

Factors Affecting the Beneficiary Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Project on Its' Sustainability: A Case Study of Local Administrative Entities Development Agency

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Abstract: The general objective is to assess the impact of beneficiary participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects funded by LODA and its effect on its sustainability. Specifically, the research aims to determine the relationship between monitoring and evaluation of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda and prudent management of resources, establish the relationship between monitoring and evaluation of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda and effective implementation of the project and to assess the role of conducting monitoring and evaluation of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda and the attainment of project objectives. The study used a case study research design. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The study targeted 1249 members whereby a Solvin's formula was used to calculate the sample size of 125 individuals to participate in data collection exercise. The researcher used cluster sampling method in order to select the beneficiaries. Due to the small number of administrators, the researcher used census whereby all the administrators were targeted. Probability sampling was used to collect data from the beneficiaries because the number is large. Descriptive statistics and correlations were used to analyze the data. The study found that beneficiary participation in M&E can take various forms. In some projects, it may be no more than providing information to review or evaluation teams, but this is too limiting. It was observed that beneficiary participation in M&E is low. Beneficiaries participate mainly in data collection and giving testimonies. Apart from that they are not involved in data analysis and documentation. This is a conventional way of M&E rather than participatory approach. The study also found that majority of the respondents stated that they lack financial and structural capacity to participate in M&E of the project. It was established that beneficiary participation in the project activities is essential for the sustainability of the project. In addition, their participation is generally restricted to simple matters, such as provision of labour and cost sharing, and not with the important issues faced during the process of decision making as it relates to project initiation and execution and monitoring and evaluation.

Keywords: Project Sustainability, beneficiary participation, Monitoring and Evaluation.

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Project management is the discipline of planning, organizing and managing resources to bring about successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. A project is successful (Burton, 2003) when it achieves its objectives and meets or exceeds the expectations of the stakeholders. There exists a wide range of definitions and interpretations of participation. It is (Chambers, 2006) the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions which enhance their well being, for example their income, security or self-esteem.

The focus of monitoring and evaluation of project performance and success is strategically linked to the objective of ensuring that those programmes and projects produce sustainable results that benefit the target groups and the larger communities of which they are a part. Both functions contribute to the achievement of this objective by supporting decision-making, accountability, learning and capacity development (Karuti, 2015).

Monitoring is the systematic gathering and analysing of information that will help measure progress on an aspect of your project. Evaluation provides an opportunity to reflect and learn from what you've done, assess the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and think about new ways of doing things (Mulwa, 2008).

Effective Monitoring and Evaluation of community development programs can improve management, accountability, participation, trust, learning, efficiency and development impacts. This facilitates sustainability of the project intended to be developed. The term "sustainable" refers to something which can be sustained, or kept going. Development assistance is often offered on a temporary basis and projects typically have finite timeframes. Yet, the impacts of the assistance and projects are intended to be lasting. As a result, a challenge for international development is to achieve longterm sustainability of projects.

Historically, many projects have failed to achieve their intended goals (Bishop 2001). There is unmistakable evidence that beneficiary participation has a favorable impact on the outcomes of a project and this linkage gets established through better aggregation of preferences, better design, through use of local knowledge and pressure by community on bureaucracies to perform and better sustainability through ownership (Richard, 1999). In rural areas, a significant number of community based project fail to full meet the expectations of the people because they either become unsustainable or fail altogether.

Many researchers have asserted that the rural communities have not been encouraged to do much in terms of their development; they have been made to wait for donors and the government to do things. Mansuri and Rao (2004) argue that there is not much study to illustrate the effects of participation to community development. The participatory practice has not yet been cultured properly. Project information is hardly disseminated to the community people.

It is critical to the success of a project that various elements of sustainability be considered throughout each stage of the project process. This is particularly true where outside involvement is discontinued after project closure, as is the case for much international development work. This research therefore aims to conduct the study on impact beneficiary participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects funded by Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA) and its effect on its sustainability.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

Project sustainability is a major challenge in many projects in Rwanda. Large number of projects implemented at huge costs often tends to experience difficulties with sustainability. All major donors, such as the World Bank, the Asian Development bank and the bilateral aid agencies have been expressing concerns on this matter. According to several recently conducted studies, while the trend with implementation is showing significant improvement, the trend with post implementation sustainability is rather disappointing - increasingly, fewer projects are being sustained. This means that while huge expenditures are being incurred by Rwanda in implementing projects, poor sustainability is depriving the country from the returns expected of these investments. This also means that while the debts from development expenditure are increasing, gains from these expenditure have either not been forthcoming fully or been accrued at a lower rate. Several factors are responsible for poor sustainability. Some are simple. Some are quite complex. Some are within the control of the project management, while others come as external threats. Although beneficiary participation in monitoring and evaluation process is relatively an old concept in project management, very few studies have tried to link its relationship with project sustainability. It is also not evident as to whether those projects which have attempted to engage their beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation process have been sustainable or not.

This document aims to presents various definitions of sustainability, highlights issues that affect sustainability and introduces tools which can be used for enhancing sustainability both at the planning as well as at the monitoring stage of a project. This will be achieved through the conduction of a research study aimed at assessing the impact of beneficiary participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects funded by LODA and its effect on its sustainability.

1.2 General Objectives:

The general objective is to assess the impact of beneficiary participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects funded by LODA and its effect on its sustainability.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives:

The study aims to;

- i. To assess the intensity of beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda
- ii. To determine the imitating factors affecting the beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda
- iii. To establish the role of beneficiary participations in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda on prudent management of resources, effective implementation of the project and attainment of project objectives

1.3 Research Questions:

1. To what level do beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda?
2. What are the limitations of beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda?
3. What role does the beneficiary participations in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda on prudent management of resources, effective implementation of the project and attainment of project objectives?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical review:

According to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs Theory" and the "Theory of Human Motivation", people aim to meet basic needs, they seek to meet successively higher needs in the form of a pyramid. The Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs has often been represented in a hierarchical pyramid with five levels (lower-order needs) are considered psychological needs, while the top level of the pyramid is considered growth needs (Maslow, 1970). This study will consider the theory to be relevant because we are discussing ways used to attend to the needs of the poor people in the society.

However, this theory has been criticized in the sense that there is vagueness is what is considered a 'deficiency', citing that what is deficient for one is not necessarily a deficiency for another. Secondly, there seem to be various explanations that frequently occur. For example, some people often risk their safety to rescue others from danger.

The theoretical debate about benefiting the poor has traditionally been dictated by two schools of thought. One cohort believes that the best possible way to execute any poverty reduction intervention is by "identifying" those in need and then directing the entire resource pool towards them. The opposing view prefers universal programs that are extended to all, irrespective of the level of poverty, but offer benefits that in theory end up benefiting the poor disproportionately (Besley & Kanbur 1991; Weiss 2005)

Moreover, political economy considerations of balancing the needs of the poor and the vested interests of the middle and upper socio-economic strata can undermine the theoretical advantage of resource efficiency in targeted interventions (Besley & Kanbur 1991; Besley 1997; Coady 2004). A failure to account for these concerns inevitably leads to one of the two types of errors associated with targeting. These include the error of under coverage or exclusion (type I) where some of the poor are not reached, and the error of leakage or inclusion (type II) in which the non-poor—those outside the target group—receive direct benefits from the program (Weisbrod 1970; Hoddinott 1999).

2.2 The dominant models of participation:

Most agencies have a theory about why the participation of beneficiaries in development project valid. Boyden, Kaiser and Springett (2002) argues that such theoretical perspectives determine the objectives, strategies and outcomes of programmes and projects. The great majority of organisations follow what here is termed an 'instrumental' model of participation, according to which the prime objective of involving aid recipients in the various activities of a project is to improve overall project performance. In other words, participation is viewed as a means towards a specific end, which is the delivery of effective projects.

The argument is that the contribution of beneficiaries to planning, implementation and monitoring of projects reduces cost, ensures greater accountability to recipients of aid and increases sustainability. Internationally, different agencies emphasise different aspects of project performance when making the case for participation.

Oxfam's working principles stress the importance of being accountable and facilitating local ownership in the context of local capacity building. For it is argued that, participation makes it possible to meet food security objectives more successfully, although it is recognised that: 'In general, participation in emergencies tends to concentrate on consulting

beneficiaries about their needs, rather than entrusting beneficiaries with control over the programme'. Whatever the driving force behind it, the core purpose of the instrumental model can be seen as meeting the immediate survival and livelihood needs of aid recipients, reducing their vulnerability and promoting their self-sufficiency. More profound social structural impact is not generally envisaged.

2.3 Empirical review:

2.3.1 Conducting Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects Financed by LODA in Rwanda:

The Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA) is a public institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC). It came into existence with the enactment of Law n°62/2013 of 27/08/2013 establishing the Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA) and determining its responsibilities, organization and functioning. LODA replaced and took over all the responsibilities, mission and vision formerly assigned to RLDSF (Rwanda Local Development Support Fund), in the framework of implementing the local economic and community development policies and strategies, social protection and poverty reduction programs (MINALOC, 2013).

The Rwanda Local Development Support Funds (RLDSF) was established by law No 41/2010 of 25.11.2010 creating the organisation and functioning of RLDSF. The objectives of RLDSF are: to support development activities in local administrative entities; to serve as an intermediary between local administrative entities with legal personality and donors especially those involved in financing development activities in those entities; to put in place mechanisms of distributing financial support in local administrative entities; to monitor the use of funds allocated by RLDSF to development activities in the local administrative entities; establish strategies of job creation in favor of a large number of people and assistance to those unable to perform jobs such employment; contribute to sensitizing population and building their capacities in analyzing and solving their problem; to contribute to sensitizing population to participate in development activities meant for them; contribute to sensitizing population on the culture of making savings and working with banks and microfinance institutions; to built capacities of local administrative entities within the scope of LODA mission; and finally to mobilise and collect funds (MINECOFIN, 2010).

It is therefore evident that LODA finances various projects within Rwanda with an intention to uplift the welfare of the local citizens. In order to maintain these developments to last longer, management and evaluation practices must be conducted more often. This is done in a systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project. The aim is to determine the relevance and level of achievement of project objectives, development effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluations also feed lessons learned into the decision-making process of the project stakeholders, including donors and national partners. Monitoring and evaluation take place at different levels. The following box defines the common terms with examples.

2.3.2 Importance of Conducting Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects Financed by LODA in Rwanda:

Monitoring is the systematic, regular collection and occasional analysis of information to identify and possibly measure changes over a period of time and Evaluation is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity and involves making a judgment about progress and impact. Governments, Public Sector Organizations, Non Profits and NGO's are all challenged to do more with less. Collecting and organizing data will enable organizations to understand, manage and report if projects are running on schedule, within planned budget, receiving adequate funding, appropriate resources, reporting to donors properly by taking into account risk and risk mitigation (Maina, Peter & Kibalama, 2006).

Monitoring forms an integral part of all successful economic activity. Monitoring is about information and its aggregation to a level appropriate to all levels of management. Without access to accurate and timely information, it is difficult if not impossible to manage an activity, project or program effectively. According to UNDP (1997) "monitoring enables management to identify and assess potential problems and success of a program or project. It provides the basis of corrective actions, both substantive and operation to improve the program or project design, manner of implementation and quality of results. In addition it enables the reinforcement of initial positive results." The primary purpose of evaluation is to provide lessons which assist in the design of new projects and programs. Without evaluation, any lessons that are learned from project or program experience may remain hidden or at best only known to those directly concerned with project implementation (North, 2005).

Evaluation, necessarily supported by effective feedback mechanisms to disseminate results, can be useful to a wide range of people and institutions involved in project/program design, implementation and management as well as those in the policy and planning areas. Evaluation is also useful in promoting accountability, on the basis that the possibility that a project will be evaluated may have some influence on management (though admittedly this effect may be minimal). In the

case of the donor/funding agencies, and increasingly in local line agencies, evaluation is also seen as a way of assuring the stakeholders that the program is running well and achieving the desired outcomes (Abor, Quartey, 2010).

2.3.3 Relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Projects and Sustainability of such Projects:

Sustainability can be defined as the ability of a project to maintain its operations, services and benefits during its projected life time. In public sector activities this decision is crucial and should be made right at the planning stage (Claud, 2006). This will then help incorporating those elements that are relevant for 'sustainability'. However, in general project sustainability is defined as the percentage of project initiated goods and services that are still being delivered and maintained after five years of termination of implementation of the project; the continuation of local action stimulated by the project and generation of successor services and initiatives as a result of project built initiatives. This definition implies that sustainability concerns itself with: level of continuation of delivery of project goods and services, changes stimulated / caused by the project and new initiatives caused by the project. This for this sustainability to occur, management and evaluation should have to be consistently and persistently exercised. This creates the link between the two variables (World Bank, 2003).

2.3.4 Contribution of Sustainable Projects on Overall Development in the Rwanda:

Development mean, growing in complexity and strength for poverty reduction. It is social positive change, where a community becomes more complex, adding institutions, increasing its collective power and changing qualitatively in its organization. As a social institution, community does not get development by external actors. Community develops itself. A mobilize can only stimulate. Many development projects are aimed at improving the welfare of the communities in a given geographical area. Community development project seek to improve community capacities and capabilities to take decision, chose and implement their priorities, managed and controlled by whole community in the cellule level (Umurenge Program, VUP, 2011).

2.3.5 Community project implementation functions:

According to Cooper and Kerzner (1998) the best project implementation functions' practices do not emerge from a vacuum rather, a community culture must exist those values and nurture or take care for best practices. One key element is the existence of competencies where competencies may be seen as a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities, within the community project, competencies; a task or activity competency, an output competency and a result competency In terms of leadership, three different kinds of competencies are required leadership competencies such as the ability to lead change, functional competencies such as technical and human resource management skills and personal skills such as high achievement motivation and persistence (Caudron and Thite, 1999).

From the above Zimmerer and Yasin (1998) reported that in their study of American project managers, the highest rated characteristics for effective community project managers and for project success were team building, communicating, demonstrating trust, and focusing on results among others. Similarly, the key project tools as implementation functions the successful were project scheduling, budgeting, among other tools. They concluded that their profile reveals a leader who recognizes that it is absolutely essential to build a project team, reinforce positive behavior, communicate, demonstrate trust and respect, develop team members and empower them to perform and set goals while remaining flexible to respond to the inevitable changes.

According to Loo (2002) found that his sample of project managers regarded a people-oriented leadership style most highly in the context of the best leadership style for their projects in the future with a participative leadership style rated closely behind. The main point that participants wanted to make was that staff on project teams are typically well-educated and motivated so they want to be empowered and to participate in decision making. The purpose of the research was to develop a multi-level causal model for best practices in project implementation. At the micro level, the important role of the individual team member is recognized as the project team and project leader in affecting best practices. At the more macro level, the important role of community systems and senior management is recognized in affecting best practices. Project implementation skills.

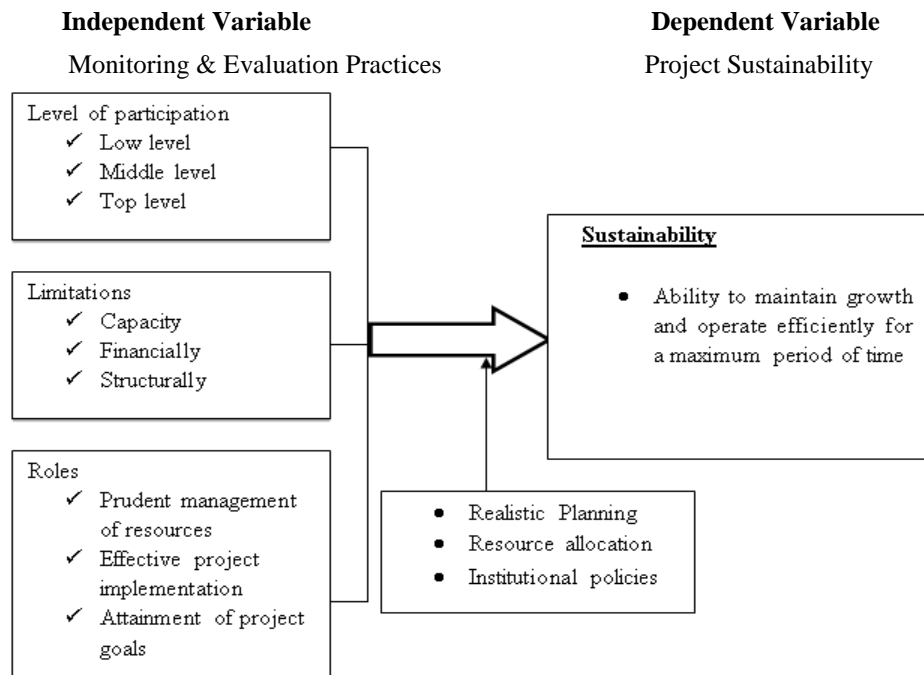
The first component of the model is project implementation skills. Numerous studies have consistently shown that, for both project managers and staff, technical knowledge and skills, on the one hand, and people skills, on the other hand, are essential to project success .The technical skills set that emerges from the literature includes project planning which was articulated to include preplanning and contingency planning, organizing, controlling, contract management, scope management, resource management and cost control, performance and quality management, and project documentation. The people skills set that emerges from the literature includes effective interpersonal communication, effective

interpersonal skills to manage conflict within the team and with the client, and the ability of the manager to motivate project staff. (Barad and Raz, 2000, Jawaharnesan and Price, 1997).

To add on Loo (2002) found that his sample of project implementers gave technical and people skills equal importance for best practices. It can be safely stated that project success and a best practices project organization will not happen if the project managers or implementers and staff do not have the core technical and people skills to do the job; these are the necessary input ingredients because projects are done by people.

2.4 Conceptual framework:

The study will develop a framework which will be used to show the linkage between the dependent and independent variable citing its relationship as shown in fig. 2.5 below;



(Source: Researcher 2016)

Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

In the conceptual framework developed above the researcher indicated the relationship of the two variables in the sense that they both relates directly to each other. In simple terms, it implies that project Monitoring and Evaluation; Identifies potential project problems at an early stage and gives the ability to propose possible solutions, recognizes how different approaches to participation affect outcomes, impact and reach, gives the ability to establish and monitor quantitative and qualitative project objectives, monitors budget vs. actual for project financials, provides access to project performance details to all constituents, provides ease of report creation and reporting to donors, monitors the efficiency with which the different components of the project are being implemented and suggest improvements, evaluates the extent to which the project is able to achieve its general objectives, provides guidelines for the planning of future projects and allows for reliable flow of information during implementation which enables manager to keep track of progress and adjust up-to-date operations accordingly

2.5 Critical Review:

Criticism of development projects is widespread, and blame for disappointing results is cast in many directions. One of the criticisms which have been quite strong in the recent development literature is that (Peskestt, 2011) projects are top-down and need to be bottom-up, while real development must involve beneficiaries in their own improvement. Some constraints to incorporating beneficiary participation, in the design and implementation of development projects include increased planning costs, conflict between local community priorities and the objectives of government and aid agencies; private versus public and community benefits (David & Joseph, 2001), although it has been established that community participation has favorable impact on the outcomes of a project. In for example, construction projects, delegation of power to the grassroots reveals that the rural communities are fully capable of handling construction of simple rural -, infrastructure. Many projects are not sustainable after completion due to lack of community involvement in the project design and implementation (David & Joseph, 2001).

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design:

The study employed a case study research design. In the case study, the researcher had time to understand problem or area of study in preliminary way and relate the variables of the study. This approach often relies on direct research of a limited number of respondents of what is to be studied. In this design the researcher was apply both the quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain the data sought. This method was used to determine the number of people who participated in the study giving out their views depending on the level they understand the subject matter under study. Qualitative method helped the researcher to draw their attitude and perception of tax payment in Rwanda.

3.2 Study area:

The study was conducted in Kicukiro. Kicukiro is a district (akarere) in Kigali Province, Rwanda. Its headquarters is the Kigali suburb of Kicukiro. Kicukiro is home to a thriving market, a number of NGOs and the Bralirwa Brewery. Kicukiro district is divided into 10 sectors (imirenge): Gahanga, Gatenga, Gikondo, Kagarama, Kanombe, Kicukiro, Kigarama, Masaka, Niboye and Nyarugunga. The total objective of the development plan which is spread out over five years (2012-20017) is to provide an instrument of planning and coordination of the interventions in order to improve the living conditions of the population in Kicukiro District and to ensure a harmonious development.

It lies within the political and administrative scope of Rwanda's decentralization policy. This implies that all the sectors of the population in the whole District, is governed on the core principals of that decentralization framework on all levels. This plan was worked out, indeed, starting from the priorities expressed by the population of the fourteen sectors of the District. It places at the disposal of the various partners under development a document including/understanding the priority projects so that their interventions are done in a coordinated way and in synergy. Kicukiro District has six health centres. The administration of the District oversees the development and maintenance of infrastructural projects in the area.

3.3 Target population:

Table 3.1 Target population

Target groups	Target population
LODA Facilitators	49
Beneficiaries	1200
Total	1249

Source: Direct support program, 2015

Therefore the researcher targeted 1249 people in this study. Out of this group the researcher selected the appropriate sample size for the purpose of data collection exercise.

The sample size was calculated using Slovin Formula:

$$\text{Where; } n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = the minimum sample size

N = the population from which the sample was obtained

e = the margin of error estimated at 10%.

3.3.1 Sample frame:

Table 3.2: Sample frame

Target groups	Sample size	Sample method
Facilitators (LODA staff)	$\frac{49}{1 + 49(0.1)^2} = 33$	Simple random
Beneficiaries	$\frac{1200}{1 + 1200(0.1)^2} = 92$	Random sampling
Total	125	

Source: Researcher, 2016

3.4 Data Collection Instruments:

The researcher used the following instruments: that is, questionnaire and interview schedules.

3.4.1 Questionnaire:

Kothari (2008) defines a questionnaire as that consisting of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. Closed ended and open ended questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The researcher used questionnaire because of its low cost even the universe is large and widely spread geographically, it is free from bias, respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers and large samples can be made use of and thus the results can be made more dependable and reliable (Kothari, 2008) questionnaire is commonly used to obtain data about population, since each item is developed to address a specific objective, research questions or hypothesis of the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003)

3.4.2 Interview schedule:

Interview is a method of collecting data that involves presentation of oral verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral verbal responses (Kothari 2003:120, Oson and Onen 2005:8). The study employed the respondent type of interview where the interviewer retains all control throughout the process. The researcher used semi-structured interview for guidance during the interview process. The interview schedule was designed and administered to beneficiaries who do not know how to read and write. It enabled the researcher to collect the information based on the objective of the study and balance between quality and quantity of data collected and also access more information that cannot be directly observed or is difficult to put down in writing.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of research instruments:

3.5.1 Validity:

This means that the research method produces information which is relevant to the topic i.e. does the research method actually measure what it claims it is supposed to be measuring (Kombo, 2006). Validity is the extent to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested (Kothari 1990). For the validity of this instrument the researcher consulted experts and specialists and the supervisor.

3.5.2 The Reliability:

A reliable criterion is stable or reproducible. Reliability is a measure of how consistent the results from a test are (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Reliability is quantified if you administer a test to a subject twice and get the same score on the second administration as on the first (Kombo and Tromp 2006). For the reliability of the instrument a pilot study was done together with pre-test. The examiner's manual or technical manual for most tests had information on the validity of the test (Kombo and Tromp 2006)

3.6 Data Collection Procedures:

Data collection Procedures included the activity of gathering facts or information about a subject under the research study. After formulating research instruments and sampling the respondents, the researcher informed respondents about the research and its intentions. A covering letter explaining the purpose of the study was attached to the research instruments in which it was used to introduce the study to the respondents, an introduction statement at the top of the questionnaire guided the respondents on how to answer the questionnaire and give the assurance of confidentiality. The questionnaire was administered to the participant by the researcher during March, 2016. However, the researcher conducted an interview in person with the respondents during the same date of administering questionnaires.

The completed questionnaires were picked after being appropriately and fully responded to. Permission to obtain and use these documents were adequately sought from the respondents with the assurance of their safety and confidentiality. This created a good interaction process between the researcher and respondents and consequently getting sincere responses from them.

3.7 Data Analysis:

After the collecting the data collection instrument, data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. For descriptive statistics, frequency tables and percentages was applied. The study was analyzed using a Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive statistics: was applied whereby Cross tabulation, Frequencies, Descriptive, Explore, Descriptive Ratio Statistics was adopted.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Level of beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda:

Table 4.3 Whether the beneficiaries normally monitor the work of this project Rwanda

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	44	53.7
No	38	46.3
Total	82	100.0

The study shows that 56.7% of the respondents agreed that they normally participate in monitoring of their projects while 46.3% denied that they do not participate in this process. This implies that majority of the beneficiaries are involved in monitoring process of the project. Project monitoring is a necessary component of all project management plans. This process is not complicated and most of the beneficiaries involved in the project can monitor the daily process of the project. Regular monitoring enables the project leader to identify actual or potential problems as early as possible so that they can make timely adjustments to project plans and move forward. In addition to tracking the outputs and measures of their project team's contributions and periodic results, project leaders should be mindful of spending and milestone tracking.

Table 4.4 Whether the beneficiaries get involved in evaluation of the project

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	40	48.8
No	42	51.2
Total	82	100.0

The study found that 48.8% of the respondents get involved in evaluation process whereas 51.2% are not involved in this process. Evaluation process usually is conducted at the end of the project. Evaluation allows for necessary adjustment to fit people's needs within the framework of established and agreed upon goals.

Table 4.5 Whether all members are involved in M&E process

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	30.5
No	57	69.5
Total	82	100.0

The study indicates that 30.5% of beneficiaries stated that all members are involved in the process of Monitoring and evaluation exercise while 69.5% said that all members are not involved in this process.

4.2. Facilitators response whether all beneficiaries are involved in M&E process:

The study also propped the facilitates in order to ascertain whether indeed the beneficiaries are engaged in M&E process of the projects and the results were as follows:

Table 4.6 Facilitators view whether all beneficiaries in M&E process

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	10	34.5
No	19	65.5
Total	29	100.0

The results indicate that there are similarities between the responses given by the beneficiaries and the facilitators of the project. It was found that 65.5% of the facilitators said all the beneficiaries do not get in involved in this process whereas 34.5% said all of them participate in the process. In general, it is observed that majority of the beneficiaries are not involved in M&E process. However, monitoring is a continuous process whereby all the beneficiaries can participate in a daily basis. On the other hand evaluation usually happens after a completion of certain stage of development or at the end of the project. This process might not necessarily require the involvement of all the beneficiaries. An external ager might be engaged to conduct who has technical and professional expertise to conduct the impact assessment of the project.

Table 4.7 Method of participatory used in M&E development projects

	Frequency	Percent
Conventional	60	73.2
Participatory	22	26.8
Total	82	100.0

The study indicates that 73.2% of the respondents indicated that the participatory in M&E process is more of conventional than participatory whereas 26.8% stated that they use participatory approach in M&E of the project. This implies that M&E of the projects funded by LODA mostly uses conventional method rather than participatory approach. Monitoring can be done by using project records, such as financial statements (to monitor inputs) and administrative records (to monitor outputs).

However, because the development projects have to create an impact to beneficiaries at the long run, it will probably be necessary to design new monitoring tools. These may include simple forms to be filled out by service providers on a regular basis – monthly or quarterly – as well as specific entries of the project. It is also advisable to conduct a yearly survey of beneficiaries which will serve to cross-check and complement the information already available on inputs and outputs. In this way, beneficiaries are engaged extensively in this process.

Table 4.8 Events where beneficiaries have participated

	Frequency	Percent
Filling questionnaire for a survey	21	25.6
Semi-structured interviewing	2	2.4
Focus Group Discussions	9	11.0
Appreciative Inquiry	21	25.6
Testimonials	29	35.4
Total	82	100.0

The study found that 25.6% of the respondents stated that they have participated in filling the questionnaire for survey, 2.4% also mentioned that they have been involved in semi-structured interviews, 11.0% said that they have participated in focus group discussions, 25.6% stated that they have been contacted in appreciative inquiry and 35.4% stated that they do have participated in testimonials. In general, it implies that there are various ways which the beneficiaries are able to share their information on their view about the impact they have felt as a result of being part and parcel of the development the project. Various tools can be used to collect the data such as mentioned above but the most essential thing is to get the testimony of the beneficiaries.

4.2. Facilitators response on specific level of delegated duties to beneficiaries in M&E of the development project:

The study wanted to establish the level which beneficiaries are engaged in M&E of development projects especially when it comes to decision making and financial responsibility. These are the key aspects to be considered in project implementation and the success of the project is almost entirely relying on these aspects.

Table 4.9 Level of delegated duties in decision making and financial responsibility to beneficiaries

	Frequency	Percent
Project planning	2	6.9
Project implementation	11	37.9
Project sustainability	16	55.2
Total	29	100.0

It was observed that 55.2% of the respondents from facilitator's side stated that beneficiaries play a key role in project sustainability. At this stage, their decision making and perhaps information on resource allocation entirely depends on their input. However, 37.9% of them also stated that they play a crucial role in project implementation. At this stage, they provide critical information required for decisions to be made. Lastly, it is observed that beneficiary input in terms of decision making and financial responsibility contributes less in project planning as indicated by 6.9% of the facilitators. At this stage, majority of the beneficiaries are not engaged in numbers which means that the task is mainly taken up by the facilitators.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics showing the beneficiary awareness of project M&E practices (N=82)

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Participatory in evaluation is usually carried out at the end of the project.	1.43	.703
Participatory evaluation is jointly carried out by all project partners.	1.38	.796
Key decisions regarding the evaluation are made jointly by all project partners.	1.44	.630
Valid N (listwise)		

The study established that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that participatory in evaluation is usually carried out at the end of the year. The statistics obtained from 82 respondents were rated with a mean of 1.43 and a heterogeneous standard deviation of .703 which means that in average majority of them highlighted the first choice in a Likert scale.

Similarly, majority of them also stated that participatory evaluation is jointly carried out by all project partners. This was rated with a mean of 1.38 and a heterogeneous standard deviation of 7.96 which also implies that in average, majority of the respondents strongly agreed on this variable.

Lastly, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the key decisions regarding the evaluation are made jointly by all project partners. This was evidently shown by a mean of 1.44 and a heterogeneous standard deviation of .630.

4.3 Limitations of beneficiaries' participation in M&E of development project:

The study wanted to ascertain various limitations faced by beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation the development projects. The results are as indicated below.

Table 4.11 Limitations for beneficiary participations in M&E of development projects

	Frequency	Percent
Technical capacity	7	24.1
Financial capacity	20	69.0
Structural capacity	2	6.9
Total	29	100.0

The study asked the facilitators to indicate some of the limitations which hinder beneficiary participation in development projects and it was observed that financial capacity is the main challenge highlighted by 69% of the facilitators followed by technical efficiency highlighted by 24.1% and lastly the structural capacity highlighted by 6.9% of the facilitators.

Nonetheless, beneficiaries were asked the same questions and the results they provided are as follows;

Table 4.12 Technical capacity to participate in M&E of the project

	Frequency	Percent
More than enough	7	8.5
Enough	22	26.8
I don't know	4	4.9
Not enough	48	58.5
Not at all enough	1	1.2
Total	82	100.0

The study indicates that majority of the respondents stated that they do not have enough technical capacity to participate in monitoring and evaluation of development projects. This is illustrated by the statistics whereby 8.5% of the respondents mentioned that they have more than enough skills, 26.8% stated that they have enough skills, 4.9% stated that they don't know the capacity required to conduct M&E, 58.5% stated that they do not have the capacity and 1.2% stated that they have never had any capacity to conduct this exercise. This implies that in average, majority of the beneficiaries believe that they have enough technical capacity to conduct M&E of the development projects. Technical capacity in this case implies to the ability of the beneficiaries to apprehend the process and practices to be undertaken while conducting M&E. It basically refers to the skills and knowledge of beneficiaries to undertake impact assessment of the project. Since majority of the beneficiaries participate in monitoring process, either through regular follow-up of the project or continuous participation in the project activities, majority of them believe that they have the technical capacity.

Table 4.13 Financial capacity

	Frequency	Percent
Enough	18	22.0
I don't know	19	23.2
Not enough	37	45.1
Not at all enough	8	9.8
Total	82	100.0

The study indicates that 22.2% of the respondents stated that they have more than enough financial capacity, 23.2% stated that they do not know the level of financial capacity they have, 45.1% stated that they do not have enough financial capacity. This implies that in average majority of the beneficiaries do not have enough financial capacity to conduct M&E of the development projects.

Table 4.14 Structural capacity

	Frequency	Percent
Enough	14	17.1
I don't know	29	35.4
Not enough	31	37.8
Not at all enough	8	9.8
Total	82	100.0

The study established that 17.1% of the respondents stated that they have enough structural capacity, 35.4% stated that they don't know the structural capacity, 37.8% stated that they do not have capacity and 9.8% mentioned that they have never had structural capacity to conduct M&E of the project.

Table 4.15 Correlations between beneficiary capacity and their ability to participate in M&E process

		Technical capacity to participate in M&E of the project	Financial capacity	Structural capacity
Do you normally monitor the work of this project Rwanda	Pearson Correlation	.278*	-.162	-.091
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	.145	.414
	N	82	82	82
Are you involved in evaluation of the project?	Pearson Correlation	.350**	-.102	-.025
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.361	.824
	N	82	82	82
Are all members involved in this process?	Pearson Correlation	.679**	.132	.242*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.237	.028
	N	82	82	82

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study indicates that there is a positive correlation between beneficiary participation in monitoring and evaluation and technical capacity to participate in M&E of the project. This is indicated by a Pearson correlation .278* and p-value of 0.012. This means that majority of the beneficiaries who participate in M&E process has technical capacity to do so. Contrary to this, there is a negative correlation between beneficiary participation in M&E and financial capacity as well as structural capacity as indicated by the correlations above.

It also observed that all members are not involved in this process because mainly they don't have financial capacity as indicated by a Pearson coefficient of .132 and a p-value of .237.

Table 4.16: Whether beneficiaries participate in baseline survey to provide your views

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	56	68.3
No	26	31.7
Total	82	100.0

The study found that 68.3% of the respondents agreed that beneficiaries participate in baseline survey to provide their views whereas 31.7% denied. This means that they participate in the process of data collection which is used to measure the impact of the project on beneficiaries. They do so by filling the questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and others provide testimonies.

Table 4.17 Whether opinions collected during the baseline survey taken seriously

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	68	82.9
No	14	17.1
Total	82	100.0

The study shows that 82.9% of the respondents agreed that their opinions collected from the baseline survey are taken seriously whereas 17.1% denied. This implies that the beneficiaries contributions facilitates information sharing concerning the impact of the development project.

Table 4.18: Whether the results from the survey are documented and share them widely to create awareness

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	73	89.0
No	9	11.0
Total	82	100.0

The study indicates that 89% of the respondents agreed that the results from the survey are documented and shared widely to create awareness whereas 11% denied. The importance of information sharing is to facilitate awareness on the impact of development project. Information in development project is needed to plan, make decisions, and act is often held outside their own organizations, collected for widely different purposes, and maintained in disparate formats. Information sharing allows the project stakeholders to work at the same time, with the same information integrated from multiple disparate sources. It has the potential to support the development process of the project and communication channels among multiple agencies working in different locations.

4.4 The role of beneficiary participation in M&E on prudent management of resource, effective project implementation and attainment of project goals:

The study wanted to find out the role of beneficiary participation on M&E of development projects in order to assess key factors which contributes to project sustainability which among them include; prudent management of the resources, effective implementation of the project and attainment of project objectives. The results are as shown below;

Table 4.19 Descriptive statistics showing the role of beneficiary participation on sustainability

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Prudent management of resources		
Accountability	1.55	.827
Transparency	1.41	.780
Getting value for money	1.28	.455
Effective implementation of the project		
Efficiency of the project	1.21	.412
Effectiveness of the project	1.17	.468
Meeting objective goals	1.28	.528
Attainment of project objectives		
Progressive development agenda	1.45	.632
Transforming lives of beneficiaries	1.21	.412
Sustainable project development	1.28	.455
Valid N (listwise)		

The study used a Likert scale to rate the above five variables such that those who indicates that they strongly agree would be indicated by a mean of (0-1.5), agree (1.6-2.4) Neutral (2.5-3.5) disagree (3.6-4.4) and strongly disagree (4.5-5.0). The above table indicates that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that beneficiary participation in M&E can lead to project sustainability particularly when the project activities are accounted for (Mean=1.55), when there is transparency (Mean=1.41) and also when the project beneficiaries attains the value of money (Mean=1.28). Such factors fall under the prudent management of the resources. Beneficiary participation in M&E at this stage is very important factor to consider.

Secondly, the study established that majority of the respondents also strongly agreed that for project to be sustainable, beneficiaries must be allowed to monitor and evaluate the efficiency of the project (Mean=1.21), its effectiveness (Mean=1.17) and the ability of the project to meet its goals (Mean=1.28).

Finally, it is observed that for project to attain its project objectives, beneficiaries out to be allowed to participate in M&E in order to push the progressive development agenda (Mean=1.45), transform their lives as a results (Mean=1.21) and also be able to sustain the project after the completion (Mean=1.28).

In conclusion, the main benefit of beneficiary participation appears to be the building of community capacity, and beneficiary organization appeared to increase the amount of participation, build community capacity and lead to more local control and hence ownership. There's unmistakable evidence that community participation has a favorable impact on the outcomes of a project and this linkage gets established through better aggregation of preferences, better design through use of local knowledge, pressure by community on bureaucracies to perform and better sustainability through ownership.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Findings:

This section provides a summary of the results per objectives of the study.

5.2 Level of beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda:

The study indicates that there is a positive correlation between beneficiary participation in monitoring and evaluation and technical capacity to participate in M&E of the project. It implies that majority of the beneficiaries who participate in M&E process has technical capacity to do so. Contrary to this, there is a negative correlation between beneficiary participation in M&E and financial capacity as well as structural capacity as indicted by the correlations above.

The study found that beneficiary participation in M&E can take various forms. In some projects, it may be no more than providing information to review or evaluation teams, but this is too limiting. It was observed that beneficiary participation in M&E is low. Beneficiaries participate mainly in data collection and giving testimonies. Some of them stated that they have been involved through filling the questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions. Apart from that they are not involved in data analysis and documentation. This is a conventional way of M&E rather than participatory approach.

On level of knowledge the goals and objectives of the project, the beneficiaries seemed to understand well the purpose and expectations of the project. They however, did not understand well the amount of the investment made in the project, and neither did they understand the returns each one of them was supposed to make from the project, implying that they seemed to globe in the dark about the business they were engaged in. Least understood, however, was the timeframe within which they were expected to make those returns, and element which would seriously affect the project evaluation, noting that projects have timeframes within which they are supposed to be completed.

5.2.1 Limitations of beneficiary participation in M&E of development projects financed by LODA in Rwanda:

Whereas majority of the beneficiaries actually are aware that they have a role to participate in M&E process of the projects, the analysis indicates that structures may not be in place to accommodate their contributions. The beneficiaries were aware of the existence of the stakeholder forum and its roles, and they were also aware of their financing models in the different project locations and apparently interacted well with these models. The study also found that majority of the respondents stated that they lack financial and structural capacity to participate in M&E of the project. On the effects of beneficiary participation in project monitoring and evaluation, the beneficiaries agreed that the project had many underlying benefits.

5.2.2 Role of beneficiary participations in M&E on prudent management of resources, effective implementation of the project and attainment of project objectives:

It was established that beneficiary participation in the project activities is essential for the sustainability of the project, critics have been quick to point out that there is often is a limited number of members of the community participating in project activities. In addition, their participation is generally restricted to simple matters, such as provision of labour and cost sharing, and not with the important issues faced during the process of decision making as it relates to project initiation and execution and monitoring and evaluation.

5.3 Conclusion:

From the above, it's clear that the beneficiaries see benefits in participation on M&E of the development projects funded by LODA. In fact, they think the project is effective and can lead to alleviation of poverty. It is also clear that all the variables considered affecting projects monitoring and evaluation had factors whose absence inhibited effective project monitoring and evaluation. For example, the beneficiaries reveled a below average in participation in participatory planning workshops, an activity geared to enhancing beneficiary ownership of the project. This means that if the situation is not checked, if no interventions are made to ensure beneficiary participation, then this key stakeholder in projects monitoring and evaluation can be left out in the exercise altogether.

5.4 Recommendations:

While conducting this research, the researcher was faced with quite a number of challenges which included finances, time and personnel. Beneficiaries should be involved in planning the assessment (including selecting indicators), providing information on what was and was not achieved, analysing and verifying the results and making decisions about future activities. Findings should always be fed back to communities. The needs of communities in this regard may differ from those of outside agencies, and the targets, indicators and priorities developed by communities may differ considerably from those of agency staff. Adopting participatory approaches does not prevent the use of more formal data collection methods: these can complement or validate information gathered in a participatory way. Methods should be selected according to their usefulness in helping to understand impact.

Since it is never possible to involve everyone, careful thought must be given to ensuring that those who are consulted are representative of the range of groups concerned, paying particular attention to the most marginalised as well as people

who may have dropped out of the project. Some evaluations pick up the views of similar people who were not involved in the project as a kind of 'control group'.

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