

# INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN RWANDA: CASE OF CITIZEN VOICE & ACTION PROJECT IN NIBOYE, KICUKIRO DISTRICT, RWANDA

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**Abstract:** This research examined the influence of Community Mobilization on the Management of Development Projects in Rwanda because, it has been observed that often when project start, communities members are actively participating. However when the project phases out /ends, there is hardly any continuity of the project activities. This may be attributed to the fact that usually community members are not sufficiently empowered and fully engaged in every single activity of the project. The researcher intended to achieve this by use of three specific objectives namely; to establish the influence of Community participation in Planning on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project; to examine the influence of Community participation in Project Control on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project, and to assess the influence Community participation in Project Implementation on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project. The research was beneficial to the researcher, Citizen Voice & Action Project and UOK. The researcher used descriptive design of study based on qualitative and quantitative approach in order to get better analysis of the study. The population size was 185 and sample of 115 respondents was taken. Both primary and secondary sources with their relevant tools, like questionnaire and documentary analysis was used in order to come up with required data. Data was processed by use of SPSS and analyzed by use of percentages, mean and standard deviation. The relationship between the variables was established by use of Pearson correlations module. In the findings it was established that Community Mobilization in development projects inform of Community Project planning, Community Project control and Community Project implementation contributes highly to on management Citizen Voice & Action Project in form of physical growth of the children, emotional growth of the children, intellectual growth of the children and moral growth of the children. Table 4.16 gave the relationship between Community Mobilization and Management of Development Projects in Rwanda whereby the respondents N is 115 and the significant level is 0.01, the results indicate that independent variable has positive high correlation to dependent variable equal to .781\*\* and the p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. When p-value is less than significant level, therefore researchers conclude that variables are correlated and null hypothesis is rejected and remains with alternative hypothesis. This means that there is a significant relationship between Community Mobilization on the Management of Development Projects in Rwanda. We can therefore conclude Community Mobilization greatly contribute to positive Management of Development Projects in Rwanda.

**Keywords:** Community Mobilization, community members, Development Projects, Rwanda.

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## 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Community participation in community development activity is as old as man himself. Men have had to work individually and collectively to make life better for them. Prior to the onset of colonial administration, communities had engaged in communal efforts as a mechanism for mobilizing community resource to provide physical improvement and functional facilities in the socio, political and economic aspects of their lives. The use of community labor was paramount in this period.

In recent years there has been increasing interest in participatory approaches, which have been developed to improve the health of communities. Community participation (or mobilization as the World Health organization (WHO) prefers to call it) has been identified as one main principle of primary health care (PHC) at a World Conference 11 (WC11). In addition, there is evidence that efforts which involve beneficiaries at the beginning of programmes are more effective than those which do not (Gillics, 1997; Chambers, 1997). Experiences in a range of countries throughout the world have shown the potential of participatory approaches as a means of obtaining programme management.

Most of the development projects are implemented with great expectation that the community will participate in the management of the projects. But however many projects have failed due to lack of community participation. For example In Turkana Kenya, the development agency of Norway whose aim was to exploit fisheries resources in the lake for development by increasing incomes through employment creation and by combating drought failed because they didn't involve communities (Courtney, 2007). For the sake of this research, the researcher intends to establish extent of community participation and project management in Rwanda by taking the Citizen Voice & Action (CVA) as a case study.

The Citizen Voice & Action (CVA) was a nutrition project sponsored by World Vision Rwanda, the project was located in Niboye sector in Kicukiro District in Kigali city. The Project started in 2007 with the main objective of improving the community nutritional status targeting under five years' old children and pregnant women. Malnutrition is both a direct cause and underlying factor for the high infant and child mortality rates. There were also improvements in key nutrition indicators in Rwanda with reductions in underweight from 18% to 11%, wasting from 5% to 2.8% and stunting decreased slightly during the same period from 29% in 1992 to 22% in 2005 from 51% to 44% over the same period (DHS 2010). CVA project encouraged for community participation on rehabilitation of malnourished children with Positive Deviance Hearth in Niboye sector. The malnutrition rate was reduced from 44% to 34% for moderate cases and from 9% to 8% of severe malnourished (CVA evaluation report 2011). The project objectives of improving the community nutritional status targeting under five years' old children and pregnant women achieved to a large extent and now the researcher would like to assess the role of community participation in the whole CVA project cycle and management of the project after the projects. The findings would help project implementers, development partners and stakeholders to address the issue of project future management.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Community participation is one of the pre-requisites in most development Projects around the world. However it is uncertain if community participation plays a big role in the development project's management. It has been observed that often when project start, communities members are actively participating. However when the project phases out /ends, there is hardly any continuity of the project activities. This may be attributed to the fact that usually community members are not sufficiently empowered and fully engaged in every single activity of the project. Hence they don't feel as owners of projects activities.

Responsibilities and role of community members during project cycle are often limited. Additionally their mobilization in the planning, design, monitoring and evaluation, is unfair and the linkages between various stakeholders undermined or weakened. Most projects have been donor-driven and only selected for their high visibility and quick impact with emphasis on achieving specific targets within a specified time rather than long-term contribution to a sustainable development process, for example of UNDP Three Year Support Project to the Implementation of The Rwanda TOKTEN Volunteer Programme. It is the above problem that prompted the researcher to study the extent to which community participation contributed to the management of development projects in Rwanda.

### **General objective**

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of Community Mobilization on the Management of Development Projects in Rwanda.

### **Specific objectives**

Our study focused on specific objectives as follows:

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- i. To establish the influence of Community mobilization in planning on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project.
- ii. To examine the influence of Community mobilization in Project Control on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project
- iii. To assess the influence Community mobilization in Project Implementation on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project

### Research questions

Through the following questions objectives was examined:

- i. What is the influence of Community mobilization in Planning on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project?
- ii. What is the influence of Community mobilization in Project Control on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project?
- iii. What is the influence Community mobilization in Project Implementation on management of Citizen Voice & Action Project?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

This section presents the theoretical framework and guiding the study. This study is supported by the principal agent theory, dialectical theory general systems theory and Socio - economic theory which are explained below.

#### A systems and Participatory Approach to Capacity Building

As briefly discussed above, capacity building encompasses institutional development but goes beyond individual organizations and institutions to broader systems, groups of organizations and networks. It addresses complex multi-faceted problems requiring the participation of various actors, organizations and institutions (Qualman and Morgan, 1996). Individuals operate within organizations, individual organizations operate within a wider sector, and these sectors operate within a broader environment. Interventions at one level need to recognize the interactions with other levels:

#### Classical Theory on People-centered development

The two classical development theories of modernization and dependency failed to explain the continued underdevelopment of the third world nations, epitomized by increasing poverty and inequalities. This led to the emergence of the people-centered approach, which will be discussed in the section below. This paradigm shift to a more people-centered approach focused on micro-level as opposed to macro-level theorizing. Korten (1990) cited in Davids, Theron, Maphunye, & Kealeboga (2009) indicated that people-centered development is “a process by which the members of the society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations”. Unlike in past theories of development, humans are placed at the centre, contrary to the „trickle-down“ approach in other development initiatives.

#### Dialectical theory

Dialectical theory begins with the Hegelian assumption that the organizational entity exists in a pluralistic world of colliding events, forces, or contradictory values that compete with each other for domination and control (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). These oppositions may be internal to an organizational entity which may have several conflicting goals or interest groups competing for priority. But oppositions may also be external to the organizational entity. Van de Ven and Poole (op. cit.) use dialectical theory to explain change in organizations as occurring when the opposing values, forces or events gain sufficient power to confront and engage the status quo. These opposing forces are termed thesis and antithesis, thesis being the status quo or the ruling way of “doing things”. In such situation a new “synthesis” is developed which at a later stage becomes the status quo and again may be confronted by an opposing force. It must be added that the new situation or “way of doing things”, the synthesis is not necessarily progress to a better state.

**Empirical Review**

**Influence of Community Project Planning on Project management**

Participation of the masses in development activities implies enhanced capacity to perceive their own needs. Through participation, local people identify their needs as well as the relevant goals of a program. By participating in decision making and implementation activities, local people help project officials identify (1) needs, (2) strategies to meet those needs, and (3) the necessary resources required to implement the various strategies (Yadama, 1995). For example, community participation will be discouraged if environmental issues are given priority in agendas without addressing issues such as poverty, homelessness, health, and other basic necessities perceived to be more important by the coastal communities.

**Influence Community Project Implementation on Project Management**

Partnership in development processes allows stakeholders to work, talk, and solve problems with individuals who are often perceived as the masters. Instead of demonstrating the relationship as a worker- client tie, the parties involved should agree on working in partnerships. An expression used by the Latin American activists to describe their relationship with the people (communities, groups) with whom they are working is *acompanamiento*, or “accompanying the process” (Wilson and Whitmore, 1997). Wilson and Whitmore identified a set of principles for collaboration in a variety of settings and situations. These include nonintrusive collaboration, mutual trust and respect, a common analysis of what the problem is, a commitment to solidarity, equality in the relationship, an explicit focus on process, and the importance of language. According to Igboeli (1992), no matter the level of technical and financial assistance offered to self-help groups, the members should share actively in the decision to undertake certain projects. That is, rather than imposing development projects on a community, its members should be allowed to participate meaningfully in the planning and execution.

**Conceptual Framework**

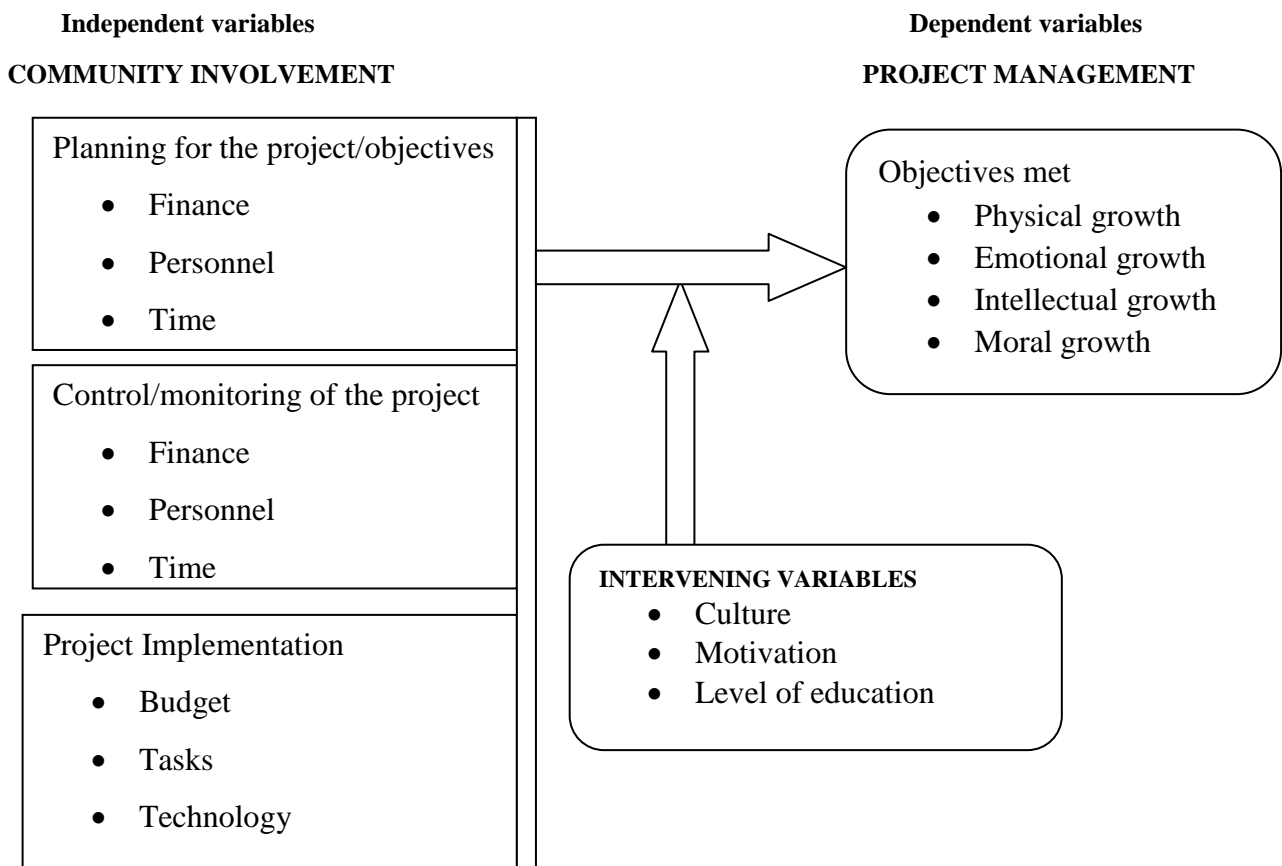


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### Research Gap

Most of the development projects are implemented with great expectation that the Community will participate in the management of the projects. But however many projects have failed due to lack of community participation. Different scholars have reviewed literature on community participation on project management but however there is no empirical literature from Rwanda hence creating a gap in the research and the researcher found it necessary to conduct the research. The literatures reviewed from the scholars above are mostly from 1990,s which create a time gap hence there is need to establish current findings on community participation on project management.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research design

Correlation Study is the strength of relationships between variables described and explored from the testing of the specified questions of the study. According to Bryman (2004), in a correlation analysis, the strength of relationships between variables is explored. Similarly, Kumar (2005) emphasized that in correlation studies relationships or associations between two variables are ascertained. This study showed the relationships between the independent variable and dependent variable.

### Target population

A population is the number of all the organisms of the same group or species, which live in a particular geographical area, and have the capability of interbreeding (Kothari, 2004). The target population of the study was 185 community members of the project.

### Sample Design

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample (Kothari, 2004).

### Sample size determination

When it is not possible to study an entire population but the population is known, a smaller sample is taken using a random sampling technique. Slovine's formula allows a researcher to sample the population with a desired degree of accuracy (Stephanie, 2013). Slovine's formula was used to calculate the sample size.

With regard to the level of accuracy, we used a confidence level of 95% as suggested by Kothari (2004), this means that there are 95 chances in 100 (or .95 in 1) that the sample results represent the true condition of the population within a specified precision range against 5 chances in 100 (or .05 in 1) that it does not. The Slovine's formula is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Stephanie (2013)

n=Number of samples or sample size

N=Total population

e=Error tolerance

The population size of this research is 185 members of Citizen Voice & Action Project. We take a sampling error of 5%, and then the sample of 115 size was taken

## 4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study was mainly concerned about the influence Community Mobilization on the Management of Development Projects in Rwanda. This summary was based on the objectives of the study which are influence of Community Project planning on management Citizen Voice & Action Project, influence of Community Project Control on management Citizen Voice & Action Project and lastly influence s of Community Project Implementation on management Citizen Voice & Action Project.

### **Influence of Community Project planning on management CVA Project**

The findings shows that community participated in financial planning in Citizen Voice & Action Project, they also participated in personnel planning, work schedule planning and technological planning. Community mobilization in Planning has improved physical growth of the children, emotional growth of the children, intellectual growth of the children and moral growth of the children. Table 4.9 gave the relationship between Community Planning on management Citizen Voice & Action Project whereby the respondents N is 115 and the significant level is 0.01, the results indicate that independent variable has positive high correlation to dependent variable equal to .721\*\* and the p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. When p-value is less than significant level, therefore researchers conclude that variables are correlated. This means that there is a significant relationship between Community Planning on management Citizen Voice & Action Project.

### **Influence of Community Project control on management CVA Project**

The finding shows that Community was involved in financial control in Citizen Voice & Action Project, personnel control, time schedule control and technological control in Citizen Voice & Action Project. Community mobilization in control has improved physical growth of the children, emotional growth of the children, intellectual growth of the children and moral growth of the children. Table 4.12 gave the relationship between Community Project Control and management Citizen Voice & Action Project whereby the respondents N is 115 and the significant level is 0.01, the results indicate that independent variable has positive high correlation to dependent variable equal to .793\*\* and the p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. When p-value is less than significant level, therefore researchers conclude that variables are correlated. This means that there is a significant relationship between Community Project Control and management Citizen Voice & Action Project.

### **Influence of Community Project implementation on management CVA Project**

The finding shows that Community participated in financial implementation in Citizen Voice & Action Project, task implementation, time/schedule implementation and technological implementation in Citizen Voice & Action Project. Community mobilization in implementation has improved physical growth of the children, emotional growth of the children, intellectual growth of the children and moral growth of the children. Table 4.15 gave the relationship between Community Project Implementation on management CVA Project whereby the respondents N is 115 and the significant level is 0.01, the results indicate that independent variable has positive high correlation to dependent variable equal to .829\*\* and the p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. When p-value is less than significant level, therefore researchers conclude that variables are correlated. This means that there is a significant relationship between Community Project Implementation on management CVA Project

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In the findings it was established that Community Mobilization in development projects inform of Community Project planning, Community Project control and Community Project implementation contributes highly to on management Citizen Voice & Action Project in form of physical growth of the children, emotional growth of the children, intellectual growth of the children and moral growth of the children. Table 4.16 gave the relationship between Community Mobilization and Management of Development Projects in Rwanda whereby the respondents N is 115 and the significant level is 0.01, the results indicate that independent variable has positive high correlation to dependent variable equal to .781\*\* and the p-value is .000 which is less than 0.01. When p-value is less than significant level, therefore researchers conclude that variables are correlated. This means that there is a significant relationship between Community Mobilization on the Management of Development Projects in Rwanda. We can therefore conclude Community Mobilization greatly contribute to positive Management of Development Projects in Rwanda.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Researcher has identified the following recommendations;

- i. Community should be able to mobilize enough funds to fund the project influence ively so that the project is managed influence ively and influence ively.



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- ii. Donors and government should involve community right from project planning, control and monitoring as well as implementation.
- iii. Community members should be trained on project management skills especially project assessment, monitoring and evaluations as well as resource management skills.

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