

Challenges Of Delivering Child Sponsorship: Case Of Ivola Child Sponsorship Project In Vihiga County Of Kenya

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Abstract: Globally, stakeholder participation has become a key principle of undertaking development projects. Community participation in development projects is widely recognized as a basic operation principle of community development. However, beneficiaries of community projects have been seen as consumers of services and their role in community development projects has been accorded less attention even in studies on community development. Existing studies have paid more attention on the role of community projects on the communities; and thereby ignoring the creative capabilities and contribution of community members to the success of these projects and the challenges that they encounter while serving in the projects. The objective of this study was to examine the challenges facing beneficiaries in their participation in the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project. The study was guided by the stakeholder theory. For methodology, the study adopted a mixed method research paradigm and a descriptive survey design in which qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting and analyzing data were used. Out of a target population of 903 project stakeholders, questionnaires, interview guide and focus group discussion guide were administered to 99 respondents who were selected through random and purposive sampling techniques. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed through thematic framework. The study found out that there are many challenges that impede stakeholders from actively engaging in the implementation of the Ivola CSP including lack of resources, training and skills in community development, political interference and conflicts. This has tended to limit the potential of the community to contribute to the project, and of the project to deliver on its mandate to the community.

Keywords: Community, Community Development, Development Project

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

It has been acknowledged that internationally, resources for social welfare services are shrinking. Population pressure, changing priorities, economic competition, and demands for greater effectiveness are all affecting the course of social welfare. The utilization of nonprofessionals through citizen involvement mechanisms to address social problems has become more commonplace (Dosner, 2004). The world is today grappling with deep-seated problems of poverty, disease, illiteracy, corruption, rising human population, unemployment, and general hopelessness amongst the majority of the world's human population. The triple problem of conflict, crime and insecurity has also emerged as one of

the challenges to development, particularly in Africa. (Taiwo, 2010).

Based on literature, the following facts and statistics show conditions around the world, that have arisen out of the aforementioned challenges. According to Shah (2009), almost half of the world population – over 3 billion people – live on less than a dollar a day; nearly a billion people entered the 21st century while unable to read a book, or sign their names; the combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the 41 heavily indebted poor countries (with 567 million people) is less than the combined wealth of the world's 7 richest people!

Shah, 2009 further observes that according to UNICEF; 25,000 children die each day due to poverty; and they die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed

from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Other than that, 72 million children of primary school age in the developing world were not in school in 2005, and 57% of them were girls. About disease, he notes that infectious diseases continue to squash the lives of poor people across the globe. As a result, an estimated 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, out of whom 3 million died in 2004 alone. Concerning malaria, Shah notes that every year, there are 350-500 million cases of malaria with 1 million fatalities. Africa alone accounts for 90% of all malarial deaths.

The foregoing challenges have continuously engaged development experts and agencies. Beginning from the mid 1970s there has been an increasing effort to adopt community participation as a necessary instrument for people driven development in order to reduce poverty in third world countries (Moyo, 2012). Non-governmental organizations and governments have come to use this participatory approach not only to empower local people, but also to give them a platform to plan and implement their own development projects (Moyo, 2012). However, Moyo (2012) did not explore exactly what the local people were able to achieve using their participation in the projects.

According to Michener (1998), participation has proven to be a most difficult and elusive goal to attain; and that in the early 1990s, the debate was mostly concentrated on the objectives of participation with a focus on whether it was sought as an end in itself or as a means to an end. It was found that many community projects emphasized participatory processes not for the sake of participation and its related empowerment objectives, but more as a marketing tool to attract funding or to promote a specific agenda. Michener (1998) found participation to be difficult because it was not clear how the community was involved, what it contributed in the development effort, and how this contribution affected the community. As such, communities felt that their contribution was not being recognized and this tended to discourage them from contributing to community projects. The current study sought to address this gap in knowledge.

According to Craig and Moyo (1995), community participation has become more vital and yet more overtly problematic than ever in the current global context. In the face of deepening poverty resulting from international recession and restructuring; international agencies, national and local states have demonstrated increasing interest in strategies to promote community participation as a means of enhancing the development process (World Bank, 1991). These two studies do not however reveal how the enhanced community participation has been able to change the subject communities' fortunes; so that it is not possible to know if this participation is adding value to the communities or not. The current study sought to address this dimension.

From the 1980s, community participation (CP) has been almost a mandatory feature in most of the bilaterally and multilaterally aided projects. From the point of view of donor agencies, CP has been seen as a device to enhance the effectiveness of projects which they sponsor (World Bank, 1991). Consequently, community participation has been embraced by Third World governments and international organizations such as the World Bank as a means to reduce poverty and empower disadvantaged communities. According

to Craig and Moyo (1995), international agencies such as the World Bank have seen community participation as a means for ensuring that Third World development projects reach the poorest in the most efficient and cost-effective way, sharing costs as well as benefits, through the promotion of self-help.

The past several decades of development funding have demonstrated the failures of top-down approaches to development for not only does the provision of public goods remain low in developing nations, most projects suffer from a lack of sustainability; and a possible reason for these failures is attributed to the lack of meaningful local participation (Michener, 1998). Nevertheless, one of the major criticisms of participation has been the lack of meaningful community participation in community development projects which the reviewed studies have not addressed. Moreover, Craig and Moyo (1995) and Michener (1998) observe that often, project staff does not recognize the specific role played by communities in such projects; and this demotivates communities from fully supporting community development projects.

Until the 1990s, development discourse emphasized the role of the state and of international agencies in delivering development to people but this blueprint approach was progressively challenged because of its failure to effectively address the underlying causes of poverty (Kapoor, 2002). It is argued that this is one of the reasons as to why community participation emerged as the new paradigm of the development process. (Kapoor, 2002). Nevertheless, Kapoor (2002) fails to disclose how communities have engaged in poverty alleviation projects and how this engagement has enabled community projects to succeed. There is need for further research on such aspects in order to show the specific input by communities to projects and apportion credit where it is due.

The rationale behind participation is multifold: Increased participation is supposed to promote greater efficiency, more accountability and transparency, enhanced ownership and empowerment. Ultimately, participation is supposed to be the key to genuine and sustainable poverty alleviation by shifting power to those who are local and poor (Dosner, 2004). It is believed that social networks based on shared norms, values, beliefs, knowledge and understanding can significantly enhance people's capacity to organize in their own collective interest, cooperate to perform collective tasks and achieve mutual benefits (Babajanian, 2008). However, Dosner's (2004) study on community participation in projects is short on specific details on how communities contribute to project success as opposed to how the projects benefit the communities. This implies a skewed perspective where communities are looked at as mere beneficiaries of projects thereby discouraging them from fully and effectively contributing to projects. The current study seeks to address the gap.

Based on the benefits of community participation in community projects, many of such projects have endeavored to engage as many local stakeholders as possible. For instance, after exploring the challenges and practical strategies related to implementing and evaluating a community-based abstinence project in Polk County rural community in Arkansas (USA), Stauss *et al.* (2012) found out that the

project reduced teenage pregnancies and that the project faced many challenges. What Stauss *et al.* (2012) failed to explore was the manner in which the community contributed to the project that eventually gave it success given that reduction in teenage pregnancies is a big global problem that cannot be addressed without community input. The contribution by the Polk County community to the project was as important as the project success and should thus be disclosed. The aspect of community participation in project success is the subject of the current study.

In 2012, Dadvar-Khani studied the role of community participation in rural tourism in Iran and established that there was lack of meaningful community participation in the development of tourism in the villages and that the government's top-down planning of rural tourism had alienated the rural communities. In this study, the focus was on the role of community participation which is similar to what the current study explored. However, while Dadvar-Khani (2012) focused on community participation in a rural tourism project in Iran, the proposed study will focus on community participation in a child sponsorship project in rural Kenya. Nevertheless, just like in Dadvar-Khani (2012) study, the current study had participation challenges that arose from the top down nature by which the community was engaged in the project.

Other than the foregoing, Boon *et al.* (2013) undertook a study whose objective was to analyze the quadripartite project participation model (QPPM) and its implication for management of community development projects in Ghana. Although this study had examined the positive and negative influence of community-participation in community development projects in general, it does not explore the aspect of exactly what role the community played in the undertaking of the subject community projects and how this influenced the projects. This needs to be addressed in subsequent studies on community participation and the current study is a step in this direction.

Lazarus, Naidoo, May, Williams, Demas, and Filander (2014) studied the Railton Community Assessment Project which was a community-based participatory research project in a South African rural context. This project sought to identify community needs and assets for the purposes of prioritizing actions that could support community development planning and funding allocation in Railton area. The study then focused on impact of the project on the community. Nonetheless, Lazarus *et al.* (2014) fail to explore the role of the community in the undertaking of the project, yet the project was participatory. This made it difficult to ascertain the actual contribution of the community to the stated project outputs. The current study sought to focus attention on the role of the community in the undertaking of the project as well.

In Kenya, the Western Kenya Community-driven Development and Flood Mitigation Project (WKCD-D-FMP) is one of the many community - driven projects that are aimed at reducing poverty and improving the standards of living in the affected communities in Western Kenya (World Bank, 2015). Whereas World Bank (2015) documents the role of this project on the affected communities, it has however not explored the various ways in which communities that

participate in this project have helped the project to attain its current outcomes. This calls for investigation.

This study explored the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project (Ivola CSP) which is a project sponsored by Compassion International (CI) and implemented by Compassion-Kenya (CI-K) and the local partner Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church, together with the community members. CIs goal is to work with local evangelical churches to holistically address the spiritual, economic, educational and social emotional needs of children from poor families. Indeed there are many child sponsorship projects in Kenya sponsored by CI-K. The main objectives of the Ivola CSP which is located at Ivola in Tambua Ward of Vihiga County in Kenya are: To help children survive and thrive in the critical developmental years by ensuring a healthy environment and a good start in life using proven child survival strategies; to provide children with a safe and loving home, church and community environment for their holistic development; to identify and provide university level education as well as leadership training opportunities for outstanding graduates from the Child Sponsorship Project to attain their full God-given potential and to strengthen the economic coping mechanisms of caregivers by empowering them in various ways. It also has complementary interventions aimed at supplementing and enhancing the core programs by providing a wide range of opportunities to engage in the fight against poverty. Since the inception of the Ivola CSP, no study has been done to explore the influence of the community in the undertaking of this project; although the contribution of the project to the community is well documented.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most literature on community participation and this literature shows that many community projects have been keen to integrate community participation as an essential ingredient for project success. However, beneficiaries of community projects have always had limited participation; and have been seen as mere consumers of services and their role in community development projects has been accorded limited recognition even in studies on community development projects. This has in turn discouraged communities from effectively participating in projects thereby limiting the potential of the projects to address community needs. Indeed, apart from the existing studies having focused on the benefits of such projects on the community and the challenges faced, these studies have not explored specific ways in which communities participate in the undertaking of community projects; and how such participation influences project outputs. In the Ivola CSP, the community continues to participate in the project but its contribution is not quantified, and community members are constrained while taking part in the project and are often only looked at as passive beneficiaries; which tends to curtail their potential to fully, effectively and valuably engage in the project. This study therefore, sought to investigate the challenges facing beneficiaries in their participation in the Ivola CSP.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study was to examine the challenges facing beneficiaries in their participation in the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This section on methodology addresses the research design, study population and sample size, methods of data collection and analysis.

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan that is used to conduct a study (Kerlinger, 2004). It is a conceptual structure that guides data collection, data analysis and the resultant interpretations. A research design is critical in any research because it enables the researcher to logically draw inferences concerning causal relationships amongst the variables of a research.

The study applied a mixed method research approach. This approach offers the researcher the best of both worlds that include in-depth, contextualized, and natural but more time-consuming insights of qualitative research coupled with the more-efficient but less rich or compelling predictive power of quantitative research (Kothari, 2007).

Under this approach, descriptive survey design was used. It entails the gathering of data from a wide array of respondents and using this data to describe what the phenomenon under study is.

B. TARGET POPULATION

A study population refers to all elements and people who share one or some common quality in a special geographical scale (Babbie, 2007). The target population of this study was all the key stakeholders who are taking part in the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project. The study population was 903 community members (ICS Project Records, 2016).

C. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The proposed study used a sample of 99 respondents. This sample was picked using the following formula as propounded by Yamane (1967):

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

Where: n = Sample

N = Population

e = Level of precision

Thus, using a population of 903 stakeholders and a level of precision of 0.095, a sample of 99 respondents was obtained as follows:

$$n = \frac{903}{1 + 903(0.095)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{903}{1 + 8.15}$$

$$n = 98.7$$

$$n = 99$$

The sampling design that was employed entailed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. This sampling design enabled us to arrive at our target sample units which comprised of pupils enrolled in the project, caregivers, project alumni, teachers, opinion leaders, project staff, and the project manager. The sampling design is summarized in table 1

Sampling Design	Target Group	Sampling Technique	Sample Units
Probability sampling	405 Pupils	Random	43 Student beneficiaries
	405 Caregivers	Random	43 Caregivers
Non-probability Sampling	72 Project alumni	Purposive	6 Project alumni
	10 Teachers	Purposive	2 Teachers
	5 Opinion leaders	Purposive	2 Opinion leaders
	5 Project staff	Purposive	2 Project staff
	1 Project manager	Purposive	1 project manager

Table 1: Sampling Techniques

Non-probability sampling technique was used first to draw part of the sample. In non-probability sampling, the required number of sample units is normally selected deliberately depending on purpose of research. In which case, only the units that bear true characteristics of the population (Dooley, 1995) are included in the sample. Thus, purposive sampling technique was used to select the 6 alumni, 2 teachers, 2 opinion leaders, 2 project staff, and 1 project manager who were involved in the study as shown in the table 1.

As indicated in the table 1, probability sampling was then used to obtain sample units out of the total number of caregivers and pupils within the organization. Thus, out of the 405 caregivers and 405 student-beneficiaries, a sample of 86 respondents was obtained using simple random sampling technique where 43 caregivers and 43 student-beneficiaries (to make a total of 86 as indicated above) for the study; by picking on every ninth subject.

D. METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

Given that this study adopted the survey design to obtain the primary data, it used primarily research tools such as questionnaires, interview guides and focus group discussion (FGD) guides to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data.

a. QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD

This study used both closed ended and open ended type of questionnaires that were administered to the caregivers of the ICSP. The open ended items in a questionnaire captured unrestricted answers from respondents thus allowing researchers to better access the respondents' choices that actually reflected their feelings. The closed ended items in a questionnaire were pre-set questions that were designed based on the research questions with multiple choices.

This method was suitable for this category of respondents mainly because their number was big and interviews would not be appropriate. This method will involve presenting written questions to the respondents who then will provide responses to the questions in written.

The questionnaire was the tool for data collection. Forty-three questionnaires were administered to the selected project

caregivers and the questionnaires comprised of two sections; Section A sought for demographic information such as age, sex, education and marital status whilst section B, C and D consisted of a set of closed as well as open-ended questions based on thematic issues of the study related to research objectives. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the selected sample of participants. This was done to ensure that all the sections of the questionnaire were answered.

b. INTERVIEWS

The interview guide was used on project alumni, teachers, opinion leaders, project staff and project manager. These gave the opportunity of instant feedback and enabled probing of complex answers. The researcher used a semi-structured interview to collect data from the respondents because it enabled the participants to speak freely and also gave every respondent the opportunity to say out their line of thought without being influenced by group psychology.

Therefore the interview guide tool was used and it consisted of section A and B that were comprised of open-ended questions which captured qualitative data related to the study objectives.

c. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Focus group discussion guide was used to gather data from the student beneficiaries of the project. This method was ideal here owing to the fact that the concerned respondents constituted a homogeneous group that had almost common information about the project. The FGDs comprised of two groups of 20 primary school children, two groups of 15 secondary school students and one group of 8 college and university students. The researcher assumed the role of the moderator. The focus group discussion guide was the tool for data collection.

d. DOCUMENT REVIEW

The document review guide was used to study all the relevant documents that relate to the Ivola CSP. These included the student progress records, project alumni records, admission records, project reports, minutes, class registers, Kenya Certificate of Primary Education results and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education results. Data that was gathered from document analysis helped in triangulating information obtained by the use of personal interviews, FDGs, questionnaires and direct observation. The document review checklist was the tool for data collection in this method.

e. DIRECT OBSERVATION

Observation guide was used to ascertain the availability of the project plan, project progress records, project staff, project beneficiaries, minutes, stakeholder management plan and other project resources. The observation checklist was used to help in the collection of data.

V. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The researcher conducted a personal visit to the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project Center to ask permission to collect data and also for familiarization with the respondents and explained the purpose of the research and the relevance of the targeted population.

The respondents were visited on the agreed dates and filled in the questionnaires. The filled questionnaires were then subjected to quality check, coded and processed for emerging themes. The interviews lasted 30 minutes, while the FGDs took one hour to complete. The researcher went ahead to review relevant documents that were important to the study.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

According to Wolverton, (2009) descriptive analysis involves a process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables, charts, with frequency distribution and percentages, which are a vital part of making sense of the data. For this study, the quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed thematically.

A. QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data collected was coded with regard to the type and source. This data was then analyzed and interpreted in the light of the research objective through descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages and means.

B. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data that was collected was in the form of descriptions and narratives. Its analysis involved thematically analyzing the interview data derived from the FGDs and key informants, who were project manager, project staff, teachers, opinion leaders and project alumni. Thematic analysis is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research (Kombo and Delno, 2006). It emphasizes pinpointing, examining and recording patterns (or themes) within data. Themes normally manifest as patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated to a specific research question (Wolverton, 2009). The analysis process involved first transcribing and organizing all the data; secondly, giving the codes to the first set of field notes drawn from the interviews, having noted personal reflections and other comments in the margin. The third stage involved sorting and sifting through the materials to identify similar phrases, patterns, themes and common sequences. The fourth stage identified these patterns and processes, commonalities and differences and taking them out to the field in next wave of data collection. The fifth process elaborated a small set of generalization that covered the consistencies discerned in the database. Finally, the researcher examined generalizations made in light of a formalized body of knowledge in the form of constructs or theories.

VII. FINDINGS ON CHALLENGES TO THE IVOLA CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROJECT

The objective of the study was to examine the challenges facing beneficiaries in their participation in the Ivola Child Sponsorship Project. Findings show that a number of factors inhibited stakeholders from active participation in the Ivola CSP. Some respondents (47) admitted that they encounter participation-related challenges while 9 respondents did not encounter challenges. This is shown in figure 1.

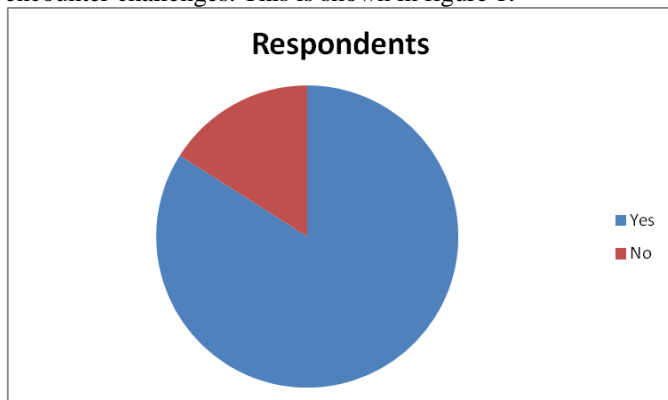


Figure 1: Challenges encountered during participation in the Ivola CSP

As reflected in figure 1, most of the respondents (84%) encountered challenges in their participation in the Ivola CSP while 16% of the respondents said they did not encounter any challenges. However, owing to the nature of participation challenges that characterized the Ivola CSP, the latter group of respondents (16%) either felt that they did not want to say anything negative about the project; or because of illiteracy, some were not able to analyze their activities in the project and consequently identify the challenges that they encountered while taking part in the project.

According to views of the majority of the respondents, a major obstacle to effective participation in the Ivola CSP was poverty. Most members (82%) were concerned that their involvement in the project entailed some costs in terms of their time, labor and other resources which they could not afford. The members indicated that they failed to participate in project initiatives especially when such involvement required monetary or other material contribution. Due to this, it was noted from the project records that construction activities for example, delayed to be accomplished because mobilization of community resources which were required as part of community contribution took a long time.

The other challenge that community members encountered in a bid to participate in the project related to long distances. Most students had to walk for long distances in order to get to the Ivola CSP Centre where classes were conducted. This made it difficult for some of them to participate in the project and ended up dropping from the project. One of the respondents observed as follows:

Because of our low financial status, it has been difficult for us to effectively be part of the project. We are not able to make mandatory contributions that are required for development activities in the project. Also because some of the community members stay far from the Ivola CSP Centre, it

has been difficult for them to take part in the project. (Interviewee 3)

The study findings further established that there is a dependency syndrome amongst local community members which emanated from the support offered by the Ivola CSP. This is an attitude and belief that someone/group cannot solve own problems without outside help. The study noted that community members who benefit from the project have depended so much on the project to such an extent that they forgot that the sponsees are their own children and that they also had a duty to provide for their basic needs. This could be seen when some of the caregivers lamented that some community members amongst them always refer their children to the project even when the need can be solved at home. This in turn had created lack of initiative among community members.

Other than the foregoing, the study also found out that the project stakeholders were not given an opportunity to air out their views regarding the planning and implementation of the project. This alone could be one of the reasons why effective community participation was minimal in the Ivola CSP. Incidentally, some organizations seem to believe that local people are not capable of identifying their needs and transforming them into development projects; thus, local people are not given a platform to contribute their views in the process of identifying, planning and decision making of projects (Dosner, 2004). The ideal way to start the project, as expressed by the respondents is to involve the beneficiaries at the initial stages and throughout the project cycle. This is also recommended by Kimani and Muia (2004) who observe that the involvement of the local people is very crucial in all stages in development projects as it fosters collective ownership.

There are various challenges that the students who are admitted into the Ivola CSP face as they participate in the sponsorship project. When it comes to geographical location, some students complained of having to walk for very long distances to the Ivola CSP Centre. This is because they come from poor backgrounds and could not afford any means of transport. Others also complained that their colleagues who are not in the project would laugh at them because they are poor back at their homes and that is why they are being helped. This resulted to self-pity and stigmatization of those children in the project.

The study further established that some of the children in the Ivola CSP were HIV positive which made them weaker and unable to take part in the activities that others performed. Being HIV positive also posed stigma to the children because some would be segregated by others due to their HIV status. According to class register records, this had affected their attendance of school and even made some of them to drop out of the project. During the focus group discussions, some of the student beneficiaries observed that:

Some of our friends laugh at us because we have come to seek for assistance in the project. This discourages us to continue being part of the project. Also some of us are HIV positive. This has made us unable to participate because we are being segregated by our fellow children. This made some of our friends to drop out of the project. (Interviewee 9)

Findings also revealed that poor community leadership impacted negatively on the participation of the community

members in the Ivola CSP, because the political leaders at the local level did not effectively mobilize members to take part in the project activities when required. Poor leadership at the church also contributed immensely to the local people not participating in development projects. Respondents noted that during meetings that are normally held by the church leaders, it was always emphasized that only children who belong to the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (P.A.G) Church should benefit from the Ivola CSP whereas the management of the project insisted that all children had a right to benefit from the project for as long as they qualify. This tended to limit the number of children in the project who come from non-P.A.G backgrounds.

Conflict among community members was another challenge that constrained community participation in the project. Respondents observed that project stakeholders were looking down upon each other, and they failed to reach a mutual understanding hence the conflicts ensued and negatively affected the project. For example, some of the affected caregivers failed to turn up in meetings or for project tasks to avoid meeting people whom they were in conflict with. The problem of conflicts in development has been underscored by Taiwo (2010) who observes that it has also emerged as one of the major challenges to development particularly in Africa.

Another challenge according to the respondents was that community members tended to promote ideas of their political parties in the project which negatively affected the way the project was being implemented. Indeed, respondents reported that some community members introduced party politics into the project and tried to influence other members to join their parties and this caused disagreements in the project; and aggrieved members kept off crucial project activities. The fact that politics interferes with participatory development makes the whole concept of community participation vulnerable. If development projects are turned into political platforms, then there will be low participation and it kills the whole essence of communities freely participating in projects and community participation loses its importance.

Lack of access to relevant information was also been pointed out as a hindrance to community participation in the project. A majority of the respondents felt that there was poor information dissemination in their villages and wards concerning the project. They also felt that the information that was available was difficult to obtain and interpret. They observed that they needed to access information that is understandable, concise and timely. Information is fundamental to any development whether social or otherwise. Lack of information disempowers local communities and it also leads to mistrust among the community members.

In a nutshell, the foregoing challenges were seen to be holding back the Ivola CSP from achieving its full potential. As such, these challenges had a bearing on how participation by project stakeholders eventually influenced the implementation of the Ivola CSP.

As a result of the foregoing findings, respondents suggested various ways in which community participation in the project could be improved. Some respondents emphasized that there is need for stakeholders to participate freely in the initial stages of the projects, noting that there should be no

barriers to participation at the initial stages. Other respondents felt that training and capacity building programs for community members are needed in Tambua Ward. The training should be broad and should touch on all areas relating to rural development and not narrowly on project identification and implementation. They also suggested that there should be change in structure which requires the development of mechanisms that provide both communities with a voice and rural development agencies with a means to hear community concerns. Some of the community members felt that having the power to make decisions on various issues arising in their communities is also some form of empowerment. Other respondents pointed out that effective communication and information dissemination could help achieve meaningful community participation. They suggested that information regarding community development projects should be disseminated through various ways as not many people attend village meetings which were the preferred mode of communication.

VIII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Study findings revealed that lack of resources tended to limit community participation in the project. Most of the project members were willing to participate in the project but due to lack of enough resources, it became a barrier that prevented them from giving the required support to the project. Respondents also indicated that community participation in the Ivola CSP had not been adequately attained because members were not fully equipped with the necessary skills to engage in their own decision making process that would lead to successful community development. Respondents indicated that they felt that there was lack of access to information about the project's activities and services. Most respondents revealed that generally, information that is available on community development programs, projects and services is difficult to obtain and interpret. There was a desire to learn about and access information about the available programs, projects and services that is understandable, concise and timely. Conflict among community members was another challenge; where respondents claimed that project members were looking down upon each other and they failed to reach a mutual understanding hence conflicts ensued. Another challenge was that, community members were active in party politics and this negatively affected the way the project was being implemented.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that there are many challenges that impeded stakeholders from actively engaging in the implementation of the Ivola CSP. This tended to limit the potential of the community to contribute to the project, and of the project to deliver on its mandate to the community.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the context of the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following recommendation was made: That Project sponsors and the Government of Kenya ought to continually identify and address challenges that impede communities from fully and effectively taking part in development projects, as a way of increasing on their success rate.

XI. AREA OF FURTHER RESEARCH

In the Ivola CSP, there was evidence that the intended beneficiaries of the project may not all have been included due to preferential selection that favoured families that belong to the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church which hosted the project. Consequently, there is need for research to assess whether community development projects end up benefiting the intended beneficiaries or not. Appropriate measures can then be taken.

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