



Assessing the Importance of Community Engagement & Participation in Project Monitoring and Evaluation: A Case Study on the Impact of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects in Kanjala Ward – Chipata Central Constituency.

Regina Banda¹, Dr. S. Benjamin Franklin²

¹MSW Student, ²Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Sri Ramachandra University (DU), Chennai, India

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to assess the importance and impact of the Community Engagement and Participation in Monitoring and Evaluating Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects.

The researcher conducted the study in Kanjala Ward – Chipata district Constituency, Eastern Province. The objective of this Study was to assess the significance and impact of Community Engagement and Participation in enhancing CDF Project outcomes in Project Monitoring and Evaluation.

This study examined the variables that affect the utilization of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in relation to CDF Projects. Community Engagement and Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects is important as it give the chance to the community members to learn about the achievement or if there any deviations from original plans so that remedial measures can be taken in time. Community Engagement and Participation contributes to capacity building of the Project beneficiary, by ensuring that participants are actively involved in all the stages of project through formal or informal training and consciousness raising activities. The study was be guided by the following objectives;

To determine the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation in Projects Identification and Completion of CDF funded Projects in Kanjala – Chipata Central constituency.

To assess the Level of Community Participation in implementation of Community development Projects CDF funded Projects.

To assess the impact of Community Engagement and Participation on CDF Projects outcomes.

The study employed the mixed methods approaches in the collection of data in Kanjala Ward. The Ward sits on 142.1Km square and has a density population of 250 per Km square the overall population for Kanjala ward is 35, 577 (Census 2010) and the target population is Constituency Development Fund (CDF) beneficiaries from which a sample of 50 respondents was selected. Data collection was done using Focus groups, Surveys and questionnaires, and in-depth interviews for both primary and secondary data. This researcher administered Questionnaires to Community Members, Council Personnel, Councilors, WDCs, and other stakeholders in the Communities under study.

Keywords: Participation, Community, Community Participation, Engagement, Project, Monitoring & Evaluation, Capacity Building, Community Development Fund (Zambia)

INTRODUCTION

Community Engagement and Participation plays a crucial role in the successful Monitoring and evaluation of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects. As the globe now focuses on sustainable development and Community driven initiatives continue to grow, there need to understand the impact of community involvement in Project monitoring and evaluation as it has become increasingly important. This study aims to assess the significance of Community Engagement and Participation in the context of Project Monitoring and Evaluation with a specific focus on the impact of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects in Kanjala Ward - Chipata Central Constituency.

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was introduced in 1995 after approval by the National Assembly as an “instrument” to facilitate the delivery of public goods and services to foster development for local Communities. The objective of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was to create

an enabling environment for all-inclusive development at Constituency level where Members of Parliament and the local Community have the opportunity to make choices and implement Projects which would improve the well-being of their respective constituencies.

Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is one of the policy tools which can greatly influence development in Communities if well utilized. Ojwang and Bwisa (2014) argue that CDF Projects are meant to safeguard Communities from the centralized and often rigid impersonal governance of state institutions that may not pay attention to specific Communities under the guise of administrative rationality. Countries around the world have different methods of CDF implementation. Advocates of CDFs argue that, they give opportunities to the local Communities to select the Projects that are to be funded and how the funds are to be allocated and utilized. However, this statement is not as it sound and would only be achieved if Local government comes up with a deliberate policy which local Communities should be fully engaged in all the activities of CDF Project cycle.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discussed the key concept which was used in this study and looked at a number of theories by different authors concerning their views relating to the role of Community Engagement and Participation in the successful Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Project Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of development Projects and recognized the significance of involving local Communities in decision making processes.

This section looked at the literature review of the past studies from the global level to the regional level and then ward level.

There is excess of literature on local government in Zambia, but there is lack of literature exclusively focusing on Community engagement and Participation in Constituency Development Fund (CDF) process at local level. However, a few research studies were conducted on Community participation at grass-root development Projects. Other works from outside Zambia that are related to the current study was also reviewed. The core findings of those studies were highlighted out here. Community Engagement and Participation is a concept that is described by various scholars in various ways. Arnstein. S. (2019) Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation highlights the different levels of community participation, ranging from non-participation to citizen control. She emphasizes the importance of power sharing in decision making processes. Pretty. J. (2016) – Pretty's concept of community based natural resources management focuses on empowering local communities to manage their resources sustainably. He argues that involving communities in decision making can lead to better outcomes.

Regional Perspective

CDFs have been implemented in different parts of the developing world for years. In Uganda, for instance, a CDF-like mechanism existed in since 1969 (Chambers 1974). Papua New Guinea introduced a CDF in 1984, thereafter; CDFs became a common government budget allocation mechanism mainly in Asia and African Parliamentary involvement in grassroots projects and in community development according to Baskin (2010). Since then CDF has been growing in many developing countries including Papua New Guinea, Bhutan, Jamaica, Pakistan, India, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya.

On the regional level, Nyanguti & Oyugi (2013) looked at the influence of Community Participation on successful implementation of CDF Projects in Kenya: This was a descriptive study whose general objective was to assess the influence of community participation on successful implementation of CDF projects. The study by Nyanguti and Oyugi (2013) had similarities with the current study in that it was also dealing with the CDF Projects. The other similarity was on the involvement of the community in the CDF Project implementation processes. However, the current Project looked at Community Engagement and Participation Monitoring and Evaluation of CDF Projects such as levels of awareness of CDF project guidelines

National perspective

[Asian Journal](#) of Social Science and Management Technology. This can be better understood by

looking at the case study of what transpired in the central province during a project inspection. It has become a norm to hear of stories where Zambian contractors have abandoned or left government funded projects before they are actually completed.

Kabaila (2014) states that during a tour of government funded projects in Eastern Province the Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet who was accompanied by Eastern Province Permanent Secretary, Permanent secretary Policy Analysis Coordination and Division (PACD), found that most of the Government Projects were below standards they attributed this to lack of seriousness among Zambian contractors in general.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the research viewpoint, research design, research strategies to be adopted by the study, Population of the study, sampling Procedure, sample size, Sources of Data Collection, data, Methods of data collection, Tools for Data Analysis, Limitations of the study and Limitations of the study, ethical Considerations. It will finally look at reliability, validity and the limitations that will be faced in gathering the evidence.

This study used a descriptive research design in which a mixed method was employed (quantitative and qualitative methods) that guided the assessment of community engagement and participation in monitoring and evaluation CDF funded projects in Kanjala ward of Chipata central Constituency. The researcher adopted a descriptive analytical research design incorporating quantitative and qualitative methodological paradigms with the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as main data collection tools.

The study was done in Kanjala Ward of Chipata Central Constituency of Eastern Province in Zambia. The sample of the study was 50 respondents residing in Kanjala Ward of Chipata Central Constituency which comprised of twenty-five (25) Cooperatives members, two (2) health facility administrators, six (6) school Headteachers, four (4) health staff and six (6) teaching staff. From the civic side, there was one (1) Member of Parliament (MP), one (1) ward councilor and five (5) CDF committee members. Education, Health and Cooperatives respondents completed questionnaires while civic personnel were interviewed.

The sampling techniques used in this study was purposive sampling which allowed for the selection of participants who had direct experience or knowledge the Ward and CDF Projects, ensuring that the sample is representative of the target population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data was analyzed in accordance with the research questions in first chapter of this research. The data is presented in tables and graphs to aid in the analysis.

1.1 Response rate

The table below delineate the response rate. A total number of 50 questionnaires were distributed of which 49 were retained fully completed. Thus, the response rate was 98 percent i.e. 49 out of 50 questionnaires were completed.

Total no. of questionnaires distributed	50
Number of questionnaires retained	49
Number of questionnaires completed	49
Response rate	98

1.2 Demographics Analyses

The demographics analyses were significant in the research as they allowed the researcher to determine whether she was actually reaching the targeted community members and at the same time gathering the information she needed. Furthermore, the demographics characteristics helped the researcher determine how close the sample represents the population of Kanjala Ward.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Strongly Agree	2	4.1	4.1
Agree	3	6.1	6.1
Not sure	2	4.1	4.1
Disagree	18	36.7	36.7
Strongly Disagree	24	49.0	49.0
Total	49	100.0	100.0

The table above illustrates the responses in finding out if the Community is actively involved in Monitoring and Evaluation of CDF Projects, 3 (6.1 percent) disagreed, 2 (4.1 percent) were not sure. 18 (36.7 percent) agreed and 24 (49.0 percent) strongly agreed. The respondents who strongly Disagreed constituted the majority. This implies that there is less Community involvement actively involved in Monitoring and Evaluation of CDF Projects.

MAJOR FINDINGS

According to the statutory provisions, community members should be fully involved in the monitoring and assessment of CDF projects. However, this study revealed otherwise. The study's conclusion on resource mobilization was that local government is primarily responsible for the low levels of community engagement and participation. It also came to the conclusion that Kanjala Ward residents are not completely involved in decision-making. The survey found that the community's knowledge about CDF programmes in Kanjala Ward was noticeably lacking. There were few opportunities for residents to participate, as evidenced by their low levels of involvement in determining project needs and priorities. There appeared to be a lack of community involvement in the decision-making processes, as evidenced by the low perceived influence on project implementation.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends educating community members on their role in the identification and decision-making processes related to CDF projects within the ward, emphasizing their involvement throughout the entire project cycle, not just in monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, the researcher suggests amending the CDF Act to clarify the role of community members in resource utilization and to establish an independent body, separate from

local government staff, where community members can effectively monitor and evaluate CDF projects. Effective involvement of community members in procurement processes is also recommended to avoid the use of substandard materials and ensure high-quality work. To further enhance community engagement, the study suggests implementing awareness campaigns to inform residents about CDF projects, their purposes, and their potential benefits, along with developing clear and accessible channels for community participation in identifying project needs and priorities. Creating a collaborative environment where the community feels empowered to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of CDF projects is crucial.

The study also highlights the need to review existing strategies for promoting community engagement, as they may not be effective. Innovative approaches to foster meaningful community involvement should be explored, including alternative communication methods, technology platforms, and the establishment of community-led project committees. Examining successful models of community engagement in CDF projects from other regions can provide valuable insights into key elements contributing to their success and whether these strategies can be adapted to the specific context of Kanjala Ward. Furthermore, elected councilors and Ward Development Committee members should be well-versed in CDF guidelines and take charge of all projects occurring within the wards to ensure proper oversight and community involvement.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the significance of community engagement and participation in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects. Focusing on Kanjala Ward, Zambia, the research explored the level of community involvement, its influence on M&E processes, and its impact on project outcomes.

The study found that Community Engagement and Participation in M&E for CDF Projects in Kanjala Ward was moderate. While Community Members attended meetings and provided feedback during Project selection, their involvement in data collection and analysis was limited. This involvement did, however, improve the identification of project issues and led to more realistic project timelines.

While the long-term impact requires further investigation, initial signs suggest community participation contributed to a greater sense of ownership and potentially improved project sustainability.

These results highlight the importance of fostering active community participation in all stages of the CDF project cycle, from needs identification to M&E

REFERENCES

- Musenge D. (2013). An assessment of
- Rabia Malik (2019) Community engagement and culture
- Robert Ochoki Nyamori (2009) Trait utilization
- Ongoya, Z.E & Lumallas, E (2005) A Critical Appraisal of the Constituency Development Fund ACT, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Development: The Case of West Bengal, India” (CDR Research Report 8), Copenhagen.
- Andrea C. (2008) Unpacking ‘Participation’: models , meanings and practices.
- Stratford Peer Reviewed Journals and Book Publishing Journal of Marketing & Communication Volume 1||Issue 1||Page 61-77 ||June ||2018|
- Folotiya, T. (2000). An Analysis of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy at the
- Local Government Level, Research Report (LL.B), The University of Zambia.
- Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), Constituency Development Fund:
- Black, P., & William, C. (2004). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. Granada Learning.
- Transparency in Grassroots Development or Political Patronage, Tearfund and Micah Challenge, (2013)
- Nyanguti & Oyugi (2013). Influence of Community participation on successful implementation of Constituency Development Funded Projects in Kenya:
- International Budget Partnership Constituency Development Funds: Scoping Paper 18 January 2010
- Kariuki, D. K and Misaro, J. (2013) Socio-Economic Status and Participatory
- Development in Kenya. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 3 No. 1; January
- Kakungu, F. Resource Allocation Model for the Constituency Development Fund, Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR), Working Paper No. 13, December 2013.
- Kakumba, U. & Nsingo, S. (2008). Citizen Participation in Local Government and the Process of Rural Development: The Rhetoric and Reality of Uganda. Journal of Public Administration. Vol. 43. No.2, pp 107-123.

- Khwaja, A. I. (2004), Is Increasing Community Participation Always a Good Thing?
- Journal of the European Economic Association April–May 2004 2(2–3):427– 436.
- Kumar, S. (2002). Methods for Community Participation: A complete guide for practitioners. London: ITDG Publishing.