

**POTENTIALS OF IMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES TO
DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN
MBINGA DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN A PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for the acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation entitled; **“Potentials of Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development for Sustainable Community Projects in Mbinga District”** in partial fulfillment the requirements for award of the Master Degree of Monitoring and Evaluation (MAME).

.....
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Date

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DECLARATION

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Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work dear parents and my lovely son.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God for all the graces he granted to me, the protection and the guidance throughout my entire study. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Noel Matemba for his supervision, assistance, support and encouragement throughout my study.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the potentials of improved opportunities and obstacles to development for sustainable community projects in Mbinga District Council. The study specifically focused on identifying the improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects; examining the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches; and determining the strategies that should be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects. The study employed a cross-sectional study design and collected data from 100 respondents who were randomly selected. Questionnaire, observation and focus group discussion were employed in this study. Data collected through questionnaire was analyzed through multiple analysis and descriptive statistics using SPSS. The study found that, community empowerment through community and ward facilitators are among of the O & OD approaches applied for community projects as well as capacity building through project implementation. It has also observed that financial and material contributions are among of the roles played by community for sustainability of their projects as well as participation in projects monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, the results revealed strategies such as trusting each other, transparency, community involvement in the whole process of project development and community sensitization to improve the sustainability of community projects. The study concludes that, O & OD exists at Mbinga District and uses approaches like community empowerment through ward and community facilitators, and project implementation by the community for community projects. The study recommends that more efforts should be put to ensure that community develop and implement more projects for their prosperity.

Keywords: *Community, Project, The Top-Down Approach, Community Participation.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFs	Community Facilitators
D by D	Decentralization by Devolution
GoT	Government of Tanzania
LGAS	Local Government Authorities
O & OD	Opportunities and Obstacles to Development
OUT	Open University of Tanzania
PLSD	Participatory Local Social Development
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
TDV	Tanzania Development Vision
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
VEO	Village Executive Officer
WEO	Ward Executive Officer
WFs	Ward Facilitators

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Globally, Opportunities and Obstacles to Development O & OD has been used since 1980s as a planning tool that aim at strengthening people participation in planning of the projects and development interventions which showed great success in empowering local community to plan for their development and projects that guarantee its sustainability (Morgan, 2011).

African countries have a long way in their efforts to achieve sustainable development where community participation has been realized as an important aspect to be included in the development process (Wasilwa, 2015). According to Rajalahti, *et al.*, (2012) development actors, including donors, government and international organizations are advocating participatory approaches by integrating peoples' knowledge as the basis for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. Community participation simply means, in simple terms, is about providing people with a great amount of knowledge, skills and experience to plan, execute, monitor and evaluate projects with the aim of creating a sense ownership and participation in the development process which improve life of the people and contributes to sustainable development.

According to URT, (2014) Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O & OD) is a planning method adopted by the government of Tanzania in 2001 as a planning and development tool in Local Government Authorities (LGAs). It is a planning and development tool which determines the problems before suggesting any acute

solution by using the available resources and external efforts. The adoption of O & OD in Tanzania was in line with Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) which introduced the Decentralization by Devolution (D by D) of 1998 and Local Government Policy of 1998. The programme went hand in hand with providing power to local people to participate in decision making and implementation which in turn contributed much to empowering of local community and sustainability of community projects.

The O & OD methodology was necessitated by the government which believed that planning and development process in LGAs was owned and led by experts and development partners who believed to know community needs and aspirations in development process (URT, 2019). Before the introduction of O & OD methodology, most of development strategies were top down which discouraged the role of community participation in the planning and execution of the projects. As a result, most of the community projects implemented became unsustainable and irrelevant to reflect community needs. Therefore, the government of Tanzania introduced O & OD as a bottom-up development approach to be implemented in LGAs to strengthen development and service delivery to communities.

Despite of the government efforts to introduce and implement O & OD methodology all over LGAs, communities were not well prepared to execute their role as development planners, executors, monitor and evaluators of development programme, plans and projects rather than thinking their responsibilities was to tell the government what they wanted and the government would plan, execute, monitor

and evaluate community projects such as health, water, road infrastructure, irrigations (Wasilwa, 2015). As a result of implementation of O & OD, most of the development projects failed to be sustainable since the government assumed that people were aware of their duties and responsibilities. Meanwhile communities still believed that the government must ensure sustainability of the planned projects. In turn, communities relied on the government support and lacked ownership of the projects hence resulting into failure of the O & OD planning approach.

According to URT, (2019) the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (Improved O & OD) is one among the efforts made by the government of Tanzania (GoT) to strengthen community empowerment as a development methodology which replaced the existing O & OD methodology. The Improved O & OD is in line with Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025- and Five-Years Development Plan (FYDP) 2021/22-2025/26. It aims to be an effective and efficient methodology for all LGAs in providing quality services and sustain community projects. Compared to previous development methodology (O & OD), the Improved O & OD came up with the idea of establishment Ward Facilitators (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) as a development tool that strengthen community empowerment efforts to plan, execute and sustain community projects based on their self-help efforts.

The presence of WF and CF is what differentiate Improved O & OD methodology from previous O & OD methodology where the two live in specific areas are empowered to be mentored or focal persons who empowered and functions as a link between community members and LGAs, government as well as other development

partners. As WFs and CFs increased its recognition and establishment in LGAs¹, the potentials of WFs², CFs³ and Improved O & OD methodology in general is questionable to most of development actors since most of the community projects are not sustainable and community are not fully participated in all phases of the project cycle as it was expected to be after the introduction of Improved O & OD methodology (Kileo, et al., 2021).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Debate on Improved Obstacles and Opportunities to Development (Improved O & OD) has been a centre of concern for many researchers, mostly addressing issues related to Ward Facilitator (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) as a mechanism to remove the existing development dependency attitudes of communities. However, the functions of WFs and CFs is questionable in most of the areas where most of their functions rely much on funds from external development stakeholders than internal capacity to sustain community projects (Kileo, *et al.*, 2021).

The Improved O & OD in Tanzania has formulated conducive environment such as preparation of guideline along with Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025 and Five Years Development Plan 2021/22-2025/26 to assist communities in identifying their needs and aspirations, increase community participation in decision making, increase the number of people attending development meetings and linking community to government and non-government stakeholders to realize better service delivery and sustainability of community projects (URT, 2019).

¹ Local Government Authorities

² Ward Facilitators

³ Community Facilitators

Despite the implementation of improved O & OD in Tanzania and Mbinga District Council in particular, most of the community project fail to attain its objectives since they are ineffective to reflect the reality of improved O & OD which aim at enhancing project impact to the intended beneficiaries (Kileo *et al.*, 2021). In most cases, people still tend to full participate in planning phase of the community projects and leaves behind its implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of community projects as a result of community project implemented after introduction of improved O & OD face the existed sustainability challenges posed by previous O & OD development methodology (*ibid*).

There are limited initiatives taken by development actors to strengthen capacity building to WFs and CFs on their duties and responsibilities, fundraising and management, WFs and CFs policies and by-laws for their sustainability of community projects (Nour, 2020). Yet simultaneously, there is frequent ineffectiveness on the functions of improved O & OD to the extent that one cannot expect community projects to be sustainable for much longer in Local Government Authorities regardless the presence of improve O & OD as new development methodology in community projects. Therefore, this study intended to examine the potentials of improved O & OD for sustainable community projects.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of the study was to investigate the potentials of Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development for sustainability of community projects in Mbinga district council.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects in Mbinga district council
- ii. To examine the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches for community projects in Mbinga district council
- iii. To determine the strategies that can be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What are the Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects in Mbinga district council?
- ii. What is the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches for community projects in Mbinga district council?
- iii. What strategies that can be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study intended determine the potentials of Improved O & OD for sustainable community projects. Special focus was on identification of the Improved O & OD approaches such as WFs and CFs applied to community projects, examination of the sustainability of the applied O & OD approaches and determination of the strategies that should be taken to improve sustainability of community projects.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge by proving the participatory approach which emphasizes the active involvement and engagement of community

members in decision-making processes and project implementation while recognizing that local communities possess valuable knowledge, expertise, and insights that can contribute to the success and sustainability of community projects. This study has proven by showing how members of the community participate in their projects.

Again, the study has provided baseline information on the Improved O & OD approaches that are used for community projects in Mbinga district. Also, the study has shown the sustainability role of the community members in the implementation of community projects at Mbinga district. It has provided baseline information to target population of the study area about the strategies that they should take to improve community participation in their projects for prosperity of themselves and the upcoming generations. Also, the study aided the researcher to integrate her class theoretical knowledge into practical application in an academic journey of improving her career goal in Monitoring and Evaluation.

The study will assist readers in generating information related to Improved O & OD and sustainable community projects as one of the literature reviews to those who are interested in continuing with similar study or other fields on Improved O & OD sustainability and community projects.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter rodded on various studies that have been undertaken by different authors on issues related to O & OD and sustainability of community projects. Basically, this part focused on the conceptualization of key terms, theoretical and empirical literature review, conceptual framework as well as research gap.

2.2 Conceptual Definitions

This part presented the definition of key terms that were used in the study, including O & OD, sustainability and community projects as well as other related terms.

2.2.1 Community

According to Morgani (2011) community refers to a social group of any size whose members resides in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage. This research the concept of community as a group of populations living and interacting with one another in a particular environment.

2.2.2 Project

According to Morgani (2011) project means finite or predetermined attempt or effort undertaken to create a unique product or service which brings about beneficial change or added value. Therefore, a project simply refers to a series of activities that are undertaken in a specific time thought the use of specific resources to achieve specific objectives.

2.2.3 The Top-Down Approach

According to Cooksey and Kikula (2005) this is a type of planning or development process of which decisions are centrally made by organizations that are remote from the project area. Therefore, under this approach decision-making process occurs at the highest level and is then communicated to the rest of the team for implementation. Top-Down Approach has a tendency of making the people dependent on the government and development partners.

2.2.4 The Bottom-Up Approach

A bottom-up approach is a way of making decisions that starts from the bottom of the hierarchy, rather than at the top (Cooksey and Kikula, 2005) the Bottom-Up Approach simply means participatory planning of which all stakeholder or project beneficiaries are full involves in decision making, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the development activities. Therefore, this kind of planning ensures empowerment of local people in the development process to ensure their participation, ownership and sustainability of development activities or projects.

2.2.5 Community Participation

Community Participation refers to social process whereby specific groups with shared needs living in a defined geographic area actively pursue identification of their needs, take decisions and establish mechanisms to meet these needs (Cooksey and Kikula 2005). Moreover, it is the involvement of intended beneficiaries in the planning, design, implementation and subsequent maintenance of the development intervention where people are mobilized, manage resources and make decisions that affect their lives.

2.2.6 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment refers to the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives (Cooksey and Kikula 2005). Community empowerment is more than the involvement, participation or engagement of communities. It implies community ownership and action that explicitly aims at social, economic and political change.

2.3 Theoretical Literature Review

Globally, Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O & OD) has the mission to promote a holistic and dynamic process through which local people continuously improve their productivity and consequently the quality of life through efficient and sustainable utilization of internal and external resources (Lewis, 2012) The O & OD focuses on strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to contribute effectively in the promotion of community development.

According to Thomas (2013) the concept of capital development is associated with O & OD which focus on strengthening the capabilities of individuals of individuals, organizations and societies or indigenous and sustainable development process. In the context of O & OD, the capacity of communities to manage their affairs successfully has to have specific goals and efforts rather than depending on the provisions of goods and services. Additionally, O & OD has become one of the sustainable development paradigms of many development actors who considering it as the process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human

needs and aspirations.

According to United Nations Development Programme (2010) in most of the African countries, rural and urban development implemented with top-down approaches leads to insufficient utilization of funds and generates poor outcomes. Based on this negative impact, the importance of a bottom-up approach for successful community development is increasingly recognized. The application of participatory methods such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as well as Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) aims at strengthening the bottom-up approach which nowadays become mainstream in African countries.

Successful operation of O & OD needs a proper link mechanism of various plans and project activities of different stakeholders who are harmonized to fulfil community development needs which contribute significantly to the holistic development of communities. Furthermore, establishment of appropriate coordination structures and effective channels for sharing information, joint decision making and collective action are necessary to prepare a community with strong capacities to manage their affairs successfully.

Community participation in development and projects in particular has become a mainstream aspect of the O & OD agenda since it the development process which involves analysis, planning and implementation up to collaborative planning of interventions, collective decision making, participatory execution and making a jointly interventions that occurs (Thomas, 2013). This implies the participation of community throughout all the management process has to go hand in hand with

strengthening their capacities in managing their affairs.

Lewis (2012) disclosed out that, O & OD is a community development approach where collective process involving groups of community member with the aspiration to improve community life collectively. Therefore, community projects can be successful if key processes of management, such as analysis, decision making steering and reflection on achieved results is organized in a such a way that the community can participate. This simply means the ideas and projects emerging from the community as a whole have a higher potential for implementation since they are emerging from the reality as perceived by the local communities. Additionally, when community themselves decide on the modality and strategies on a project, they are motivated to give their best efforts to achieve the goal and move towards their vision and the final outcome of such a participatory process that contributes greatly to the capacity building of the concerned community.

Dube (2011) pinpointed out that, analyzing existing community project approaches, we can identify in general a community project cycle with the following steps: Awareness and Confidence Building, Social Mobilization for Collective Action, Participatory Analysis, Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. Also, the community project cycle has great similarities with the life cycle of projects. In project cycles we can identify the following steps: situation analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation, and monitoring as an accompanying process.

2.3.1 Ownership of Community Projects by Communities

According to UNDP (2010) Confidence of community members in their own

strength and the ability to act and improve their situation collectively creates the motivation for becoming more productive and moving in the direction of their vision and aspirations. Such self-confidence is the foundation for all further steps of community projects. Also, it strengthens the capacities of the community to discover or rediscover their resources and abilities and to identify clearly their potentials and challenges. Therefore, confidence-building activities between external agencies and community institutions and leaders are essential to create the necessary confidence among community members so that they can jointly tackle the challenges and mobilize necessary resources to improve the situation in the respective communities.

2.3.2 Social Mobilization for Collective Action of Community Projects

According to Thomas (2013) Social mobilization for collective action enables communities to solve those problems that are beyond their individual capacity. Social mobilization may include the following;

Activities: reflecting collectively on attitudes and behaviours prevailing in the communities and hindering them from being productive, encouraging roles and responsibilities favourable for collective and productive activities, fostering mutual respect among all sectors of the community, strengthening or creating institutions, groups, and organizations needed for improving the community situation and promoting leadership at various levels.

2.3.3 Participatory Management or Analysis, Planning, and Action of Projects

Once awareness and confidence building within the community and with external stakeholders is completed and organizational development through social mobilization has been initiated, the next phase of participatory analysis, planning,

and action can be tackled effectively. During this phase, the community is facilitated to analyse the situation and formulate project plans and activities for implementation. Respecting and valuing the ideas and knowledge of the people and facilitating a joint learning process can contribute significantly to solving their problems.

2.3.4 Monitoring of Community Projects

Monitoring is an accompanying process throughout the various steps of the community projects spiral and is essential to adjust the process so that the ultimate goal is achieved. It involves critical observation and analysis of emerging phenomena throughout the process and provides insights to take corrective measures as necessary. The community has to be encouraged to concentrate not only on the immediate outputs of their activities, but also on the contribution of the achieved outputs regarding desired outcomes and impacts. It is the community that has to develop the necessary monitoring abilities, always supported by facilitators. Continuous monitoring by different stakeholders, including external actors, contributes to continuous improvement of community project activities, and to the achievement of short, medium- and long-term goals.

2.3.5 Evaluation of Community Projects

At the end of the community project cycle, systematic evaluation is helpful to improve the next projects, but also to systematically strengthen the abilities of communities and other involved actors to work more and more effectively in improving the situation at the community level. Evaluations of Community Projects contribute to the improvement of community project practices in general and to the

formulation of guidelines or policy frameworks at a higher level.

According to UNDP⁴ (2010) knowledge and skills are only one aspect of capacity development in O and OD, other important aspects of capacity development are strengthening motivation and self-confidence of community members, their ability to network with actors inside and outside the community, nurturing their ability to mobilize necessary resources and very important thing is developing their ability to gain legitimacy for their decisions through processes of dialogue and consensus. Further, it is important to keep in mind that the capacity of actors to achieve their objectives or to perform their functions is enhanced or restricted by external and internal factors such as institutions, laws, regulations, cultural beliefs, mindsets, motivations, and relationships.

2.4 Theories of Participatory Approach

According to Dinbabo (2003) participatory theory criticized the modernization paradigm on the ground that it promoted a top-down view of development. The strategic model proposed a conception of development associated with a western vision of progress. The top-down approach of persuasion models implicitly assumed that the knowledge of governments and agencies was correct, and that indigenous population went either ignored or had incorrect beliefs. According to Dube (2011) The dissatisfaction with the above traditional development theory led to a reexamination of the purpose of development towards a search for alternative

⁴ United Nations Development Programmes

conceptual explanations to answer this challenge articulating a concept known as Participatory, or “People Centred Development”.

Therefore, current debates and development efforts focus on ‘bottom up’ planning, ‘People-Centred Development’ and the view that ordinary people have the capacity to manage their own development. This theory encourages the involvement of all stakeholders in the process of development. For participatory theory and practitioners, development required sensitivity to cultural diversity as well as other specific points that were ignored by modernization theorists. The lack of such sensitivity accounted for the problems and failures of many projects.

The main essence of participatory development theory is participatory approaches and community development where the active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation of processes, programs and projects which affect them. Participatory development approaches view the term “participation” as the exercise of people’s power in thinking, acting, and controlling their actions in a collaborative framework. The theory implies that the participatory development approach stresses the participation of the majority of the population (especially the Women, Youth and the illiterate) in the process of the development program.

This approach views development as a process which focuses on the community’s involvement in their own development using available resources and guiding the future development of their own community. The wishes of an individual never superimposes on those of a group. Additionally, his approach, emphasis concept such as: capacity building, empowerment, sustainability and self-reliance. According

to the belief of participatory development theory, the answer to the problem of successful third world development is not found in the bureaucracy and its centrally mandated development projects and programs, but rather in the community itself.

This study perceives the Theory of Participatory Approach as the attitudes towards development approaches have changed over the years in exactly the same way that attitudes to develop itself have changed. Currently, there is a paradigm change and they have become aware that development requires genuine community participation in the decision-making processes. For any community development program to be appropriate and sustainable, local communities must be an integral part of the development activities. As opposed to the traditional approach of community development, participatory approaches generally lead to development efforts that are sustainable over the long term because the people themselves have a stake in their success.

2.5 Empirical Literature Review

2.5.1 The Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects

According to Mitchell, *et al* (2017) to be sustainable, community must think beyond the economic bottom line because maintaining financial security will not be adequate to guarantee future success where community projects to continue to operate in the long term, they must take measures to ensure that they contribute to the sustainable management of natural and human resources and contribute to the well-being of society and the economy as a whole. Thus, community and development stakeholders can incorporate principles of sustainability into their activities in the following ways: by considering sustainability during the preparation and review of a

programme, strategy, plans and projects by supporting new agreements and negotiations that promote sustainable practices, by developing new projects driven by sustainability principles, and finally by broadening their vision of sustainability beyond the limits of the community.

Smith and Johnson (2018) made a study On Community Development Approaches: Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from the Field. This study provided an overview of different community development approaches and discussed their strengths, challenges, and lessons learned. It explored the opportunities that community projects offer for empowerment, social capital building, and sustainable development, as well as the obstacles related to funding, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement.

Brown and Baker (2019) studied Participatory Approaches to Community Development: Opportunities and Challenges. This study examined participatory approaches to community development and highlighted the opportunities and challenges they present. It discussed the potential benefits of involving community members in decision-making and project implementation, as well as the obstacles related to power dynamics, inclusivity, and resource constraints.

Garcia and Chaen (2020) conducted a study on Sustainable Development in Community Projects: Opportunities and Obstacles. This research article focused on sustainable development in community projects and explored the opportunities and obstacles associated with integrating environmental, economic, and social considerations. It discussed the potential for long-term benefits, collaboration with

local stakeholders, and the need for adaptive management, while also addressing challenges related to limited resources, conflicting interests, and knowledge gaps.

Again, Johnson and Williams (2021) studied *Community-Based Development: Opportunities and Obstacles for Local Empowerment*. This study examined community-based development approaches and their potential for local empowerment. It discusses opportunities for community ownership, social capital formation, and cultural preservation, as well as obstacles related to power dynamics, external dependencies, and sustainability. The article also provides insights into effective strategies for overcoming these challenges.

Kumar and Gupta (2022) made a study on *Challenges and Opportunities in Participatory Development: Lessons from Community Projects in Developing Countries*. This study explored the challenges and opportunities in participatory development approaches based on case studies from developing countries. It discussed the potential benefits of community participation, knowledge sharing, and local capacity building. The article also addresses obstacles such as unequal power relations, limited resources, and institutional barriers, and provides recommendations for effective implementation.

2.5.2 The sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches

According to Labuschagne, *et al.*, (2015) there is a lack of systems in place for measuring performance towards community projects sustainability in operational practices. Sustainability has typically been thought of mostly in institutional and strategic terms, without giving appropriate consideration to the economic-operational side of the community.

Johnson and Smith (2019) made a study on Sustainability in Community Development Projects: Opportunities and Challenges. This study examined the role of sustainability in community development projects and explored the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing sustainable practices. It discussed the potential benefits of integrating environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability, as well as the obstacles related to limited resources, stakeholder engagement, and long-term viability. The study provided insights into strategies for enhancing the sustainability of community projects.

Garcia, et al., (2020) conducted a study on the Role of Participatory Approaches in Sustainable Community Development Projects. This research article investigated the role of participatory approaches in promoting sustainability in community development projects. It highlighted the opportunities for building local capacity, fostering community ownership, and enhancing social and environmental outcomes. The article also examined the challenges related to power dynamics, inclusivity, and resource constraints, and provides recommendations for integrating participatory practices to achieve sustainable community development.

Williams, et al., (2021) researched on Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods through Community Development Projects: Opportunities and Obstacles. This article focused on the role of community development projects in promoting sustainable livelihoods. It explored the opportunities for economic empowerment, skills development, and income generation, as well as the obstacles related to market access, financial sustainability, and social equity. The article discussed strategies for addressing these challenges and maximizing the sustainability outcomes of community development

initiatives.

Brown, et al., (2022) made research on Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Community Development: Lessons from Case Studies. This research article presented case studies that highlight the role of integrated approaches in sustainable community development. It examined the opportunities for achieving synergies between social, economic, and environmental goals, as well as the challenges related to coordination, knowledge integration, and policy support. The article extracted lessons and best practices from the case studies and provides recommendations for implementing integrated approaches in community projects.

Chen et al., (2023) made a study on Measuring the Sustainability Impact of Community Development Approaches. The study discussed the measurement of sustainability impact in community development approaches. It explored the opportunities for assessing environmental, social, and economic outcomes, as well as the obstacles related to data collection, indicator selection, and evaluation frameworks. The article proposed methodologies and indicators for measuring the sustainability impact of community projects and emphasizes the importance of monitoring and adaptive management.

A report by Silvius, *et al* (2013), shows that the relationship between community project management and sustainable development has been gaining attention among professionals and scholars. The study of the integration of the concepts of sustainability into project management is considered an emerging field. To date, empirical studies that can be used to understand how the concepts of sustainable

development are implemented in the practice of project management are lacking.

2.5.3 The Strategies that Should be Taken to Improve the Sustainability of Community Projects

Wilkins (2019) made a study on Community development and the challenges of participation: Learning from a case study. This study examined a case study of a community development project in Australia. The author identified several opportunities for improving community participation, including building trust, providing training and support, and ensuring that community members are engaged in decision-making processes.

Oyekanmi (2017) conducted a study on Community development and rural poverty reduction in Nigeria: Opportunities and constraints. This study looked at the challenges of community development in Nigeria's rural areas. The author identified several obstacles, including inadequate funding, insufficient capacity-building, and cultural barriers. The article also discussed strategies for addressing these challenges, such as involving community members in the planning process, building partnerships with local organizations, and leveraging technology to enhance communication and information-sharing.

Wolfson (2018) made a study on Innovations in community development: Lessons learned from an international case study. The study presented a case study of a community development project in Ghana. The study highlighted several key strategies for success, including building strong partnerships with local organizations, engaging community members in decision-making processes, and leveraging existing community assets. The study also discussed the challenges of

implementing these approaches, such as navigating power dynamics and managing competing interests.

A report by Sharma and Ohama (2007) argues that planning, management, and sustainability of community projects and groups, self-help efforts should ensure a balance among norms, organization, resources, capability, and institutional linkage. Self-help efforts which are also equated to social projects are used to entail attempts by communities and groups to address challenges facing them socially and economically without waiting for major interventions from the government. Therefore, it is believed that through the five elements, people will be able to plan, implement, and sustain self-help efforts without waiting external assistance, hence enabling move towards building a strong social economy.

Oloyede (2009) argued that the sustainability of communities in Africa requires cultural bonds of shared commitments, identity, and belief. Also, Oino *et al* (2015) encourages that community projects should consider the community's beliefs, norms, and religion in project design and implementation. Additionally, Rees *et al* (2004) contend that strong management is essential for securing local resources. Also, Espinosa *et al* (2007) argue that leadership is essential to lead the community to becoming familiar with the tasks that they need to attain social development. Leadership should be appointed according to the group's constitution, bylaws, and government laws governing Local Government Authorities (LGAs).

2.6 Summary of the Literature Review

Basing on the reviewed literature, the Improved O & OD can be a solution to the sustainability of community projects in Tanzania if it will succeed in changing the

community mindset. People need to change from thinking that the government will do everything for them and start to drive development by themselves. Mindset change will assist communities in becoming responsible, cooperating, and building a strong economy.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 simplifies the systematic structure of interrelated elements in schematic form which describe the relationship between and among variables of the study, including independent and dependent variables. Sustainability of Community Projects is a dependent variable which may change depending on the function of identified and applied Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development strategies by including a number of variations such as Ward Facilitators (WFs), Community Facilitators (CFs) as well as stakeholders' capacity building in idea generation, project planning and designing, project selection and financing, project implementation, project monitoring and evaluation.

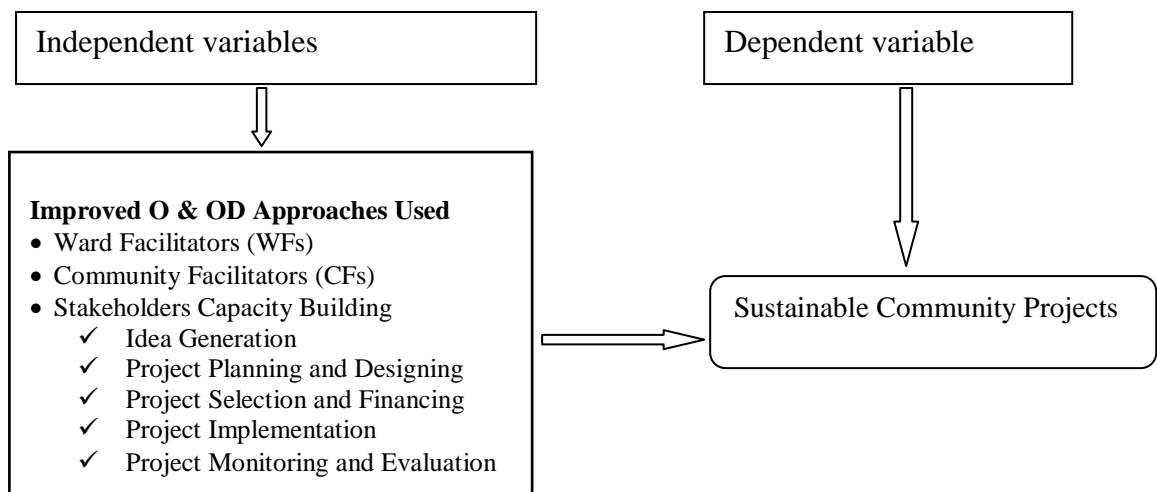


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher's Design, (2022).

From the Figure 2.1, Improved O & OD influence changes in sustainable community projects either positively or negatively. Parameters which are associated with these changes are Ward Facilitators (WFs), Community Facilitators (CFs) and Stakeholders Capacity Building in Projects Life Cycle. These elements are the centre of changes in sustainability of community projects in which positive performance of this variable influence project beneficiary ownership and their participation, which ensure project sustainability while the negative performance of these variables will limit the sustainability of community projects.

2.8 Research Gap

From the reviewed literature, there is more concern of O & OD and participatory community development which focused much or involving of the local community by focusing much or idea generation and project planning by many researchers. There are limited studies in the field of sustainable community projects and improved O & OD as more researchers are concentrating on participatory development planning. More research is required to focus on sustainable community projects under improved O and OD at household level as an integral part of the community.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Cross-sectional design was employed in this study, the reason for selecting this type of research design was the fact that it allowed studying different groups of respondents at one point of time. It also provided a suitable room for gathering the required data from different groups such as household members, Ward Facilitators (WFs), Community Facilitators (CFs) as well as government and non-governmental officials at one point in time through the use of questionnaires, focus group discussion and observation methods of data collection.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted at Kigonsela Lukarasi and Mkako Wards, Mbinga District Council in Ruvuma region. The Kigonsela, Lukarasi and Mkako Wards are among 29 Wards of Mbinga District Council which O & OD implemented since 2002. The reasons for selecting the proposed study area are due to the fact that Kigonsela, Lukarasi and Mkako Wards are information rich based on documentary sources such as “Chapisho Maalumu wilaya ya Mbinga” of 2020 accessed from in the study area. Also, there is the increase formation and implementation of WFs and CFs while the sustainability of community projects is questions to most of development actors who always believe that improved O & OD is acute solutions while its implementations leave a lot to be desired.

3.3 Population of the Study

The study involved the population of 29,828 people from which individuals of 18

years old and above, both sex male and female were systematically selected. In addition, the study consulted WFs, CFs and government official such as Villages Executive Officers (VEOs) as well as Ward Executive Officer (WEO) as key informants.

3.4 Units of Analysis

In this study, the unit of analysis was community member within the study area who were involved in development process and community projects in particular with coexistence of information related to improved O & OD and sustainable community projects. It is from this individual unit; it was possible to get and analyze information on the potentials of improved O & OD for sustainable community projects.

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size was drawn from 29,828 household populations so as to get a manageable representation in relation to time, financial resource and the nature of the data required for carrying out the study. To minimize sampling errors, Nassiuma (2000) standard formula was used to select the required sample size to represent the respondent population.

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample Size

N= Household Population (29,828)

C= Coefficient of variation (10 %)

e = Sampling Error 1 %

Hence

$$n = \frac{(29,828) (10 \%)^2}{(10 \%)^2 + (29,828-1) (1 \%)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{(29,828) (0.01)}{(0.01) + (29,827) (0.0001)}$$

$$n = \frac{298.28}{2.9927}$$

$$\mathbf{n = 99.67 \approx 100}$$

Therefore, the study involved 100 household respondents and 16 key informants from seven VEOs, three WEOs, three members of CFs and three members of WFs, thus make a total of 116 respondents.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed to select appropriate respondents. With probability sampling, simple random sampling was used to pick the respondents from households, while with non-probability sampling, purposive sampling was used to select respondents from key informants such as VEOs, WEO as well as leaders of CFs and WFs.

3.7 Types and Sources of Data

The study used primary and secondary data, primary data was obtained from field through questionnaires and observation with respondents, mainly from households. Secondary data was obtained from journals, book reports, official records and newspapers, internet as well as other secondary sources that were available and

accessible.

3.8 Data Collection Methods

This part covers diverse data collection methods that were used in this study to collect primary and secondary data. These methods were questionnaires, focus group discussion and observation.

3.8.1 Questionnaires

Open questionnaires were translated in *Swahili* language to gather information from household respondents without any language barrier. This was applied as it allowed the collection of a lot of information from respondents in a short period of time and was in line with the time required by a researcher to accomplish the data collection process. All objectives of study were answered through questionnaire though it was only used to collect data from the households.

3.8.2 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussion was employed in gathering information from key informants such as VEOs, WEO, CFs and WFs. This method involved obtaining information through discussion between researchers and the above-mentioned respondents. This data collection tool gathered information from the respondents about all the study objectives and it was not from the households.

3.8.3 Observation

Non participant type of observation was used throughout the field, hand in hand with taking photographs through the use of the camera. The method facilitated the

availability of information which was collected by other data collection methods or to validate the information gathered by other data collection methods that were employed in field area.

3.8.4 Documentary Review

This study also collected secondary data through reviewing of various documents concerning Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development for sustainability of community projects. Documents such as Guideline for improved O&OD of 2019 was reviewed to get some hints about the study topic.

3.9 Data Processing, Analysis and Presentation

3.9.1 Data Processing

This involved transformation of the collected data into format that can be easily interpreted and used to draw meaningful conclusions. The researcher collected data by asking participants to complete a questionnaire and interview that included questions about the O&OD approaches applied to their community project, their sustainability role and strategies to improve the community projects. Once data was collected, the researcher processed them for analysis. First, the researcher conducted data cleaning by checking for errors, missing values and inconsistencies. Then data entry and coding took place through software analysis programs such as SPSS and NVivo and then were set ready for analysis.

3.9.2 Data Analysis

Data from household respondents were coded, tabulated and analyzed through multiple response in which frequencies and cross tabulation analysis were used and

findings were presented by frequencies and percentages in tables and figures. Information from key informants such as VEOs, WEO, CFs and WFs was used to complement data from household respondents. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the data collected through questionnaire.

3.9.3 Data Presentation

This involves communication of research findings in a clear and organized manner. This involved transforming of collected data into visual or text formats that are easily understandable and accessible to the intended audience. In this study, data collected through questionnaire are presented in table format while data collected through focus group discussion are presented in narratives. Data collected through observation are presented in multimedia format.

3.10 Validity of the Study

This involved the degree to which a study accurately measures or assesses what intends to measure or asses. To ensure the validity of the study the researcher firstly ensured that the questionnaires and interview guideline which were used to collect data had questions that were relevant to research objectives. Again, people who participated in community projects were the ones selected for data collection.

3.11 Reliability of the Study

This involves the consistency and stability of research findings or results. To ensure reliability of the study the researcher trained the participants to use the questionnaire consistently and that the questionnaires were standardized to ensure that all participants received the same instructions and questions. The researcher then

administered the questionnaire to a sample of participants at two different times to compare the results to ensure that the responses were consistent over time.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study that was conducted to examine the potentials of Improved O & OD for sustainability of community projects. It also provides an overview of data collected during research process and presents the results of the analysis. The study aimed to answer the research questions that were outlined in chapter one which included, identifying the Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects, examining the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches, and determine the strategies that should be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects. The chapter also presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study collected demographic data from the respondents to determine their sex, education level, occupation and ward of their residence. The data was collected from the total of 100 respondents who were randomly and purposively selected. The descriptive statistics was made to determine the frequencies and percentages of responses and are presented in Table 4.1.

The results revealed that 56% of the participants were male while 44% of them were female. This indicates that, both male and female were considered in this study though there were more male than female respondents. The results have also shown that majority of the respondents (51%) had primary education, 15% secondary education and 14% had diploma while 8% of the respondents had certificate. Again,

the results found that 41% of the respondents were self-employed, 37% unemployed and 22% were employed. This implies that majority of the respondents were self-employed and unemployed. Moreover, the study took place in three wards namely Kigonsela, Mkako and Lukalasi.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

No	Questions	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Sex	Male	45	56.0
		Female	44	44.0
		Total	100	100
2.	Education level	Non-educated	12	12.0
		Primary school education	51	51.0
		Secondary school education	15	15.0
		Certificate	8	8.0
		Diploma	14	14.0
		Degree	0	0.0
		Masters	0	0.0
		Total	100	100
3.	Occupation	Student	0	0.00
		Employed	22	22.0
		Self-employed	41	41.0
		Unemployed	37	37.0
		Total	100	100
4.	Ward	Kigonsela	34	34.0
		Mkako	33	33.0
		Lukalasi	33	33.0
		Total	100	100

Source: Field Data (2023).

4.3 Improved O & OD Approaches Applied to Community Projects

This objective intended to identify Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects. Data was collected from respondents who were people from Mbinga district. Both questionnaire and Focus group discussion were used to collect data from the respondents. The responses are presented in table 4.2 below

Table 4.2: Improved O & OD Approaches Applied to Community Projects

No	Questions	Responses	Frequency	percentage
1.	Are you familiar with the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development Approaches for Community Projects	Yes	91	91.0
		No	9	9.0
		Total	100	100
2.	What are the Improved O&OD Approaches used in community projects?	Community Empowerment through CFs	12	13.2
		Community Empowerment through WFs	66	72.5
		Capacity building trough project idea generation	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project designing and planning	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project selection and financing	0	0
		Capacity building trough project implementation	13	14.3
		Capacity building through project monitoring and evaluation	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project sustainability plan	0	0.0
		Capacity building though programme or plan evaluation	0	0
		Community Empowerment through CFs	12	13.2
Total	91	100		

Source: Field Data (2023).

The results revealed that majority of the respondents are familiar with the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development Approaches for community projects with the percentage rate of 91% while 9% of the respondents are not familiar with it. Again, the results have shown that O&OD approaches that are used are community empowerment through ward facilitators, empowerment through community facilitators and capacity building through project implementation. The results indicate that community empowerment through ward facilitators is mostly used approach in community project which covers 72.5% of the responses. Followed by capacity building through project implementation and community empowerment through community facilitators with 14.3 and 13.2 responses respectively.

Also, the data collected through focus group discussion revealed that community empowerment through ward facilitators is one of the approaches used in community projects as one of the respondents stated;

“We use ward facilitators in most of the projects initiated in the community, each of the ward at Mbinga District has its facilitators who are responsible for conducting assessments to identify the needs and priorities of their wards” (Key Informant 1, 19th May, 2023).

Another respondent added;

“We use ward facilitators for mobilizing community resources and facilitating community meetings to gather input and feedback from community members” (Key Informant 3, 19th May, 2023).

Again, the results revealed that capacity building through project implementation is another approach used in community projects. One respondent from Mkako responded that;

“The O &OD approaches used in our ward is the use of ward facilitators and capacity building through project implementation” (Key Informant 4, 22nd may 2023).

4.4 The Sustainability Role of the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective intended to examine sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches to community projects. Data was collected from respondents who were people from Mbinga district. Both questionnaire and focus group discussion were used to collect data from the respondents. The observed roles were measured through participants' responses on the roles they play in the community projects. The responses are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The Sustainability Role of the Applied O & OD Approaches

No	Questions	Responses	Frequency	percentage
1.	What are roles played by the approaches to implement the improved O&OD at your village/ward?	Financial contribution	48	52.7
		Material contribution	33	36.3
		Formulation of CFs/WFs	4	4.4
		Formulation of CFs/WFs by-laws	0	0
		Implementation of CFs/WFs by-laws	0	0
		Community participation in project planning	0	0
		Community participation in project implementation	0	0
		Community participation in projects monitoring and evaluation	6	6.6
		Total	91	100
2.	Does Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to development benefits the community?	Yes	89	97.8
		No	2	2.2
		Total	91	100
3.	How do you assess community contribution on projects sustainability under the improved O&OD methodology?	Increasing	90	98.9
		Decreasing	0	0
		None	1	1.1
		I do not know	0	0
		Total	91	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

The results revealed that, the roles of O & OD approaches are financial contribution, material contribution, formulation of CFs and WFs, and community participation in project monitoring and evaluation. The study has shown financial role is one of the

great roles played by O&OD approaches with response rate of 52.7% followed by material contribution (36.3%). The other role observed is community participation in project monitoring and evaluation (6.6%) as well as the formulation of CFs and WFs (4.4%). The study has also found that majority of the respondents (97.8%) admitted that improved Opportunities and Obstacles to development benefits the community. Again, the results have shown that community contribution on projects sustainability under the improved O & OD methodology is increasing as majority of the respondents (98.9%) admitted it.

The results from focus group discussion have also shown that financial contribution and material contribution are among of the roles played by O & OD approaches applied in community projects. One respondent stated

“Both financial and material contribution are made in the community but mostly material contribution where members of the community provide either food for those who directly participate in the field or they fetch water if the project is of construction” (Key Informant 1, 19th May 2023).

Another respondent added; *“For those who fail to participate direct in the field they provide money to help the implementation process of the project”* (Key Informant 2, 19th May 2023). Also, the results have revealed that formulation of CFs and WFs and community participation in project implementation is practiced in wards of Mbinga District. The respondent said;

“Most of projects in our ward are developed and implemented by the community members by directly participating in the field and for those who fail they contribute something to help the implementation process” (Key Informant 4, 22nd May 2023).

Another respondent stated;

“Ward facilitators are formulated purposively to initiate the projects and bring it to the members of the community and later succeeding the implementation process” (Key Informant 5, 22nd May 2023).

4.5 Strategies that Improve the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective of the study intended to explore strategies that will help to improve the applied O & OD approaches for community projects. This objective was met through an open-ended questionnaire and focus group discussion with the respondents in which the researcher asked the predetermined questions concerning the strategies towards the improvement of O & OD approaches in the community. Only 75 respondents responded this question in questionnaire out of 91 respondents who were aware of O&OD approaches in the community. The results from questionnaire revealed that, 14 respondents insisted about community sensitization; 26 suggested about trusting each other among members of the community; again, 19 respondents opined on the issue of transparency in implementation process of community projects. Moreover, 16 respondents suggested that community members should be involved in the whole process of project development to its accomplishment.

Table 4.4: A Summary Table

No	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Trusting each other	26	34.7
2.	Transparency in implementation process of community projects	19	25.3
3.	Community involvement in the whole process of project development	16	21.3
4.	Community sensitization	14	18.7
Total		75	100

Source: Field Data (2023).

Also, data collected through focus group discussion revealed several strategies towards improvement of O & OD approaches applied at the community. The results suggested that people should be sensitized about benefits of community projects as one of respondents stated;

“One of the common challenges we face is people’s commitment in the community is low and so I suggest that people in our ward should be emphasized of the importance of togetherness in developing ways to end obstacles in our villages” (Key Informant 1, 19th 2023).

Again, in the discussion made between the researcher and the respondents, it was suggested that leaders should be committed in ensuring that the established projects complete as planned. Again, it was suggested that, government should fulfill what they promise in supporting the implementation of community projects. The respondent stated;

“My opinion is government leaders should implement what they promise us because sometimes we fail to implement our developed project on time because government leaders do not fulfill what they promise in helping us completing the established project” (Key Informant 3, 19th May 2023).

Moreover, respondents suggested that community members should trust each other so as to ensure that the developed community projects complete as planned. The respondent stated;

“To improve O&OD programme, people in the community should trust each other and us their leaders as people sometimes hesitate to participate and contribute in the projects as they think that leaders in the villages and ward have personal interests in the established projects something which is not true” (Key Informant 4, 22nd May 2023).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings against the research questions. The results are arranged according to the objectives of this study. The first part discusses about the improved O&OD approaches applied to community projects; the second part involves the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches. The third part is the strategies that should be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects. The findings from this study are discussed in the line with the findings from other studies.

5.2 The Improved O&OD Approaches Applied to Community Projects

This objective intended to identify the improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects with the aim of identifying if community members are involved in anyways in their projects. As presented in chapter four, the study discovered that community members are familiar with improved O & OD approaches for community projects. This implies that, they have some understanding in the key factors that can facilitate or hinder the success of community projects. This could lead to better project planning since they will be able to identify potential barriers to success and develop strategies to overcome them. It could also bring about improved decision making and increased community engagement since their familiarity with improved O&OD approaches could make them have a sense of ownership in community projects and hence increased participation and engagement in project planning and implementation.

The study has also observed that, the improved O&OD approaches applied in community projects are community empowerment through community facilitators and WFs. This implies that, the programme is tapping into the local knowledge, skills and resources of community to identify their own development priorities and develop solutions that meet their needs. By using community facilitators and ward facilitators, the programme is promoting community ownership and participation in development process which increases the likelihood that the projects implemented will be sustainable and have a lasting impact on the community.

Again, the study discovered that capacity building through project implementation approach is among of the improved O&OD approaches applied for community projects. This implies that the programme is promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members for the success of the projects. It also implies that the programme allows the community members to gain practical experience in project management and implementation which they can use in future projects. It also indicates that community members are supported with necessary resources such as technical assistance and financial resources.

The observed results are in line with the study Sharma and Ohama (2007) which insisted that planning, management, and sustainability of community projects and groups, self-help efforts should ensure a balance among norms, organization, resources, capability, and institutional linkage. Self-help efforts which are also equated to social projects are used to entail attempts by communities and groups to address challenges facing them socially and economically without waiting for major interventions from the government. This is linked to this study as community

members participate in development of the projects through their ward facilitators and community facilitators as well as participating in project implementation process.

The results are also linked to the study by Espinosa *et al* (2007) which argue that leadership is essential to lead the community to becoming familiar with the tasks that they need to attain social development. The ward facilitators and community facilitators act as leaders in the community to lead members towards projects development which would address social problems.

5.3 The Sustainability Role of the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective intended to examine the sustainability role of the applied O& OD approaches for community projects. As presented in chapter four, the study observed that, the community members provide financial contribution and material contribution in the implementation of community projects. This implies that community members contribute in term of cash and labor which can help to supplement the resources provided under programme and can also build a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members. Again, the results imply that community members provide tools or building materials for use in the project. For instance, in one of the selected wards, community members contributed bricks for construction of ward office for their leaders to perform their tasks. These contributions can help to reduce the cost of the project and also help ensure that the project meets the specific needs of the community.

Moreover, the study discovered that community members play the role of formulating community and ward facilitators as well as participating in projects

monitoring and evaluation. This implies that community is actively involved in development process. This is an important aspect of community development as it ensures that the needs and aspirations of the community are taken into consideration when implementing development projects. It also shows that the community is taking ownership of the projects being implemented and is committed to ensuring their success.

Again, the study observed that community members benefit from the projects under O&OD program for community projects. This implies that the program is achieving its goals and objectives. The community members may be benefiting through improved access to basic services such as healthcare and education, access to clean water and sanitation and improved livelihoods through income-generating activities. Thus, the program is making a positive impact and is contributing to the sustainable development of the community.

The study by Cooney, *et al.*, (2017) observed that community participation in implementation of the project, government support and private sector involvement were crucial in creating sustainable and successful renewable energy projects in South Africa. This study examined the opportunities and obstacles to sustainable development based on a case of study of renewable energy project in South Africa. This is linked to the current study due to the fact that the study observed community benefits from the raised community projects since they contribute financial resources and material resources which in turn leading to successful implementation of the projects in the community.

5.4 Strategies that Improve the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective intended to determine strategies that improve the applied O&OD approaches for community projects. As presented in chapter four, the study observed strategies such as trusting each other among community members has been suggested to improve O&OD approaches for community projects. This implies that community members may sometimes not being trusting each other something which could impose a challenge towards successful implementation of the established projects. Trusting each other among community members builds a strong foundation for community-led development efforts. It fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility towards achieving a common goals and objectives.

Also, the study observed that there should be transparency in implementation process of community projects. This implies that, community members are not fully informed of the progress made in the established project. This might cause hesitancy and loss of trust in the community since no full information is granted to citizens by their leaders. Transparency in project implementation processes ensures that community members are aware of project activities and progress. It builds trust between the project implementers and community, reducing the risk of suspicion and misunderstandings that can derail project outcomes.

Again, community involvement in the whole process of project development has been suggested to be strategy to improve O&OD approach. This implies that community members are not fully involved in the project development process. Involving community members in entire project ensures that the project in tailored to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. It makes the community feel

valued and empowered, reducing the risk of community resistance to the project.

Furthermore, community sensitization has also been suggested as the strategy to improve O&OD approach for community projects. This implies that some members of the community may not be aware of the benefits of the established projects of the community and hence failing to participate in implementation of those projects. Community sensitization ensures that community members are aware of the benefits of the project and the expected impact on their lives. It increases community ownership, enhances participation and boosts the likelihood of sustainability of the project.

The study by Wilkins (2019) also identified strategies to improve community projects which included building trust, providing training and support and ensuring that community members are engaged in decision making process. This was observed in study which examined community development and the challenges of participation in community projects in Australia. This is linked to the current study as the provided strategies may be helpful in improving the O&OD approaches for community projects.

The results are also in line with the study by Oyekanmi (2017) which observed strategies such as involving community members in planning process, building partnerships with local organizations and leveraging technology to enhance communication and information-sharing. This has been observed in study which examined challenges of community development in Nigeria's rural areas.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations with regard to the findings of the study.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

This study intended to examine the potentials of improved O&OD for sustainable community projects. This study had three objectives which were; to identify the improved O&OD approaches applied to community projects; to examine the sustainability role of the applied O&OD approaches; and to determine the strategies that should be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects. This study used participatory development theory which assumed that community development needs active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation of processes, programs and projects which affect them.

The objectives of the study were determined through cross-sectional study design and data were collected through questionnaire and focus group discussion. The collected data were analyzed through multiple response analysis and thematic analysis respectively. The study found that improved O&OD approaches applied to community projects are community empowerment through community and ward facilitators, and capacity building through project implementation. It has also observed that community play the role in the project through material contribution and financial contribution. Also, through community participation in project monitoring and evaluation. The study has also determined strategies such as building

trust between the community members and transparency in implementation process of community projects. Moreover, community involvement in the process of project development and community sensitization.

6.3 Conclusion

Basing on the findings of the study, the study concludes that, community and ward facilitators are approaches used in Mbinga district for community projects. Also, capacity building through project implementation. Moreover, community members have been contributing material and financial resources for community projects as well as participating in implementation of the projects. However, there should be trusting between community members, community sensitization and transparency in community for sustainability of projects.

6.4 Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the Mbinga district should put more efforts to ensure that community proceed to initiate more projects in their respective wards and villages since they are beneficial to their prosperity. Also, there should be trust between members of the community since it fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility towards achieving common goals and objectives. This would enable successful development and implementation of projects in the community. Nevertheless, there should be community sensitization on the benefits of the project in the society. Moreover, the government leaders should implement what they promise to community members in supporting their projects on time since it would encourage them to develop and implement more projects in society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Households Respondents

Dear Sir/Madam

You are kindly requested to answer a set of questions by giving relevant information.

The study is purely for academic purpose only. Your contribution towards smooth realization of the indented purpose is highly appreciated.

Instructions

- i. Please, tick in the appropriate box

Section A: Respondents Characteristics

1. Sex:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| 1. Male | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. Age

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Below 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. 18 - 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. 31 - 43 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. 44 and above | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. Education Level

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Non | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Primary | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Secondary | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Adult | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. College and above | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Occupation(s)

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Student | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Employed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Self Employed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Non | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Village of the Respondent

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1.Kigonsela | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Mihango | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Litorongi | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Mkurumusi | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section B: Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects

6. What are the Improved O & OD approaches used in community projects?

Please, ticks if the following variable improve O & OD and project sustainability at your Village

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Community Empowerment through WFs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Community Empowerment through CFs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Capacity building trough project idea generation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Capacity building through project designing and planning | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Capacity building through project selection and financing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Capacity building trough project implementation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Capacity building through project monitoring and evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Capacity building through project sustainability plan | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Capacity building though programme or plan evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. How do you assess the applied O & OD approaches for sustainable community projects? Please, select and tick in one of the following boxes provided.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Increasing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Decreasing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Balancing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. None | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section C: Ward Facilitators, Community and Community, Facilitators role on O & OD and sustainability of community projects

8. How do you assess the roles of the WFs and CFs in implementation of Improved O & OD for sustainable community projects? Please, choice only one answer and tick in the appropriate box

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Increasing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Decreasing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. None | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. Indicate by putting many tick as many variables as you can if the following roles are being played by the community to implement the Improved O & OD at your Village/Ward? Please, tick in appropriate box/boxes of your selection

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Financial contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Material contribution | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Formulation CFs/WFs | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 4. Formulation of CFs/WFs by-laws | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Implementation of CFs/WFs by-laws | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Community participation in project planning, | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Community participation in project implementation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Community participation in projects monitoring and evaluation | |

Section D: Strategies that improve the applied O & OD approaches

10. How the applied O & OD approaches will be improved at your street? Please, tick in the space(s) provided if your household apply one or more than one variables mentioned below: -

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Implementation of CFs/WFs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Community capacity building on improved O & OD | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Involving private sectors in O & OD implementation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Strengthened the role of community participation in O & OD | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Bylaws on CFs and WFs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Economic incentives | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Strengthened the role of community in project cycle management | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Key Informants

Section A: Respondents Characteristics

1. Street/Ward.....
2. Occupation.....
3. Education Level
 1. Non ☐
 2. Primary ☐
 3. Secondary ☐
 4. Adult ☐
 5. College and above ☐

Section B: Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects

4. What are the improved O & OD approaches applied in community projects?

1. Community empowerment through

WFs_____

2. Community empowerment through

CFs_____

3. Capacity building through project idea generation_____

4. Capacity building through project planning and designing_____

5. Capacity building through project selection and financing_____

6. Capacity building through project implementation_____

7. Capacity building through project monitoring and evaluation_____

8. Capacity building through project sustainability plan_____

9. Capacity building through programme or plan evaluation_____

10. Other(s) _____

5. How do you assess sustainability of community project as a result of improved O
& OD in this Village/Ward?

Section C: The roles of community in O & OD and sustainable community projects

6. How do you comment on the roles played by community to improve the application of Improved O & OD in sustainable community projects?

Section D: Strategies that improve the applied O & OD approaches

7. Which strategies will be applied to improving the implementation of improved O & OD for sustainable community project?

Appendix III: A Toilet Constructed by Community Members of Kigonsera at Juhudi Primary School



Appendix IV: Administrative building for leaders at Lihale Village still in construction by the community members





JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA
OFISI YA RAIS
TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA YA MBINGA



Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb.Na. MDC/R.20/VOLIII/76

18 May, 2023

Mtendaji Kata,
Kata ya Kigonsera, Mkako na Lukadi,
Halmashauri ya wilaya ya Mbinga.

**YAH: KIBALI CHA KUFANYA UTAFITI JUU YA UWEZO WA FULSA
NA VIKWAZO ULIOBORESHWA (O&OD ILIO BORESHWA) KATIKA
MAENDELEO ENDELEVU YA MIRADI YA JUMUIYA.**

Tafadhali rejeeni somo tajwa hapo juu,

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji imepokea barua kutoka ofisi ya Mkuu wa mkoa yenye Kumbukumbu **Na. AB.2228/276/01/174** ya tarehe **11/05/2023** iliotoa kibali kwa Jane Shitindi kufanya tafiti juu ya iliyohusu somo tajwa hapo juu.

3. Hivyo basi kwa barua hii mnaagizwa kutoa ushirikiano ili kukamilisha utafiti huu.

Nawatakieni utekelezaji mwema

Juma Haji Juma

**MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI (W)
MBINGA**

Nakala: Mkuu wa Wilaya,
Mbinga

Ndugu Jane Shitindi
Watafiti

Jane Yisambi Shitindi
P.O.BOX 14
SONGEA
DATE: 02/05/2023

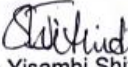
Regional Administrative Secretary,
Ruvuma Region,
P.O Box 74,
RUVUMA.

Dear Regional Administrative Secretary

**RE: Request for change of date for Research clearance for Ms. Jane Shitindi REG
NO: PG202000243**

2. Please refer my letter with reference number Ref. No. OUT/ PG202000243 date number 26th January, 2023 concerning the research clearance. The clearance to conduct a research titled "Potentials of Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development for Sustainable Community Projects in Mbinga District Council" the data were asked to be collected at Mbinga District Council in Ruvuma Region from 27th January to 27th February 2023
3. With this letter I hereby request to change the date for data collection to be 8th May, 2023 up to 08 June 2023.

Yours sincerely,


Jane Yisambi Shitindi
Masters of M&E student
OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA
0654-960833



Ref. No OUT/ PG202000243

26th January, 2023

Regional Administrative Secretary,
Ruvuma Region,
P.O Box 74,
RUVUMA.

Dear Regional Administrative Secretary,

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MS JANE YISAMBI SHITINDI. REG NO:
PG202000243**

2. The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.

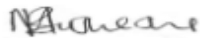
3. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Ms. Jane Yisambi Shitindi, Reg. No: PG202000243** pursuing **Master of Arts in Monitoring and Evaluation**

(MAME). We hereby grant this clearance to conduct a research titled “Potentials of Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development for Sustainable Community Projects in Mbinga District Council”. She will collect her data at Mbinga District Council in Ruvuma Region from 27th January to 27th February 2023.

4. In case you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O.Box 23409, Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820. We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.

Yours sincerely,

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA



Prof. Magreth S. Bushesha

For: **VICE CHANCELLOR**

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tel. Nos. 025- 2602256/2602238
Fax No. 2602144
Email: ras.ruvuma@tamisemi.go.tz
Website: www.ruvuma.go.tz



Regional Commissioner's Office
Ruvuma Region,
1 Tunduru Road,
P.O. Box 74,
57180 SONGEA
RUVUMA.

Ref. No. AB.228/276/01/I/36

8th May, 2023

District Executive Director,
Mbinga District Council,
P. O. Box 94,
MBINGA.

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE FOR MS JANE YISAMBI SHITINDI, REG NO:
PG202000243**

Please refer to my letter sent to your good office with Ref. No. AB.228/276/01/I/174 dated 10th February, 2023 concerning the above caption.

2. The office has received the letter from MS. Jane Yisambi Shitindi informing the office on the change of dates for data collection which is expected to start from 8th May to 8th June, 2023.
3. With this regards, I would like to inform you about the changes on the date as stated above. Kindly find the attached copy of the previous letter as quoted above:

Thank you for your continuous cooperation.

Jumanne A. Mwankhoo
For Regional Administrative Secretary
RUVUMA

Copy: MS Jane Yisambi Shitindi

- For your information

POTENTIALS OF IMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN MBINGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Jane Yisambi Shitindi

Dr. Noel Matemba

This study was carried to examine the potentials of improved opportunities and obstacles to development for sustainable community projects in Mbinga District Council. The study employed cross-sectional research design using a sample of 100 respondents who were randomly selected. Data were collected using questionnaire and focus group discussion. Data collected through questionnaire was analyzed through multiple response analysis and descriptive statistics. The data collected through focus group discussion was analyzed through thematic analysis where the transcript was prepared within which coding of the responses took place. Findings showed that, community empowerment through community and ward facilitators are among of the Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) approaches applied for community projects as well as capacity building through project implementation. It has also observed that financial contribution and material contribution are among of the roles played by community for sustainability of their projects as well as participation in projects monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, the results revealed strategies such as trusting each other, transparency, community involvement in the whole process of project development and community sensitization to improve the sustainability of community projects. The study concludes that, O &OD exists at Mbinga District and uses approaches like community empowerment through ward and community facilitators, and project implementation by the community for community projects. The study recommends that more efforts should be put by the Government to ensure that community develop and implement more projects for their prosperity.

Keywords: Opportunities and Obstacles to Development approaches, roles and strategies, community and ward Facilitators, community projects, Community empowerment, community participation.

1.0 Introduction

Globally, Opportunities and Obstacles to Development O & OD has been used since 1980s as a planning tool that aim at strengthening people participation in planning of the projects and development interventions which showed great success in empowering local community to plan for their development and projects that guarantee its sustainability (Morgan, 2011). African countries have a long way in their efforts to achieve sustainable development where community participation has been realized as an important aspect to be included in the development process (Wasilwa, 2015). According to Rajalahti, *et al.*, (2012) development actors,

including donors, government and international organizations are advocating participatory approaches by integrating peoples' knowledge as the basis for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. The adoption of O & OD in Tanzania was in line with Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) which introduced the Decentralization by Devolution (D by D) of 1998 and Local Government Policy of 1998. The programme went hand in hand with providing power to local people to participate in decision making and implementation which in turn contributed much to empowering of local community and sustainability of community projects.

According to URT, (2019) the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (Improved O & OD) is one among the efforts made by the government of Tanzania (GoT) to strengthen community empowerment as a development methodology which replaced the existing O & OD methodology. The Improved O & OD is in line with Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025- and Five-Years Development Plan (FYDP) 2021/22-2025/26. It aims to be an effective and efficient methodology for all LGAs in providing quality services and sustain community projects. Compared to previous development methodology (O & OD), the Improved O & OD came up with the idea of establishment Ward Facilitators (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) as a development tool that strengthen community empowerment efforts to plan, execute and sustain community projects based on their self-help efforts.

Despite the implementation of improved O & OD in Tanzania and Mbinga District Council in particular, most of the community project fail to attain its objectives since they are ineffective to reflect the reality of improved O & OD which aim at enhancing project impact to the intended beneficiaries (Kileo *et al.*, 2021). In most cases, people still tend to full participate in planning phase of the community projects and leave behind its implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of community projects as a result of community project implemented after introduction of improved O & OD face the existed sustainability challenges posed by previous O & OD development methodology. Therefore, this study intended to examine the potentials of improved O & OD for sustainable community projects. This ground necessitated the study to be made to determine potentials of improved O & OD for sustainable community projects. The study specifically focused on (i) identifying the Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects, (ii) examining the sustainability role of the applied O & OD approaches, (iii) determining the strategies that should be taken to improve the sustainability of community projects.

2.0 Theoretical review

2.1 Theories of participatory approach

According to Dinbabo (2003) participatory theory criticized the modernization paradigm on the ground that it promoted a top-down view of development. The theory emphasizes the active involvement and engagement of community members in decision-making processes and project implementation. It recognizes that local

communities possess valuable knowledge, expertise, and insights that can contribute to the success and sustainability of community projects. In relation to the current study, the participatory approach encourages the inclusion of community members in identifying and assessing opportunities and obstacles related to development approaches for community projects. Also, the approach recognizes that sustainability is crucial for the long-term success of community projects since community members are able to identify their needs and share their resources and capabilities towards the success of the community projects.

Moreover, the approach supports the development of strategies to improve the sustainability of community projects. Community members were used to co-create and co-design strategies that address the identified obstacles and leverage the identified opportunities. This collaborative process ensured that the strategies align with the community's aspirations, values, and resources, increasing the likelihood of their successful implementation and long-term sustainability. Additionally, involving community members in decision-making and implementation fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment, which can contribute to the project's sustainability by encouraging long-term community engagement and support.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted cross-sectional study design. The design was adopted because it allows studying different groups of respondents at one point of time. It also provides a suitable room for gathering the required data from different groups such as household members, Ward Facilitators (WFs), Community Facilitators (CFs) as well as government and non-governmental officials at one point in time through the use of questionnaires, focus group discussion and observation methods of data collection. The study was conducted in Mbinga District specifically at Kigonsela, Lukarasi and Mkako wards due to the fact that the selected wards are information rich based on documentary sources accessed from in the study area. Also, there is the increase formation and implementation of WFs and CFs while the sustainability of community projects is questions to most of development actors who always believe that improved O & OD is acute solutions while its implementations leave a lot to be desired.

The study involved the population of 29,828 people from which individuals of 18 years old and above, both sex male and female were systematically selected. In addition, the study consulted WFs, CFs and government official such as Villages Executive Officers (VEOs) as well as Ward Executive Officer (WEO) as key informants. The sample size was then determined through simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques where 100 households were determined through Nassiuma (2000) standard formula which is presented below and 16 VEOs, WEOs, members of CFs and WFs were determined through saturation level.

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample Size

N= Household Population (29,828)

C= Coefficient of variation (10 %)

e = Sampling Error 1 %

Hence

$$n = \frac{(29,828) (10 \%)^2}{(10 \%)^2 + (29,828-1) (1 \%)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{(29,828) (0.01)}{(0.01) + (29,827) (0.0001)}$$

$$n = \frac{298.28}{2.9927}$$

$$n = 99.67 \approx 100$$

Open-ended questionnaires were prepared to gather information from household respondents because it allowed the collection of a lot of information from respondents in a short period of time and was in line with the time required by a researcher to accomplish the data collection process. While data from the key informants such as WEOs, VEOs and members of WFs and CFs was collected through focus group discussion.

Data collected through questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive statistics whereby data were firstly cleaned, entered and coded in SPSS and then frequency and percentages of the responses about the study objectives were determined. The data collected through focus group discussion was analyzed through thematic analysis where the transcript was prepared within which coding of the responses took place. Then themes were generated from the codes which indicated the same expressions. Themes were then reviewed to compare with original data and look for any missing points or irrelevant results. Moreover, the researcher defined themes depending on what they indicated and then presenting the results that the researcher came to understand through thematic analysis.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Improved O & OD Approaches Applied to Community Projects

This objective intended to identify Improved O & OD approaches applied to community projects in Mbinga District. Both questionnaire and Focus group discussion were used to collect data from the respondents. The responses are presented in table 4.1 below

Table 4.5: Improved O & OD Approaches Applied to Community Projects

No	Questions	Responses	Frequency	percentage
1.	Are you familiar with the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development Approaches for Community Projects	Yes	91	91.0
		No	9	9.0
		Total	100	100
2.	What are the Improved O&OD Approaches used in community projects?	Community Empowerment through CFs	12	13.2
		Community Empowerment through WFs	66	72.5
		Capacity building through project idea generation	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project designing and planning	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project selection and financing	0	0
		Capacity building through project implementation	13	14.3
		Capacity building through project monitoring and evaluation	0	0.0
		Capacity building through project sustainability plan	0	0.0
		Capacity building through programme or plan evaluation	0	0
		Community Empowerment through CFs	12	13.2
		Total	91	100

Source: Field Data (2023).

The findings revealed that community members are familiar with improved O & OD approaches for community projects. This implies that, they have some understanding in the key factors that can facilitate or hinder the success of community projects. This could lead to better project planning since they will be able to identify potential barriers to success and develop strategies to overcome them. It could also bring about improved decision making and increased community engagement since their familiarity with improved O&OD approaches could make them have a sense of ownership in community projects and hence increased participation and engagement in project planning and implementation.

The study has also observed that, the improved O&OD approaches applied in community projects are community empowerment through community facilitators and WFs. This implies that, the programme is tapping into the local knowledge, skills and resources of community to identify their own development priorities and develop solutions that meet their needs. By using community facilitators and ward facilitators, the programme is promoting community ownership and participation in development process which increases the likelihood that the projects implemented will be sustainable and have a lasting impact on the community.

Again, the study discovered that capacity building through project implementation approach is among of the improved O&OD approaches applied for community

projects. This implies that the programme is promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members for the success of the projects. It also implies that the programme allows the community members to gain practical experience in project management and implementation which they can use in future projects. It also indicates that community members are supported with necessary resources such as technical assistance and financial resources.

The observed results are in line with the study Sharma and Ohama (2007) which insisted that planning, management, and sustainability of community projects and groups, self-help efforts should ensure a balance among norms, organization, resources, capability, and institutional linkage. Self-help efforts which are also equated to social projects are used to entail attempts by communities and groups to address challenges facing them socially and economically without waiting for major interventions from the government. This is linked to this study as community members participate in development of the projects through their ward facilitators and community facilitators as well as participating in project implementation process.

The results are also linked to the study by Espinosa *et al* (2007) which argue that leadership is essential to lead the community to becoming familiar with the tasks that they need to attain social development. The ward facilitators and community facilitators act as leaders in the community to lead members towards projects development which would address social problems. The study by Smith (2019) also identified the opportunities and obstacles to development in a rural community in Thailand while implementing community-based development approaches. The study observed that there is increased community participation, improved social cohesion, and enhanced local capacity.

Johnson (2020) also explored the opportunities and obstacles to development associated with community development approaches in urban settings. The approaches identified included increased access to resources, improved social networks, and enhanced community empowerment. However, the study identified challenges such as limited institutional support, competing interests, and gentrification pressures which hindered successful community development.

Smith and Johnson (2018) made a study on Community Development Approaches: Strengths, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from the Field. This study provided an overview of different community development approaches such as capacity building, community empowerment and project implementation by the community members and discussed their strengths, challenges, and lessons learned. The study observed that the so identified approaches were significant since they built a sense of ownership by the community in their developed projects which has led to the success of the developed projects.

4.2 The Sustainability Role of the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective intended to examine the sustainability role of the applied O& OD approaches for community projects. Both questionnaire and focus group discussion were used to collect data from the respondents. The observed roles were measured

through participants' responses on the roles they play in the community projects. The results are presented below

Table 4.6 The Sustainability Role of the Applied O & OD Approaches

No	Questions	Responses	Frequency	percentage
1.	What are roles played by the approaches to implement the improved O&OD at your village/ward?	Financial contribution	48	52.7
		Material contribution	33	36.3
		Formulation of CFs/WFs	4	4.4
		Formulation of CFs/WFs by-laws	0	0
		Implementation of CFs/WFs by-laws	0	0
		Community participation in project planning	0	0
		Community participation in project implementation	0	0
		Community participation in projects monitoring and evaluation	6	6.6
		Total	91	100
2.	Does Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to development benefits the community?	Yes	89	97.8
		No	2	2.2
		Total	91	100
3.	How do you assess community contribution on projects sustainability under the improved O&OD methodology?	Increasing	90	98.9
		Decreasing	0	0
		None	1	1.1
		I do not know	0	0
		Total	91	100

Source: Field Data (2023)

The study observed that, the community members (52.7%) provide financial contribution and material contribution (36.3%) in the implementation of community projects. This implies that community members contribute in term of cash and labor which can help to supplement the resources provided under programme and can also build a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members. Again, the results imply that community members provide tools or building materials for use in the project. For instance, in one of the selected wards, community members contributed bricks for construction of ward office for their leaders to perform their tasks. These contributions can help to reduce the cost of the project and also help ensure that the project meets the specific needs of the community.

Moreover, the study discovered that community members play the role of formulating community and ward (4.4%) facilitators as well as participating in projects monitoring and evaluation (6.6%). This imply that community is actively involved in development process. This is an important aspect of community

development as it ensures that the needs and aspirations of the community are taken into consideration when implementing development projects. It also shows that the community is taking ownership of the projects being implemented and is committed to ensuring their success.

Again, the study observed that community members benefit from the projects under O&OD program for community projects (97.8%). This implies that the program is achieving its goals and objectives. The community members may be benefiting through improved access to basic services such as healthcare and education, access to clean water and sanitation and improved livelihoods through income-generating activities. Thus, the program is making a positive impact and is contributing to the sustainable development of the community.

The study by Cooney, *et al.*, (2017) observed that community participation in implementation of the project, government support and private sector involvement were crucial in creating sustainable and successful renewable energy projects in South Africa. This study examined the opportunities and obstacles to sustainable development based on a case of study of renewable energy project in South Africa. This is linked to the current study due to the fact that the study observed community benefits from the raised community projects since they contribute financial resources and material resources which in turn leading to successful implementation of the projects in the community.

Again, the study by Mia *et al.*, (2022) identified the role of community members on the community projects in Malaysia and found that community members had the role of contributing financial needs and materials to successful implementation of projects. Also, this was succeeded through engagement and planning which then creates a sense of ownership to members of the community and hence being able to participate in development activities for prosperity of the community at large.

Moreover, Tanrikul (2023) studied the role of community participation and social inclusion in projects in Mediterranean region. The study found that community members play the great role for community projects through the provision of their knowledge, resources and direct implementation of the projects. Furthermore, community participation has been observed to have fostering a sense of ownership and collective identity among local residents. This implies that, community members have to highly be considered since it is through them projects can be created, developed and successfully implemented.

4.3 Strategies that Improve the Applied O & OD Approaches

This objective intended to determine strategies that improve the applied O&OD approaches for community projects. This objective was met through an open-ended questionnaire and focus group discussion with the respondents in which the researcher asked the predetermined questions concerning the strategies towards the improvement of O & OD approaches in the community. The results are presented below

Table 4.7: A Summary Table

No	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Trusting each other	26	34.7
2.	Transparency in implementation process of community projects	19	25.3
3.	Community involvement in the whole process of project development	16	21.3
4.	Community sensitization	14	18.7
Total		75	100

Source: Field Data (2023).

The study observed strategies such as trusting each other among community members has been suggested to improve O&OD approaches for community projects. This implies that community members may sometimes not being trusting each other something which could impose a challenge towards successful implementation of the established projects. Trusting each other among community members builds a strong foundation for community-led development efforts. It fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility towards achieving a common goals and objectives.

Also, the study observed that there should be transparency in implementation process of community projects. This implies that, community members are not fully informed of the progress made in the established project. This might cause hesitancy and loss of trust in the community since no full information is granted to citizens by their leaders. Transparency in project implementation processes ensures that community members are aware of project activities and progress. It builds trust between the project implementers and community, reducing the risk of suspicion and misunderstandings that can derail project outcomes.

Again, community involvement in the whole process of project development has been suggested to be strategy to improve O&OD approach. This implies that community members are not fully involved in the project development process. Involving community members in entire project ensures that the project in tailored to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. It makes the community feel valued and empowered, reducing the risk of community resistance to the project.

Furthermore, community sensitization has also been suggested as the strategy to improve O&OD approach for community projects. This implies that some members of the community may not be aware of the benefits of the established projects of the community and hence failing to participate in implementation of those projects. Community sensitization ensures that community members are aware of the benefits of the project and the expected impact on their lives. It increases community ownership, enhances participation and boosts the likelihood of sustainability of the project.

The study by Wilkins (2019) also identified strategies to improve community projects which included building trust, providing training and support and ensuring that community members are engaged in decision making process. This was

observed in study which examined community development and the challenges of participation in community projects in Australia. This is linked to the current study as the provided strategies may be helpful in improving the O&OD approaches for community projects.

The results are also in line with the study by Oyekanmi (2017) which observed strategies such as involving community members in planning process, building partnerships with local organizations and leveraging technology to enhance communication and information-sharing. This has been observed in study which examined challenges of community development in Nigeria's rural areas.

Also, Uche *et al.*, (2023) observed strategies that promote sustainability of community projects in Southern Nigeria. The strategies included community mobilization for active participation in projects' sustainability, also education should be given to community members about the benefits of the projects. Again, effective communication has been observed as one of strategies to achieve the goal of project sustainability. This implies that local action is the effective technique to ensure the sustainability of projects. Without some sort of resource commitment from the recipients, development efforts cannot be maintained.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

Basing on the findings of the study, the study concludes that, residents of Mbinga district are familiar with the Improved Opportunities and Obstacles to Development approaches for community projects and they have been able to identify the approaches applied in their community which included empowerment through community and ward facilitators who are responsible for sensitizing, developing and emphasizing community members on the need to develop projects to address their needs as the community. Also, capacity building through project implementation has been identified as another approach used for community projects in Mbinga district which creates a sense of ownership by community members since they directly participate in implementation of their developed projects.

In addition, the community members of Mbinga district have been providing financial contribution and material contribution to succeed the project. Also, the formulation of community and ward facilitators is the role of the community as the facilitators come from the community itself and people of community are responsible to choose facilitators who will be responsible of identifying community needs and thus developing strategies to address them together with community members. Moreover, community members have been participating in projects monitoring and evaluation which creates a sense of accountability and responsibility by the community members and their leaders. Also, community members have been observed to have been benefiting from the so developed projects as services become closer to the community.

Furthermore, different strategies have been proposed by community members and key informants to improve O&OD approaches which included developing a sense of

credibility among the community members since through it programs will be maintained. Also, there should be transparency in the implementation of community projects as well as community members should be sensitized on the benefits of participating in their projects since some of members have been hesitating to participate in issues involving the community and hence drawing back the ones who wish their villages and wards to prosper.

5.2 Recommendations

Basing on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the Mbinga district should put more efforts to ensure that community proceed to initiate more projects in their respective wards and villages since they are beneficial to their prosperity. Also, there should be trust between members of the community since it fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility towards achieving common goals and objectives. This would enable successful development and implementation of projects in the community. Nevertheless, there should be community sensitization on the benefits of the project in the society. Moreover, the government leaders should implement what they promise to community members in supporting their projects on time since it would encourage them to develop and implement more projects in society.

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