

SOCIAL NETWORKS AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPREHENSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

A critical goal of the Comprehensive rural development programme (CRDP) is to stimulate agricultural production for the sector to contribute to food security and addressing skewed patterns of land distribution through rights-based interventions. This study investigated the factors that influence the stakeholders' participation in the CRDP in South Africa using social network analysis. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 respondents from the various CRDP projects and 36 respondents were purposively selected for focus group discussion used for the study. Data was collected using questionnaire and focus group discussion guide.

The mean age for the respondents was 35.5 years while the mean income level of the respondents was R1000. This study revealed that participation is high in benefit sharing (PI=0.6) but low in other key areas of study. Participation in Council of stakeholders interaction had the least (PI=0.1). The majority of the respondents (83%) agreed that the existence of the CRDP projects had improved the quality of life and livelihood of the people and 72% agreed the projects had alleviated poverty among the people in the community. The result revealed increasing economic activities, crime reduction, clinic providing health services, increase in the size of local workforce, providing local access to education and training, provision of free internet and computer access as being associated with the CRDP projects. The CRDP projects, though was achieving some of its objectives but sustainability issues as well as low youth participation remains a challenge.

Keywords: Comprehensive rural development, stakeholders' participation, rural livelihood, social network analysis

Introduction

Many of the government rural development programmes interventions appear to have collapsed completely while some are struggling to survive with yet some remaining fairly dependent on government financing for continued functioning (Hart et al., 2012). For some, the operating costs based on existing technology and infrastructure being too high thereby making their financial sustainability a serious concern. Despite all this rural development's goal remains being directed towards the betterment of the lives of people living in rural areas and to sustain and improve rural values through the redistribution of central resources, reducing comparative disadvantages for competition and finding new ways to reinforce and utilise rural resources (Nemes, 2006). What makes the rural development process to be a challenge is the fact that rural areas' development needs are different in many ways, not the least of which is the importance to the rural economy of small businesses and micro-enterprise (Hull, 2005).

Rural areas throughout the world tend to have diverse characteristics such as populations being sparsely distributed, agriculture though being the dominant economic sector but contributing differently depending on the area in question. An interesting commonality is that opportunities for resource mobilisation are limited (Integrated Rural Development Strategy, ISRDS, 2000). These characteristics mean that people living in rural areas face a set of challenges in their quest for development. The spatial dispersion of rural populations often increases the cost and difficulties in providing rural goods and services effectively. These specific economic conditions prevailing in rural areas result in the areas to have fewer opportunities than in non-rural locations.

As if that is not enough, the tax base for the local authorities tasked with bringing development in the rural areas, is limited such that they are rarely able to mobilise sufficient resources to finance their own development programmes, leaving them dependent on transfers from the centre (ISRDS, 2000). Factors such as markets in rural areas often operate imperfectly, rendering the search for efficient outcomes to be an extremely challenging one. Furthermore, rural areas are often politically marginalised, leaving little opportunity for the rural poor to influence government policies (United State Development Agency, *USDA*, 2007). In many developing countries, policies have also consistently discriminated against agriculture through high levels of taxation and other macroeconomic policies that have adversely affected

agricultural performance and the rural tax base resulting in net transfer of resources out of rural areas.

An interesting combination of the participatory and the rural livelihoods approach was a Participatory Poverty Appraisal (PPA) carried out in Mongolia, where growing demands placed on the pastoral livestock sector without the necessary investments, and the consequent increase in pressure over grazing land, has begun to threaten sustainability in significant ways, with symptoms that are also symptoms of rising poverty and inequality (De Campos-Guimarães, 2009).

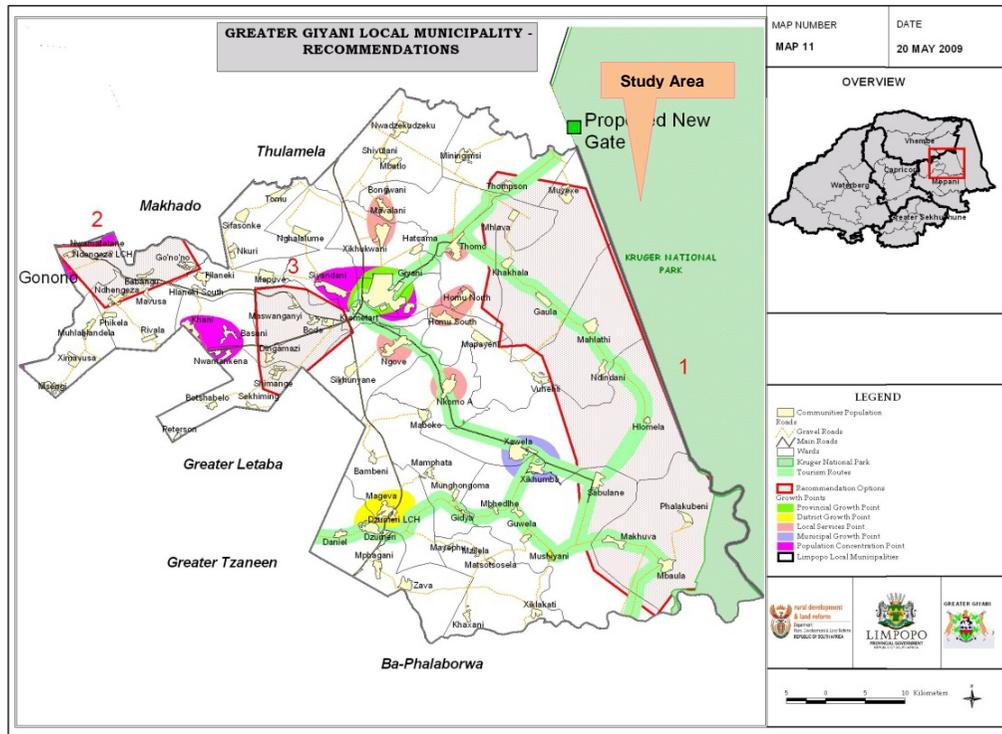
In Phillipine, the Cordillera Highlands Agricultural Resource Management (CHARM) Project, implemented from 1996 to 2003 had the usual components of rural infrastructure development, agricultural support services and reforestation (Estrella, 2002).. In addition to this, development priorities and sub-projects addressing local needs were identified with the direct involvement of residents of poor communities and the participation of elected officials, NGOs and local government agencies. Subprojects identified by the communities then went through a collaborative screening and selection process involving the stakeholders - including government agencies - at municipal and provincial levels. Despite some imperfections (low participation of women and the poorer households), the consequences of participation included strong commitment to the process, increased ownership by citizens and officials and a strengthening of the collaboration between government agencies and NGOs (Estrella, 2002).

South Africa is characterised by high levels of poverty, especially in rural areas. Approximately 70% of South Africa's poor people live in rural areas, and about 70% of the rural residents are poor (ISRDS, 2000). Their incomes are constrained because the rural economy is not sufficiently vibrant to provide them with remunerative jobs or self-employment opportunities. The cost of living is high because they spend relatively more on basic social services such as food and water, shelter, energy, health and education, and transport and communications services (USDA, 2007). Moreover, the natural resource base to which they have access cannot provide rural people with the means of subsistence. It should be noted that the larger majority of people that lives in the most rural areas are the young people. It is unfortunate that most system do not encourage youth to participate in the rural development programmes.

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), was established to address most if not all of the rural challenges in a more holistic way. It promises to transform rural areas into urban centres with agrarian development, infrastructural development and economic sustainability.

Methodological Issues Involved

Data was collected from CRDP projects being implemented in Muyexe village located about 155km north east of Polokwane, about 100km from Thohoyandou, about 550km from Tshwane and about 30km north east of Giyani (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, DRDLR, 2009). Muyexe village comprises of 900 households. About 70% of the households in the village are struggling because of unemployment and various other poverty related challenges (DRDLR, 2009). There is no proper access road to this village resulting in the area having a bus service only twice a day. The close proximity to the Kruger National Park makes foot and mouth disease being a concern in this “red line area”, thereby constraining the community from selling their animals outside of their village (DRDLR, 2009: 13).



Source: DRDLR, 2009

Figure 1: Greater Giyani Local Municipality Showing the study area

The research employed a sequential mixed methods design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through a household questionnaire survey administered to 300 randomly selected members of the village, and other surrounding villages around Muyexe. The researcher also conducted a focus group discussion (FDG) with 36 key informantsto enrich and

supplement the data gathered from the questionnaire. These informants were from community leaders, project leaders, government officials, health practitioners, local contractors, NGOs/CBOs. A conscious effort was made to involve men, women, the aged and youth as well as school children in the discussions. A Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) in which the community was taken along throughout the whole study process was employed. The FGD and the open-ended questions made up a total of 5029 words coming from 36 participants and about 8112 words coming from the semi-structured interview questions were the core of the qualitative analysis. The FGD answers questions around the following: What is the contribution of your projects to the lives of the people in Muyexe?, What problems do you experience in your project?, How do you communicate with the civic and traditional leaders?, What do you think the government can do to support the project?, What are the sustainability plans and who is developing the sustainability plan?, In what ways do you think the University can be involved in the projects? The data was analysed using ATLAS.ti Version 6.2.15. ATLAS.ti is widely used for qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio, and video data (Friese, 2010). This produced a social network of relationships among the participants in the community and their activities.

Results

The study reveals that participation was high in benefit sharing (PI= 0.6) but low in other key areas of the study (Figure 2). Participation in stakeholders committee interaction had the least (PI = 0.1). This might have been due to the fact that projects are represented at the stakeholders' committee level and little or no conflict was reported to the committee as most of the emanating conflicts were resolved by the project leaders. The sharing of benefits among the project beneficiaries was high as most of the participants got their shares as at when due. The trend of primary stakeholders' participation in CRDP projects revealed in this study shows the effect of government initiated projects and the level of participation among stakeholders. These findings contradict recent literatures on natural resources decentralization and devolution, which argues that local elites at the community level are likely to capture benefits intended for poorer groups (Platteau and Gaspart, 2003; Shackleton *et al.*, 2002; Kumar, 2002 cited by Alhassan, 2010).

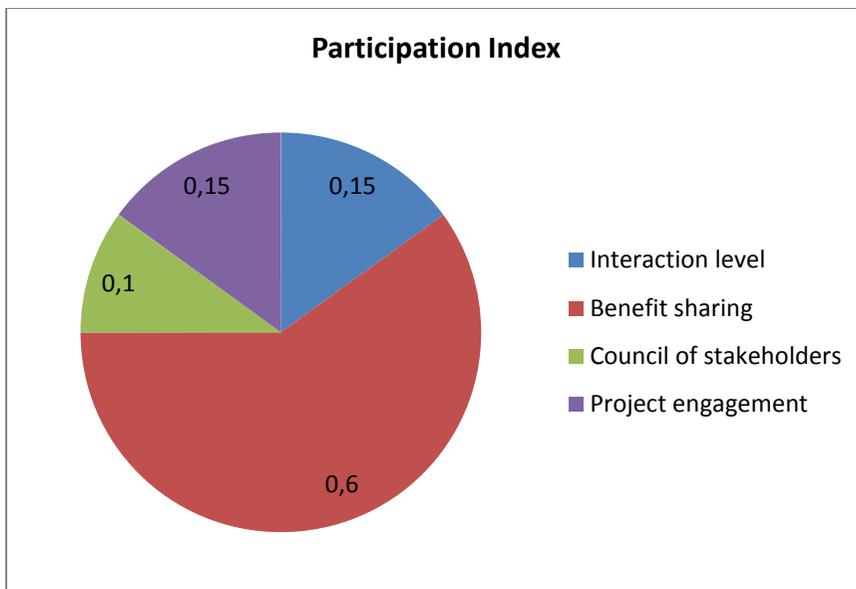


Figure 2: Participation index of primary stakeholders in CRDP Projects

The focus group discussion responses were interconnected and linked in the social network diagram shown in Figure 3. In ATLAS.ti, the actors or nodes are colour coded based on their groupings and are displayed with node labels or boxes in user-defined bitmaps. The links are generated based on how codes or quotations are related. All other object relations are simple links with no attributes and are shown as plain lines. This relationship shows a pattern that gives a descriptive explanation of the analysis. The network overview shows various stakeholders and how they interconnect or relate to each other in various projects. The code was used in categorising the elements into their different groups and their level of importance. It shows stakeholders levels of participation and relationships and interests in the CRDP projects. For example, the provision of the Computer Centre brought about skills development and catered for people using the facility on daily basis for free internet access and printing. The role players like the Council of stakeholders and their roles can easily be traced on the network view.

The result reveals that the participants in the projects did not have the technical know-how and capacity to operate efficiently in their projects in order to facilitate the transformation of traditional agriculture, for example to modern agriculture. Farmers who are equipped with technology (farm machinery and infrastructure), farming techniques and management skills, are likely to realise enhance production and productivity (Machethe, 2004 and Amani, 2004). However, increased production and productivity can be a result of enhanced technical performance emanating from extension advisory

services, workshop attendance, financial capacity, market access, and research and development.

The respondents strongly disagreed that they had low access to information and modern technology. The provision and usage of the Computer Centre facilities and Postal Services in the community have improved the information flow in the community (Figure 3). Access to information and modern technology are crucial for the sustainability of CRDP projects.

The findings reveal that the communities are encountering difficulties with market infrastructure. Therefore, if crops are to be available for consumption throughout the year, proper storage facilities have to be implemented by both farmers and traders. Amongst farmers, storage may have some added advantages because it increases market flexibility. Households with proper storage facilities do not need to market their produce immediately after harvest when prices are low. They can store their produce and sell when prices are higher. Most smallholder farmers do not have access to adequate storage infrastructure and end up selling their produce soon after harvest, because they need the money. Smallholder farmers often rely on open-air storage due to lack of facilities. Most smallholder producers are keen to sell produce almost immediately after harvest in order to ease congestion, leading them to sell their produce at lower prices (Makhura and Wasike, 2003)

The study reveals that the community is faced with the problem of roads infrastructure and transport which constitute challenges in terms of transporting their produce to market. The absence of mechanical transport poses serious problems for the marketing of agricultural produce and blocks from the brick making projects. It is difficult to transport produce in time, to the market if there is no reliable transport, since public vehicles tend to be few in rural areas (Makhura and Wasike, 2003). Inability to transport produce in time may result in produce spoilage and losses.

The study reveals that majority (65%) of the respondents indicated that their projects had the ability to employ workers. Macena garden project employed 15 youths who had passed matric but had not yet entered tertiary institutions and each were paid a stipend of R1050 per month. This clearly indicates that CRDP projects play a critical role in poverty alleviation and its contribution to job creation must be acknowledged because it is capable of absorbing a lot of labour. The smallholder farm sector has been recognised as an important sector in employment creation in South Africa (Machethe, 2004). This finding corroborates the study by Mokonyane (2012) that where there is active participation in agriculture, there is more gainful employment.

The study reveals that majority of the beneficiaries are able to generate income on a monthly basis and pay their workers but most of the funds are project funds from the government and the agencies who either initiated or sponsored certain aspects of the project. The Computer Centre was being financed by the DRDLR and IDT while Macena garden project received financial support from DAFF and AgriSETA for the payment of the youths working on their farm. SMMEs provided a more equitable distribution of incomes since they allowed own-production for relatively many households, implying that less would be spent on food purchases (Dorosh and Haggblade, 2003). The backyard garden project exemplifies households that produced their own food. A further explanation shows that poor households that produce their own food are better off, in terms of income, than those that purchase food, hence the overwhelming claim by the participants in the study of projects providing better life for the people. The respondents confirmed that the community have experienced increased livelihood and the standard of living of the beneficiaries of the projects have improved remarkably.

The study reveals that the participants of the CRDP projects were food secured due to the increase in food change in the households. South Africa Social Investment Exchange (SASIX, 2007) recognises the role of the smallholder farm sector in achieving food security through increased production and productivity. Given the large number of farmers in the smallholder sector, it is crucial to develop the sector (Machethe, 2004). There is no doubt about the potential role of SMMEs in alleviating poverty. Currently, smallholder farmers in South Africa produce food for subsistence but we could not rule out the fact that they have the potential to produce marketable surpluses (SASIX, 2007).

The study reveals that training plays a critical role in the increased productivity and sustainability of the CRDP projects. The study also reveals that many beneficiaries have been trained on various skills on the use of farming equipment like tractors, the use of irrigation technology, rain water harvesting and drinking water purification techniques. In Figure 3, there are

more (re)training needs which were identified, such as computer systems repair skills, managerial, management and marketing skills and so on that would maximise their profit and enhance sustainability of the CRDP projects. In the study carried out by Oni et al. (2010), it was revealed that the best farmers were the educated and most of them had some vocational training. To be a successful entrepreneur, one should be equipped with parameters that determine the scope of an enterprise in rural situations. The smallholder farmers should be familiarised with the principles of business economics, record keeping and they should become proficient in managerial skills (Nompozolo, 2000 and Dlova et al. (2004)). A sound educational background can reinforce natural talent; it can provide a theoretical foundation for informed decisions. Entrepreneur success requires formalised knowledge of functional aspects like marketing, purchasing, supply chain management and finance (Rwigema and Venter, 2004). Therefore, education and skills development is likely to improve managerial ability in terms of better formulation and execution of farm plans; and acquiring better information to improve marketing ability.

Stakeholders Belief as Compared to Study Outcomes

The majority of the survey respondents (83%) agreed that the existence of the CRDP projects had improved the quality of life of the people and 72% agreed the projects had alleviated poverty among the people in the community. The commonly cited responses included increasing economic activities, crime reduction, clinic providing health services, increase in the size of local workforce, creating jobs, providing local access to education and training, provision of free internet and computer access. They believed it prepared individuals to be more productive by generally increasing the level of education in the region, providing better access to skills development, making residents more employable, and opening the doors to better employment options.

The respondents gave examples of ways they believed the CRDP projects had improved the economic welfare of their communities. Increased local spending and economic activity generated were cited. Most of the respondents reiterated improvement in their social values such as the improved cultural life, overall health of residents, overall safety of life and property of the community, and opportunity for residents to improve their lifestyles. These were reflected in the skills development among others received on water purification for household drinking and cooking. A nurse working at the Clinic emphasised that the residents used to travel a long distance to access health facility at another village but since the clinic was provided, many have easy access to health facilities provided and the community is healthier. Many of the discussants believed that pockets of

crime have reduced drastically since the government provided the SAPS satellite station at the village. A government official from the National Parks confirmed that the Kruger National Parks will open another gate into the park through Muyexe village because of the increased economic activities taking place in the village. The respondents mentioned the crèche and primary school built in the community provide early childhood education for the children of school age in the community. The study revealed that there are some teenagers with newly born babies who had to stop working because of their babies. They now have the opportunity to keep their children in the crèche why they take advantage of the CRDP projects to get jobs in the village. The orphans also benefit from the Drop-in care centre which provides feeding facilities for 96 school children on a daily basis.

This findings is in consonance with previous studies which indicated higher education institutions generate socio-economic benefits such as reduced health care, crime, social welfare, and unemployment costs (Christophersen and Robison, 2002, 2003; Robison and Christophersen 2007, 2008). The survey respondents for this study, however, rarely cited these benefits and almost never listed them as economic advantages from having the school in the community. Although, some respondents equated social advantages with financial returns, they were unable to quantify the savings from these benefits. These observations were partly explained by Blendon et al. (1997) when they found that members of the general public tended to underestimate the value of economic factors as calculated by economists because they made judgement based on their own personal experiences and lack of economic knowledge.

No respondents specifically referred to some of the economic benefits identified in the socio-economic study, including the value generated by property taxes paid to the community and the advantages of workforce skills the projects brought to the community. Respondents did not mention better working conditions, increased workforce flexibility, higher personal savings levels, increased charitable giving, better social cohesion, increased quality of civic life, and improved ability to use technology. A few community members identified increased levels of community service, improved appreciation of diversity, better consumer decision making, higher life expectancies, and the availability of more and better leisure activities. Respondents appeared to be unaware that the government would have had to increase tax rates to sustain the level of publicly funded services offered across the community even if it had not funded the services the CRDP provided in Muyexe.

Responses to the Contributions of the CRDP Projects

The participants at the focus group discussion were representatives of the different projects existing in Muyexe and its environs, the government officials from the various departments, the Traditional Authority, the workers in government establishments like the clinic, the post office and National Parks. They responded to the questions based on their present knowledge of the activities of the CRDP projects in the community being involved one way or the other. Table 1 arranged the responses according to the questions asked. The question about the contribution of the project to the lives of the people in Muyexe received the highest responses from 24 participants who indicated that the CRDP projects has brought better life to the people of Muyexe. The responses to the question of problem experienced in the projects received only 2 responses from the participants not because they do not understand the question but because they think it is a common problem which needs a collective wisdom to overcome.

Lack of water for agricultural purposes is a general problem in the Southern Africa which is in the semi-arid region. A number of projects have been initiated on finding solutions to the perennial problem of water for agricultural purposes in South Africa and many are still in progress. Government, through the establishment of backyard gardens provided Jojo tanks for rain water harvesting and introduced irrigation technology at the various agricultural projects in Muyexe to solve the problem of water shortage.

Table 1: Responses at the focus group discussion

Focus group question	Responses from the participants	Number of responses
What is the contribution of the project to the lives of the people in Muyexe?	Word count of 840. Example: Better life for the people. Backyard garden provision Irrigation technology for agriculture. Rain water harvesting system Youths are provided with jobs. Fresh vegetables for people Tanks are distributed for agricultural purposes Building of fences. Poverty alleviation. CDW provided 300 jobs New clinic is being built. Free internet access. Crime reduced. Free computer services. Post office and business centre Post office provides savings facilities. Provision of crèche Job creation and stipend payment.	24
What is the problem experienced by you in this projects?	Word count of 107. Example: Problem of water and electricity Delay in stipend payment	2
How do you communicate with the civic and	Word count of 487. Example: Council of stakeholders resolve conflicts Unresolved matters are referred to the Chief Projects are represented at the council of stakeholders	5

traditional leaders?	Project reports should be submitted to the Council of Stakeholders SANCO should cooperate with the Council of Stakeholders	
What do you think that the government can do to support the projects?	Word count of 560. Example: Government should build roads The department of Public Works should assist the contractors The municipality should provide electricity Water from Nandoni dam may solve water problem New gate for National Park at Muyexe	5
What are the sustainability plans and who is developing the sustainability plan?	Word count of 541. Example: Council of stakeholders is developing sustainability plan, Skills development. Rain water harvesting training Rain water purified for drinking. Use of tractor for farming	5
What ways do you think the University can be involved in this project?	Word count of 410. Example: The University will inform the policy Provide learnership and Education for the youth Conduct more research in the area	4

Responses to Problems Encountered in the Projects

The question on problems encountered by individuals in the CRDP projects recorded fewer responses from participants. These low responses do not mean that all is well with all the projects but may be a positive attitude of the respondents indicating their willingness to combat the problems and move on to success stories. However, some of the problems highlighted by the participants included lack of water, insufficient distribution of electricity to project sites (which are environmental issues) and delays in stipend payments. Supply of water for both domestic and agricultural purposes is the mandate of the local municipality. Water resources are restricted to surface and groundwater. The major surface water resources in the whole of Greater Giyani municipality (Integrated Development Plan, IDP, 2008-2011) are the Middle Letaba Dam (fed by Middle Letaba River, the Koedoes River, Brandboontjies River and minor streams) and the Nsami Dam (mainly fed by Nsami River). The current infrastructure in Giyani is inadequate to supply water to the whole of Greater Giyani Municipality. The challenge is now to supply water to all the villages within the entire Greater Giyani Municipality, putting too much pressure on the existing plant.

The study reveals that 9 boreholes were already drilled in the area which requires repairs. This will go a long way in alleviating the problem of water if the municipality can attend to them. The respondents also suggested that the best solution will be tapping water from the newly constructed Nandoni dam. The representatives from the Office of the Premier confirmed that discussions had already started on constructing water pipe from Nandoni dam to supply Muyexe village and its environs. Water pollution in the Greater Giyani Municipality is a serious problem. Water is polluted by

littering and the overflow of sewage, creating serious health problems for people who depend on water from rivers and streams. Informal businesses, conducted alongside the road to Moeketsi – Malamulele, worsen the problem by illegal dumping in the Klein Letaba River (IDP, 2008-2011).

The problem of stipend payment among the projects beneficiaries is not internal but external because it usually emanates from the project initiators or donors, be it the government, NGOs and the private agencies. Most of it is caused by lack of communication, unforeseen circumstances and bureaucratic practices on the part of the sponsors of the projects. The promise to pay stipends to participants is a promise to encourage the participants in the projects and most of them already relied on it as a source of income for the payment of school fees, settlement of monthly bills and purchase of groceries for the household. The payment of such stipend is of great importance to the beneficiaries as it is tantamount to their livelihood as they work on the projects. The respondents confirmed continued support for the CRDP projects even when the stipends have not been paid.

The study reveals that most of the projects have an underlining criterion of transferring the day-to-day running, including stipend payments to the participants at the end of certain periods. This decision calls for serious concern as most of the projects are struggling with sustainability issues. Most of the beneficiaries are not properly trained, they do not have the required capacity or expertise and their financial management acumen and skills for the nature and magnitude of such business is lacking. At the inception, most of the projects are not introduced as business ventures and the idea of profit making enterprise is not clear to the participants. The computer centre project or the e-Rural Access Centre (e-RAP) for example, still depends on external service providers from the Independent Development Trust (IDT), the initiator of the project to service their computer systems. The service provider may not be available for repairs as frequently as required. This will affect the continuity of the services in the centre. The stipulated period to hand over the project to the community should be approached with great caution.

Factors affecting sustainability of CRDP projects

The study reveals that DAFF is the sole distributor of agricultural starter packs containing input seeds and fertilisers to backyard garden beneficiaries at the beginning of the planting season. This might imply that due to small hectares of land occupied by smallholder farmers, they were unable to purchase input production in bulk on their own e.g. seeds and fertilisers whereas, agricultural inputs suppliers companies sell in bulk. Distance to markets, poor infrastructure and poor access to assets and information result in high business costs. Since CRDP projects beneficiaries

are poor, they find it difficult to compete in lucrative markets due to high transaction costs. Small-scale farmers lack consistency in terms of producing for the market due to insufficient access top production resources.

In ATLAS.ti, codes-primary documents-table is created when two objects or events are compared in a quantitative manner. Different groups or families in the analysis were compared, it reveals that a number of contributions (40.7%) came in form of funding, donations and assistance on stipend which is running very high (Table 2). Stakeholders' interactions (22.9%) are very high which was observed to be within the project participant levels. Whereas, vertical or cross project stakeholders' interaction is almost absent. Research work on CRDP project by the university and other research institutions is very low. This area cannot be overlooked as it can influence positively the work on the projects.

Table 2: Comparing different groups on codes-primary-documents-table

	Project contributions	Stakeholders interaction	Other government support	University contributions	Project problems	Sustainability plans
1	73	106	9	37	39	53
2	70	47	0	0	5	33
3	132	40	0	0	70	35
4	68	0	0	0	13	11
Total	343	193	9	37	127	132
%	40.7	22.9	1.07	4.39	15.1	15.69

The study reveals that water harvesting tanks were distributed to backyard garden beneficiaries to be able to assist continuous food production but they did not have mitigation plans for climatic changes which posed a huge threat to food security in the area. Climate change in the form of increase or lack of rainfall, higher temperatures, variability reduces crop yield and threatens food security in low income and agriculture-based economies. This tends to be a serious threat to smallholder farmers whose livelihoods depend largely on rainfall. This situation is worst with the livestock farmers e.g. poultry farmers who do not have enough tanks to store water during the drought periods. The chickens and other livestock, even the block making projects, cannot survive without water and this hampers their productivity.

The provision of storage facility was not included in the packages for agricultural production in the study area which made the majority of farmers unable to compete with their counterparts because they were constrained by storage and could not respond to the market environment. This resulted in high transactions in terms of renting the storage. The inadequate infrastructure merely takes away from the smallholder farmers' chances of accessing the market both in terms of production, quantity and quality as

well as accessibility. The effect of missing or poor infrastructure manifests into high transaction costs which eventually lead to low market participation or recourse to other less profitable marketing arrangements such as direct sales to consumers (Machethe, 2004 and Makhura, 2001).

Limitation of Analysis

The data from all pilot sites in the remaining 8 provinces were not captured.

Policy Implications

This study has done robust analyses of several objectives that are very important for rural livelihoods and development with a lot of insight for policy formulation that will promote the government's CRDP drive for poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihood in the face of ever dynamic population and stressed resources.

The policy-makers should involve the stakeholders in the process as early as possible to give equal attention to perspectives in the process of location selection, permitting, and policy-making. This should warrant the representation of different perspectives like the local characteristics of the area in addition to economic perspectives.

Community members must be able to own the process before it can succeed. The most important aspect of a community's well-being revolves around accessibility to basic services and how the accessibility to the services will lead to the improvement of the quality of life for all within the municipal area. Stakeholder relations go hand in hand with service delivery as the community/stakeholders must be informed and participate in the identification of needs and the delivery of services as well as decision-making of the municipality.

Young people should be encouraged to take up agriculture as a career which comes with incentive for sustainable food security in the study area by setting up or improving CRDP – job creation models. This could be in form of farm settlements which will make the young people comfortably engage in agricultural production and reduce urban migration in search for elusive and better 'white collar' jobs. This will go a long way in reducing poverty and ensuring food security. This will be a good step towards the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger and poverty by 2015 which is around the corner.

The study reveals that most of the projects are group based. Some of the groups are formed as a strategy to attract government support and resources because it is well known in many communities that groups get attention, whereas individuals do not. This happens because government or private agencies believed that they can only reach a large number of people

through group formations. This selection method should be looked into as the level of commitment of an individual on a project is far higher and more productive.

Smallholder farmers believe that the government can help them to solve the problem of lack of operating capital by providing soft loans. The experience all over the continent of Africa has shown that there is the need for paradigm shift away from this ideology. Some of the nagging issue can be solved by a virile public private partnership (PPP) concept with the participation of the project beneficiaries from the onset.

Conclusion

The findings from this study reveal the importance of a number of elements which appear to impact on the effectiveness based on the stakeholders' participation in CRDP project at the Muyexe village. The qualitative analysis results reveal a number of areas where success has been recorded towards the realisation of government's objectives in establishing the CRDP projects at the pilot site. At the same time, there are few other areas where the expectations of the participants and the community have not been met. This could be seen from the understanding of the projects objectives and the interpretation by individual members of the community which is at variance to the intentions of the government for the establishment of the projects. This is so because of the low levels of participation of the local community members at the strategic planning stage. Some of the projects were being run by the local community members, which was a laudable step but unfortunately, there was no sustainability plan in place as yet. This made accountability and evaluation very difficult. It will be of interest to see the zeal and passion at which the participant are working on the project but the efforts may run down the drain if the individuals are not properly equipped with the right skills, training and infrastructure.

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