COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ON SUSTAINABILITY OF NJAA MARUFUKU KENYA FOOD SECURITY PROJECTS IN KISUMU WEST, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The success of food security intervention continues to face serious challenges, which have made them unable to solve the perennial food shortages faced by communities in the arid and semi-arid areas. Community participatory Monitoring and Evaluation encourages the ownership of and accountability for the M&E process and outputs by the communities themselves (CARE_PMERL, 2012). The sustainability of food security projects is a function of the community involvement in M & E activities throughout the projects life cycle i.e. key stakeholders in an intervention are allowed to participate in the project activities from formulation to termination and provide feedback that contribute to a successful project. This Research aims at exploring the influence of Community participation on sustainability of NMK funded Food Security Projects in Kisumu West, Kisumu County, Kenya. The population of the study included 215 community members of Kisumu West participating in the various projects under the programme with a sample size of 143 respondents obtained through stratified random sampling. Data collection Instruments used were questionnaires who's Reliability was determined using Cronbanch alpha coefficient, giving a coefficient of 0.87. Quantitative data was analysed and presented using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferential statistics such as Correlation Coefficient (r).The study established that Community participation in need analysis, project identification and planning explained 23.25% of sustainability of NMK projects. The independent variables namely need analysis; project identification and project planning were found to have a significant positive relationship with

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NMK project sustainability. Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation explained 6.3% of sustainability of projects, Variables of monitoring and evaluation were found to have a weak positive correlation with NMK project sustainability. The study thus recommended strengthening community participation in monitoring and evaluation of NMK projects to improve project's sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Guijt and Gaventa (1998) Describes Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation as a process where primary stakeholders are active participants; take the lead in tracking and making sense of progress towards achievement of self-selected or jointly agreed results at the local level, and drawing actionable conclusions. It goes beyond involving primary stakeholders in a process of 'conventional' M&E, such as consulting them on indicators and asking them to provide information or feed-back on the results Here the emphasis of PM&E is on deepening participation, a process that is intrinsically linked to learning and empowerment. The effectiveness (and sustainability) of such a process requires that it be embedded in a strong commitment towards corrective action by communities, project management and other stakeholders in a position to act.

According to Guijt and Gaventa (1998) Development of the PM&E approach include:-Building commitment and engagement at the community level and deciding on who participates and how this will evolve. PM&E process involves jointly establishing goals and expectations, tracking progress and information collection, joint analysis, sharing results and identifying action points and communication and feed-back systems to community, program, and other stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation in food security projects main purpose is to allow project teams to run projects effectively and ensure that they have the desired results for beneficiaries (ACF, 2011).

The success of food security intervention continues to face serious challenges, which have made them unable to solve the perennial food shortages faced by communities in the arid and semi-arid areas (Kimweli, 2013). Community participatory M & E encourages the ownership of and accountability for the M&E process and outputs by the communities themselves (CARE_PMERL, 2012). The sustainability of food security projects is a function of the community involvement in M & E activities throughout the projects life cycle i.e. key

stakeholders in an intervention are allowed to participate in the project activities from formulation to termination and provide feedback that contribute to a successful project (ACF, 2011).

QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

There is a significant relationship between Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation and sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted the theory of citizen participation. The roots of citizen participation can be traced to ancient Greece and Colonial New England. Before the 1960s, governmental processes and procedures were designed to facilitate "external" participation. Citizen participation was institutionalized in the mid-1960s with President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs (Murdock, 2005). Participation represents a move from the global, a spatial, top-down strategies that initially dominated most development initiatives to more locally sensitive methodologies (Storey, 1999).Gow& Vansant (1983) identified four strengths of community participation in development i.e. People identify problems they consider most important, volunteer labor, time, money and materials to a project and control over the amount, quality and benefits of development activities helping make the process self-sustaining (Botchway, 2001).This study adopted this theory because it helped explain concept of community participation and how it influences sustainability of Projects. This is because people will change only if they participate in the decision about the change. The general principles of participatory approach include among others the following; Encouraging communities to take responsibilities, Promote participation for all, Reconcile different interests, Listen to the community, examine the situation/problem from different points of view and then adapt to local situations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research design to help describe the characteristic of the variables of interest in the situation e.g. the age groupings, forms of financing and the age and

education level.The population of the study comprised of 215 community members participating in the various projects under the programme as per data records of Njaa Marufuku Kenya as at January 2014 obtained from the Provincial Agricultural Office, Kisumu County. The respondents were the Project facilitators in charge of the programme and Community members participating in various projects under the programme. The study applied probabilistic techniques of specific stratified random sampling to obtain the study sample of 140 from the study population. Primary data was collected using semi structured interviews of Project Facilitators. Self-administered questionnaires with both open and closed ended questionnaires made of Likert scale were administered to Community members participating in the Projects. Piloting was conducted by administering the questionnaires to 14 community members drawn from Kisumu West Sub County who are not participating in the study and was repeated after two weeks. The results were discussed jointly with University of Nairobi Professors and questions not clear were noted and reworded where necessary to generate required responses. This study subjected its instruments of data collection to face validity and also tested them for internal reliability. This was correlated through Cronbanch's alpha coefficient. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and inferential statistics with Correlation coefficient (r).The correlation analysis was computed at 5% level of significance.

RESULTS

The study started by exploring the Distribution of Respondents by Gender and establishing its influence on sustainability of NMK food security Projects. The researcher asked the respondents to indicate their Gender.

Influence of Community participation Monitoring and Evaluation on sustainability of food security projects

The study started by first exploring the perception of the community members towards monitoring and evaluation of projects. The items of perceptions were put on likert scales as presented in table 4.8

Table 4.8:

Community participation in monitoring and evaluation

Statement		disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Interpretation
I should participate in my project by gathering information	**Freq.**	2	73	65	3.45	Agree
	%	1.43	52.14	46.43		
I should participate in utilizing information gathered	**Freq.**	2	62	76	3.528	Strongly agree
	%	1.43	44.29	54.29		
I should frequently Report the project progress of the project during meetings	**Freq.**	1	58	81	3.571	Strongly agree
	%	0.71	41.43	57.86		
The baseline data should be used to compare the project performance	**Freq.**	2	54	84	3.585	Strongly agree
	%	1.43	38.57	60		
My Participation in the tracking of the project resources will help to develop sense of ownership	**Freq.**	1	59	80	3.564	Strongly agree
	%	0.71	42.14	57.14		
My Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation will enhance sustainability of project out puts and outcomes	**Freq.**	1	58	81	3.571	Strongly agree
	%	0.71	41.43	57.86		
My Participation will Improve project's implementation performance	**Freq.**	1	51	88	3.621	Strongly agree
	%	0.71	36.43	62.86		
Average mean					**3.5557**	Strongly Agree

The average mean on all items was found to be 3.557 implying that all the respondents strongly felt that participation in monitoring and evaluation of NMK projects was very important in terms

of ensuring the projects sustainability. Majority 73(52.14%) agreed that they need to involved in gathering of information, 76 (54.29) strongly agreed that they should participate in utilization of information gathered, 84 (60%) strongly agreed that baseline data should be used in determining project performance, 80 (57.14%) strongly agreed that their participation in tracking project resources will help develop a sense of ownership, 81 (57.86%) strongly felt that their participation in Monitoring and evaluation will enhance project sustainability, while 88 (62.86%) strongly believed that their participation will improve project's implementation performance.

In exploring the influence of community participation in monitoring and evaluation influences sustainability of NMK food security projects, the study conducted a cross-tabulation analysis of variable of community participation in monitoring and evaluation and sustainability of NMK food security projects are presented in table 4.9.

Table 4.9:

Participation in monitoring and evaluation and sustainability on food security

Extent of Participation	**Sustainability Rate**						**Total**	
	Average		Good		Very good			
	Freq.	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**
Very high	2	1.43	12	8.57	35	25	49	35.00
High	8	5.71	14	10.00	24	17.14	46	32.86
Average	19	13.57	11	7.86	15	10.71	45	32.14
Total	**29**	**20.71**	**37**	**26.43**	**74**	**52.85**	**140**	**100**

Community participation in project monitoring and evaluation was measured through the extent at which the community were involved sharing of information gathered through M&E, utilisation and evaluation of NMK Project progress. The respondents were therefore asked to rate the extent to which they participated in information sharing, utilisation and evaluation of progress. A total of 49(35%) respondents rated it as very high, 46(32.86%) rated it as high, while 45(32.14%) respondents rated it as average. Out of the 74(52.85%) respondents who rated food accessibility, food availability and utilisation from NMK food security projects as very good, a total of

35(25.00%) rated their involvement in information sharing, utilisation and evaluation of progress as very high while 24(17.14%) rated it as high

These findings show that participation in monitoring and evaluation through information sharing and utilisation was associated with very good food accessibility, food availability and utilisation from NMK food security projects to a very high extent. On the other hand out of the 29 (20.71%)respondents who rated food security as average, 2(1.43%) respondents rated their involvement in monitoring and evaluation as very high, 8(5.71%) rated it as high and 19(13.57%) rated it as average. These findings show that low involvement of community in monitoring and evaluation was associated with low food security and vice versa.

For the hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation and sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West.

The study again used the correlation analysis in testing the second Null hypothesis. The dependent variable was sustainability of NMK food security projects and the independent variable was community participation in projects monitoring and evaluation. Table 4.10 shows the correlation analysis.

Table 4.10:

Correlation analysis between Community Participation in M&E and sustainability

Correlation coefficient **(r)**	0.251
P value	0.017
Coefficient of determination ($\mathbf{r^2}$)	0.063

The correlation coefficient between Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation and sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West was found to be 0.251. This is a positive but somehow weak correlation coefficient, meaning that as Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation increases, sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu

West also increases. The p value was found to be 0.017, considering that this is a value less than 0.05, it was established that the relationship between Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation and sustainability of NMK food security projects was positive and significant. The coefficient of determination was found to be 0.063; this means that Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation explained 6.3% of sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West. In other words Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation influences 6.3% of sustainability of NMK food security projects. The low correlation index 0.251 could also explain the lower contribution power (6.3%) of M&E towards the sustainability of NMK projects. Although the perception of the community towards M&E is shown to be stronger (M=3.557-see table 4.8), there could be a big gap between what the community believe about the NMK project monitoring and evaluation and what is actually practiced on the ground. This is because other study findings such as a study by Kimweli (2013) on The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices to the Success of Donor Funded Food Security Intervention Projects in Kibwezi District, Kenya established that Participatory monitoring and evaluation in food security projects contributes to the success of food security projects though it should be complemented with good project management skills.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that the perception of community towards project M&E is very appropriate for project development, however, the study established that community participation in M&E explained only 6.8%. Furthermore, the relationship between M&E variables was found to be there but weak. This led to the conclusion that there are certain conditions that the NMK project management needed to fulfill in order to allow easy participation of community in monitoring and evaluating the projects. Such conditions include establishing appropriate framework that will allow more participation of the community in NMK project activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that community participation in need analysis, Project Identification and project Planning should be strengthened. Evidence from this study indicates that the three variables explain only 23.25% of NMK project sustainability. The government thus should invest more resources in building the capacity of communities towards project planning and

management. The study also recommends that community participation in M&E should be strengthened. It was established that the perception of the community towards M&E as a key variable in NMK project sustainability was very positive and strong. However, according to the community, project M&E explained only 6.8% of the NMK project sustainability. This therefore implies that there are other factors related to M&E that inhibits the relationships between community participation in project M&E and NMK project sustainability. The government should put up appropriate strategies to improve community's' participation in monitoring and evaluation of NMK projects.

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