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Research Project Topic: **Assessment of the Factors Affecting Sustainability of Community Based Projects in Rural Areas: Case Study Rumbek East County**

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**Chapter One**

1. **Introduction**

This chapter covers the background of the research problem, statement of problem, objective of the study, research questions, and significance of the study and limitation of the study.

* 1. **Background of the study**

The community based projects (CBPs) are core initiatives for intervention of common problems while enhancing development in most communities. With this in mind, different projects are formulated and carried every year with different purposes such as ensuring clean water supply improving community health, reducing poverty ,promoting human rights and peace, managing natural resources, climate change adaption and many more. These projects work to provide solutions and hope to communities in need such as rural areas where majority of population in developing Countries dwells (Oino, 2015). Most of the CBPs are meant to be sustainable, with implication of delivering positive impacts beyond the funding support. However, the sustainability of these projects has been a major issue.

According to UNHCR, 2016 report, most of community Based projects in developed Countries have long life cycle because they have well developed systems of monitoring project implementation. About 40 percent of many new projects fall short of life after first few years since the termination of initial fund (Fabietti & Giovannoni, 2014). Most of projects fail to sustain in rural areas (Persoon, 2016). Failure of projects to sustain associated with different factors. Among of them including; political regime transition (Adam 2015); lack of community participation Tifow (2013); community not owning projects (Harvey and Reed, 2007) and; low community technical capacity, projects technical and innovation capacities and community technological competencies (Jones & Brandis, 2008; Persoon,2005).

In Western Lakes State, only 40 percent of existing rural water points are functional and a quarter of the newly installed systems fail after only two years of operation. Lack of sustainability is associated with lack of finance especially for operation and maintenance, lack of technical personnel at the project level, lack of spare parts and lack of community participation. Some of CBPs which has not sustain includes, wells and boreholes conducted in Aduel Payam and Pacong Payam which was financed by International Donor Agencies. The question of its sustainability was due to poor technology choice, poor supervision and lack of expertise and experience. (International project leadership Academy Report, 2006).

The sustainability of community based projects is determined by many factors, among of them are community participation, Financial support, monitoring and evaluation, Leadership Capacity of community Leaders and Community awareness about different projects (Harvey and Reed, 2007; Lachapelle, 2008, Nwankwoal, 2011; and Nkongo, 2009). Taking into account the important of sustainability of community based projects, this study assess the extended the factors mentioned by different studies affect the sustainability of project in rural areas in Rumbek East Counties.

* 1. **Statement of the Problem**

The community Based projects are meant to be sustainable with implication of delivering positive impacts beyond the funding support. South Sudan like other developing Countries, have been positively impacted by community based projects efforts (NBs, 2013). The CBPs are planned for a certain period of time after which they come to an end while the community is expected to continue running the project and make them self-sustaining. While this is expected to be in south Sudan sustainability of community based projects is referred as a major issue for many implementing agencies and beneficiaries. Also the full potential of the CBPs has yet to be tapped due to the existence of a number of constraints such as lack of ownership, lack of planning, improper financing and poor management (Longenecker, et al, 2006). Poor governance has also been identified as one of the most serious constraints facing the sustainability of CBPs and hence hindering their profitability (Oketch, 2000). Most of CBPs in South Sudan fails to sustain themselves, become self-reliant and the communities have failed to continue running them after funding organizations withdraw their support (World Vision, 2009). On top of that, the sustainability of community based projects in South Sudan has raised debate among donors, for example a water project which carries out in Lakes state success due community participation during project planning and implementation (Shayo, 2013). Also an irrigation project which was done in Mathiang village proved failure due to misuse of project Fund. Therefore this research look on factors affecting sustainability of CBPs.

* 1. **General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to assess factors affecting sustainability of community based projects in Western Lakes State (South Sudan).

* + 1. **Specific Objectives**

1. To examine the role of community participation in the sustainability of CBPs in Rumbek East County
2. To assess how monitoring and evaluation affect sustainability of CBPs in Rumbek East County
3. To assess how financial factor affect the sustainability of CBPs projects in Rumbek East County.
   1. **Research Questions**
4. What is the role of community participation in the sustainability of CBPs in Rumbek East County
5. To what extend do monitoring and evaluation affect sustainability of the CBPs in Rumbek East County
6. To what extend do financial factor affect the sustainability of the CBPs projects in Rumbek East County

**1.5 Purpose of Study**

The study “Assessment of Factors Affecting Sustainability of Community Based projected in Rumbek East County areas” will endeavor to determine the factors that would make the community development project self-reliant and sustainable after phasing-out.

* 1. **Significance of the Study**

This study is significance for a number of reasons. The sustainability of CBPs has been a continuous debate and different studies have come out with different results, thus doing study for specific County is of great importance since it is easier to capture County specific characteristics which may be ignored when one is one cross-sectional study. The study also assists policy makers in policy selection and decision making as through it, they will able to understand well the factors affecting sustainability of the CBPs. Furthermore this study contributes more to the library of knowledge especially by updating already available information since the study includes current statistics which are unavailable in other studies. Lastly, the study also helps researchers to gain knowledge and understanding in attainment of the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Diploma Program

* 1. **Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study has been designed by considering three major factors namely limited resources, quality control and time. The study covers only four major factors affecting the sustainability of community based projects namely; community participation, financial support as well as monitoring and evaluation. This gives a researcher a confined area of the study which is easy to control and easy to understanding the effect of those factors. Geographically, the study covers only villages in Rumbek East County whereby questionnaires be administered to community leaders and communities.

* 1. **Limitation of the study**

The research is likely to be exposed to various limitation includes, getting respondents from community for example some respondents may not being to disclose some sensitive information, financial challenges as a have to move from one village to another in order to gather data as well as researcher is also limited with time of doing research.

**Chapter Two**

**Literature Review**

1. **Introduction**

This chapter includes related theories to the research problem. It is organized into conceptual definitions, theoretical and empirical reviews leading to the derivation of knowledge gaps existing in various studies. The Study consists of a conceptual framework which shows variables on sustainability of community based projects in rural areas.

* 1. **Conceptual Definitions**
  2. **1. Community Based Projects**

Community based projects (CBPs) are core initiatives for intervention of common problems while enhancing development in most communities. With this in mind, different projects are formulated and carried every year with different purposes such as ensuring clean water supply, improving community health, reducing poverty, promoting human rights and peace, managing natural resources, climate change adaptation and many more. These projects work to provide solutions and hope to communities in need such as rural areas where majority of population in developing Counties dwells (Oino, 2015).

**2.2.2**. **Project Sustainability**

Project sustainability has been defined by the World Bank (1992) as – the ability of a project to maintain an adequate level of benefit flows through its valued economic life”, Further, Khan (2000) defined project sustainability as the capability of a project to maintain its benefits for projected life time. Therefore, for a project to be sustainable, it should maintain its benefits to a projected life time. Basing on various project purposes and objectives, project sustainability can be regarded in different aspects. This study regards the project sustainability as the ability of the project meet project needs.

**2.2.3. Community**

According to UNHCR (2008) community is referred as group of people that recognize it or recognized by outsiders as sharing common cultures, religion or other social features, background and interest that forms collective identity. Therefore a community can be large or small depending on the members’ commonality. In conjunction to title community may be the beneficiaries or partners in the concerned project. Although, it is difficult to give a comprehensive definition of community because people are changing their ways of life due to environment, economy and communications and intermingling through intermarriages and migrations, this study adopted this definition since it fit well Western Lakes State environment.

2.2.4. Financial Management and Practices on Financial Sustainability

This involves how the organizations manage their funds and the existing finance policies to govern expenditure. Kumar (2004) asserts that a financial management and practices supported by strong governance, high quality standards, and sound regulatory frameworks is essential to economic development. Indeed, high quality standards of financial reporting, auditing, and ethics underpin the trust that investors place in financial and nonfinancial information thus play an integral role in contributing to a Country’s economic growth and financial stability.

According to Kumar (2004), globally consistent and uniform financial systems provide cost- efficiencies to business and greater safeguards to the public. The public is entitled to have confidence that regardless of where a business activity occurs, the same high quality standards is be applied. It is widely recognized that investors are more willing to diversify their investments across borders if they are able to rely on financial information based on a similar set of standards. The benefits of a global financial reporting framework are numerous and include: greater comparability of financial information for investors, greater willingness on the part of investors to invest across borders, lower cost of capital, more efficient allocation of resources, and higher economic growth.

**2.2.5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation**

Project monitoring is stakeholders’ continuous process of tracking performance indicators of project initiatives. This ensures that project implementation proceeds as anticipated and modifications to designs and plans are effected on the basis of arising need for change based on the external and internal policy environment. Evaluation and control on the other hand involve systematic assessment of effectiveness and efficiency on project achievement while determining the gaps for remedial policy formulations. These processes assess the utilization of resources providing basis for improving the existing strategy that enhances post implementation sustainability. End users active involvement in demand specification for development initiatives is one of the drivers of process innovation Hakkinen and Belloni, (2011). In management projects, monitoring can be used to improve the way governments and private organizations achieve results and ensure project sustainability. This can be ensured through investing in strengthening a national monitoring and evaluation system; which is important as it saves resources that may otherwise be spent inefficient programs or overlapping activities supported by different partners 9Global Fund, 2004). A mature and sustained monitoring and evaluation system has the potential to lead the organization towards meeting its responsibilities and achieving its goals, even when faced with socio-political crises that mar the development sector so often (IFAD, 2002). Monitoring and evaluation systems are designed \_ to inform project management of whether implementation is going as planned or corrective action is needed. A well-designed monitoring and evaluation system provides data on the progress of a project and whether it is meeting objectives 9World Bank, 2002).

* 1. **Theoretical Reviews**

**2.3.1 The Participatory Theory**

Participation theory has a lot to tell about community based projects, the theory provides that effective participation of important stakeholders of the related project can enhance enduring project impact. Jennings (2000) defined participation, as the total involvement by a local population and at times, addition stakeholders in the creation, content and conduct a program or policy designed to change their lives, built on the belief that, citizens can be trusted to shape their own future. Therefore participatory theory encourages mutual involvement of all stakeholders, especially the use of local communities’ decision making and capacities to guide and define the nature of an intervention.

**2.3.2 The Top-Down Model Theory**

The theory of top down places emphasis on participation of one another from the management to the people concerned (Grahame, 2001). Capitalism, top-down approaches to development and or poverty itself are seen as sources of disempowerment that must be challenged by “lowering” – the poor and disenfranchised (Chambers, 1997) into the management of community and development processes. The growth of civil society and participatory development methods are usually proposed as the mechanisms by which empowerment takes place (Friedman, 1992; Chambers 1997). The Top down Model Theory helped the researcher to understand how communities are involved in designing and implementation of projects. Taking into account the importance of community involvement this theory provided ground on how the two variable links and how to be considered to ensure project sustainability.

**2.3.3. Theory of Change**

INSP (2005) defined a theory of change as an expression of the important strategies that are critical for brining outcomes and improvement guided by service delivery strategy. Theory of change represents the need of the expected project beneficiaries and what strategies facilitated them to encounter those needs. The strategy establishes a framework for bearing connections between and organization’s mission, project strategies and actual results, while creating relations among the project implementers, the strategies that are implemented and project end results. This theory showed fundamentals of project sustainability as the theory has defined actions, necessary strategies for long term project outcomes as well as desired project outcomes. By applying theory of change in executing the community based project provides an opportunity to ensure that project staffs, community, and other key stakeholders, all share a common understanding on the expected outcomes that are expected to occur and their contribution in the change (WCED, 1987). The theory of the change also helped the researcher to understand what the project variables and factors determine the change of the project sustainability at the research area. By knowing this critical information, it enable the researcher to measure the community project results and compare them against the original intent, in order to detect the relative change. Therefore this study put into consideration the theory of change as the researcher assessed the sustainability of various projects in the study area, mainly by looking on the expected results and the change it has influenced.

**2.3.4 Financial Distress Theory**

This theory is characterized by decline in the firm’s performance, value and failure ( Opler and Titman, 1994). Organizations with projects that are supposed to yield profits have to ensure their project perform as per expectations. Projects for profits should first recoup the initial capital invested then yield profits. This theory is important when addressing financial challenges affecting the sustainability of CBPs.

The CBPs financial management practices have a gap they do not operate within budget shave weak internal controls. The major challenges of this theory is it cannot recognize symptoms of failure early enough in order to make corrections. The performance of CBPs has been declining and there is need to track and ensure they improve. This theory therefore guided in the understanding of the important role that financial factor plays in the survival and persistence of project.

**2.4 Empirical Literature Review**

**2.4.1 Role of Community Participation in sustainability of CBPs**

Shayo (2013) observed on community participation and sustainability on national water projects in Chalinze. The study was conducted in Chalinze whereby 130 respondents were selected to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. Structured questionnaires, focus group discussion, observations, interview of key informants and documentary reviews were used to obtain relevant information. Checklist and observation kits were used for interviews and focus groups discussion and observation. The findings show that the community participation in planning and implementation of Chalinze water supply project was very poor, as well as monitoring mechanism of operation management and community participation on decision making was not satisfactory.

Women (2010) based on an examination of factors affecting women’ participation in project planning and implementation, case the TASAF program in the Rufiji district Tanzania. The findings have revealed that women’s participation in development projects and TASAF in particular, was affected by social, political and economic factors embedded at community, national and global levels. The study used qualitative research method to obtain information.

Boru (2012) conducted a study on determinants of community ownership of water project in Kenya. The study revealed that community involvement influences community ownership of water projects. The study also concluded that there is a significant and inverse relationship between distances from the water sources and ownership of water projects. Furthermore the established that technology use, ease of operation and maintenance cost, availability of spare parts influences community ownership of water projects. Therefore, this study examined the extent which community get involved in designing and implementation of projects.

Nkongo (2009), the study on management and regulation for sustainable water supply schemes rural communities in Tanzania revealed that community participation and ownership have valuable role to play in achieving sustainability, but can create other challenges. In particular how realistic is participatory decision making where community members have very little understandings on various management technological options and their implication on long run. This raises the question of whether it is appropriated to try and bridge such a vast and costly knowledge gap for the sake of ownership

Lachapelle (2008), revealed that applying the concept of ownership makes it easier in determining show the interest and actions of individuals or organization contributes to community development work. The level of dedication to the process and outcome is enhanced that is if individuals are engaged authentically and intimately, engaging individual lead to greater chances of support in implementation and realization of community development goals. This study examined the extent which individual are engaged on community based projects.

**2.4.2. Project monitoring and evaluation in sustainability of CBPS**

Tadesse, et.al (2013) conducted study titled –Rural Water Supply Management and sustainability, a case of central western Lakes State. The study assesses the important of community participation in water project whereas qualitative and quantitative methods are used to collect data. The findings indicated that the community participation in planning and implementation was very good while monitoring mechanism of operation and management as well as community participation on choice of technology was poor. The finding also reveal that there is lack of control mechanism in monitoring and evaluation of water project lead the poor management of water project properly for it sustainability. Kayaga (2015) conducted a study on the role of monitoring and evaluation in improving sustainability in water projects in Rumbek East County. Both quantitative data obtained though prepared questionnaires and qualitative data from interviews done with villagers payams and county official and government members were used together with documentary evidences. Findings of study showed that the most applied monitoring and evaluation practices in water projects is field visited and meetings. It well known that regular monitoring and evaluation can help track any intervening changes in many CBPS, even though the research above have revealed that there is little consideration of monitoring and evaluation of water projects in the county, and therefore, this study engage more finding on monitoring and evaluation related factors which in one way or another affect the sustainability of community based projects, it also recommend more action points to which all CBPS stakeholders consider for more improvements.

Norman (2012) on his study investigated the reasons for failure of community-based projects at Rumbek east county areas. Questionnaires, and interviews were employed to collect data. The study revealed that lack of funds , poor project management, poor management of funds , lack of commitment and motivation , low level of education of project members , lack of community involvement , lack of monitoring and evaluation by government officials and community leaders , lack of monitoring and evaluation by government authority , community leaders , lack of training and unavailability of workshops for project members and government officials involvement in addressing project challenges were identified as the reasons for failure of community-based project.

**2.4.3 The Financial Support and Sustainability of CBPs**

Nyakkundi (2014) conducted a study that aimed at identifying on how stakeholder’s involvement influences project monitoring and evaluation and to establish the influence of project technical skills on the implementation of community based projects. The study used interview and questionnaire to collect data. The study reveal that very low stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation of donor funded project implementation. The study recommended that, project managers should be in-charge to provide resources for donor funded project to be sustainable. Hayson (2006) conducted a research in assessing the sustainability of water project in the areas of Rumbek East County, Rumbek Center County. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to collect information a purposive survey was undertaken covering 10 villages in different Counties. The study revealed positive correlation between project sustainability and fund management. Moreover the water project in the said areas failed to sustain due to improper management of project fund.

**2.6 Research Gap**

Different studies conducted by different authors have pointed out a mixture of factors, which tend to affect sustainability of community Based Projects in the world. There are numerous case studies that make similar claims, but which are based or may be limited to a single out for attention seem to miss the point. In accordance to Norman (2012) Kayaga (2015); state that lack of proper mechanism of monitoring and evaluation is one of the factor which tend to affect sustainability. Shayo (2013); found out that one of the reasons for project failure is community participation. Also Hyson (2006) and Nyakundi (2014) both explained financial factors as the cause for failure of community project to sustain but no hints on whether the financial support was sustainable not. The reports did not clearly state the capacities of the project to the community population involved it should be accompanied by many factors, among others financial strength and sustainability, community participation, monitoring and evaluation. Therefore this study put an emphasis on assessing to what extend community participation affect the sustainability, how financial support and monitoring and evaluation affect the sustainability of community based projects in Rumbek East County.

**2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The study makes review on the effect of both independent and dependent variables in CBPs sustainability of community based projects. This study conceptualized variables (independent and dependent) that affect the sustainability of community based projects. The sustainability of community based projects is dependent variables under this study determined by independent variables namely, community participation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Financial support.

The Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework of the proposed study.

**Community Participation**

* Participation in designing & Implementing project
* Labor and local materials contribution

**Financial Support**

* Grants Sustainability
* Self-Finance scheme/infrastructure
* Financial management

**Monitoring & Evaluation**

* Frequency of tracking the project
* Two way communication/feedback
* M&E Tools

**Sustainability of community Based Projects**

**Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework**

**Source:** Field Data November, 2019

The figure 2.1 show that community based community projects is dependent variable which depends on the independent variables such as community involvement, financial support and monitoring and evaluation. Therefore this conceptual provides the summary of the study by showing which factors is put into consideration in assessing factors affecting sustainability of CBPs in Rumbek East County.

The ***independent variables***can be defined as all factors that can be controlled, subjected to change or test, independent variables affect dependent variable either positively or negatively (Mosby, 2009). In this study independent variables include financial support, project monitoring and evaluation, community participation and project implementers and controllers to mention few. The ***dependent variables*** can be defined as factors that measured learned the effect of one or more independents variables (Mosby, 2009). In this study titled factors affecting sustainability of CBPs sustainability; the dependent variables is sustainability of CBPs sustainability which can be measured to determine the effect of independent variables such as financial support, project monitoring and evaluation and community participation.

**Chapter Three Research Methodology**

**3.1. Introduction**

This chapter focused on the research method that were followed during the study. It includes aspects such as the research methodology, research design, population of the study and sample size, data collection and data analysis method will be used.

**3.2 Research Design Approaches**

This study is regarded as descriptive survey design because it describes the factors affecting sustainability of community based projects in Rumbek East County. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing and administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. Quantitative approached have been used for data collection and data analysis. Information and opinions have been collected directly from individuals who participate in community projects and those who are responsible for community development in the community.

Numerical descriptions of things and their relationships have been done in this study and more emphasis is on interpretation of respondents’ views and opinions for in depth understanding of the topic (Tewksbury, 2009). An interview was conducted to workers in nongovernmental organizations; community based organizations, political leaders, communities’ leaders and selected community members available in the communities that this study was carried. The involvement of these people assisted greatly in getting relevant information for the sustainability of community based projects. Advantage of conducting interview assisted in exploring information on how the selected factors for the study affects sustainability of the projects being implemented in Rumbek East County. The findings also assisted in recommending approaches for sustainability in a positive or negative ways. Quantitative data were collected to assess the statistical the relationship existing between the independent and dependent variables as well as reliability of the study tools being used.

**3.3. Area of the Research Study**

This study was conducted in Rumbek East County, the County was purposively selected based on evidence of existence of different community based projects such as health, water, education, agriculture, tourism, and other projects introduced by the government, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

**3.4. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

Based on complexity structure and allocation of awards in Rumbek East County, the study employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques in selected the sample size of 150 where by 120 were administered questionnaire and 30 were interviewed. The researcher applied a sampling formula provided by Kothari, (2004). Since the study involves multiple respondents, simple random sampling technique was used obtain study participants. This is a probability sampling whereby all members in the population have equal chance of being selected to form a sample (Adam and Kamuzora, 2008). The use of this method gives each participant an equal and independent chance of being selected. The technique is good when the population is made up of members of similar characteristics, as the size of random sample depends on the homogeneity (Shaughnessy et al.2000).

**3.5. Sample Size**

Sample size refers to the number of units or people that are chosen from which the researcher wish to gather information or data. Since the population of this study was small (60), there was no need of determining sample size order to achieve accuracy. Instead the entire population was considered as the sample size because it was possible to collect data from the whole population.

**3.6. Data Collection and Sources**

Both primary and secondary data were collected primary data were gathered through interviews and questionnaire methods. 30 respondents were interviewed face to face and questionnaires were administered to 120 respondents. Secondary data were collected from ministry of Physical infrastructure and social development office of rural activities.

**3.7. Data Analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from primary source and compiled sorted, edited for accuracy and clarity, classified, coded into a coding sheet and analyzed using a statistical Package of Social Science 23rd version (SPSS).

**3.8. Instrument Validity**

Orodho (2009) defines validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which was based on the research results. In other words, validity on the research results obtained from the analyzes of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study. Due to time constraints, the research instruments were not piloted on a sample to find out if everything works well and detect any potential misunderstanding or biasing effects of different questions. However, the questions were posed across the cohorts and responses of more qualified respondents were used to determine the validity of the responses of the lesser qualified contenders. To improve the validity of the instruments open ended questionnaires (Appendix V, appendix VI, appendix VII) were used I order to obtain personal responses from the respondents.

**3.9. Instrument Reliability**

Orodho (2009) defined reliability as measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. The stability of questions was assessed in terms of test-retest reliability. Due to time constraints, the questionnaires were not administered twice to the same group of respondents. However, the questions were posed across the cohorts and responses of more qualified respondents were used to determine the reliability of the responses. Questions used in the questionnaires were open ended to influence personalized responses from the contenders. These were then monitored for consistency across the responses and ascertain reliability of the questions.