diverged with the findings of Masanyiwa and Kinyashi (2008) who established that poverty was the main factor limiting local communities' participation; stakeholders with minimal resources were engaged to a lesser extent. Overall, it was popular among (58(57%), Mean=3.46, $p=0.000$), that various aspects of optimal participation was present in their engagement with Plan.

Correlation between optimal participation and Project Sustainability

The researcher did a spearman correlation between Optimum participation among stakeholders on and sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The results were as shown in Table 8

Table 8:Correlation between optimal participation and project sustainability

			Project Sustainability	Optimum participation
			y	
Spearman's rho	Project Sustainability	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.382**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	103	102
	Optimum participation	Correlation Coefficient	.382**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	102	102

It was found out that there was a moderate significant positive correlation between the influences of optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. Spearman's rho= 0.382, $p=0.000$, CL=95%.This meant that the optimum participation of the stakeholders influenced the sustainability of community development projects. The findings of the study converge with those of Ofuoku (2011) who established that there was a significant relationship between functional participation and sustainability of water projects ($r\text{-cal}= 0.652$ and $r\text{-critical} = 0.632$).

Hypothesis testing between optimal participation and project sustainability

The study tested the H_0 : There is no significant relationship between optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. This was done at 95% confidence level. The critical value=366.97, this was < the Chi-square(X^2)= 480.372 ($p=0.000$), therefore we reject the H_0 and assume the H_1 : There is a significant relationship between optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. This was done at 95% confidence level

Regression Analysis

The study conducted a logit regression analysis to measure the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables by estimating the probabilities using the logit function.

Table 9:Logit analysis output

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Passive Participation	-.023	.176	.016	1	.944	.978
Interactive Participation	-.433	.467	7.858	1	.006	.649
Functional Participation	1.307	.457	8.174	1	.000	3.695
Optimal Participation	.391	.396	9.975	1	.004	1.478
Constant	-4.520	1.457	9.622	1	.002	.011

Cox & Snell R Square was found to be 17.6 %, this meant that stakeholder participation explained 17.6% variation in sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County.

The findings showed that holding other factors constant, passive participation ($OR=0.978, p=0.944$) and interactive participation ($OR=0.649, p\text{-value}=0.006$) on their own did not increase the likelihood of project sustainability. Functional participation ($OR=3.695, p\text{-value}=0.000$) and optimal participation ($OR=1.478, p\text{-value}=0.004$) enhanced the chances of project sustainability.

Odds of sustainability of projects = $-4.520 - 0.023x_1 - 0.433x_2 + 1.307x_3 + 0.391x_4 + 2.953$

Where :

β_0 is the constant

x_1 is passive participation

x_2 is interactive participation

x_3 is functional participation

x_4 is optimal participation

8.0 Conclusion

Given the findings, the researcher came up with the following conclusions;

It was concluded that there was a weak negative association between passive participation among stakeholders on the sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. It was also concluded that stakeholders were engaged passively on aspects of programming majorly as a buildup to higher level of participation.

The study deduced that there was a moderate positive correlation between interactive participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The researcher also noted that interactive participation was a dominant way of engaging the project stakeholders.

It was inferred that there was a moderate positive correlation between functional participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The researcher also inferred that functional participation was present but not as strong as the lower levels of participation

It was deduced that there was a moderate positive correlation between optimum participation among stakeholders on sustainability of community development projects implemented by Plan International in Homa Bay Town Sub-County. The researcher deduced that slightly more than one half of the stakeholders were engaged optimally in the implementation of Plan's activities.

Recommendations

Given the conclusions, the following recommendations were arrived at

- i. Plan International needs to reduce the extent of engaging stakeholder passively in the project cycle, this will yield better sustainability outcomes.
- ii. Plan needs to enhance the extent of interactive participation with its stakeholders, this will function to strengthen their capacities in project cycle management hence greater sustainability for its projects
- iii. Plan international should strengthen functional participation among stakeholders for greater ownership of project activities and sustainability of its projects
- iv. Plan should enhance optimal participation to enable greater efficiency and effectiveness of programming as well as accountability among the stakeholders, this will be an assurance for project sustainability.
- v. Plan should equalize participation of the stakeholders throughout the continuum to avert the feeling that some stakeholders are more preferred than the others.

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