

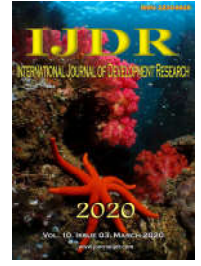


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EFFECTIVENESS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS IN KISARAWE DISTRICT, TANZANIA

***Shabani Nyaburiri Maijo**

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Mass Education and Open Schooling, Institute of Adult Education,
Tanzania, P.O.Box 20679 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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*Corresponding author:
Shabani Nyaburiri Maijo

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness monitoring and evaluation systems on the sustainability of community based projects in Kisarawe District, Tanzania. Descriptive survey design was used in this study. The sample comprised of 80 employees selected through simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The study population were all employees at Kisarawe district headquarters. Morgan theory of sample determination was used to determine the sample size. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interview schedule. Non-parametric data was analysed descriptively by use of frequencies and percentages as the tools of data analysis. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. The findings of the study revealed that monitoring and evaluation systems was effective on the sustainability of community projects. The study recommended that there should be high level of community participation in project management phases in order to enhance the sustainability of the project. The study concludes that sustainability of community based projects depends on other factors as community participation, adequate finance and community capacity building. Also, project team in the district should seek to adopt modern techniques of project management and increases budgetary allocations for monitoring and evaluation of community based projects.

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study: Monitoring and evaluation system is a continuous process for collection of information and data (Mandara et al. 2013) and it is also significant for sustainability of community based projects (Wanjohi, 2010). The process uses systematic data collection on project management (Frame, 2010). The role of monitoring and evaluation has increased significantly due to more involvement of donors in implementing community based projects. Effective monitoring and evaluation is important because donors consider the usefulness, efficiency, outcome and sustainability of the funded project. Wabwoba and Wakhungu, (2013) acknowledged that clear monitoring and evaluation systems in project management phases leads to the sustainability of projects. Sustainability of community based project can be seen in time and change of social, economic and political framework (Simane & Zaitchik, 2014). Community based projects in Sub Saharan region face management challenges, weak linkages in M&E, little success, impact and

sustainability (Wanjohi, 2010). Since monitoring and evaluation system is to guide the implementation and collect data that permit to track the project progress, its echo should be seen in impact and sustainability. Unclear monitoring and evaluation systems not only affect the project outcome but also the sustainability in the community. It is clear that project sustainability is reverberated in the capacity of community with coping change and adjusts to innovative situations. The use of monitoring and evaluation systems should be linked to the impact and sustainability of the project. In Kisarawe district, Tanzania, monitoring and evaluation system have been applied as the tool for tracking the implementation and judge the strength of the community based projects.

Statement of the Problem: Monitoring and evaluation system is important in project management. Its obligation call for project impact and sustainability. In Tanzania number of community based projects have been financed by external donors. The imperative of the project to the community have pulled donors to spend a huge amount of fund to finance the projects in the districts. It is fact that most projects are

implemented by huge fund, often, tends to experience hitches in sustainability. Water and farming projects in Kisarawe district face challenges to imitate impact and sustainability. Little has documented on how the M&E guidelines have followed during project execution. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems on the sustainability of community-based projects in Kisarawe district.

Literature Review

Monitoring and evaluation systems are critical to manage the implementation, success or failure of the community based-projects. Anie and Tetey Larbi, (2014) described that in Senegal community-based projects play an imperative part in the evolution of social activities; it is apparent that the courtesies to the monitoring and evaluation system are vital about to promote the maturity with efficient management of the project. Kiprotich and Njoroge, (2018) determined the evidence on the M&E system in project implementation as the key feature for the success of project management. They showed that if communities control the monitoring and evaluation of their development activities should feel more commitment to them. M&E systems are useful in deciding precisely when the project is on track and when changes may be called for community based projects have succeeded due to proper monitoring and evaluation system Mwangi and Iravo, (2015). Determination of efficient management of resources is an element of project management, while sustainability is the ability of an activity to pass later on its attainment. The more the science of project management evolved in complexity and applicability, the more the monitoring and evaluation systems articulated in the project (Brandon *et al.*, 2013). Akhakpe and Igbokwe, (2012) pointed that the process of performing monitoring and evaluation needs strong system of tracking. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical success factors for project management, it provides managers and other stakeholders feedback on the implementation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted qualitative paradigm with mixed methods research approach using descriptive survey design. The target population of the study was 830 respondents and a sample size of 80 respondents was drawn by using Morgan theory of sample size determination. Mugenda, (2003) established that a sample size of 10% 30% of the entire population are adequate in qualitative research. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interview schedule. The questionnaires were used because it allowed respondents to respond freely while remaining anonymous. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and some clarifications were given to them. Responses in the questionnaires was processed by the used of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings and interpretation of the collected data from research were handled according to the following subheadings.

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics describes the distribution of respondents' categories in relation to education level,

occupation and age as described in Table 1-3. Findings in Table 1 indicates that the district has more employees with bachelor degree 33(41.2%) than other education levels; diploma 25 (31.2%), certificate 15 (18.8%) and postgraduate 7 (8.8%). This scenario implies the fact that, most of the respondents were properly cultivated to understand the study theme on effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems to the sustainability of community-based projects in the district. The analysis in Table 2 presents the occupation of respondents that majority of respondents in the district 21(26.2%) were teachers, 13 (16.2%) were community development officers, 4 (5%) were planning officers, 12 (15%) agricultural extension officers, 6 (7.5%) engineers, 10 (12.5%) were health officers, and 14 (17.5%) were education officers. This is associate with the fact that the large number of employees in the district are teachers. The intention of researching the occupation of respondents was to explore more insights on the research variables. From Table 3 the results as indicated that majority of respondents 41(51.2%) were aged between 36-45 years, 23 (28.8%) were aged between 46-55 years and 16 (20.0%) had aged less than 35 years. This shows that majority of respondents had more experience in work and able to understand the research variables.

Table 1. Education Level of Respondents (N=80)

Education level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bachelor degree	33	41.2
College (diploma)	25	31.2
Certificate	15	18.8
Postgraduate	7	8.8
Total	80	100

Table 2. Occupation of Respondents (N=80)

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Community development officers	13	16.2
Planning officer	4	5.0
Teachers	21	26.2
Health officers	10	12.5
Engineer	6	7.5
Education officer	14	17.5
Agricultural extension officer	12	15.0
Total	80	100

Table 3. Age group of Respondents (N=80)

Age group (years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 35 years	16	20.0
Between 36-45 years	41	51.2
Between 46-55 years	23	28.8
Total	80	100

Effectiveness of M&E Systems on Sustainability of Community Based Project

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems on sustainability of community-based projects in Kisarawe district, Tanzania. In order to determine the study variables, the set of criteria was applied. The set of criteria consists of variables as; tracking the project inputs, tracking the project results and impacts and checking the process and outputs of the projects. The result shows that 20% of respondents indicated that M&E systems to be effective need regular checking of project activities, 22.5% of respondents pointed on tracking the project inputs, 33%, while tracking the project results and checking the process and outputs were revealed by 23.5% of respondents.

Respondents were also asked in the interview schedule to assess the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system based on the set of criteria. One of the respondents said;

".... the sustainability of the community based project largely depends on the mechanisms set during planning the project. For instance, in agricultural project communities trained on how to use agro-inputs and to maintain changes in the project, nevertheless, this should be effective only if monitoring and evaluation system lies in the criteria set and the adequate allocation of a budget."(Respondent's response)

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicated that, the application of monitoring and evaluation systems on the sustainability of community based project in Kisarawe district was not granted special recognition. A budget allotment of more than 10% for monitoring should be distinguished from capability building. Mwangi *et al.*, (2014) argues that monitoring and evaluation are the crucial functions that should take place frequently as long as a community-based project exists. The allocated budget should be disbursed accordingly. If the community based projects in Kisarawe district are designed without considering the role of monitoring and evaluation system in the future, it should be believed that the sustainability of project will continue to be questionable. Lack of expertise in monitoring and evaluation system should detect to handle and measure the sustainability of community based projects (Cao & Hoffman, 2011). Project budget should be prepared and should supply a clear and adequate planning for monitoring and evaluation activity. Gyorkos, (2003) and Martin *et al.* (2014) pointed that monitoring and evaluation budget can be clearly delimited with the overall project budget to make the effective M&E system due to the credit it plays in project management. Donor's preference in project management should be integrated in the planning process in order to attain project goals and sustainability of the project. The monitoring and evaluation systems in managing community-based projects are mostly affected by inadequate budget allocation, lack of expertise. Monitoring and evaluation plan should be regarded as one of the components contributing to project success. However, the types of monitoring and evaluation carried into the district as input or output monitoring plan, process evaluation and impact evaluation also should be looked critically to the sustainability of community projects. The system ensures the role of project management in the aspect of monitoring and evaluation to collect active data and to provide efficiency of the project. It was also, exposed that conducting a baseline research and stakeholder participation in planning and implementations of project accounts for the sustainability of community-based projects. However, the utilization of opportunity and obstacle for development (O&OD) was heavily applied as the most planning and implementation tools in the planning of donor driven projects in the locality.

Conclusions

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Monitoring and evaluation system is more imperative in the sustainability of community-based projects. The sustainability of projects was found to be significant in attaining the better

community support. From study analysis, study concludes that the project management tools employed in the groundwork and implementation of the community projects were found to be as significant as efficiency in the sustainability of community projects. The planning tool like the SWOC analysis, problem ranking and stakeholder analysis were examined as the instruments used for preparation and execution of the project.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- The sustainability of community based projects is very paramount, hence based on the findings, it is recommended that; community participation, financial level, project infrastructure, capability building, and involvement of stakeholders should be linked since it affects the sustainability of the community based project in Kisarawe district.
- Community participation in different phases of the project as planning, carrying out and handling phase bring the sense of loyalty and ownership that enhanced the sustainability of the project.
- Documenting the learned lesson during project monitoring and evaluation enables manager and project team to ascertain from the projects. The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems was interpreted as the sustainability of residential area based projects carried out in the district. Therefore, the sustainability of community-based project largely depended on the mechanisms set during planning the project.

Implication of the Findings

The sustainability of community-based project depends on the project management tools employed in the form of planning and execution. The employment of instruments makes the residential district take part in the project. Therefore, is indispensable for the sustainability of community-based projects. If the project manager employs planning and implementation tools in being in the projects it guarantee for monitoring and evaluation. From the research finding it should be noted that the factors affecting monitoring and evaluation system are highly correlated to the factors affecting sustainability of community-based projects. The M&E systems make the bodily process of managing and monitoring, evaluation and information more active and effective. The components of monitoring and evaluation system revealed to affect the sustainability framework in managing the community-based projects.

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