

FACTORS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABILITY OF CHURCH FUNDED PROJECTS: A CASE OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ISIOLO, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Church funded projects is a powerful global concept which describe those businesses with primarily social and environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in businesses or in the community rather than to provide returns to owners and shareholders as profit. Financial sustainability is critical to church funded projects for stability and enhancement of growth. It may necessitate the development of diverse resource bases for the Catholic Church as it's becoming the case so that it can continue its institutional structure and production of benefits for intended community after the cessation of financial support. However, church funded projects usually end their operations when funding stops. The scenario in the Diocese of Isiolo, the number of Catholic funded projects has been steadily increasing yearly. However, the sudden end of almost 50% of such projects with noble goals in the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo have seen the very hopes and lives that were already raised in the beneficiaries might suffer due to sustainability challenges of the church funded projects. The purpose of the study was to identify the factors influencing sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya. The specific objectives are: to establish the extent to which community participation influences sustainability of church funded projects, to determine the extent to which source of funds influence sustainability of church funded projects, to establish

whether institutional capacity influences sustainability of church funded projects and to determine the extent to which project planning influences sustainability of church funded projects within the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya. This study will be limited to Catholic Church organizations within Isiolo Diocese as there are a number of projects within Isiolo, Kenya and its periphery. It included all the management teams and project facilitators which are the CARITAS which oversees the catholic projects in Isiolo County. Although the headquarters of the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo is in Isiolo town, some church funded projects are located both within and outside the Isiolo town. This study adopted a descriptive research design which is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or groups. The researcher focused on all the management teams and project facilitators which are the CARITAS which oversees the catholic projects in Isiolo County. There are 50 management teams and project facilitators from the CARITAS and these were used as the study respondents. The study adopted a census sample design which allowed the use of a sample size of 50 respondents. Data was collected through questionnaire. Descriptive statistic such as frequencies and percentages were used. Quantitative data is presented using tables while qualitative data is presented in narrative form.

Key Words: *sustainability, church funded projects, catholic diocese, Isiolo, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

Church funded projects is a powerful global concept which describes those businesses with primarily social and environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for

that purpose in businesses or in the community rather than to provide returns to owners and share-holders as profit (Leadbeater, 2013). Church funded projects is the contemporary global trend of Corporate Social Responsibility that is spreading as scholars and business people realize the importance of meeting the social and environmental needs of the society, thus bridging the gap between the rich and the poor.

In the United States of America, a church funded project provides a completely new vision in business animated by social purpose that is, attending to the unmet needs of the society and the environment (Leadbeater, 2013). Church funded projects creates a positive image, earns an individual or institution special respect amongst its peers, reduces pollution, creates employment opportunities by taking various projects like construction of parks, schools, health centers, tree planting and serves the needs of the society. Individuals, institutions and corporate entities that undertake church funded projects take the dimensions of social response and social contribution. While some go on selective basis beyond the legal requirements using cost-benefit analysis, others volunteer with a sense of deep obligation to serve the society regardless of the costs or benefits involved. The lack of legal framework and government support has made competition challenging for such organizations except in a few countries (Pattiniemi, 2010).

In Europe, church as an institution as well as individual people in the Church especially, missionaries have played a key role in the alleviation of socio-economic challenges of people in various comers of the world through church funded projects. This has been mainly through the provision of education, health facilities and food alongside their spiritual nourishment (Flannery, 2009). At times, such projects are usually brought to a sudden halt with the transfer of an individual minister, demise of donors or withdrawal of funds by the donors who support such courses.

In South Africa, there has been a sudden halt of the church funded projects which often leaves incomplete projects, unfulfilled goals and unfulfilled hopes of the beneficiaries whose livelihood and uplifting to a higher level of security in terms of food, education and medical health was solely dependent. This has in most cases left challenges in managing such projects, dissolution or reduction in the number of beneficiaries at best. It is such moments that various stakeholders and beneficiaries struggle with the church funded projects and wish they would have initiated some sustainability structures to seen them through such unforeseen yet compelling and demanding challenges. This brings in the importance of sustainability of church funded projects within Church organizations as a preventive strategy that could see the successful completion of various church funded projects and eventual fulfillment of the visions of the founders of such projects (Pattiniemi, 2010).

In Uganda, the financial capacity of church organization comprises resources that provide an organization with the ability to seize opportunities and to react to unexpected threats while continuing to manage general operations of the organization. Given that churches serve in high-need communities that require consistent and continually available services, the challenge is even more pronounced. The goal of financial sustainability for non-profit organiza-

tions is to maintain or expand services within the organization while developing resilience Vis a Vis the occasional short-term economic shocks (Bowman, 2011).

In Kenya, there are challenges facing church funded projects include, but are not limited to, the need to maintain financial sustainability and to pursue the church mission. In order to counter these challenges, these organizations must be guided by a sustainability strategy. Along this line of thought Masoka and Zimmerman (2010) maintain that the success of non-profit organizations (including CROs) cannot be measured only by their high-impact programs if there is no effective accompanying strategy for sustaining the organization financially.

In Isiolo County, the catholic church has been in frontline to establish projects that are community based and they seek to empower local community groups and institution by giving the community direct control over investment decisions, project planning, execution and monitoring which is realized through a process that emphasizes inclusive participation, church management and implementation of the projects (Karanja, 2014). Successful implementation of such projects may be affected by how well heterogeneity is managed, by what resources and strategies are used to bring communities together and how effectively the interests and differences of the members are dealt with.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Financial sustainability is critical to church funded projects for stability and enhancement of growth. It may necessitate the development of diverse resource bases for the Catholic Church as it's becoming the case so that it can continue its institutional structure and production of benefits for intended community after the cessation of financial support. However, church funded projects usually end their operations when funding stops. In the Isiolo scenario, the number of Catholic funded projects has been steadily increasing yearly. However, the sudden end of almost 50% of such projects with noble goals in the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo have seen the very hopes and lives that were already raised in the beneficiaries might suffer due to sustainability challenges of the church funded projects. This has made the Catholic Church funded projects to be challenged in continuity in offering their services midst the demand for continuity as most challenges require long term solutions. It is from this information that the study focused on establishing the factors influencing sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the study was to identify the factors influencing sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To establish how community participation influences sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.
2. To determine how source of funds influence sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.

3. To establish how institutional capacity influences sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.
4. To determine how project planning influences sustainability of church funded projects; a case of the catholic diocese of Isiolo, Kenya.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

A project is considered successful when it is completed on time, on budget, within its scope and solves its intended purpose. However, for this to be realized, various other functions of the project needs to be addressed in planning and closely monitored to ensure that established church funded projects execute the desired goals.

Concept of Sustainability

Sustainability implies that society must use no more of a resource than can be regenerated. This can be defined in terms of the carrying capacity of the ecosystem (Hawken, 1993) and described with input-output models of resource consumption. Unsustainable operations can be accommodated for either by developing sustainable operations or by planning for a future lacking in resources currently required. In practice organizations mostly tend to aim towards sustainability by increasing efficiency in the way in which resources are utilized. It is the core of organizational effectiveness and connected to all other key components (WCC, 2005). Sustainable strategies must therefore be considered in the areas of strategic direction, spiritual values, moral values, governance, management practices, human resources, impact of service delivery, financial resources and external relations. Sustainable organizations have been found to have at a minimum: A clear mission and strategic direction, the necessary skills to attract resources from a variety of local and international sources, skills and ability to manage resources effectively and efficiently and any effort at organizational regeneration (Ogre & Gitoho, 2005).

Community Participation

Community participation is the sociological process by which residents organize themselves and become involved at the level of a living area or a neighborhood, to improve the conditions of daily life (water, sanitation, health, education). It comprises various degrees of individual or collective involvement (financial and/or physical contributions, social and/or political commitment) at different stages of a project. Since, it implies that residents set up management committees in charge of equipment (Moningka, 2010).

Moningka (2010) adds that community participation can be seen as a process in which community members are involved at different stages and degrees of intensity in the project cycle with the objective to build the capacity of the community to maintain services created during the project after the facilitating organizations have left. Community participation throughout the whole project, thus from project design and sustainability to evaluation, ensures the reflection of community priorities and needs in the activities of the project and motivates communities into maintaining and operating project activities after the project is completed.

According to Mansuri and Rao (2011) church funded projects are typically implemented in a unit referred to as a 'community'. This often refers to either an administratively defined locale such as a village, a tribal area, or a neighborhood, or identifies a common interest group, such as a community of weavers or potters. It is common in the literature on development policy to use the term, without much qualification, to denote a culturally and politically homogeneous social system, or one which is, at least implicitly, an internally cohesive and more or less harmonious entity.

In Nigeria, Maduagwu (2009) indicates that the Government should not presume that they know what will benefit the poor better than the poor themselves. Maduagwu (2009) further indicates that projects should be embarked upon because people need them not because contractors are pushing for them. Citizens should clarify their own needs and priorities. Capra (2011) sees participation as essential for establishment of community cohesiveness. It enables members to live together, share common norms, values, fears, and challenges as well as embrace the principle of partnership with the dynamic of change and development which bring about democracy and personal empowerment, build the tendency to associate, establish link, live inside each other and cooperate.

Mulwa (2008) argues that an organization that lacks commonness and diversity of interests and vision is likely to challenge attainment of the objective, while limited awareness will affect the quality of project conscientiousness. Naive understanding of notions like community participation and social capital can obscure differences that critically influence outcomes. Such differences may arise from multiple sources. They may be driven by local structures of power, authority and gender, by social divides based on caste, race or ethnic identities, by differential interests in the provision of particular public goods or services or by differential resources due to economic inequality (Mansuri and Rao, 2011).

Mosse (2011) examines several participatory projects and finds that even in projects which had a high level of participation, what was labeled as 'local knowledge' was often a construct of the planning context and concealed the underlying politics of knowledge production and use. UNESCAP (2009) shows that a form of participation can be traced to 1940s in Nigeria where a colonial District officer in charge of community development wrote frequently about how self-help development could transform the capacity of Nigerians to identify their own needs and strengthen their abilities to improve their won condition.

Approaches of participation have been popularized by RRA and PRA approaches to community development and research which Chambers (2010) refers to as a family of approaches and methods to enable rural people to share, enhance, and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and act. Cleaver (2009) observes participatory approaches as ways of building synergy, ownership and enhancement of sustainability.

Participatory approach has been criticized on the basis that no single study (to establish) a causal relationship between any outcome of a project and its participatory elements (Mansuri and Rao, 2011). They have also faulted the individualization of the concept of action and the depolarization of empowerment. Their observation is that it would be difficult to elaborate on

who is empowered; individual or community or categories of people e.g. women, the poor or socially excluded (Cleaver, 2009).

Mansuri and Rao (2011) observe that there is a substantial, and disparate, theoretical literature on collective action and coordination by economists, sociologists and anthropologists which examines the relationship between heterogeneity and the capacity for collective action. This literature has identified a number of constraints to collective action and has also indicated the types of environments in which coordination issues are likely to be more or less problematic.

Community participation is key to the success of any given project at the level of the community. Members of the community through church funded projects address issues that directly affect them in an effort to curb situations of interest to them. If the community is therefore not involved at the various project levels, chances of it not owning the project may render its operational capacity unattainable.

Source of Funds and Sustainability of Church funded projects

Mobilization is the process of forming crowds, groups, associations and organizations for the pursuit of collective goals. Organizations do not emerge spontaneously but require the mobilization of resources. In modern capitalistic society, these resources are free flowing and are easier to mobilize than in the more traditional societies. There are various resource needs in starting an organization, that is technology, labour, capital, organizational structure, societal support, legitimacy etc. the right mix of these resources are not always available. Stinchcombe (2010) posits that organizational development seems to occur in spurts followed by long periods of stability.

Magano (2008) outlines that funding is the element that could positively contribute to the success of the project and indicated that the financial need of the project should be reflected in both the planning and sustainability proposals. In measuring the success and failure of poverty alleviation projects, availability of project funding specially focusing on comparing the amount of money required to start the project with that received should be considered (Tshitangoni, Okorie and Francis, 2010). The availability of continuous funding, transparency and faithfulness of members of management are also regarded as success factors of poverty alleviation projects (PAPs). Tshitangoni (2010) indicated that lack of basic business practices such as record keeping as well as poor business records impacted negatively to poverty alleviation projects and resulted from lack of training on business management skills.

An article by Duggan (2011) stated that in order to maximize profitability and return on investment, project managers require a working knowledge of basic finance accounting concepts like cost benefit analysis, budgeting, break-even-analysis and forecasting. According to Meredith and Mantel (2009) the following financial factors may impact positively and or negatively on projects: profitability, net present value of the investment; impact on cash flows; cash requirements; time until break-even; size of the investment required; impact on seasonal and cyclical fluctuations; cost of getting systems up to speed and level of financial risks.

According to the World Bank (2010) financial management brings together planning, budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, internal control, auditing, procurement, disbursement and the physical performance of the project with the aim of managing project resources properly and achieving the development objectives. According to Ravhura (2010) it is imperative that community development projects (CDPs) start with financial and indicates that community development projects at Mutale Municipality used funds for various purpose without the plan. Ravhura (2010) further indicates that the financial plan would assist in eliminating the random usage of project money, which contributes to the mismanagement of funds.

It is important to establish protocols for the disbursement of funds, procurement, financial management and transparency (Haider, 2009). Haider further indicates that financial management training is required although efforts should be made to simplify bookkeeping. The misuse of funds is a risk when financial management responsibilities are transferred to local communities that suffer weak capacity and training should be done alongside with procedures to ensure transparency which include the use of multiple local signatories for receipt of funds and procurement, the maintenance of financial records as well as public access to and regular inspections of these records (Haider, 2009).

The World Bank (2009) further indicates that financial management is a critical ingredient of project success and that sound project financial management provides essential information needed by those who manage, implement and supervise projects, including government oversight agencies and financing institutions; the comfort needed by the borrower country, lender and donor community that funds have been used efficiently and for the purpose intended and a deterrent to fraud and corruption, since it provides internal control and the ability to quickly identify unusual occurrences and deviations.

Most community approaches are financed through installments as opposed to once off large grants. Delays in payments create problems for programme management and can result in frustration, disillusionment and loss of support to beneficiaries and insufficient funding will have greater negative impact (Haider, 2009). The creation and maintenance of record is integral to the operation of the management system and there is an implicit assumption that records are being created and are available to support each stage of the management cycle. It was further indicated that records must be preserved and classified for easy access because they provide the paper trail on which the accounting system is based. Record must be created for each financial transaction (World Bank, 1999).

According to Mulwa (2008) the fundraising strategies for the community based organizations in Kenya have varied from merry go rounds, micro credit and savings schemes, consultancy, serves, fanfare and special events, harambees and endowment fund. However, there are others like the public, private sector partnerships, the corporate social responsibility and the government funding, either through an agency or directly as well as donor support. Different sources of funds, depending with the PMCs strategy, will influence directly or indirectly, the sustainability of the church funded projects due to the conditions that go with them as well as the volume each strategy is likely to earn. Projects require funding. Funds form one of the major resources that enable day to day operations of most of the church funded projects. It is

however important to point out that due to poor fund management most projects fail to meet their budget constraints and end up incomplete and of little value to communities that instituted them.

Institutional Capacity and Sustainability of Church funded projects

Many studies and investigations point lack of skills and low level of education as a factor that compromise the success of community projects. In community Based Disaster Management projects, the need for community training in accordance with the objectives of the project is identified among the key factors for enhancing sustainability (Pandey and Okazaki, 2005). Pandey and Okazaki (2010) further indicate that community based action plans and training improve community problem solving skills.

In Thailand, the Asian Centre for Tourism Planning and Poverty Reduction (2008) established a capacity building program on community based tourism project with the aim of enhancing knowledge and understanding of local communities in developing community- based tourism projects through organizing training courses for the local community. One of the outputs from training, in addition to knowledge and attitude changes, is that the community has a chance to do a SWOT analysis and get involved in setting a community vision, direction and plan (Asian Centre for Tourism and Poverty Reduction, 2008).

According to Tshitangoni (2010) 27% of project members do not have any formal education which is critical in ensuring project sustainability because educated members may easily grasp and implement skills that they receive during training. The community development support project established in Kayes and Koulikoro had as one of its objectives addressing high level of illiteracy affecting mainly women (Nzau-Muteta et al, 2009). Training is important in team development and includes actions designed to improve the skills, knowledge and competencies of the project team. For example, general management skill is important for team development (Knipe, 2010).

In the United States of America the new Indian Education Centre was established to provide facilitator leadership training to the Native American communities in the field-based mode, with the capacity to link existing service delivery systems to resulting exemplary local projects to provide technical assistance (Miller, 2009). The aims of the Centre were to provide leadership development, to provide training for local community members, to provide technical assistance to local communities and to provide information and dissemination services. The main focus was to develop the capacity of local communities and the creation of employment.

Knowledge and skills are paramount in running of church funded projects. Very minimal results will be achieved if projects are not run systematically and necessary skills applied in maximizing output. Project leaders and members require trainings to enable them understand issues at the level of commonness and proven result oriented procedures.

Project Planning and Sustainability of Church funded projects

Mihelcic et al. (2003) defines sustainable development as the design of human and industrial systems to ensure that humankind's use of natural resources and cycles do not lead to diminished quality of life due either to losses in future economic opportunities or to adverse impacts on social conditions, human health, and the environment.

The way a project is planned and implemented can have considerable influence on its long-term sustainability. For instance, by fostering participatory approaches, remaining flexible in the face of inevitable setbacks, and strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to plan and manage future actions, development officers can help ensure that interventions have a lasting impact on the vulnerable communities they serve. Each of these principles of project sustainability was seen in the projects visited as part of the case studies.

Development projects can take place in a variety of situations. The ideal situation, according to McDade (2004), would be first to determine the priorities of the people (both men and women) themselves and then to focus the project, or multiple projects, on assisting them in improving their livelihoods and making them more sustainable. However, many projects are more specifically focused, oftentimes due to the expertise of the implementing organization.

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 long-term sustainability of projects. Historically, many projects have failed to achieve their intended goals (Bishop 2001). Multiple factors contribute to this phenomenon. One key factor is the manner in which projects are planned and executed. 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.

The UN designates three pillars of sustainability: economic, social, and environmental (UN 2002). McConville and Mihelcic (2007) further subdivide the social pillar into three components: socio-cultural respect, community participation, and political cohesion. The result is a group of five factors, containing practices central to achieving sustainability in development. The comprehensive planning process enables communities to identify local social, economic, and environmental issues, engage and educate the community; and promote the long-term health and sustainability of the community (Kelly and Becker 2000; Public Health Law and Policy 2006).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Stakeholder Theory

Community members are stakeholders in community projects therefore it is important to involve them in projects activity from the start. Stakeholder's theory argues that every legitimate person or group participating in the activities of a firm or organization, do so obtain benefits, and that the priority of the interest of all legitimate stakeholders is not self-evident

(Donaldson, and Preston, 1995). Stakeholder Theory pays equal credence to both internal and external stakeholders; employees, managers and owners as well as financiers, customers, suppliers, governments, community and special interest groups.

Community participation enhances social cohesion as they recognize the value of working in partnership with each other and organizations. It also adds economic value both through the mobilization of voluntary contributions to deliver regeneration and through skills development, which enhances the opportunities for employment and an increase in community wealth, gives residents the opportunity to develop the skills and networks that are needed to address social exclusion. CBOs must ensure the community members voluntarily and actively participate in the projects from the start. This theory also emphasizes that the community members also benefit from their participations. CBOs need to ensure the community members also participate in the decision making, their staffs are trained on handling the community members and also the community members' interests are considered. This theory therefore leads to research question three which inquires on how community participation affect the successful performance of the CBOs projects. This theory will therefore assist in the better understanding of the importance of community participation in the success of community projects.

Resource-Based Theory

The currently dominant view of business strategy resource-based theory or resource-based view (RBV) of firms is based on the concept of economic rent and the view of the company as a collection of capabilities. This view of strategy has a coherence and integrative role that places it well ahead of other mechanisms of strategic decision making (Kay, 2005). The resource-based view (RBV) offers critical and fundamental insights into why firms with valuable, rare, inimitable, and well organized resources may enjoy superior performance (Barney, 1995). Its current prominence is reflected not only by its dominance in the academic journals, by its inclusion in leading strategic texts which warrants the conclusion that it is widely taught to students and practitioners in undergraduate, masters' and executive programs.

Building on the RBV, Hoopes, Madsen and Walker (2003) suggest a more expansive discussion of sustained differences among firms and develop a broad theory of competitive heterogeneity. The RBV seems to assume what it seeks to explain. This dilutes its explanatory power. For example, one might argue that the RBV defines, rather than hypothesizes, that sustained performance differences are the result of variation in resources and capabilities across firms. The difference is subtle, but it frustrates understanding the Resource Based View's possible contributions (Hoopes et al., 2003). The Resource Based View's lack of clarity regarding its core premise and its lack of any clear boundary impedes fruitful debate. Given the theory's lack of specificity, one can invoke the definition-based or hypothesis-based logic any time. Again, we argue that resources are but one potential source of competitive heterogeneity. Competitive heterogeneity can obtain for reasons other than sticky resources (or capabilities) (Hoopes et al. 2003). Competitive heterogeneity refers to enduring and systematic performance differences among close competitors.

The RBV uses firms' internal characteristics to explain firms' heterogeneity in strategy and performance. A firm is an organized, unique set of factors known as resources and capabilities, and RBV theory cites two related sources of advantages: resources and capabilities. Resources are a firm's accumulated assets, including anything the firm can use to create, produce, and/or offer its products to a market. Resources are eligible for legal protection (as such, firms can exercise property rights over them; Amit and Shoemakers, 1993); can operate independently of firm members (Camisón, 2005); and intervene as factors in the production process to convert input into output that satisfies needs (Grant, 1991).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey design which is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or groups (Kothari 2009). Descriptive survey design was used in this study as it enables a researcher to gather data from a relatively large number of subjects at a particular time. The study aimed at collecting information from respondents on Factors Influencing Sustainability of Church Funded Projects in Isiolo Diocese.

Target Population

Kombo and Tromp (2006) describes population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement or it is an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. In choosing the members who participated, the researcher focused on all the management teams and project facilitators which are the CARITAS which oversees the catholic projects in Isiolo County. There are 50 management teams and project facilitators from the CARITAS and these were the study respondents.

Sample Design and Sample Size

The study adopted a census sample design which allowed the use of a sample size of 50 respondents. This is due to the fact that the target population was manageable and the respondents were within church systems which could be accessed easily. According to Kothari (2010), census is a complete enumeration of all items in the population.

Research Instruments

This study employed primary data collection. The questionnaire had both open ended and closed ended questions. The researcher personally collected the data. This was useful in administering the questionnaires to the sampled population since it ensured that respondents were reached without any external influences. For the closed ended questions, a Five-Point Lickert scale was used. Lickert (1932) developed the principle by asking people to respond to a series of statements about a topic, in terms of the extent to which they agree with them and so tapping into the cognitive and affective components of attitudes.

Piloting of the Research Instruments

Piloting ensured that the questionnaire was free from ambiguity and the data generated was meaningfully analyzed in relation to the stated research questions. This was done by administering (10% of the sample size) similar capacity as the actual respondents in CARITAS Meru, one of the Catholic Organization's in Meru County and which contained similar characteristics as the study area. After piloting, adjustments were made accordingly to address areas of concern.

Validity of Research Instrument

Validity of the measuring instruments refers to the degree to which the tools used to measure what was intended to be measured. In this study, the questionnaires were piloted to enhance their correctness and consistency. The pilot study was conducted in respondents in Meru CARITAS in Catholic Diocese of Meru in Meru town using management teams. Information obtained from the pilot study was used to adjust the questionnaire.

Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability explains that the results are the same even if the research is carried out by another researcher on a different occasion. Test- retest will be used to measure reliability where questionnaires will be given to respondents in Meru CARITAS in Catholic Diocese of Meru, and after 2 weeks this will be repeated again. The data was subjected to correlation coefficient and a correlation of 0.81 was obtained. According to Kothari (2010), a correlation coefficient of 0.7 is desirable for newly developed questionnaires.

Data Collection Procedures

To generate data for this research study, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the University of Nairobi which was presented to the respondents during data collection. The researcher with help of research assistants then visited the CARITAS administration offices to make appointments then later visited the sampled respondents to establish rapport. Adequate time was accorded to each respondent to obtain appropriate answers to the questions after which the accorded completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and accuracy.

Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive data collected from this study was entered in a Microsoft Excel database, cleaned to ensure accuracy and completeness then imported to SPSS. Statistical Package version 22.0 was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used.

Ethical Issues

Introduction letter given to the respondents made this research authentic as it sought to explain what the study was all about, assuring the respondents that the study was purely for academic purposes. The personal right of choice to participate in this study was ensured by

informing the respondents of their voluntary participation and withdrawal from the study any time they wished. Trained research assistants were used to conduct this study, ensuring high levels of professionalism and humility especially on respondents of lower education levels and those that wished to discontinue as participants of this study. The findings were to be shared to any respondent who wished to see the outcome of the research.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Community Participation

The study established that since ownership by community is not taken into consideration during project inception and implementation stages of church funded projects community resource mobilization for sustaining church funded projects is therefore not adequate thus negatively influencing community participation and their long term gains from church funded projects. This finding supports the study done by Moningka (2010) which notes that community participation entails involvement of community members at different stages and degrees of intensity in the project cycle with the objective of building the capacity of the community to maintain services created during the project after the facilitating organizations have left. It is also in agreement with the study done by Mansuri and Rao (2011) who found that community participation was vital to the success of any given project at the level of the community. Members of the community through church funded projects address issues that directly affect them in an effort to curb situations of interest to them. If the community is therefore not involved at the various project levels, chances of it not owning the project may render its operational capacity unattainable.

Source of Funds and Sustainability of Church funded projects

The findings reveal that lack of reliable funds influences the church's budgetary allocations as well as timely disbursement of monetary resources to various projects. This in turn negatively influences the sustainability of various church funded projects. This finding is in line with that of This findings agree with those of Magano (2008) and those of (Tshitangoni, Okorie and Francis, 2010) who found that funding is the element that could positively contribute to the success of the project and indicated that the financial need of the project should be reflected in both the planning and sustainability proposals.

Institutional Capacity

The study established that despite lacking adequate facilities and proper equipment for project sustainability the church has policies and procedures in place as well as skilled personnel who are competent and ready to oversee the sustainability of church funded projects within the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo. This finding supports the study done by Miller (2009), in the United States of America where the new Indian Education Centre was established to provide leadership training to the Native American communities with the aim of providing leadership development, training, technical assistance and to provide information and dissemination services to local communities . The main focus was to develop the capacity of local commu-

nities to have the necessary knowledge and skills paramount in running of church funded projects.

Project Planning

In line with this objective the study established that in as much as the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo had modern technology that positively influenced the sustainability of church funded projects, the socio-cultural lifestyle of the pastoralist community which involved being constantly on the move coupled with the arid nature of climatic conditions of northern Kenya planning, implementation and timely completion of church funded projects was often negatively influenced hence posing a challenge on the sustainability the said projects within the Catholic Diocese of Isiolo. This finding agrees with those of Mihelcic (2003) who found that the way a project is implemented depends so much on project planning of the organisation and this can have considerable influence on its long-term sustainability.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that Catholic Church is actively involved in project implementation activities enhancing community cohesiveness. This enables project members to live together while sharing common norms and values necessary for successful project implementation and development. Members have also ensured availability of continuous funding for their projects, transparency, accountability and faithfulness of members of funds management. Projects members are aware that knowledge and skills are important in the implementation of community based projects. Both project leaders and members are undertaking appropriate trainings and have required skills for handling issues related to successful project implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since community participation is significant to successful project implementation, development agencies and project leaders should strive to sensitize community participation in community based projects.

Funds management is a critical function in all community based projects since it influences successful implementation of the projects, projects leaders and development partners need to emphasize and undertake training on proper management of funds.

There is need for institutional capacity development to identify resource availability and build capacities in communities and have them assisted to undertake church based projects.

Project members should also be sensitized on the various aspects of sustainability and its importance so that they can be more involved in planning for projects sustainability.

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