

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: A CASE STUDY OF ESSENTIAL NUTRITION AND HEALTH PACKAGE PROJECT IN KABUGA, GASABO DISTRICT, RWANDA.

BY

**BAYASESE BERNARD
10/A/MAPPM/005/PG**

ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine the extent to which community participation contributed to the improvement of design and implementation of development projects and their sustainability. The specific objectives of the study were to examine modalities for community participation in development projects, to analyze the benefits of community participation and how participation leads to sustainability of development projects, to establish the conditions required for achieving sustainability of development projects through community or participation and to examine the challenges faced by the community in sustaining development projects. The study adopted four research questions namely: what are the modalities for community participation in development projects, what are the benefits of community participation and how participation leads to sustainability, what are the conditions required for achieving sustainability of development projects through community or participation and what are the challenges being faced by the community in sustaining community development projects. The study adopted a case study research design because it was more appropriate for this research. The study collected data from a sample of 367 who were selected randomly out of a population of 7982. Data was collected through the use of literature review, interviews and questionnaires. Data was analyzed using SPSS software and presented in tables. Ethical guidelines were followed in the study including obtaining informed consent from the respondents and getting ethical clearance from Kabale University. Findings also revealed that the respondents participated in projects in a number of ways including identification of stakeholders, participation in the identification of their needs and directing the goals of the ENHP project, information dissemination among others. It was also revealed that local participation of the community in projects benefited both the projects and the community through better designs; cost effectiveness, less corruption, equitable distribution of resources among others. It was revealed that after the project closure, the local communities maintained the projects through development of levies at a flat rate, voluntary contributions, and contribution of materials among others. The study concluded that community participation in projects greatly contributes to the sustainability of projects. It also concluded that the community participates through consultations, taking part in project design, organizing and implementing activities. The study recommended that communities should be empowered through training and equipping them with management skills in order to sustain projects effectively. It also recommended that open accountability of resources should be encouraged so that communities can build and support projects effectively by contributing money.