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Stakeholder Involvement and Model Villages Project Sustainability in Rwanda: A Case of Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District

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Abstract

The concerns on project success have shifted focus not only to the project's success as measured using the traditional measures of cost, time and quality, but also to incorporate the project sustainability as a measure. The study was undertaken to investigate the role of stakeholder's involvement in Model Villages Project sustainability in Rwanda, taking a case of Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District. The specific objectives that guided the research were to examine the extent to which stakeholders' involvement in project identification affect project sustainability; to analyze the level of significance of stakeholders' involvement in project planning on project sustainability and to evaluate the level to which stakeholders' involvement in project implementation affect project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda. The study was based on the Stakeholder theory, Need Chain Theory and Community Action Planning Theory. The findings of this research are intended to benefit different parties including the academicians, policymakers, government, and project managers, among others. The research design that was used is descriptive, cross-sectional and survey research designs using qualitative data. The target population for this study was 122 respondents made up of 18 Project management Team members and 104 Project Recipients or Primary beneficiaries from which a sample of 94 was selected using stratified random sampling technique. Data was collected both from primary sources, using structured questionnaire and interview, and from secondary sources using documentary analysis. The data collected was entered into SPSS version 21 for presentation and analysis using frequency tables, percentages, charts, and descriptive summaries. A significant number of the respondents (63.8%) said that they were involved in the project identification phase and 47.9% of the respondents were involved in beneficiary value creation. On the regression analyses that were conducted, the first regression model to determine the effect of stakeholders' involvement on project sustainability was not found to be statistically significant (F=1.975,P=0.123) since the p-value was higher than 0.05. However, the second regression (F=3.465,P=0.02) model on project planning and the third

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regression model on project implementation(F=7.765,P=0.000) were found to be statistically significant since their p-values were less than 5%. This indicated that stakeholders' involvement in project planning and project implementation both have statistically significant effect on project sustainability. The study therefore recommended that the government policy makers and other Project Managers in Bugesera District should ensure that stakeholders are playing a key role at all stages of projects management. Consultation of project stakeholders is also recommended while making any decision regarding projects management. Furthermore, planners and decision makers at district level should integrate the participatory approach in district strategic frameworks to attract more donors' engagement. Other than the traditional indicators of time, cost and quality, the researcher recommends further research on the influence of other factors affecting Sustainability of community development projects in Rwanda. Further study should be done on the influence of stakeholders' capacity building on the project sustainability in Rwanda as well as the mediating effects and demographic variable on the relationship between institutional management, social economic factors and the role of stakeholders in project Sustainability.

Keywords: *Stakeholder Involvement, Project Sustainability, Model Villages Project and Rwanda*

1. Introduction

The relationship between stakeholder's involvement and the project sustainability has been inadequately studied and less attention has been dedicated to the integration of the problem owners' interests and concerns throughout the entire project life cycle, and particularly in the decision-making process with regard to the long-run benefits after the project closure. As a matter of fact, a project can be seen to be successful if its desired outputs can still be enjoyed by the beneficiaries long after the donors have gone. Hence there is a concerted interest on project sustainability (Bossert, 2014). Empirical research has investigated the effect of stakeholders' involvement on project sustainability with varying arguments and outcomes. Different authors have tackled the debate from the side of the community willingness to be engaged in community driven projects (for instance Peter, *et al*., 2013) while others on the ability of the project managers and donors to engage the stakeholders (for instance Abesida and Onkulola, 2015). However, most of the empirical research conducted are more concerned on project success as measured by the three traditional measures of project success, that is, project scope/quality, budget and time (Odoyo, 2013).

There is need for further research on project sustainability as a measure of project success especially in providing continued benefits to the intended community way after their completion. The current research aimed at filling this research gap by investigating the role of involving stakeholders' on the project sustainability. Notably, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) after the 1994 Genocide realized that the housing shortage became more apparent. Both the returnees who had fled the country over the previous 30 years as well as the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) lacked more houses to accommodate them, and the housing issue was aggravated by the shortage of land for resettlement (Law No. 24/2012 of 15/06/2012, Article 4/4 and 4/6). In order to resolve this issue, in 1996 the then Ministry of Public Works adopted instructions on regrouped settlements/villages (Imidugudu) aimed at transforming them into planned settlements, which would improve livelihoods of residents' overtime particularly for vulnerable groups mainly; orphans, widows, returnees, and disabled

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people (Republic of Rwanda, Rwanda vision 2020 document). It is in that regard that in 2016, residents (104 families) of Mazane and Sharita Islands in Lake Rweru were relocated and settled in Rweru model village.

However, after two (2) years since their relocation to date, the condition of the structures suggests lack of sustainability framework and, lack of capacity of these 104 families in maintaining the houses. The question then is the extent to which stakeholders particularly the beneficiaries of the Project product/service have been involved, how this project has improved the beneficiaries' livelihood, and the role this involvement has played in the sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rwanda. Therefore, the study intended to examine whether stakeholders' involvement particularly the above mentioned 104 families has had any impact on the Model Villages Project sustainability in Rweru sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

1.1 Objectives of the study

1.1.1 General objective

The main objective of this research project was to investigate the role of stakeholders' involvement in model villages' project sustainability in Rwanda, taking a case of Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District.

1.1.2 Specific Objectives

i. To examine the extent to which stakeholders' involvement in project identification affect project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.
ii. To analyze the level of significance of stakeholders' involvement in project planning on project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.
iii. To evaluate the level to which stakeholders' involvement in project implementation affect project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

1.1.3 Research Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' involvement in project identification and project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' involvement in project planning and project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between stakeholders' involvement in project implementation and project sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

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2. Review of Literature

2.1 Empirical Literature

This section looks at how different related research have addressed (or haven't addressed) the study's gap. The reviewed literatures came from all over the world, including Europe, America, Asia, and Africa, with a special focus on Rwanda, as mentioned below:

2.1.1 Stakeholders' Involvement in Project Identification

Stakeholder engagement is consequently critical in the implementation of SDGs at the EU and national levels. One of the main motivations for stakeholder participation, as previously said, is the need for new knowledge. Climate change, energy, resource efficiency, the circular economy, and the related issues of air pollution, health, car emissions, and transportation, as well as fresh ideas about sustainable cities, water, and seas, are all urgently needed (Osborn, 2015).

In this regard, various stakeholders are required to enable and support the SD debate, as well as to identify areas where new initiatives are required. As a result, stakeholder engagement mechanisms should be established and implemented to improve stakeholders' ability to interact constructively at each stage of the sustainability cycle in a consistent and coherent manner (Osborn, 2015).

Participation is and should be an important part of any SD strategy approach. It's been addressed on a number of levels. For example, Agenda 21 states that National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDSs) "should be produced with the broadest possible participation" (UNCED, 1992). As a result, in UN and OECD guidance materials for developing NSDS, public participation is emphasized (UN, 2002).

Ayuso, Rodrguez, Castro, and Arino (2012) conducted research on the role of stakeholder engagement in the innovation orientation of enterprises in the context of sustainable development. They investigated whether collaborating with various stakeholders improves long-term innovation. The study discovered that knowledge gained through interactions with internal and external stakeholders contributes to a company's long-term innovation orientation, but that this knowledge must be managed internally before it can be translated into new innovation concepts. According to Ayuso, et al., (2012), when communities participate in project planning and implementation, they are more likely to be sustainable, subject to certain circumstances, as opposed to when they are unaware of the project or when it is imposed on them.

Adesida and Okunlola (2015), for their part, sought to investigate the effects of community participation on the sustainability of rural infrastructure development in Nigeria's Ondo State. A structured interview was used to collect data from a sample of 144 respondents randomly selected from twelve communities that benefited from IFAD/Niger Delta Development Commission Community based project. The study found out that majority of the respondents was actively involved and had adequate information on the said project. The study also highlights the benefits accruing from engaging the community in the project life cycle for sustainable projects.

Okun (2009) observes that there is a need to educate and empower the local community on project sustainability in his study of Factors Affecting the Sustainability of Donor-Funded Projects in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Areas, so that they can articulate the project's goals and objectives and push them forward after donor funding is withdrawn. He goes on to say

that the beneficiaries must be consulted during the project's inception, planning, and implementation.

Although the aforementioned studies have addressed the factors that affect project sustainability, they have not clearly addressed the issue of role of stakeholder participation in project sustainability.

2.1.2 Stakeholders' Involvement in Project Planning

Regarding the role of stakeholder participation in European sustainable development policies and strategies, according to the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN) Quarterly Report No 39 from December 2015, which can be found at www.sd-network.eu, "Tackling the transformative challenges of sustainable development requires and will only be achieved with the full engagement and participation of all stakeholders."

At all stages of the sustainability cycle, various stakeholders are required to contribute to the identification of goals and targets, as co-producers of policies and measures required to achieve the objectives, as well as actions required to change unsustainable practices and behaviors, and as co-participants in monitoring and review processes in the form of "joint guardians" and "watchdogs of progress" (Osborn, 2015).

Peter, et al., (2013) the study asserted that, for project to be sustainable, a multidimensional attribute of sustainability such as social, cultural, economic and environment pillar have to be considered during the project design and report formulation and community involvement should be an integral part of organization in needs to maintain the sustainability of her project.

The study concluded that having community members identify their own needs and create community action plans (CAP) is critical, as is emphasizing the use of community inherent knowledge and capacity to allow them to develop an innovative way to solving their own problems. As a result, the study's focus was on community involvement as a means of ensuring the sustainability of donor-funded projects, even though this focus was insufficient in describing how their involvement and at what stage of the project's life cycle could ensure sustainability, as well as the role played by the stakeholders involved.

Olukotun, (2008) conducted a research in Nigeria to investigate the achievement of project sustainability through community participation. The researcher highlights the social network and communal life that the rural community exhibit. This communal life therefore, calls for participation of the local communities in all social aspects of life. More so, any donor aided project should from its inception engage the community if it is to be sustainable. Otherwise the project is abandon by the community if they feel the project is not part of them. The author concludes that participatory approach of the community brings about sustainability of a project during its life time and even after the donors has left.

The study was conducted at Mlali and Mzumbe wards in Morogoro, according to Mnaranara (2010) in her study on the Importance of community engagement in the construction of a school in Tanzania. The study was both qualitative and quantitative, and it came to the following conclusions using triangulation data collection methods: Collaboration plays an important role in the sustainability of a project or intervention, as it was and still is considered the active one, as the study found that participation by material giving was an important factor in community ownership and thus the intervention's sustainability. The study also emphasizes the importance and utility of expertise knowledge if only the community

people have it. The study also emphasized the value of community mobilization in that it allows people to make collective decisions about issues that affect their social and economic growth.

2.1.3 Stakeholders' Involvement in Project Implementation

The stakeholders' requirements must be considered in order to encourage stakeholder engagement and a transformative sustainable development agenda include raising awareness of the process and its importance, increasing participation by allowing everyone to share their thoughts, Stakeholders must be empowered in order to have a say in crucial processes and players. Finally, strengthen governance that engages all stakeholders and provides transparency, assures access to information and justice, and strengthens accountability by improving the visibility, inclusivity, and effect of advocacy actions and policy responses (Stakeholder Forum, 2015).

In a related empirical research, Odoyo (2013) assessed the factors affecting implementation of community projects of Kimira Oluch small holder Farm Improvement project in Homa Bay County in Kenya. The main objectives of the study were to assess the factors causing delays in project implementation. The research adopted a case study research design using questionnaire as the main tool for data collection. The research found out that the major causes of delay was natural calamities like floods and lack of involving the local community.

In a research closer home, Umugwaneza and Kule (2016) sought to investigate the role of monitoring and evaluation on project sustainability in Rwanda. The research was guided by four different specific objectives all aimed at studying various aspects of monitoring and evaluation and their role in project sustainability. The research adopted a descriptive research design with a sample of 83 respondents drawn from a population totaling to 104. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 23. Accountability, good communication, planning partnership, and supportive supervision all play a key influence in the sustainability of initiatives in Rwanda, according to the findings. As a result, the researchers suggested that management commitment, particularly through monitoring and evaluation, is critical for project sustainability. Umugwaneza and Kule (2016) emphasized on the role of monitoring and evaluation in project sustainability and broadly the community engagement but did not attempt to show the role of specific stakeholder or beneficiary involvement in various project cycles for the sustainability of projects.

2.2 Critical review and Research gap identification

In their study, Ayuso, *et al.*, (2012) looked at the role of stakeholder engagement in enterprises' innovation orientation in the context of sustainable development. Their research though related to this current study deviates by concentrating on firms' innovative endeavors. This is clearly so because the main concern of the current research is to concentrate on project funded by donors and their possibility of sustainability after withdrawing of donors. On the other hand, Okun (2009) in his study highlights the various factors that affect sustainability of donor aided projects.

The main factors that he highlights are different to those in this research. Other similar research conducted by Olukotun (2008) in Nigeria; Adesida and Okunlola (2015) in Nigeria; Odoyo (2013) in Kenya and Umugwaneza and Kule (2016) in Rwanda seem to be in agreement on the need for having sustainable projects. However, there is none of these authors who emphasize the involvement in various project life cycles. More so, the variables considered by these authors are diverse and this research intends to fill the gap on the

indicators of stakeholders' involvement and the role this has played in the sustainability of projects. The research problem should be the focus of the gap: Thus, the reviewed literature does not clearly address the aspect of how stakeholder involvement influences project outcomes and sustainability.

3. Materials and Methods

The researcher employed a descriptive research design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The objective for using a quantitative design is to be able to compare both case studies in terms of how satisfied people are with their involvement in project activities and the project's performance using real statistics (percentages) (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). The researcher's motivation for using a qualitative design is to gain a deeper knowledge of the relationship between stakeholders' engagement in the project, particularly its beneficiaries, and its performance in terms of stakeholders' involvement effects on project performance. The target population for this study is 122 respondents made up of 18 Project management Team members and 104 Project Recipients or Primary beneficiaries as per the Republic of Rwanda, EDPRS2 report of 2013–2018. Given that N was 122, the sample size was appropriately determined at e = 0.05 to be rounded up to 94. Hence, stratified random sampling technique was used in this research. In this regard then, a population is first divided into strata (groups) with similar characteristics. Then simple random sampling is applied to select sample items from each of the group according to the proportion that group has to the population (Saunders, et al., 2007).

Primary and secondary data collection methods were used. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. The questionnaire included open-ended and closed-ended questions, as well as organized and unstructured inquiries. Structured questions shorten data collecting time, whereas unstructured questions encourage respondents to provide detailed responses, hence improving the data quality (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). The questionnaire which is the primary tool for data collection was self-administered. The questionnaires were distributed to various households where the project beneficiaries already identified were required to fill. The questionnaires were later collected on the following day. On the other hand, the interview was conducted on the project management team. In this case an interview guide and an interview schedule were enough to facilitate this. After collection of data, the researcher entered them into SPSS version 21 for analysis, presentation and interpretation. SPSS was used to do this by making use of percentages, frequency tables, charts and descriptive summaries like average and standard deviation. Because this was a descriptive study, the mean and standard deviation were employed to characterize the findings. The hypotheses and link between the research variables were also tested using Pearson's correlation and regression analysis. The finding from interview was discussed alongside the findings from the questionnaires. The regression model was formulated as given below:

$y = \beta o + \beta 1 * x1 + \beta 2 * x2 * \beta 3 * x3 + \epsilon$

Where y= Independent variable (stockholders' involvement),

βo = y intercept (constant),

β1, β2, β3=regression coefficient for x1 x1, x2, x3 and x1, x2, x3 = independent variable : stockholders' involvement in project identification, project planning and project implementation respectively.

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4. Research Findings

4.1 Stakeholders' involvement in Project Identification affect project sustainability

Objective one sought to investigate the extent to which stakeholders' involvement in project identification affect project sustainability of the model villages project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

Table 1: Stakeholders' involvement analysis

Population category	Frequency	Percent
Beneficiaries	67	71.3
Contractors	21	22.3
Public officers	4	4.3
Partners in development	2	2.1
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

As shown in Table 1, most of the respondents were the beneficiaries of the project as shown by a representation of 67 (71.3%) of the respondents. 22.3% were contractors, 4.3% were public officers and 2.1% were partners in development. It implied that the beneficiaries being the majority would be able to give their views on their level of involvement. In the same way, other participants were important to the research in order to get their views on the significant effect of involvement of stakeholder for the success and the sustainability of a project.

Table 2: Stakeholders' involvement in project identification

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	60	63.8
No	34	36.2
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

As shown in Table 2, 60 or 63.8% of the respondents said that they were involved in the project identification phase while 34 or 36.2% of the respondents indicated that they were not involved. From this, it is clear that most of the respondents were involved in the identification process. The key informants contacted during the interview revealed that having the stakeholders' involvement in the project identification stage ensures that the projects are tailored to meet the stakeholders' interests. The informants said that this helps to incorporate the needs especially of the end users or the end beneficiaries. According to this, the involvement of the stakeholders at this stage may therefore help the project planners ensure that the project will attract the interests of the stakeholders, who will in turn ensure sustainability of the project.

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Table 3: How the stakeholders were involved

	Frequency	Percent
Compared expected benefits with identified problems	18	19.1
Beneficiary value creation	45	47.9
Cost sharing	31	33.0
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

Concerning how the stakeholders were involved in the project identification phase, the findings showed that most of the respondents were involved in beneficiary value creation. This was represented by 45 (47.9%) of the total respondents. This was followed by the stakeholders who said they were involved in cost sharing as indicated by a percentage of 33% of the respondents. Lastly, 19.1% of the respondents were involved in comparing expected benefits with the identified problems. Apart from these results obtained through questionnaire, the informants contacted through interview agreed that various methods were used to get the stakeholders' involvement with different tasks. They said that different stakeholders were able to contribute what they could. In addition, the informants noted that letting the stakeholders to contribute in different ways according to their capacity ensures holistic coverage of the project areas.

Table 4: Role of stakeholders in project feasibility study

	Frequency	Percent
Description of the project	13	13.8
Study the human capital	8	8.5
Purchasing power of the population	10	10.6
Identification of opportunities around the site	34	36.2
Future benefits of the population	29	30.9
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

Table 4 shows the different roles played by the stakeholders in terms of their involvement in project feasibility study. As shown in the table, 36.2% of the respondents indicated that they were involved in the identification of opportunities around the site. 30.9% of the respondents were involved in defining future benefits of the population while 13.8% were involved in providing the description of the project. Another 10.6% of the respondents were involved in analyzing the purchasing power of the population while 8.5% were involved in studying the human capital. All these stakeholders' involvement were important in informing the feasibility study.

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Table 5: Stakeholders' involvement in the project approval

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	28.7
No	67	71.3
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents were requested to indicate whether they were involved in the process of project approval. As shown in Table 5, majority indicated they were not involved in the project approval stage as shown by 71.3%. The remaining 28.7% of the respondents indicated they were involved. This possibly point to the understanding that the approval is usually done at the top-level decision making. When asked to comment on stakeholders' involvement in project approval, the key informants contacted during the interview informed the researchers that most of the project approvals are done at high level of project management. They therefore said it is rarely to include end users in such process. However, some informants also stated that occasionally technical advice may be needed during project approval and therefore necessitate the need of incorporating other stakeholders who may have such prowess. Some of the informants described this form of stakeholders' participation as involuntary.

4.2 Stakeholders' involvement in project planning on project sustainability

The second objective sought to analyze the level of significance of stakeholders' involvement in project planning on project sustainability of the model village project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

Table 6: Stakeholders' involvement in project planning

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	63	67.0
No	31	33.0
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

In addition, respondents were asked if they were involved in project planning. The majority of respondents responded that they were involved, as seen in Table 6. 67 percent of the total respondents agree with this. The project planning phase was not attended by 33% of the respondents.

Since majority were involved in the planning stage, the conclusion was that they would have more knowledge about the project and be committed towards its sustainability. Asked to give their views concerning stakeholders' involvement in project planning, key informants contacted during the interview had many suggestions to give in this area. They noted that planning is one of the key pillars that determine the success and the sustainability of a project. They also said that many projects fail due to poor planning. They also indicated that involving stakeholders in project planning has an added advantage of helping the

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beneficiaries to take up the project as their own. This in turn helps to increase project sustainability. It was therefore clear from the discussions with the key informants that involving the key stakeholders will definitely help in project planning.

Table 7: How were you involved in project planning?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
	Identification of work requirements	10	10.6	10.8
	Identification of expected quality of work	24	25.5	25.8
	Resources needed	9	9.6	9.7
	Expected schedule	24	25.5	25.8
	Related risk	20	21.3	21.5
	Delivery of materials	6	6.4	6.5
	Total	93	98.9	100.0
Missing	System	1	1.1	
Total		**94**	**100.0**	

Source: Primary data, 2022

When asked to indicate how they were involved in project planning, 10.8% of those who responded said they were engaged in identification of work requirements for the project. 25.8% of those who responded indicated that they were involved identifying the expected quality of work, 9.7% were involved in providing and assessing the resources needed, 25.8% of the respondents who answered the question were involved in drawing up the expected schedule, 21.5% were engaged in determining the related risk for the project in the planning phase while 6.5% of the respondents indicated that they were involved in delivery of materials. These results showed that different stakeholders who were involved in the project planning played different roles in the planning of the project. This was interpreted to be a good sign that would ensure active participation of different stakeholders at different levels as well as for different purposes. With this participation, it is expected that the stakeholders would get engaged in seeing to it that the project becomes more sustainable.

Table 8: Increased the level of involvement

	Frequency	Percent
Tasks specification	17	18.1
To know how the resources are being allocated	8	8.5
Align goals with available resources	16	17.0
Joint planning	29	30.9
Warm working relationship	24	25.5
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

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The researcher also wanted to find out if the stakeholders' engagement in the planning of the project improved the level of the involvement of the stakeholders in the project. To this, different responses were obtained as shown in Table 8. According to the results, 30.9% of the respondents indicated that the involvement improved joint planning efforts from all the stakeholders. This was followed with 25.5% of the respondents who indicated that the involvement improved the working relationship among the stakeholders. In addition, 18.1% of the respondents indicated that the involvement in project planning improved tasks specification in the project while 17% indicated that the involvement of stakeholders helped to align the goals with available resources. Key informants in the interview said that involvement of stakeholders helps to create synergy and good working relationships among the project managers and other actors. They said that even though involving stakeholders may delay projects due to lengthy consultations and conflicting views, the end result may outweigh these challenges.

Table 9: Benefits of stakeholders' involvement

	Frequency	Percent
Increased milestone review capacity	26	27.7
Full commitment of stakeholders	23	24.5
Avail necessary budget	8	8.5
Easy work planning	9	9.6
Increased advisory services	28	29.8
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents were asked to indicate the benefits they think come as a result of stakeholders' involvement in project planning. The results displayed in Table 9 show that 29.8% of the respondents view that having stakeholders' involvement helps in increasing advisory services within a project. This was closely followed by those who viewed that stakeholders' involvement increased milestone review capacity for the project at 27.7% of the respondents. 24.5% of the respondents also said that involvement in project planning makes stakeholders to be fully committed to the project while 9.6% of the respondents and 8.5% of the respondents indicated that stakeholders' involvement in project planning improve ease of work as well as avail the necessary budget respectively.

4.3 Stakeholders' involvement in Project Implementation affect project sustainability

The third objective sought to evaluate the level to which stakeholders' involvement in Project Implementation affect project sustainability of the model village project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District, Rwanda.

Table 10: Involvement in project implementation

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	68	72.3
No	26	27.7
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

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The respondents were asked to indicate whether they were involved in project implementation. Table 10 shows that 72.3% of the respondents were involved while 27.7% indicated that they were not involved. This could be probably because the project has many different types of stakeholders with some not involved in the project implementation stage. According to the findings obtained from interview with key informants, project implementation is where the action of stakeholders should be more visible. They were of the views that during the execution stage, project managers should involve not only the technical stakeholders, but also the end users or beneficiaries, especially for projects that are community based. The informants further indicated that having the beneficiaries included during the project implementation helps to increase project feasibility and acceptance in the community.

Table 11: How were you involved in project implementation?

	Frequency	Percent
Coordination of people	26	27.7
Efficient utilization of resources	24	25.5
Effective evaluation of risks	36	38.3
Well-structured tasks being carried out	8	8.5
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

When asked to indicate how they were involved in the project implementation phase, the respondents selected different options that were provided. As shown in Table 11, 36 (or 38.3%) of the respondents indicated they were involved in effective evaluation of risks. This was followed by 26 (or 27.7%) of the respondents who said that they were involved in coordinating people. 24 (or 25.5%) of the respondents indicated they were involved in efficient utilization of resources. Only 8 (or 8.5%) of the respondents were involved with establishing well-structured tasks that were being carried out in the organization. These results revealed that the stakeholders were actually involved in the project implementation, but in different responsibilities.

Table 12: Role of stakeholders in project implementation

	Frequency	Percent
Fundraising	13	13.8
Political influence	18	19.1
Project sponsorship	22	23.4
Environmental protection	21	22.3
Compliance to government regulations	14	14.9
Procurement, supply and contractor	6	6.4
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents also indicated the role they played in project implement of the model villages in Rweru. According to Table 12, the majority of respondents, or 23.4 percent, said

that they were involved in project sponsorship. This was closely followed by 22.3 percent of respondents who said they helped to protect the environment. 19/1% of the respondents said they played role in matters to deal with political influence to ensure the project has the political backing. 14.9% of the respondents were concerned with ensuring that there was high compliance with the government regulation. Lastly, 6.4% of the respondents said that they were involved in procurement, supply and contractor issues. In this respect, it was clear that the stakeholders who participated in this research played different roles to see to it that the project implementation went on smoothly.

Table 13: Types of stakeholders' involvement in projects

	Frequency	Percent
Passive participation	9	9.6
Interactive participation	9	9.6
Functional participation	55	58.5
Optimum participation	21	22.3
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

The researcher also asked the respondents to indicate the type of involvement as categorized in to four different categories. Passive participation, interactive participation, functional participation, and ideal participation were among the options.

As shown in Table 13, most of the respondents, that is, 58.5% of the respondents indicated that they were involved in the functional participation level. 22.3% of the respondents said their participation was at optimum participation while only 9.6% of the respondents said they were passively involved. Similarly, another 9.6% of the respondents indicated they were involved at interactive participation.

When asked to indicate the kind of participation that the beneficiaries were involved in, the key informant during the interview indicated that some were actively involved in the project especially in the implementation phase while some were passive participants especially during the planning stage. Moreover, the informants indicated that various challenges hindered active participation of stakeholders in the project. Some of these included initial resistance from the stakeholders, poor communication and poor project coordination.

Table 14: Project outcome results analysis

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	69	73.4
No	25	26.6
Total	94	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2022

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The researcher also sought to find out the performance of the project in terms of its objectives and sustainability. On whether the project was able to achieve its objectives, 73.4% of the respondents said yes while the remaining 26.6% said it did not. The majority of the respondent therefore were of the view that the project was successful in terms of meeting the stated objectives.

Table 15: Project maintenance cost analysis

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	59	62.8
No	35	37.2
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they had a capacity to maintain the project. This targeted to find out responses in regard to the ability of the respondents to meet the associated costs of sustaining the project after closure. As shown in Table 15, out of the respondents contacted, 62.8% of the respondents said yes while 37.2% said that they did not have the required capacity to maintain the project.

Table 16: Project beneficiaries' ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	59	62.8
No	35	37.2
Total	**94**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data, 2022

On whether there was project ownership, 62.8% of the respondents indicated yes while 37.2% indicated that they did not feel the sense of project. The majority were in favour that there was more beneficiary ownership of the project. This was a good sign since project sustainability depends on how the beneficiary perceive their belongingness in the project.

Table 17: Correlation matrix

		Sustainability	Identification	Planning	Implementation
Sustainability	Pearson Correlation	1	.270**	.354**	.467**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008	.018	.000
	N	94	94	94	94
Identification	Pearson Correlation	.270**	1	.034	.225*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008		.748	.029
	N	94	94	94	94
Planning	Pearson Correlation	.354**	.034	1	.083
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.748		.427
	N	94	94	94	94
Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.225*	.083	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.029	.427	
	N	94	94	94	94

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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The correlation analysis shown in Table 17 shows that all the three indicators of stakeholders' involvement are positively and significantly related with project sustainability. Stakeholders' involvement in project identification ($r = 0.270, p = 0.008$) is positively and significantly related to project sustainability with a weak positive correlation. Stakeholders' involvement in project planning ($r = 0.354, p = 0.018$) is also positively and significantly related to project sustainability. Similarly, the correlation between stakeholders' involvement in project implementation ($r = 0.467, p = 0.000$) and project sustainability is significantly and positively related.

Table 18: Regression analysis (*Analysis of Variance*) between independent variables and outcome results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.250[a]	.062	.031	.439		
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.141	3	.380	1.975	.123[b]
	Residual	17.139	89	.193		
	Total	18.280	92			

a. Dependent Variable: project outcome results
b. Predictors: (Constant), project implementation involvement, project planning involvement, project identification involvement

Source: Primary data, 2022

The researcher conducted a regression analysis to determine the effect of stakeholders' involvement on project sustainability. As shown in Table 18, the regression model between stakeholders' involvement and project outcome ($F = 1.975, p = 0.123$) was not found to be statistically significant since the p-value was higher than 0.05.

Table 19: Regression coefficients for project outcome

Model		Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.435	.205		7.003	.000
	project planning involvement	.037	.031	.125	1.218	.226
	project identification involvement	-.009	.047	-.021	-.201	.841
	project implementation involvement	-.213	.102	-.216	-2.096	.039

a. Dependent Variable: project outcome results

Source: Primary data, 2022

Table 19 shows the regression coefficient for the regression analysis conducted between stakeholders' involvement and project outcomes. As shown in Table 4.25, only project implementation coefficient was found to be significant since the p-value was less than 5%.

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The rest were not significantly influential to project outcome since their p-values were more than 5%.

Table 20: Regression analysis (Analysis of Variance) predictors and maintenances cost

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.323[a]	.105	.074	.469

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2.283	3	.761	3.465	.020[b]
Residual	19.545	89	.220		
Total	21.828	92			

a. Dependent Variable: maintenance cost
b. Predictors: (Constant), project implementation involvement, project planning involvement, project identification involvement

Source: Primary data, 2022

Table 20 shows the regression analysis between the independent variable and maintenance cost. The model was found to be statistically significant ($F = 3.465, p = 0.02$)at 5% since the p-value obtained was less than 0.05. This implied that the predictor variables, namely, project implementation involvement, project planning involvement and project identification involvement. The reported R^2 was 0.105 showing that 10.5% of the project sustainability as measured by maintenance cost, was influenced by stakeholders' involvement in the project at identification, planning and implementation stages.

Table 21: Regression coefficients for maintenance cost

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	.803	.219		3.667	.000
	Project planning involvement	-.003	.033	-.009	-.088	.930
	Project identification involvement	.122	.050	.248	2.465	.016
	Project implementation involvement	.241	.108	.223	2.220	.029

a. Dependent Variable: maintenance cost

Source: Primary data, 2022

On inspecting the regression coefficient to determine the effect of each of the predictor variables on maintenance cost, Table 21 revealed that project planning involvement ($p = 0.93$)was not significant since the p-value was much higher than 0.05. However, project identification involvement ($p = 0.016$) and project implementation involvement ($p = 0.029$)were statistically significant since their respective p-values were less than 5%. It was therefore concluded that stakeholders' involvement in project identification and implementation stage as key factors to consider in regard to project sustainability as measured using the maintenance cost.

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Table 22: Regression analysis (Analysis of Variance) predictors and beneficiary's ownership

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	.455[a]	.207	.181	.438

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.475	3	1.492	7.765	.000[b]
Residual	17.095	89	.192		
Total	21.570	92			

a. Dependent Variable: ownership of beneficiaries
b. Predictors: (Constant), project implementation involvement, project planning involvement, project identification involvement

Source: Primary data, 2022

The last regression model formulated investigated the effect of stakeholders' involvement on the project sustainability as measured by beneficiaries' ownership of the project. As shown in Table 22, the model was found to be significant ($F = 7.765, p = 0.000$) since the p-value was less than the normal threshold of 0.05. Hence, this showed that three predictor variables of stakeholders' involvement were statistically significant to project sustainability. Moreover, the R^2 of 0.207 was obtained showing that 20.7% of the changes of project sustainability as measured by the ownership of beneficiaries, are due to the stakeholders' involvement.

Table 23: Regression coefficient for project ownership

Model		Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
3	(Constant)	1.366	.205		6.675	.000
	Project planning involvement	.021	.031	.065	.691	.492
	Project identification involvement	.154	.046	.313	3.306	.001
	Project implementation involvement	-.327	.101	-.304	-3.220	.002

a. Dependent Variable: ownership of beneficiaries

Source: Primary data, 2022

As shown in Table 23, the regression coefficients show that project planning involvement has a positive ($\beta = 0.021, p = 0.492$)but statistically insignificant to project ownership. Project identification involvement ($\beta = 0.154, p = 0.001$) has a positive and statistically significant effect to project ownership. This imply that a one unit increase in stakeholders' involvement in project identification will lead to increase in project ownership by 0.154 units. However, project implementation involvement has ($\beta = -0.327, p = 0.002$) a negative and statistically significant effect on project ownership. This implied that if the stakeholders' involvement in project implement is increase, it reduces their level of ownership in the project. The findings contradict the findings from earlier literature like Odoyo (2013) who found a positive effect of involvement of stakeholders on the project success.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the result of the research work carried out to evaluate the role of stakeholders' involvement in model villages project sustainability in Rwanda, taking a case of Model Villages Project in Rweru Sector, Bugesera District. The conclusion also reflects both theoretical and practical lessons which can be drown from the study.

For the research question one the researcher confirmed that stakeholders' involvement in project initiation influenced the Sustainability of Model Villages Project in Bugesera district. The findings showed that the involvement of stakeholders in the initiation stage is important as it helps the project managers identify the priority needs of the intended beneficiaries. This in turn works to favor the project in its entire life including the post completion phase where its sustainability is crucial for the benefits of the community. The researcher also confirmed that stakeholders' involvement in project planning influenced the Sustainability of Model Villages Project in Bugesera district. As pointed in the discussion of findings, the involvement of the stakeholders' in planning phase ensures that there is active participation of the key persons. This enable the planners to integrate those ideas and inputs that will be more beneficial to the project. Lastly, at question three, the researcher confirmed that the stakeholder involvement in project Implementation influenced the Sustainability of Model Villages Project in Bugesera district. And finally, the researcher confirmed that the stakeholders' involvement in three stages of project management influenced Sustainability of the Model Villages Project in Bugesera District.

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