

Case Report

# Participatory Planning and Project Performance in Rural Areas: A Case of Nsimbo District Council

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## Abstract

Most rural areas in Tanzania suffer from inadequate service delivery that is due to inadequate social economic development projects that can help them attain such services. The government and other stakeholders have been allocating funds in rural areas to help solve certain pinching problems associated with lack of social economic infrastructures that include but not limited to schools, health facilities, water services and road services. Despite the fact that funds have been allocated to help solve the community's problems, the communities have remained as they were since there has been lack of total community participation. To achieve the anticipated goals, it is necessary for the rural community to adopt participatory planning approach in implementing various development projects taking place in the community. The objective of this study was to assess how participatory planning affects performance of development projects in rural areas with particular focus of Nsimbo District Council. A sample of 92 respondents was used to achieve the purpose of the study. The study found that more than 70% of the respondents interviewed had knowledge on participatory planning, they knew their local leaders and the roles they played in development projects, and they understood the factors affecting effective participatory planning in attainment of project performance in their community. Respondents interviewed had at least received education of participatory planning, they understood their contribution towards achievement of development projects, they understood the sources of funds for carrying on the projects, and they had clear plans for projects sustainability. The key lesson learned from this study is that, better understanding of participatory planning resulted into robust achievement of social economic development projects in rural areas and thus will address the problems experienced by the local community. This calls for the government and policy makers to design appropriate participatory approach design than the existing Opportunity and Obstacles to Development that is currently being used.

## Keywords

Participatory Planning, Project Performance, Rural Areas

## 1. Introduction

Participatory planning is a process through which communities work toward achieving planned socio-economic goals by analyzing their challenges and formulating appropriate courses of action. Experts play a role in this process, but

primarily as facilitators rather than decision-makers.

The results of development projects in Sub Sahara Africa are mixed. While certain projects bring sustainable outcomes, others fail to continue after withdrawal of the funder [1] He

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continues by saying that a number of projects never yield the expected results irrespective of involving technical manuals and participatory methods. For so long this has been the reason. In most of these projects, the native public institutions play a key role. To overcome project implementation and sustainability challenges, a method that focuses on planning, control, government responsibilities and top-down flows of information and resources must be put in place. Sustainability has thus been seen as the important benchmark in assessment the project achievement.

Policies and negotiation skills of different stakeholders, mostly governments, target groups, non-governmental organizations or multinational institutions determined why, when and how they are identified, formulated and approved [3]. FAO observed the necessity of participatory plans simply because there was a need of one-to-one participation of the target groups or their representatives in the procedures of project identification and preparation so as to take on project sustainability especially in developing countries [17].

Research on Forms and effectiveness of community participation in squatter settlements Largely agreed with the benefits of popular participation; however, he was of the opinion that its practical achievements had often been hugely overstated and its outcomes had often damaged the interest of the weaker groups in society, basically because its advocates had often played down the political dimension of community participation [20].

At the national level, planning guidelines are issued to Office of the President, Regional Administration and Local Government as well as Regional Secretariats. The main role of these institutions is to coordinate planning at LGA. After receiving planning guidelines either from the ministry responsible with planning/PO-RALG or regional secretariat, Local Government Authorities communicate them to the wards. Furthermore, ward submits the same guidelines to the village. In this regard, during meeting through the use of O and OD villages priorities are identified and included in the plan. Village plans are submitted to ward level. The ward compiles the villages plan and submits to the respective LGA. At this stage, LGA compiles all wards plans and submits to the national level and copy to Regional Secretariat and PO-RALG. At the national level, all LGAs' plans are integrated to form a national plan.

Participation is frequently inhibited at the state level by biasness, inadequate funding, rigidity, the local opposition of and national administrators, and the state's weakness to respond effectively to the felt needs of the people Nsimbo District Council (NDC) receives money from the Central government but it as well directs funds to implement development projects. In each village or facility that receives funds for projects. At the project area, there was a procurement committee which took authority to advertise tenders under the facilitation of Council executives to obtain the construction agencies basically the Local 'Fundi' (contractors).

After completion of procurement procedures, community

had to participate in implementation of projects by providing 20% of the allocated fund per project, these could be in terms of cash or in kind such as labor, bricks, sand, stones and water to supplement the government support (Council Development Reports, 2020).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Theoretical Literature Review

#### 2.1.1. Tran Active Theory

This is a theory used in the field of Development Economics especially in economic planning, it was adopted by John Friedman's in 1973 and is defined as a normative response to improving the practice of planning through a dialogical process that combines various forms of technical and experiential knowledge, through which a deeper understanding of issues surrounding a particular challenge in a community is attained [13].

Gilbert (1987) examined various forms and effectiveness of community participation in development projects, emphasizing the need for equitable involvement to prevent marginalization of weaker societal groups. His findings suggest that while participation is beneficial, special mechanisms must be in place to ensure that underprivileged communities have a voice in decision-making processes [21].

This study adopted this theory because it insists on empowering all groups within society to have their voice heard and to be treated with respect and self-worth and it ensures people's participation at all levels of planning. It highlights collaboration, participation, dialogue and mutual learning and it is characterized by decentralized planning and institutions that enable people to have greater control over social processes. A planner becomes more of a facilitator or and less as a technician.

FAO (2013) observed the necessity of participatory planning due to the importance of direct engagement of target groups in project identification and preparation, ensuring long-term sustainability of rural development projects. For instance, FAO-led projects in various developing countries have demonstrated that community involvement in decision-making enhances project ownership and sustainability [4].

In transactive theory of planning, there are two levels of communication. The first is person centered communication that presumes a relationship which is applicable to all forms of human intercourse which is the life of dialogue. The second is content communication which is sustained by the primary relation of communication and cannot be understood self-reliantly. Both methods are key to planning [8]. So if we look keenly at this theory we find that it's all about dialogue, meaning that for planning to be realized it must involve interaction between individuals that the project intends to benefit. This will enhance ownership and sustainability of the project.

### 2.1.2. Synoptic Theory

The synoptic theory to participatory planning is characterized by graded comprehensiveness. Ideally, this theory is a conscious effort launched by top management to integrate the decisions that compose the overall strategy to ensure that plans are consciously developed, mutually reinforcing, and integrated into a whole [5]. Sometimes referred to as the goals approach that represents a hierarchy of goals from the more general at the corporate level to the more specific at the operational level [2].

The synoptic approach is in line with traditional planning theory from the private sector. It is a "formalized procedure to produce articulated result(s) in the form of an integrated decision" [22]. Three basic premises inform this approach (p. 42). The first premise is that strategy formation should be a conscious, controlled, formalized effort, decomposed into specific steps and procedures with delineated checklists and supportive techniques. The second is that responsibility for the overall participatory planning process rests with the chief executive officer (in principle), and its execution rests with the staff planners (in practice). The third is that strategies come out of the planning process fully developed and articulated so that they can be implemented through objectives, budgets, programs, and operating plans. However, this study could not adopt this theory because it is a theory that dictates what has to be done rather than doing it with the community.

## 2.2. Empirical Literature Review

Research on community development agency in developing village in the Lamongan district used descriptive research to analyze its findings. Findings revealed that Community participation is the main capital in an effort to achieve the goals of government programs throughout the territory of the Republic of Indonesia [9]. Realization in accomplishing the goals of the development program is not based merely on the capability of government officers, but also with respect to efforts to achieve capacity and security of the community to participate in the implementation of development programs. The study on financing rural infrastructure revealed that the first step in helping communities to plan access improvements should be a horizontal procedure that permits them to organize funds for the venture of their choice [2]. Therefore, funding organizations, comprising local governments and communities themselves, must grow communication abilities and approaches for recognizing local priorities. The relevance of this study with the study of NDC is that it looked at the source of funding and maintenance of those funds for projects in rural areas.

Another study was done due to the rise of combined effect of various factors like lack of awareness and understanding of the concept and applicability of the participatory planning processes. The study was done in Delhi which is an urban municipality. Results from this study revealed that participatory planning in plan preparation in Delhi was the stakehold-

er's participation as was evident from the workshops and the composition of the monitoring committee [15]. Government official and their representatives had a greater representation rather than the representatives of the public. The smaller number of the participation from residents groups and other civil societies can be attributed to the selective invitation for the participation in the workshops. The study is relevant to the study of Nsimbo in that its main objective is explained in specific objective one of Nsimbo study. Despite the fact that it was done in an urban area but it also used the same methodology in getting response from the respondents. Respondents in the study of Nsimbo were mostly the community members unlike the study of Delhi that greatly involved government officials as respondents.

Despite the fact that there is a wider approval of public participation in planning, however, it is observed that there is little consistency in its application and efficiency [11]. The central problem of public participation practices is low involvement and unsuccessfulness, which is mostly found in developing countries [10]. The low status of public participation could be traced to both macro and micro forces hindering efficiency in participatory process.

- 1) Research Question 1: What is the level of understanding of participatory planning on project performance?
- 2) Research Question 2: Which roles do local leaders play in participatory planning process in ensuring project performance?
- 3) Research Question 3: Which are the factors affecting participatory planning in the performance of projects?
- 4) Research Question 4: What is the effect of participatory planning on project performance in rural areas?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design

Exploratory research design was used since the study sought to look into and better understanding of the prevailing problem. In this design, a cross – sectional survey was used. A cross sectional research design was used on the basis that, the design allowed collection of data from different groups of respondents at one point at a time and easy-going. Also, the method was used due to its flexibility in terms of data collection and analysis.

### 3.2. Target Population

Target population refers to the set of units or elements with similar features to which the inference is made [23]. There were forty-six (46) projects implemented at the time of study in Nsimbo DC, the study deployed a complete enumeration survey method. This is a method where each item in the universe is selected for data collection especially when the population is within manageable size, and in this case all the (46) projects were reached to see whether all processes of partic-

ipation were involved.

### 3.3. Unit of Inquiry

A unit of inquiry is a unit about which information is required in a research project. The study used purposive sampling type of non-probability sampling in choosing the respondents. The researcher chose two respondents from the three project implementation groups (Construction committee, procurement committee and the receiving committee), two respondents' one from construction committee and the other from the procurement committee. The reason was that these were individual who knew well the project and so could give clear and efficient information about the project. However, the researcher also had key informants including eight ward executive officers (WEO), eight Councilors and four Heads of Departments who were also purposively selected.

### 3.4. Data Types

#### 3.4.1. Primary Data

Primary data related to Participatory planning and project performance in rural areas was extracted from the field by using data collection tools like questionnaires observation and interviews from the seventeen (17) selected villages of the eight wards. Thus, structured questionnaire was used to gather qualitative data from the field. However, both open and closed ended questionnaire were included in order to allow respondents to express fully their understanding, opinions and perceptions.

#### 3.4.2. Secondary Data

In this study secondary data included reports of the ongoing projects in Nsimbo and other Districts of Katavi Region, general information of Nsimbo and budget allocation for each project. These data were found in the Council strategic plan

(CSP), Council profile (CP), Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Action plans (AP) and Cash flows (CF). Region.

### 3.4.3. Methods of Data Collection

#### (i). Interviews

Basically, two sets of questionnaires were administered to conduct interview. One set for the key informants and the other set for other respondents. The questionnaire consisted of both close-ended and open-ended questions that allowed the researcher to extract large volumes of data from respondents on Participatory planning and project performance in rural areas. Interview was used since it ensured high percentage of return since everyone could be reached by and could respond. Information secured through interviews is likely to be more correct compared to that secured through other methods and also it is a flexible method.

#### (ii). Observation

The study also involved observation as a method for data collection. Through this method the study was able to observe the projects implemented in both the villages and Council Headquarter, materials contributed by community and previous year's village plans formulated by participation. This method was important because it helped to verify or cross check the accuracy of information obtained throughout interview and documentary sources during the data collection. In general, this was an in-build technique which was used throughout the study to see what is actually taking place on ground. It was chosen it did not require much technical knowledge and because it ensures greater accuracy. The method also has greater universality of practice and also it does not require the willingness of the people to provide various information.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

*Table 1. Data Analysis.*

No.	Specific objective	Variables	Method of analysis	Source of data
1	To study community's knowledge of participatory planning on project performance in rural areas	Number of trainings done, planning stages, types of contribution made, project benefit	Descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and discourse analysis	Primary data
2	To determine local leaders influence of participatory planning on project performance in rural areas	Source of information, mobilization of community	Descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and discourse analysis	Primary data
3	To explore factors affecting participatory planning on Project performance in rural areas	Government role, beneficiary identification, project benefits, funding source, project contractors, planned implementation period and project sustainability	Descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and discourse analysis	Primary data

No.	Specific objective	Variables	Method of analysis	Source of data
4	To identify the effect of participatory planning on projects performance in rural areas	Funds allocated for the project and time allocated for project implementation	Multiple linear regression	Secondary data

The fitted model for objective number four thus become;

$$\gamma = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

$\gamma$  = Project performance in NDC measured by the number of completed projects

$x_1$ = Funds allocated for the project in NDC measured by the total Tanzania shillings allocation per individual project

$x_2$ = Time allocated for project implementation in NDC measured by time taken for a particular project to be completed ranging from one year to four years.

$\varepsilon$  = Error term

Thus the independent variable for the model was funds allocated for the project, time allocated for project implementation and other error terms to enhance project performance. The error term formed dummies which were created by estimation. The estimation model was formulated as follows;

$$\text{Project performance} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ funds allocated for the project} + \beta_2 \text{ time allocated for project implementation} + \varepsilon$$

### 3.6. Validity and Reliability of Data

#### 3.6.1. Reliability

A cronbach Alpha was used to test internal consistency i.e. reliability in the multiple Likert questions in the questionnaire tool. So the results of the Cronbach’s alpha was 0.82 which indicate high level of internal consistency thus the data were reliable.

#### 3.6.2. Validity

The study used multiple linear regression in answering specific objective number four. All the assumptions of multiple linear regression were tested to see whether data were reliable. Linear relationship was tested by drawing a scatter plot of each predictor variable and response variable and the points fell roughly along a diagonal line thus proving existence of linear relationship. Multicollinearity was also checked to see whether none of the predictor variables were highly correlated with each other. Durbin –Watson test was used to test dataset independence and see whether or not the residuals exhibit autocorrelation.

### 3.7. Preliminary Results

#### 3.7.1. Descriptive Statistics

The study of participatory planning and project perfor-

mance in Nsimbo District Council used the methodology of descriptive research in analyzing its findings and it had the same scope since it involved one district but came with findings that reflected the situation in many rural areas of Tanzania as the study done in Indonesia Research on community development agency in developing village in the Lamongan district, where findings revealed that Community participation is the main capital in an effort to achieve the goals of government programs throughout the territory of the Republic of Indonesia [9]. Realization in accomplishing the goals of the development program is not based merely on the capability of government officers, but also with respect to efforts to achieve capacity and security of the community to participate in the implementation of development programs. Their participation will be able to reward costs and the ability of government in achieving the implementation of the development program.

#### 3.7.2. Characteristics of the Respondents Age, Gender, Occupation and Marital Status

The study examined a total of 92 respondents from Nsimbo District Council (NDC). Table 2. shows the presentation of characteristics of the respondents, it briefly presents respondents age, gender, occupation and marital status. Findings show that out of the 92 respondents, only 64 respondents equivalent to 70% were aged between 18-40 years, 28 respondents equivalent to 30% were aged 41 years and above, 73 respondents equivalent to 79% of the respondents were male while 19 respondents equivalent to 21% were female. 72 respondents equivalent to 78% were farmers, 16 respondents equivalent to 17% were employees, two respondents equivalent 2% were pastoralist while another two respondents equivalent to 2% were business people. However, 35 respondents equivalent to and 38% of the respondents were living single life, 40 respondents equivalent to 43% were married, 10 respondent equivalent to 11% were either widows or widowers while 7 respondents equivalent to 8% were divorced.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Respondents Age, Gender, Occupation and Marital Status.

Age	Frequency	%
18-40	64	70
41 years and above	28	30
Gender		

Age	Frequency	%
Male	73	79
Female	19	21
Occupation		
Farmer	72	78
Employee	16	17
Business person	2	2
Pastoralist	2	2
Marital status		
Single	35	38
Married	40	43
Widow/widower	10	11
Divorced	7	8

Source; Research findings 2021

### 3.8. Knowledge of Participatory Planning on Project Performance in Rural Areas

#### 3.8.1. Participatory Planning Awareness, Trainings Received and Training Frequency

URT (2010), strengthening participatory planning and community development cycles is essential for good local governance, providing a framework for enhancing community participation in project decision-making. An example of this can be seen in Tanzania's decentralization strategy, which aims to empower local government authorities to work closely with communities in planning and executing development initiatives [18].

The findings show that out of 92 respondents, only 72 respondents equivalent to 78% of the respondents were aware of what participatory planning was, 64 equivalent to 70% had received training on participatory planning while 54 respondents equivalent to 59% had received trainings on participatory planning at least once from the Council's experts. These findings concurred with the observation made by David (1997) who in his journal asserted that in particular, it is suggested that, as participatory exercises, Participatory rural appraisal (PRAs) involve public social events which construct local knowledge in ways that are strongly influenced by existing social relationships. It suggests that information for planning is shaped by relations of power and gender, and by the investigators themselves; and that certain kinds of knowledge are often excluded.

(URT, 2016) emphasizes the role of participatory planning in fostering industrialization and economic transformation through inclusive community engagement. This is evident in infrastructure projects such as rural road networks and elec-

trification programs, where local input has shaped effective implementation strategies [19].

#### 3.8.2. Awareness of the Existence of Development Projects and Contribution Made and Type of Contribution Made

The study findings examined whether respondents were aware of the existence of development projects in their village and whether they contributed anything in its implementation as well as the type of contribution they made. The findings show that out of the 92 respondents, only 82 respondents equivalent to 89% were aware of the existence of development projects in their village, 82 respondents equivalent to 89% said they made contribution to the projects.

During the interview session, one male respondent said that;

*"Because the village chairman and the village executive officer normally enlightens us on the development of projects, I always contribute mostly through cash and manpower since at the end of it all, these projects only benefits we the people of this village"* (Male respondent).

These findings also confirm that people had knowledge of what participatory planning was and also understood the importance of contributing in the implementation of those projects.

#### 3.8.3. Role Distribution and Implementation Plan Agreement

The findings from the study shown in table 3. below reveals that 79 respondents out of 92 equivalent to 86% said there was clear role distribution, 63 respondents equivalent to 68% said there was a clear plan for operation and maintenance, 77 respondents equivalent to 84% said implementation plan was reviewed 72 respondents equivalent to 78% said the community agreed to sponsor operation and maintenance of the project while 55 respondents equivalent to 60% said the projects were implemented as planned.

These results match the observation made from a study which explains that involving stakeholders and the public in planning processes can stimulate a feeling of ownership regarding the ways with which their communities develop, that is important for continued community plans and proposals [24]. These finding prove that the community had knowledge of participatory planning in their villages. It also shows that the community was involved in the whole process of project implantation.

These results match the study results done on Participatory Planning in Plan Preparation in Delhi which revealed that there was no doubt that the main thrust of the participation was the stakeholder's participation as was evident from the workshops and the composition of the monitoring committee [16].

**Table 3.** Role Distribution and Implementation Plan Agreement.

Role distribution plan	Frequency	%
YES	79	86
NO	13	14
Operation and maintenance plan		
YES	63	68
NO	29	32
Implementation plan		
YES	77	84
NO	15	16
Agreement to sponsor operation and maintenance		
YES	72	78
NO	20	22
Projects implemented as planned		
YES	55	60
NO	37	40

Source; Research findings, 2021

### 3.9. Influence of Local Leaders on Participatory Planning on Project Performance in Rural Areas

#### 3.9.1. Local Leaders as Source of Information and Link Between the Community and Project Funders

Findings from the study show that out of 92 respondents only 52 respondents equivalent to 57% said local leaders were the source of information for village projects, the rest of the response can be seen in table 4 below. As to whether local leaders were the link between the community and project funders, findings show that 83 respondents equivalent to 90%

said yes on this. However as to whether local leaders were the authorizers of project implementation findings revealed that 84 respondents equivalent to 91% said yes on this. These findings concurred with the statement in a study of public participation that describes the core elements of participation in planning as; Trust and Understanding, Access and Information, Voice and Values, Negotiation and Mediation, Resources in terms of time and technical [7]. These findings also suggest that another role of the local leaders influence on participatory planning on project performance in rural areas was to act as a link between funders of the project and the community they served.

#### 3.9.2. Other Roles Played by Community Leaders' on Implementation of Projects

Study findings suggest that the community was aware of the duties of their local leaders in ensuring full participation and implementation of development projects in the village. The table illustrates in percentage the other roles that were played by community leaders on implementation of projects.

These results also match with the study on the role of local leaders in community development programmes in Idea to local government area of Imo state for extension policy implication where the said Leaders should therefore ensure that they gain the trustworthiness of their subjects and sponsors and continue to commit their energy and time in a transparent way towards achieving success in community development programmes. The local leaders must be well-organized through appropriate machinery. Such machinery must involve the likelihood of detecting embezzlements and grueling the leader in the event of a proven swindle [14].

During a focal group discussion, one respondent had the following to say;

*“Our local leaders do so much work in giving out information and making sure that people from our village join development meetings raised in the village for it is from these meetings that we know what the government has in place for our development actives” (One respondent).*

**Table 4.** Roles Played by Community Leaders on Implementation of Projects.

Other roles played by community leaders on implementation of projects	Frequency	%
Mobilize community to join the meetings	16	17
To sensitize villagers on the importance of development projects the village	36	39
Present facts about the project	2	2
Collect information	4	4
Impart knowledge to villagers on participatory planning	3	3
Lobbying and advocating for financial resources from the government	1	1

Other roles played by community leaders on implementation of projects	Frequency	%
All the above	30	33

Source; Research findings, 2021

## 4. Factors Affecting Participatory Planning on Performance of Projects in Rural Areas

### 4.1. Project Fund Source

As to whether the community knew where the source of fund for project implementation came from, as one of the factors affecting effective participatory planning on performance of projects in rural areas. Results obtained from the study showed that out of the 92 respondents, only 59 respondents equivalent to 64% said they understood the source of funding while 33 respondents equivalent to 36% said they did not know the where funds for the projects came.

These results match the study results by World Bank on financing Rural Transport Infrastructure and revealed that the four most common sources for finance are donor funds, central government, grants from the general budget, local revenues (from the local government and the community), and allocations from a dedicated road fund [6]. These sources provide funds for capital and recurrent expenditures. Up to now, and for the likely future, the lion’s share of funds for capital expenses has and will come from donors. Among six African countries (Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania), external finance accounted for 50–90% of total resources for investment in rural roads and 10–20% of resources available for maintenance [6]. Therefore, these results prove that a large portion of the community knew well the sources of funding for their projects and this also proves that the planning was participatory. This is a justification that once the implementation begins there is likelihood that the community will participate fully in project development and achievement.

Table 5. Project Fund Source.

Funding source awareness	Frequency	%
YES	59	64
NO	33	36
Project fund source		
(1) Community contribution	17	18
(2) From LGAS	10	11

Funding source awareness	Frequency	%
(3) Central government	16	17
(4) Private donor(s)	2	2
Both 1 &2	22	24
All 1, 2, 3 & 4	25	27

Source; Research findings, 2021

### 4.2. Planned Implementation Period and Its Certainty

With regard to planned implementation period, aim was to know the average time the project under implementation will use to mature and whether that period was certain as one of the factors affecting participatory planning on performance of projects in rural areas.

Results obtained from the study showed that out of the 92 respondents, only 45 respondents equivalent to 49% said the project will take an average of between 2-3 years to mature, 27 respondents equivalent to 29% said between 1-2 years, however other respondents’ response can be seen in table 6 below. These findings show that on average, development projects take an average of 1-3 to mature. Also, when asked whether the period was certain, out of the 92 respondents only 57 respondents equivalent to 62% said the period was certain while 35 respondents equivalent to 38% said the period was not certain.

Table 6. Planned Implementation Period.

Implementation period	Frequency	%
1-2 years	27	29
2-3 years	45	49
3-4 years	5	5
4 years and above	15	16
Certainty of implementation period		
Certain	57	62
Not certain	35	38

Source; Research findings, 2021

### 4.3. Community’s Contribution in Project Implementation

With regard to community’s contribution, aim of the study was to know how the community contributed in the implementation of development projects as one of the factors affecting effective participatory planning on performance of projects in rural areas. Results obtained from the study showed that out of the 92 respondents, only 37 respondents equivalent to 40% said they contributed by involvement in project identification, cash contribution manpower contribution, local Materials contribution and information dissemination, 27 respondents equivalent to 29% said they contributed only manpower.

These results proves that there was full participation of people in the planning process as almost every community member agrees to have contributed something in the implementation of development projects in their villages.

**Table 7.** Community’s Contribution in Project Implementation.

Community contribution in project implementation	Frequency	%
Involvement in Project Identification	10	11
Cash contribution	6	7
Manpower contribution	27	29
Local Materials contribution	2	2
Information Dissemination	9	10
All the above	37	40
None of the above	1	1

Source; Research findings, 2021

### 4.4. Project Sustainability in Support of Participatory Planning

With regard to project sustainability in support of participatory planning as one of the factors affecting participatory planning and with the aim of knowing how sustainable the projects could be. Findings obtained from the study showed that out of the 92 respondents, only 29 respondents equivalent to 32% said project sustainability could be a leading factor in ensuring participatory planning, by observing the following; decision making process, defining the community priorities, planning process, sensitization and mobilization, demanding quality services and it’s influenced by local leaders. A total of 19 respondent’s equivalent to 21% said because it helps in decision making only. These results from the respondents were similar to the opinion of the key informants who also agreed that sustainability of the project is critical and it could

only be attained through community involvement all stages of implementation.

These findings also concurred with the views of Banerjee who explained that, while certain projects brought sustainable outcomes, others failed to continue after withdrawal of the funder. He went ahead by saying that certain projects never bring the expected results irrespective of involving technical manuals and participatory methods [1]. To beat project implementation and sustainability setbacks, a method that focuses on planning, control, government responsibilities and top-down flows of information and resources must be ensured. Sustainability has thus been seen as the important benchmark in assessment the project achievement. Therefore, these results prove that it is important to involve the community at all stages of both pre and post implementation of the projects for better performance and sustainability of the project.

**Table 8.** Project Sustainability in Support of Participatory Planning.

Sustainability and participatory planning	Frequency	%
Decision making process	19	21
Defining the community priorities	11	12
Planning process	10	11
Sensitization and mobilization	12	13
Demanding quality services	3	3
It is influenced by local leaders	7	8
All the above	29	32
None of the above	1	1

Source; Research findings, 2021

## 5. The Effect of Participatory Planning on Project Performance in Rural Areas

The results presented in Table 9 shows that the overall model was statistically significant different from zero since  $Prob > F = 0.0051$ . The coefficient of determination (R-square) was 0.163, implying that, 16.3% of the variability in the project performance is explained by the regression model. The coefficients of the variable funds allocated to the project was 0.5341 and statistically significant different from zero at 5% level of significance since their p-values<5%. The coefficient is positively associated with performance of the project. This implies that, holding other factors constant, an additional unit increase in project’s fund tends to increase the performance of the project by about 53.41% meaning that, the funds allocated to projects has an effect on the performance of the projects. Moreover, coefficient of time used on individual project was

0.3306 positive and significant different from zero at 5% significance level since  $p\text{-values} < 5\%$ . This indicate that performance of the project depends on time used on implementation of the project. This the findings suggest that time on implementing a project has an influence on performance of the project by about 33.06% *ceteris paribus*.

Table 9 indicates the effect of participatory planning on

project performance. Findings from descriptive statistics illustrated in table 2 show that, all variables read 4.2 and above except one variable. This implies that the respondents agreed that participatory planning had effect on project performance in rural areas. Also, the overall mean is 4.3 which fall between 4.2 up to 5.0, this also support that participatory planning had effect on project performance in rural areas.

**Table 9.** The Effect of Participatory Planning on Project Performance in Rural Areas.

Project performance	Coef.	St. Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Funds allocated to projects	0.5341	0.0186	28.6073	0	0.341	0.763	**
Time used on individual project	0.3306	0.0053	6.1911	0.0025	-0.889	1.551	**
Constant	1.7551	0.9589	1.8302	0.036	0.083	3.382	***
Mean dependent var		4.3		SD dependent var		1.778	
R-squared		0.163		Number of obs		21	
F-test				Prob > F		0.0051	

Source; Research findings, 2021

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 6.1. Conclusion

On studying community's knowledge of participatory planning on project performance in rural areas, the study concluded the following: the community had knowledge of what participatory planning was, people understood the existence of development projects in their community and they knew the importance of contributing in those projects. The community understood the stages of planning, community understood the funding sources for their local projects, distribution of duties was understood by the community, implementation schedule was known and the government role was clear to the community.

On determining local leaders influence on participatory planning on project performance in rural areas, the study concludes the following: local leaders were the source of information for all development plans happening in the community, they were key persons to be consulted on and when a project or plan was to be easily implemented in the community, they were peace keepers in the community, they presented community revenue and expenditure.

As per the factors affecting effective participatory planning on project performance in rural areas, the study explored the following: government gives supports to the community in identifying and tackling their problems. Projects beneficiaries were identified and justified, benefits of the project to the community were outlined. Operation and maintenance re-

sponsibility was identified, project funding source was known. Sustainability of the project was arranged for; period of implementation was clear. There was little political interest in undertaking the projects, challenges facing participatory planning and its solutions were addressed.

Performance of the project depends on time used on implementation of the project. That is, the findings suggest that time on implementing a project has an influence on performance of the project by about 33.06% *ceteris paribus*.

### 6.2. Recommendations

Basing on the suggestions provided by respondents in assessing how participatory planning affects performance of development projects in rural areas and with particular focus on Nsimbo District Council, the study recommends the following:

First "bottom-up" participatory planning method encourages the identification, prioritization and implementation of development activities by local communities, enabled by area government staff. Therefore, there should be strong local institutions to give technical skills including time to time training on participatory planning for better achievement of development projects in the community. Second, stakeholder involvement should be considered at every stage since it is determined by means of participation hierarchy which is a tool for defining kinds of participation, and accordingly states the qualification input of selected stakeholders which in this case are the community and stages with which they were involved in the project implementation process. Third, the government and other development partners should not by-

pass area local leaders in implementing development projects since local leaders have the support of the community and therefore likely to persuade them in accepting or refusing a project in their community.

Forth, there should be government support for the community to discuss their problems, needs and challenges and come with priorities through the public meetings since this is key to effective participatory planning on performance of projects in rural areas. This will build a sense of ownership among the community and thus will lead to project's sustainability. Fifth, for quick and effective completion of local development projects, the government and other development partners should ensure timely disbursement of development funds to the community as this will quicken the process and thus leading to the achievement of project goal.

#### Notes

Participatory Planning; Is a process by which a community undertakes to reach an agreed socio-economic objective by carefully analyzing its problems and suggesting a course of action to resolve the problem [12].

Project Performance; Is a state that entails clearly defined, actionable and measurable goals that cascade from organizational mission to management and program level.

Rural Areas; Is a geographical area located outside towns and cities normally characterized by low population, agricultural activities and poor socio-economic infrastructure.

## Author Contributions

Hezbon Onyango Magesi is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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