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Assessing the Effect of Stakeholder Responsiveness on Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia

Edwin Andrew Dopoe Jr^{1}, Susanne Nambatya², Emmanuel Tweh Friday³*

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kampala International University. Ggaba Road, Kansanga, Kampala District, P.O Box 20000, Uganda

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kampala International University. Ggaba Road, Kansanga, Kampala District, P.O Box 20000, Uganda

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kampala International University. Ggaba Road, Kansanga, Kampala District, P.O Box 20000, Uganda

* E-mail of the corresponding author: edwindopoe28@gmail.com

ABSTRACT :

This study examined the effect of stakeholder responsiveness on community development initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia, a post-conflict context where governance effectiveness and citizen engagement remain critical for sustainable development. Guided by Political Economy Theory and Social Capital Theory, the research employed a descriptive cross-sectional design with a mixed-methods approach. A total sample of 133 respondents, comprising community members, local government officials, and representatives of NGOs and development agencies, was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data was collected through methods such as interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary reviews, with validity and reliability of data collection instruments ensured through expert judgment and Cronbach's alpha coefficients above 0.90. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS (version 31) for descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis, while qualitative data was thematically analyzed. The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives ($r = .879, p < .001$), with regression analysis showing that responsiveness accounted for 77.3% of the variance in community development outcomes. Responsiveness, manifested in timely action, transparency, proactive problem-solving, and acting on citizen feedback, was found to enhance collaboration, equity, inclusiveness, capacity building, and innovation. The study concludes that stakeholder responsiveness is pivotal in fostering legitimacy, participation, and resilience in community-driven development. It recommends strengthening citizen feedback mechanisms, enhancing local leadership capacity, institutionalizing participatory governance, and promoting accountability frameworks to ensure sustainable and inclusive development in post-conflict urban settings.

Keywords: Stakeholder Responsiveness; Community Development Initiatives; Sanniquellie City; Liberia

1. Introduction

Community development in post-conflict societies is inseparable from the quality of governance structures and the responsiveness of stakeholders who manage and influence local development processes. Stakeholder responsiveness, understood as the ability of state institutions, civil society organizations, and community leaders to listen, engage, and act upon the needs of citizens, has emerged as a cornerstone of effective governance. In fragile states, where institutions often struggle to rebuild legitimacy and regain public trust, responsiveness is not merely an administrative function but a developmental imperative. Liberia, and particularly Sanniquellie City, offers a pertinent context in which to explore these dynamics. World-wide, the significance of responsiveness has been well documented. Brazil's participatory budgeting programs, Nepal's local self-governance reforms, and community-led initiatives in Nigeria and Kenya demonstrate that development outcomes improve when stakeholders incorporate citizen input and act accountably (Wampler, 2012; Acharya, 2018; Odugbemi, 2010; Oloo, 2020). Equally, weak responsiveness, manifested through bureaucratic inertia, elite capture, or tokenistic participation, erodes trust and undermines the sustainability of community initiatives (Shunglu et al., 2022; Mansuri & Rao, 2021). These global and regional experiences illustrate a consistent pattern: responsiveness is indispensable for aligning development efforts with community priorities, enhancing inclusivity, and fostering long-term resilience.

In Southern America, Brazil's participatory budgeting programs that integrated citizen feedback into municipal planning have improved satisfaction with service delivery and deepened trust between communities and government institutions (Wampler, 2012). In Cambodia, community forestry initiatives illustrate how responsive engagement mechanisms, where authorities recognize and act on community concerns, foster collective ownership of natural resource management and strengthen developmental outcomes (Persson & Prowse, 2017). Similarly, in Scotland, the Community Empowerment Act institutionalized continuous stakeholder engagement, improving responsiveness in policy formulation and yielding development outcomes that reflect local aspirations (Elliott, Fejszes, & Tärrega, 2019). These global cases demonstrate that responsiveness, when embedded in governance systems, ensures that communities are not passive recipients but active co-designers of their development paths.

Across the continent of Africa, stakeholder responsiveness has emerged as a central theme in decentralization reforms and grassroots initiatives. In Kenya, devolved county governments have sought to institutionalize stakeholder consultations through public forums, enhancing transparency and responsiveness in local planning (Oloo, 2020). While capacity constraints remain, these forums have strengthened citizen confidence in governance processes. In Nigeria,

community dialogues facilitated by grassroots organizations demonstrate how responsiveness to citizen concerns improves outcomes in sectors such as water, education, and small-scale infrastructure (Mbah & Obiagu, 2020). Research in South Africa by Tshabalala (2022) reveals that communities with responsive local leadership are better able to mobilize resources during crises, underscoring the role of responsiveness as a resilience mechanism. Zimbabwe's Bindura Municipality also illustrates how structured responsiveness, training leaders to engage actively with community concerns has improved service delivery and strengthened perceptions of accountability (Chinemhiri, 2024). Despite these successes, challenges remain. Many African countries struggle with tokenistic consultations, elite capture, and weak feedback systems that undermine genuine responsiveness (Shunglu et al., 2022). These experiences highlight that responsiveness is effective only when it is continuous, institutionalized, and backed by accountability frameworks.

In the Liberian context, stakeholder responsiveness must be examined against the backdrop of post-conflict reconstruction and fragile governance. Historically, Liberia's highly centralized political structure left local communities with limited avenues to influence decision-making. In Sanniquellie City, the consequences of weak responsiveness remain evident: citizens are often excluded from planning processes, mechanisms for feedback are limited, and development interventions risk being mismatched with community priorities (Mansuri & Rao, 2021). The establishment of County Service Centers was intended to create responsive service delivery points, yet their limited capacity has constrained effectiveness, with many essential services still concentrated in Monrovia (World Bank, 2022). This gap has fueled frustration and weakened trust in governance institutions. Nonetheless, emerging initiatives show the transformative potential of responsiveness in Liberia. Programs that directly involve community leaders and civil society actors in development planning have demonstrated improved outcomes in legitimacy, participation, and sustainability. For instance, when local stakeholders are engaged in project design, communities are more willing to contribute resources and knowledge, reinforcing shared ownership of initiatives. Moreover, responsiveness has been shown to foster social cohesion, as communities perceive their voices as shaping equitable service delivery and development priorities (Anderson, 2021). Yet, persistent challenges, such as political centralization, resource shortages, and weak feedback channels, undermine the scale and consistency of these efforts. Ultimately, the Liberian experience illustrates that stakeholder responsiveness is more than a governance ideal; it is a developmental necessity in post-conflict settings. In Sanniquellie City, where legacies of mistrust and marginalization continue to shape local governance, enhancing responsiveness is critical for rebuilding confidence in institutions and ensuring that development initiatives reflect genuine community needs. By embedding responsiveness into planning, implementation, and evaluation, local authorities and partners can not only improve service delivery but also lay the groundwork for long-term stability, inclusiveness, and sustainable community development.

Theoretically, stakeholder responsiveness is well anchored in both Political Economy Theory and Social Capital Theory. Political Economy Theory explains how governance institutions and resource allocation structures shape responsiveness, while also highlighting systemic barriers that limit local decision-making and accountability (Kimenyi, 2018). Social Capital Theory, on the other hand, emphasizes trust, networks, and reciprocity as social resources that facilitate responsive governance and collective action (Portes, 2024). When combined, these theories underscore that responsiveness is shaped not only by institutional arrangements but also by the strength of social relationships within a community. In Sanniquellie City, where legacies of conflict weakened institutional trust, rebuilding social capital is crucial for creating an environment where responsiveness can thrive. Responsiveness entails more than just consultation. It is a dynamic process encompassing accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, and adaptability. Responsive stakeholders provide timely feedback, integrate citizen voices into planning and implementation, and demonstrate through action that community concerns influence decision-making. When responsiveness is present, citizens are more likely to participate actively, invest in collective action, and sustain community development initiatives. When absent, however, development projects risk being viewed as externally imposed, irrelevant, or exploitative, thereby diminishing sustainability.

In Liberia, particularly in Sanniquellie City, this highlights the urgent necessity to rigorously assess the aspect of responsiveness. Although Liberia's decentralization reforms and the establishment of County Service Centers were designed to bring governance closer to citizens, Sanniquellie's service center remains under-resourced, with many functions still centralized in Monrovia (World Bank, 2022). This has created delays, costs, and perceptions of unresponsiveness among citizens. Moreover, political instability and bureaucratic inertia exacerbate the disconnect between local leaders, policymakers, and community members, leaving development programs poorly aligned with local priorities (Sawyer, 2022). As a result, community initiatives often lack sustainability and legitimacy. Assessing the influence of stakeholder responsiveness in Sanniquellie City is therefore not only an academic inquiry but also a practical necessity. It allows for an understanding of how governance effectiveness intersects with citizen engagement, social cohesion, and trust in institutions. By situating the study within a post-conflict context, this research highlights the need for governance approaches that emphasize accountability, inclusiveness, and participatory mechanisms. The findings carry important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders seeking to improve governance structures and foster resilient, community-driven development. In sum, the study argues that stakeholder responsiveness is central to the success of community development initiatives in fragile urban contexts. In Sanniquellie City, responsiveness holds the potential to rebuild legitimacy, bridge the gap between institutions and citizens, and lay the foundation for sustainable and inclusive development.

2. Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives

Stakeholder responsiveness plays a pivotal role in the success of community development initiatives, as evidenced by recent empirical literature. Brown (2021) highlights that the active participation of stakeholders, encompassing community members, local organizations, and government agencies-enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of development projects. Brown's study demonstrates that when stakeholders are involved in the planning and implementation phases, the resulting initiatives are more likely to address the community's actual needs. By fostering a sense of ownership among stakeholders, these initiatives are more likely to receive the necessary support and participation, ultimately resulting in better outcomes. For example, Brown found that projects designed with stakeholder input not only had higher rates of participation but also achieved better outcomes in terms of community satisfaction and impact. Brown's findings highlight the importance of creating inclusive platforms for stakeholder engagement, which are essential for ensuring that diverse voices are heard and considered in the planning and implementation stages. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2023) conducted a longitudinal study that reinforces these findings, illustrating that inclusive stakeholder engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members. This sense of ownership is critical for the sustainability of development projects, as it encourages ongoing participation and

support. Lee et al.'s study concludes that responsive engagement mechanisms are essential for aligning development initiatives with community aspirations and for ensuring that projects can adapt to changing circumstances and needs over time.

Adding to this discourse, Eisenhauer and Nicholson (2022) conducted a longitudinal study that explores the effects of stakeholder engagement on community projects. Their research reveals that communities where stakeholders are actively engaged experience higher levels of satisfaction with development initiatives. The authors argue that inclusive participation not only enhances project effectiveness but also strengthens community ties. When stakeholders perceive that their input is valued, they are more likely to contribute their time and resources to support initiatives. This sense of shared purpose fosters collaboration and trust among community members, which is vital for the sustainability of development efforts. The study emphasizes that effective communication and transparency are essential elements in fostering trust and responsiveness among stakeholders. In a similar vein, Berry et al. (2023) investigated the role of stakeholder engagement in enhancing the effectiveness of community development initiatives. Their findings indicate that projects that prioritize stakeholder involvement from the outset tend to have better alignment with community priorities, leading to higher success rates. The research highlights the importance of creating mechanisms for ongoing dialogue between stakeholders, which allows for continuous feedback and adaptation of initiatives. This dynamic approach not only improves project outcomes but also cultivates a culture of collaboration and mutual respect among stakeholders. Berry et al. emphasize that responsiveness to stakeholder input is not merely beneficial but essential for fostering community resilience in the face of changing circumstances.

Furthermore, a study by Adebayo et al. (2024) highlights the impact of stakeholder responsiveness on the sustainability of community development initiatives in various contexts. The authors found that projects characterized by strong stakeholder engagement are more likely to endure beyond initial funding phases. Their research suggests that when stakeholders are involved in decision-making and implementation, they develop a vested interest in the project's success, leading to ongoing support and resource mobilization. This enduring commitment is particularly important in resource-constrained environments, where the sustainability of initiatives often hinges on local buy-in and ongoing participation. The study reinforces the notion that stakeholder responsiveness is critical for ensuring that community development initiatives remain relevant and effective over time. Additionally, a study by Santos and Lima (2023) examined the mechanisms through which stakeholder responsiveness influences community development outcomes. Their research found that effective engagement strategies, such as community forums, workshops, and participatory planning processes, lead to increased stakeholder investment in development initiatives. The authors argue that these strategies not only enhance the relevance of projects but also empower community members to take an active role in shaping their own development. By fostering environments where stakeholders feel heard and valued, communities can create more inclusive and effective development pathways. This empowerment is essential for building local capacity and resilience, enabling communities to adapt to challenges and seize opportunities for growth.

Finally, the work of Kim and Lee (2022) further elucidates the importance of stakeholder responsiveness in achieving community development goals. Their study highlights that when stakeholders are engaged in the evaluation of project outcomes, it leads to more meaningful assessments of effectiveness. This feedback loop allows for real-time adjustments to initiatives, ensuring that they remain aligned with community needs. The authors emphasize that fostering a culture of responsiveness not only improves project outcomes but also strengthens the overall governance framework within communities. By integrating stakeholder perspectives into evaluation processes, communities can enhance accountability and transparency, ultimately leading to more successful and sustainable development initiatives.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive and cross-sectional research design to assess stakeholder responsiveness and its effect on community development initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative techniques, primarily the use of structured questionnaires on a five-point Likert scale, analyzed through descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression, with qualitative methods such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and documentary reviews to provide deeper contextual insights. The target population comprised 200 individuals, including local government officials, community members, and representatives of NGOs and development agencies, with a final sample size of 133 determined using Yamane's formula. A combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques was applied to ensure both inclusivity of key actors and representativeness of the broader community. Primary data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs, while secondary data was obtained from scholarly works, reports, and government documents. Validity of instruments was ensured through expert review, yielding a high Content Validity Index (CVI = 0.90), and reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, with coefficients above 0.90 confirming internal consistency. Data analysis involved the use of SPSS (version 31) for quantitative data and thematic/content analysis for qualitative data, with findings presented through tables, narratives, and verbatim quotes. Ethical considerations guided the process, ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality, and informed consent, while limitations such as incomplete responses, social desirability bias, and reliance on structured tools were mitigated through oversampling, assurances of anonymity, and triangulation via qualitative methods.

4. Results

The target sample size for the study was 133 respondents, which included both local community members and key informants. Among these, 102 local community members successfully participated in the quantitative portion of the study, while 31 key informants contributed qualitative data. This results in a combined response rate of 100% for the respondents. The following table summarizes the response rates for both groups:

Table 1: Response Rate

Participant Type	Target Sample Size	Successful Participants	Response Rate (%)
Local Community Members	102	102	100%

Key Informants	31	31	100%
Total	133	133	100%

Source: Primary data, 2025

The response rate of 100% indicates a strong level of engagement from the population in Sanniquellie City. The response rate of 100% indicates a strong level of engagement from the population in Sanniquellie City, providing a reliable basis for assessing the effects of stakeholder responsiveness on community development initiatives.

4.1 Gender of Respondents

The study aimed to ascertain the gender of the respondents. Comprehending the gender distribution of respondents is crucial in a study that assesses the effect of stakeholder responsiveness on community development initiatives, since gender may affect individuals' experiences, involvement rates, and views of governance and development processes. Results from the table below illustrate that 52.9% of the respondents were male and 47.1% of the respondents were female, demonstrating a very equitable gender representation. This nearly equal distribution bolsters the reliability of the findings by guaranteeing the inclusion of both male and female perspectives in the analysis. It facilitates a more comprehensive evaluation of how stakeholder responsiveness impacts community development results across gender distinctions. This balance is especially pertinent in situations where equitable participation and access to decision-making procedures are essential for effective and inclusive community development.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	105	52.9%
Female	95	47.1%
Total	102	100%

Source: Primary data, 2025*4.2 Age of the Respondents*

The study was interested in the age distribution of respondents because age often shapes individuals' engagement, priorities, and perspectives on governance and development. As shown in Table 3 below, the respondents were drawn from a wide range of age groups. The largest group was those aged 40 to 49 (34.3%), followed by those aged 30–39 years (24.5%), above 50 years (21.6%), and 20–29 years (19.6%). This distribution suggests that the study captured insights from both younger and older adults, which enriches the analysis by incorporating generational differences in how the responsiveness of stakeholders is perceived and experienced in relation to community development initiatives. The fact that a large number of respondents were middle-aged or older also suggests that the data reflects the views of people who may have more experience with or knowledge of local governance processes and community initiatives. This adds to the depth and relevance of the study's findings.

Table 3: Age of Respondents

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
20-29 years	20	19.6
30-39 years	25	24.5
40-49 years	35	34.3
Above 50 years	22	21.6
Total	102	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025*4.3 Education Level of Respondents*

The study was interested in finding out the level of education of the respondents because education influences awareness, participation, and the ability to engage with governance and development processes. The findings in Table 4 below reveal that respondents had diverse educational qualifications. The largest number of respondents held either a Bachelor's degree (25.5%) or a Diploma (25.5%), which means that more than half of the people who answered had tertiary-level education. Also, 6.9% had a Master's degree and 9.8% had a Certificate qualification. At the same time, 13.7% had no formal education, and lower percentages had finished primary (8.8%) or secondary (9.8%) school. This varied distribution shows that the study included people with varying levels of education, which makes the results more interesting. The fact that a lot of the respondents who answered had some post-secondary education shows that they were able to grasp, evaluate, and think critically about issues related to stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives. Including respondents with less education also makes sure that the opinions of potentially marginalized or underserved groups are heard, which is important for a comprehensive understanding of how stakeholder responsiveness impacts community development initiatives inclusively.

Table 4: Educational Levels of the Respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor Degree	26	25.5
Certificate	10	9.8
Diploma	26	25.5
Master Degree	7	6.9

No Education	14	13.7
Primary Level	9	8.8
Secondary Level	10	9.8
Total	102	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

4.4 Respondents' Number of Years Staying in Sanniquallie City, Liberia

Respondents were asked how long they had been staying in Sanniquallie City, as duration of residence can influence familiarity with local governance systems, historical development trends, and the effectiveness of community initiatives. The results in Table 5 below show that a significant majority of respondents had lived in the city for a long time: 31.4% for more than 10 years, 35.3% for 6–10 years, and 30.4% for 1–5 years. Only 2.9% had lived in the area for less than a year. This distribution shows that most respondents had lived in the community for a long time. This makes their responses about stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives more reliable. Long-term residents are more likely to have observed changes in governance structures over time, experienced various development interventions, and formed informed opinions on their impact.

Table 5: Respondents' Number of Years Staying in Sanniquallie City, Liberia

Number of years in Sanniquallie City		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	1-5 years	31	30.4
	6-10 years	36	35.3
	Above 10 years	32	31.4
	Less than 1 year	3	2.9
	Total	102	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2025

4.5 The Effects of Stakeholder Responsiveness on Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquallie City, Liberia

The study aimed to assess the effects of stakeholder responsiveness on community development activities in Sanniquallie City, Liberia. The subsequent sub-sections include the descriptive statistics and regression analysis of the stakeholder responsiveness and community development activities in Sanniquallie City, Liberia.

4.5.1 Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquallie City, Liberia

The researcher gave some statements to the respondents, soliciting their thoughts and standpoints. The responses for this particular study objective are displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquallie City, Liberia

Stakeholder Responsiveness	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Mean	SD
Local authorities respond quickly to community concerns.	00 (0.0%)	04 (3.9%)	30 (29.4%)	46 (45.1%)	22 (21.6%)	3.84	.805
Community leaders regularly engage with residents to understand their development needs.	00 (0.0%)	05 (4.9%)	29 (28.4%)	43 (42.2%)	25 (24.5%)	3.86	.845
Stakeholders are open and transparent in the development process.	00 (0.0%)	02 (2.0%)	35 (34.3%)	43 (42.2%)	22 (21.6%)	3.83	.785
Stakeholders are proactive in solving local challenges.	00 (0.0%)	04 (3.9%)	28 (27.5%)	43 (42.2%)	27 (26.5%)	3.91	.785
Stakeholders take action based on citizen feedback.	00 (0.0%)	02 (2.0%)	30 (29.4%)	45 (44.1%)	25 (24.5%)	3.91	.834
Overall						3.87	.810

Source: Primary data, 2025

The statement, "Local authorities respond quickly to community concerns," investigates the timeliness and efficiency of local authorities in addressing the needs and concerns raised by the community. The findings, reflected with a mean score of 3.84 and a standard deviation of 0.805, indicate that residents perceive local authorities as being responsive and swift in their actions. Specifically, 45.1% agreed and 21.6% strongly agreed, meaning that a combined 66.7% of the sample view local authorities as responsive. Only 3.9% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, which reinforces the positive consensus. The comparatively low standard deviation shows that all respondents had similar views. This level of responsiveness has direct implications for adaptability and innovation within community development. When local authorities are quick to act, they can rapidly adjust development interventions to meet emerging needs, thereby enhancing the community's ability to adapt to new challenges or crises. In turn, this responsiveness builds trust and provides a lively environment where new ideas are welcomed, as community members are more willing to suggest new ideas and get involved when they think something will happen. The statistical findings are supplemented with the verbatim below from one Local Government official:

Whenever there's an issue—be it a broken well or a land dispute—our office tries to act within a day or two. We have learned that if we delay, it becomes a bigger problem. (Local Government Leader, Male, Sanniquallie City)

This verbatim quotation shows how quickly local officials acted to address community concerns. It matches the descriptive data's high mean score of 3.84, which shows that people in the community think that authorities are responsive. The quick response not only addresses problems but boosts adaptability, allowing the community to respond swiftly to challenges and maintain development progress. It also signals a culture of accountability, encouraging citizen trust and participation in collaborative development initiatives.

The statement, "Community leaders regularly engage with residents to understand their development needs," explores the extent of interaction and dialogue between community leaders and residents. This statement got a mean score of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.845, which means that people agreed with it a little more than the first statement. In this case, 42.2% agreed and 24.5% strongly agreed, which means that 66.7% of the respondents who answered see community engagement as regular and meaningful. The fact that no respondents strongly disagreed and only 4.9% disagreed points to a broadly positive sentiment. This continual engagement is essential for building partnerships and fostering collaboration in community development. When leaders talk to citizens on a regular basis, they come up with ideas together, agree on goals, and build mutual understanding, which enhances the success of development initiatives. This collaboration ensures that projects are based on what the community really wants, which makes them more useful and long-lasting. Regular interaction also helps people feel like they own the project, which is important for long-term development and lessening reliance on outside help. The statistical findings are supplemented with the verbatim below from one female community member:

Our village chief comes to the women's group every month to ask what problems we face. Last time, we talked about the need for a market shelter, and now it is being discussed at the city level. (FGD, Local Community Members, Sanniquallie City)

This quote shows how community leaders and grassroots residents work together. The mean score of 3.86 in the data shows that most people agree with this view. This kind of involvement makes sure that development projects are led by the community, which improves partnerships and collaboration. It also makes feedback loops that let leaders speak for real needs in policy and planning meetings. This helps development that includes a wide range of community perspectives, notably those of women and other vulnerable groups.

The statement, "Stakeholders are open and transparent in the development process," evaluates how transparent and accountable stakeholders are during planning and implementation of development activities. This statement got a mean of 3.83 and a standard deviation of 0.785, which means that respondents generally agreed with it, but not quite as strongly as they did with the first two. A total of 42.2% agreed and 21.6% strongly agreed, which means that 63.8% supported the statement. The low standard deviation shows that the answers are consistent, which means that everyone in the community thinks that the development process is transparent and honest. Openness in the development process strongly contributes to equity and inclusion. Sharing information openly makes things fairer for everyone in the community, no matter their gender, age, or status. This way, everyone has access to the same information and chances to get involved. This open-minded strategy stops elite capture, cuts down on corruption, and makes stakeholders more trustworthy, giving marginalized communities a say in development projects that affect their lives. The statistical findings are supplemented with the verbatim below from an NGO representative:

Before we implement any project, we hold a town hall meeting, share our budget, timeline, and who will benefit. That way, no one is left in the dark. (NGO Representative, Female, Sanniquallie City)

This verbatim quotation reflects a deliberate effort by NGOs to practice transparency in development work. The mean of 3.83 supports this sentiment, suggesting that such practices are common and appreciated. Openness fosters equity and inclusion, allowing community members to understand and monitor how resources are used. This transparency reduces suspicion and elite capture, ensuring that all groups have an equal opportunity to benefit from development initiatives and that implementation remains accountable to public expectations.

The statement, "Stakeholders are proactive in solving local challenges," examines the initiative taken by stakeholders in addressing problems before they escalate. This statement got one of the highest scores of all the items, with a mean score of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 0.785. A total of 42.2% agreed and 26.5% strongly agreed, which means that 68.7% of the people who answered feel that stakeholders take the lead in solving problems before they get worse. This kind of proactivity is very important for establishing capacity in the community. When stakeholders see problems coming and fix them early, they show others how to think strategically and solve problems, which gives local people skills and methods they may use again. Proactive stakeholders typically put money into infrastructure, training, and information that will help the community manage its own development in the future. So, their ability to respond helps not just with short-term results but also with long-term community resilience. The statistical findings are supplemented with the verbatim below from a Development Agency Staff:

We don't wait for a community to send complaints. Our field officers conduct regular visits, identify risks early, and propose interventions before issues become crises. (Development Agency Staff, Female, Sanniquallie City)

This quote illustrates proactive stakeholder behavior, aligning with the highest recorded mean score of 3.91. Proactivity translates into better capacity building at the community level. Field visits and early intervention mean stakeholders can offer training, tools, and institutional support before problems escalate, which increases local resilience. It also models forward-thinking governance, enabling the community to learn problem-solving strategies and apply them in other contexts, reinforcing sustainable development outcomes.

The statement, "Stakeholders take action based on citizen feedback," explores how well stakeholder decisions and interventions are shaped by the voices and experiences of local citizens. This statement had a mean of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 0.834, which is the same as the fourth item but with a little greater range in replies. The results suggest that 44.1% agreed and 24.5% strongly agreed, making a total of 68.6% of respondents who affirmed that stakeholders listen to feedback. This ability to respond to feedback greatly improves equity, inclusiveness, and adaptability. It ensures that a wide range of voices, especially those of groups that are typically ignored, including women, youth, and people with disabilities, can have a say in decisions. Also, acting on feedback lets stakeholders change their plans depending on what they see in the actual world, which makes interventions more useful and effective. People are more willing to stay involved, share ideas, and help with community development activities when they see that their input is being put to use. The statistical findings are supplemented with the verbatim below from one youth group leader:

After we complained about the lack of streetlights during a community dialogue, the town council worked with an NGO to install solar lights along the main road. It shows they really listen. (Youth Group Leader, Male, Sanniquellie City)

This verbatim quotation talks directly about how citizen feedback affects the behavior of stakeholders, which is shown by the mean score of 3.91. When stakeholders listen to feedback, it gives citizens more power, validates their role in governance, and makes sure that initiatives are based on real needs. This kind of responsiveness strengthens inclusive development, where even young people who are often left out feel that their opinions are heard and make a difference. This gives people a sense of ownership and makes them more likely to get involved in future development efforts.

The overall mean score of 3.87 and standard deviation of 0.810 across all statements suggests that stakeholders in Sanniquellie City are generally quite responsive. This responsiveness directly improves the success of community development initiatives across the four dimensions assessed, that is, collaboration and partnerships, equity and inclusion, capacity building, and innovation. Regular engagement and quick responses foster collaboration and partnerships. Transparency and feedback systems promote equity and inclusion. Proactivity contributes to capacity building, while adaptability in response to concerns and feedback supports innovation in development strategies. The synergy between responsive governance and participatory development leads to a more empowered, resilient, and inclusive community capable of driving its own progress.

4.5.2 Pearson Correlation for Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia

Table 7 below presents a correlation analysis that examines the strength and direction of the relationship between Stakeholder Responsiveness and community development activities within the study population of Sanniquellie City.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation for Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia

Correlations		Stakeholder Responsiveness	Community Development Initiatives
Stakeholder Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.879**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	102	102
Community Development Initiatives	Pearson Correlation	.879**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	102	102

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

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives is $r = .879$, with a p -value $< .001$. This indicates a very strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). With a sample size of 102 respondents, the result is robust and provides convincing evidence that higher levels of stakeholder responsiveness are strongly associated with more vibrant and effective community development initiatives in Sanniquellie City. This means that as stakeholders become more responsive through timely action, community engagement, transparency, and acting on citizen feedback, the quality and success of community development initiatives improve significantly. These initiatives include collaboration and partnerships, capacity building, adaptability and innovation, and equity and inclusion.

The findings fit the political economy theory very well. The strong correlation ($r = .879$) shows that responsive stakeholders can break through bureaucratic bottlenecks, reduce rent-seeking behavior, and redirect public resources toward inclusive and participatory development. This change in dynamics makes development less of a top-down, elite-driven process and more of one that is affected by local voices and realities, which are core tenets of political economy thought. Hence, good governance practices rooted in political economy structures are translating into better community outcomes. The results also suit the social capital quite well. The high correlation coefficient confirms that when social capital is high, through frequent interaction and accountability, community development initiatives thrive. Trust reduces transaction costs in community projects, improves cooperation, and enhances the sustainability of development activities. Therefore, stakeholder responsiveness is not just a governance practice, it is a mechanism for accumulating and leveraging social capital, enabling collective development.

Practically, the results show that investment in responsive governance structures is quite important. Teaching local leaders to listen, getting communities involved in making decisions, and setting up clear feedback loops are not just ideas; they are genuine ways to make development better and more inclusive in places like Sanniquellie City.

4.5.3 Regression analysis for Stakeholder Responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquellie City, Liberia

This regression analysis explores the predictive influence of Stakeholder Responsiveness on Community Development Initiatives. The findings show a statistically significant and strong positive relationship between the two variables. The interpretation is broken down into four key sections: Model Summary, ANOVA, Coefficients, and Residual Statistics.

Table 8: Regression analysis for Stakeholder responsiveness and Community Development Initiatives in Sanniquellie City, LiberiaModel Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.879 ^a	.773	.771	.3580

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder Responsiveness

b. Dependent Variable: Community Development Initiatives

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43.642	1	43.642	340.564	<.001 ^b
	Residual	12.815	100	.128		
	Total	56.456	101			

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development Initiatives

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder Responsiveness

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.272	.189		1.436	.154	-.104	.648
	Stakeholder Responsiveness	.887	.048	.879	18.454	<.001	.791	.982

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development Initiatives

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.045	4.706	3.706	.6573	102
Residual	-1.0189	.8678	.0000	.3562	102
Std. Predicted Value	-2.526	1.521	.000	1.000	102
Std. Residual	-2.846	2.424	.000	.995	102

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development Initiatives

The model summary indicates a very strong positive relationship between stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives. The correlation coefficient ($R = .879$) signifies that an increase in stakeholder responsiveness is associated with a proportional and highly consistent rise in community development efforts. The R Square ($R^2 = .773$) indicates that 77.3% of the variation in community development activities is attributable to stakeholder responsiveness. The modified R^2 of .771, which considers the model's complexity and sample size, validates the model's robustness and generalizability. The Standard Error of the Estimate (.3580) signifies a minimal average error in outcome prediction, indicating that the model effectively fits the data and can accurately forecast community development based on stakeholder responsiveness.

The ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) table assesses the overall statistical significance of the regression model. The findings indicate that the model is highly significant, evidenced by an F-statistic of 340.564 and a p-value below .001. This indicates a probability of less than 0.1% that the observed correlation between stakeholder responsiveness and community development activities arose by random chance. The substantial F-value indicates that the model significantly outperforms a model lacking stakeholder responsiveness as a predictor. This indicates that the model is a dependable instrument for comprehending how fluctuations in stakeholder behaviour influence community development initiatives in Sanniquellie City.

The coefficients table delineates the precise nature of the relationship between stakeholder responsiveness and community development activities. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.887$) indicates that for each one-unit improvement in stakeholder responsiveness (such as enhanced proactivity, transparency, or engagement), there is an average rise of 0.887 units in community development efforts. This demonstrates a substantial effect size. The standardized coefficient ($Beta = .879$) further substantiates that stakeholder responsiveness is a primary determinant among potential variables. The t-value (18.454) and significance level ($p < .001$) demonstrate that this predictor is statistically significant with a high degree of confidence. The confidence interval (.791 to .982) indicates that we may be 95% positive that the true value of the unstandardized coefficient resides within this range. Conversely, the constant term ($B = 0.272$) lacks statistical significance ($p = .154$), indicating that community development initiatives are not adequately elucidated when stakeholder responsiveness is zero. The coefficient results indicate that stakeholder responsiveness is substantially correlated with development and exerts a substantial practical influence on it.

The residual statistics evaluate the precision and dependability of the regression model's forecasts. The anticipated values span from 2.045 to 4.706, with a mean predicted value of 3.706, indicating that the model projects moderate to high levels of community development activities contingent upon stakeholder responsiveness. The residuals, or prediction errors, have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 0.3562, indicating that the prediction errors are

minimal and symmetrically distributed around zero, which is optimal in regression modeling. The standardized residuals span from -2.846 to 2.424, remaining within the permissible limit of ± 3 , signifying the absence of significant outliers or severe mispredictions in the dataset. This affirms that the model is stable, generates dependable predictions, and is free from data anomalies that could undermine its validity. The uniformity and limited range of residuals bolster trust in the model's applicability for practical planning and decision-making.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that stakeholder responsiveness has a strong and statistically significant influence on the success of community development initiatives in Sanniquallie City. Descriptive statistics showed that there was a high level of agreement among respondents about how responsive stakeholders were. Statements such as "Stakeholders take action based on citizen feedback" and "Stakeholders are proactive in solving local challenges" recorded high mean scores of 3.91, indicating a strong perception of responsiveness. The Pearson correlation coefficient between stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives was $r = .879$ ($p < .001$), which means that there is a very strong positive relationship. Also, regression analysis showed that stakeholder responsiveness could explain 77.3% of the differences in community development initiatives ($R^2 = .773$). The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = .879$) showed that how responsive stakeholders are is a strong predictor of good community development outcomes. Local government authorities, community members, and NGO personnel all told stories that backed up these statistical findings. They said that fast replies, regular participation, transparency, and action based on feedback were all normal practices.

The results of this study are consistent with existing empirical literature, which emphasizes that stakeholder responsiveness is critical for inclusive, effective, and sustainable community development. Brown (2021) says that when stakeholders, including community people, local leaders, and external agencies, are involved and responsive, development interventions are more likely to meet local needs. This study backed up Brown's findings that responsiveness enhances legitimacy and support. Community members said they felt heard and appreciated, especially when leaders swiftly replied to complaints about things like fixing infrastructure or social issues. Lee et al. (2023) support the premise that including everyone leads to ownership and long-term success. In Sanniquallie, it was clear that regular conversations between leaders and residents (mean = 3.86) were seen to make people collaborate and be more responsible. Berry et al. (2023) and Eisenhauer & Nicholson (2022) also say that being open and receptive to community feedback leads to increased satisfaction, trust, and project success. These results are quite similar to the descriptive data and verbatim reports in this study. Adebayo et al. (2024) also talk about how important responsiveness is for keeping development outcomes going, especially in places with few resources. In Sanniquallie, stakeholders were responsive, which helped them find and fix local problems before they got worse, saving resources. Lastly, Santos and Lima (2023) say that being responsive gives communities, especially those that are often left out, the power to participate by making platforms that everyone can use. This aligns with community feedback in this study, such as reports of youth and women's concerns being addressed during town hall meetings.

Together, these scholars stress that being responsive to stakeholders is not just a good idea; it is the basis for fair, cooperative, and flexible development. The statistics from this study strongly corroborate these claims. The findings are even further explained by two important theories employed in this study: Political Economy Theory and Social Capital Theory. The Political Economy Theory says that stakeholder responsiveness is a way to change the balance of power in favor of local communities. The strong correlation ($r = .879$) and significant regression results show that responsiveness breaks down bureaucratic inertia and elite dominance by moving decision-making power closer to the people. This makes development more open, accountable, and participatory, which are important ideas in political economy. When local leaders take feedback seriously and respond quickly, they break down traditional top-down institutions and instead promote inclusive governance. This was clear in Sanniquallie city, where the local government's quick response led to more relevant and timely development initiatives, including putting up solar lights or settling disputes.

Social Capital Theory also provides a powerful framework for understanding these results. Stakeholder responsiveness builds trust, reciprocity, and shared norms, which are all signs of social capital. High responsiveness fosters vertical trust (between the community and the authorities) and horizontal trust (amongst community members). This makes people less likely to resist, more likely to participate, and lowers the expenses in project implementation. When community members saw that their feedback led to action in this study, they were more likely to stay involved and contribute. These relational assets make it possible for people to work together and make development last longer. Moreover, the proactive behaviors observed, such as field visits by development staff and monthly engagements by chiefs, show that social capital is working to connect and bond people. These interactions build common values and networks that make it easier to work together, coordinate, and settle disagreements. So, responsiveness isn't only a technical part of governance; it's also a way to build and use social capital to change the community.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that stakeholder responsiveness is a significant determinant of successful community development initiatives in Sanniquallie City. The findings of this study fit well with what other scholars have found and the findings support both the Political Economy and Social Capital theories. Being responsive makes communities stronger, more accountable, and more likely to see positive development outcomes. To promote grassroots development and establish strong, empowered communities, it is important to strengthen stakeholder responsiveness. This may be done through feedback systems, clear decision-making, and getting people involved before problems arise.

6. Conclusion

The study established that stakeholder responsiveness plays a pivotal role in driving effective and inclusive community development in Sanniquallie City. The descriptive statistics showed that the majority of respondents perceived stakeholders, such as local governments, development partners, and community leaders, as highly responsive in several ways, such as responding quickly to concerns, engaging with the community regularly, being open and honest, taking the initiative to solve problems, and acting on feedback from citizens. The overall high mean score of 3.87 and low standard deviations, which show that responses were consistent, reinforced these good views. Qualitative data backed up these findings by showing that when stakeholders meet regularly, respond promptly, and act openly, communities are more likely to see better development outcomes through better collaboration, stronger ownership, and more trust.

The Pearson correlation analysis showed that there is a strong and statistically significant positive association between stakeholder responsiveness and community development initiatives ($r = .879, p < .001$). This means that as stakeholder responsiveness goes up, so does the vibrancy and success of local development activities. Regression analysis showed that stakeholder responsiveness alone explained around 77.3% of the differences in community development initiatives, with an unstandardized coefficient of $B = 0.887 (p < .001)$. These results show that when stakeholders are responsive by listening, including citizens in decision-making, and taking the lead, development initiatives are not only more relevant and fair, but also more long-lasting. This backs up both Political Economy and Social Capital theories since responsive behaviour clears up bureaucratic problems, lowers elite power, and builds trust and involvement across groups.

7. Recommendations

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs (Liberia) should make policy frameworks stronger that require local government officials to regularly and systematically involve the people in planning procedures in all counties.
- The Sanniquellie City Council should develop a citizen feedback and response system (for example, hotlines, suggestion boxes, town hall forums) to ensure community concerns are documented and acted upon promptly.
- The Development Partners (NGOs and Donors) should make capacity-building programs for local leaders on responsive governance top priority. These should include training on accountability, transparency, and participatory methods.
- The Local Government Authorities should set up proactive monitoring teams that go out into the community on a regular basis and do early risk assessments to find and deal with problems before they get worse.
- To establish trust among citizens and stop elite capture, the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) should make development programming more open by auditing and making project implementation reports public.
- The Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Groups should facilitate inclusive dialogue platforms that make it easier for everyone to have conversations, that give marginalized groups (especially women, adolescents, and people with disabilities) a voice, and let them be a part of the decision-making process.
- The government, through the Ministry of Education should add civic education modules to community development training programs, to encourage a culture of public involvement, rights awareness, and stakeholder accountability

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