

Journal of Entrepreneurship & Project Management

ISSN Online: 2616-8464



Stratford
Peer Reviewed Journals & books

Beneficiaries Empowerment and Sustainability of Non-Governmental Organization Projects in Rwanda: A Case of Send a Cow Rwanda Jyambere Project

Kanyesigye Rhoda Kadunguri & Dr. Gitahi Njenga

ISSN: 2616-8464

Beneficiaries Empowerment and Sustainability of Non-Governmental Organization Projects in Rwanda: A Case of Send a Cow Rwanda Jyambere Project

^{*1}Kanyesigye Rhoda Kadunguri & ²Dr. Gitahi Njenga

¹MBA Candidate, Project Management, Mount Kenya University, Kigali, Rwanda

²Senior Lecturer, Mount Kenya University, Kigali, Rwanda

*Email of corresponding author: rhodaknsg@gmail.com

How to cite this article: Kadunguri, K., R. & Njenga, G. (2023). Beneficiaries Empowerment and Sustainability of Non-Governmental Organization Projects in Rwanda: A Case of Send a Cow Rwanda Jyambere Project. *Journal of Entrepreneurship & Project Management*, 7(6), 47-56. <https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t3090>

Abstract

This research analyzed how beneficiary empowerment affects the sustainability of NGO projects in Rwanda. The key characteristics that significantly help communities to empower themselves and promote sustainable development were discussed in detail and finally validated. More specifically, the study evaluated the impact of capacity building, material resources and partnerships on the sustainability of the Send a Cow Jyambere project in Rwanda. The study used descriptive research design with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The population of this study consisted of 5 technical project staff, 120 peer farmers and para-veterinaries and 1520 direct project beneficiaries. Thus, the total population was 1645 individuals. Stratified random sampling was used to select 322 respondents as sample size. The survey used questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Descriptive and inferential analyses such as frequencies, percentages, correlations and regressions were used to present the quantitative data in tabular and graphical form using SPSS version 23. This study targeted to be of utmost importance to the researcher, future researchers, Mount Kenya University, the Jyambere project and the Rwandan society at large. The Pearson correlation analysis between capacity building ($r=0.772$, $p=0.000$), material resource ($r=0.613$, $p=0.000$) and partnership ($r=0.631$, $p=0.000$) against project sustainability showed that capacity building was found to have a positive and statistically significant correlation. The analysis of regression coefficients showed that capacity building ($\beta_1=0.511$, $p=0.000$) material resource ($\beta_2=0.374$, $p=0.000$) and partnership ($\beta_3=0.201$, $p=0.000$) all have positive and statistically significant effect on project sustainability since the p-values are less than 5%. This study has empirically demonstrated that beneficiaries' empowerment plays a significant role in ensuring that projects are sustainable. Therefore, the researcher recommends that project managers should embrace best practices that enhance beneficiaries' empowerment such as incorporating capacity building, provide necessary material resources that equip beneficiaries ready to work by themselves as well as partnership with other parties. The government and the regulatory bodies should be keen to promote such projects which are community-based.

Keywords: *Beneficiaries Empowerment, Sustainability, Capacity Building, Material Resource, Partnerships*

1.0 Introduction

The UN (2014) explains that community development is a way to meet the requirements for socioeconomic development of the entire population. Capacity to transform communities through community projects. Project sustainability remains one of the most important areas for all donors. A lot of money has been invested in various organisations around the world to improve people's lives. Aid effectiveness is a growing issue for donors (Odhiambo, 2012). According to Bloom (2011), improving the human capital can contribute enormously to the country's economic development. This improvement can take different aspects of life with a clear intention to improve the quality of human lives to ensure that the people living in the rural areas also have access to the basic human needs such as health, education, safe and clean water and nutritional food, among others. Some empirical studies in different countries have clearly shown that this change in form of improved quality of human life is closely associated to the level of education of the people.

One of the key areas that this need for improvement of the quality of human life is to keep the life at sustainable levels. In order to achieve this, there is need to make sure that people are adequately empowered to a point that they can be able to self-sustain their lives. As such, this calls for the development of the human capital to a level that there is sustainable capacity building. In addition, strengthening the local community is key factor for human development in rural areas. In consequence, the development and improvement of human life is a one of the key elements mentioned in the Millennium Development Strategy (MDS). Empowerment of project beneficiaries should include therefore the Community-driven development (CDD) that incorporates the community's needs on a priority basis. In this way, the development of human capital can reach a level of sustainability, since the individuals can be able to actively provide and sustain their livelihood.

1.1 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Capacity building has no significant influence on sustainability of Send a Cow's Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between material resource and sustainability of Send a Cow's Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

H₀₃: Partnerships has no significant influence on sustainability of Send a Cow's Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Empirical literature

In their study in Vietnam, Hibbard and Tang (2014) pointed out the importance of the role of development projects in the development of beneficiaries. One of the roles was that projects should balance social, economic and environmental factors in promoting development. Another important project function they found was the decentralization of central administration, which helps local communities to have more power to make their own decisions.

2.1.1 Beneficiaries Empowerment

Ile and Boadu (2018) investigated the significance of youth empowerment in Ghana. The authors were principally concerned in finding out the effect of government and NGOs' programmes towards empowering the youth, creating self-reliance and helping the beneficiaries in improving their socioeconomic lives. Using interview and questionnaires, the authors collected data from

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t3090>

programme officials and from the beneficiaries of the projects. The findings revealed that minimal participation of the beneficiaries in formulation and implementation of projects, lead to lower level of empowerment. In particular, the respondents indicated they were not actively involved and this caused the projects to perform poorly in terms of capacity building and youth empowerment. In his study, Pretty (2018) reported that beneficiaries' empowerment, participation of stakeholders in community-based projects remains a far-fetched practice, and any attempt to make this a reality has received little consideration.

2.1.2 Capacity Building

Matras (2016) in a study on the impact of a long-term CDP research visit, highlighting the importance of visiting farmers. The visit consists of organizing a meeting in the middle, on the one hand, a guest group of four to 30 people, men and women, on the other hand, a host group. The goal is to share experiences and discover new perspectives and unique perspectives on a particular topic. In terms of capacity building, visits provide more opportunities for farmers. In fact, they agree to study at a higher level. Lennie (2005) studied on the needs and importance of capacity building on creating sustainability in projects. According to the study, once a new project is started or new group members join the project, project training takes place in development. It is significant because it enhances the project participants' abilities, knowledge, and skills. As new skills and methods are continually acquired, the training process is frequently ongoing. At the point when individuals are prepared assets are appropriately overseen which adds to accomplishing the goals of the tasks successfully and effectively.

Khwaja (2013) in his studies, in terms of capacity building and participation in the sustainable development of projects, it was concluded that community-led projects are better maintained and last longer than those run by local authorities. However, the author does not monitor the role of the community during the project life and how the role of the community in each phase of the project life affects sustainable projects. Liberato *et al.*, (2011) conducted a study to identify all the components used in the text prepared by other authors to assess community development; and identify the characteristics of each domain defined by the authors and then integrate them into a complete collection. The study carried out data extraction and analysis using a synthesis method. The study demonstrates the potential for capacity building or community development and the role of the community among selected farmers and assesses the quality of their methods and their quality related to the preparation and execution of the areas that have developed. Proven to contribute to the capacity building of the population.

2.1.3 Material Resource

Uphoff (2010) conducted a study investigating the participation of farmer in an irrigation project for maintaining sustainable agriculture in Asia. The study found that it would not be possible to maintain agricultural production levels without the use of machinery. In many developing areas, the use of improved machinery has already made a very significant contribution to sustainable rural development. In recent years, governments in many African countries, through development programmes and other forms of funding, have encouraged farmers to make greater use of agricultural machinery. Fortunately, these efforts have had a limited impact on overall production and it has been noted that the adoption and use of agricultural machinery remains below expectations.

2.1.4 Partnerships

Fleming (2018) surveyed intellectual agriculture, interviewing 26 grain sector partners in Australia. The study found that Intellectual agriculture is both the subject of debates between “big data - big farming” which is interested in the preservation of information and regulations, and “big ideas for all”, with a strong emphasis on the rights and values of individual farmers According to IPA (2012), NGOs and other initiatives as well as stakeholders are committed to provide financial support to achieve the sustainable development. The accessibility of funds or financial facilities promote entrepreneurial culture and this has led community to be able to acquire production. According to Purvis *et al.* (2019) to achieve the sustainable development, both public and private development initiatives need to cooperate which leads to poverty reduction. within industrialized states, sustainability is easily achieved and there is a balance between society, economic and environment. NGOs operate in the form of decentralization and work in conjunction with the government to help the local community. In Sierra Leone, nonprofit making organizations like Caritas, CRS, Society groups are initiated to provide support to the community as means of alleviating the poverty but sometimes the local population encounters specialist or professionals to implement the stated goals and objectives (Vega & Roussat, 2019).

2.1.5 Sustainability

Ostrom's (2020) study on “considering sustainability factors in the development Project lifecycle: illustrated participatory evaluation tools and proposed a set of sustainability indicators to measure the effectiveness of community-based projects”. Purvis, Mao and Robinson (2019) explored the three key foundation of sustainability, namely the social, the economic and the environmental pillars. In their presentation, project sustainability is founded at the centre of the three pillars intersecting circles. The study revealed the relevant historical literature on sustainability with respect to the economic, social and environmental perspectives. The study used the popular three-circle diagram first presented by Barbier, although it was focused on developing countries and the objectives differ from contemporary interpretations. The study shows that to achieve sustainable development, both public and private development initiatives must work together, leading to poverty reduction. In industrialized countries, sustainable development is easy to achieve and there is a balance between society, economy and environment.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This point is made of three theories that are supposed to be very important in explaining this study. These are program theory and Kabeer’s Framework of Empowerment. Program theory is applicable to this research because it elucidates how a project, programme or policy intervention is supposed to contribute to a chain of outcomes that create desired or actual outcomes. According to Kabeer, empowerment is the increase in people's capacity to make wise decisions about their lives in situations where they did not previously have this ability.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The purpose of a conceptual framework is to demonstrate the relationship between the study's independent and dependent variables.

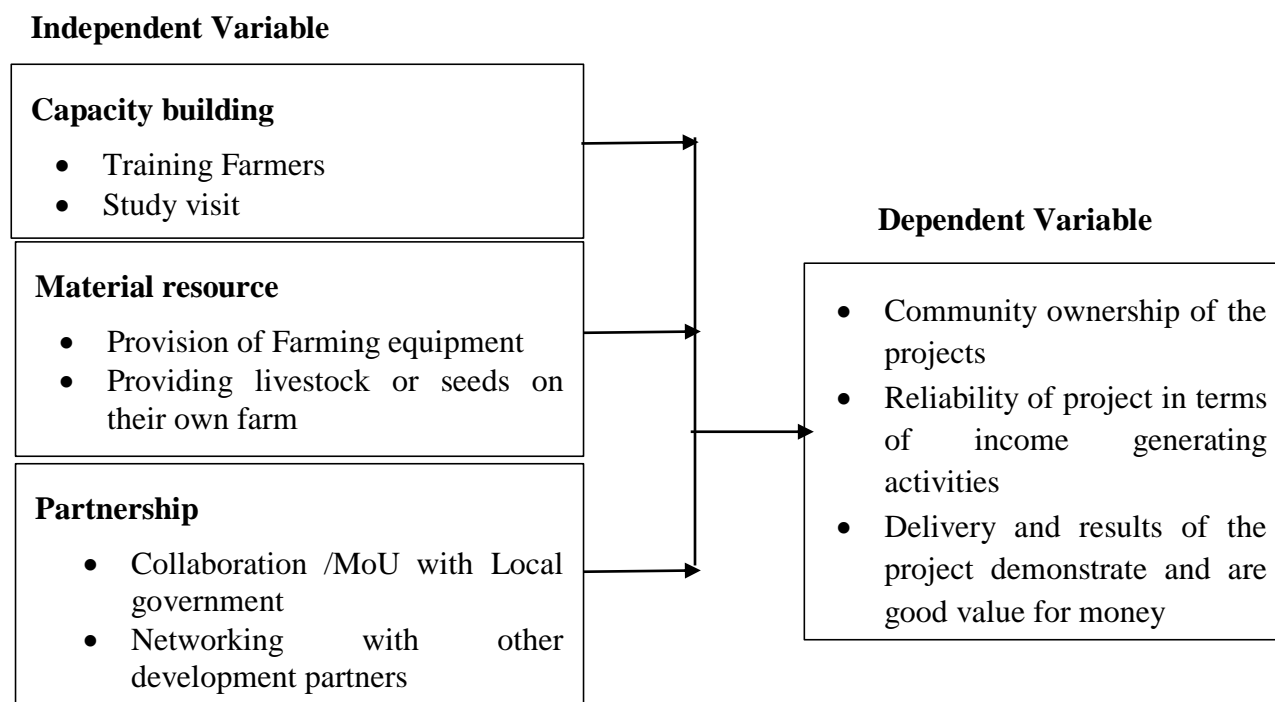


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The independent variable is Beneficiaries Empowerment initiative which include Capacity building which is measured by Training Farmers to identify and use cost-effective technologies in crop and livestock farming systems and Study visit ; material resource which is measured by Farmer equipment and livestock or seeds once their own farm and Partnership which is measured by Collaboration /MoU with Local government and Networking other development partners while dependent variable is sustainability which is measured by Community ownership of the projects, Reliability of project in terms income generating activities and delivery and results of the project demonstrate and are good value for money.

3.0 Research Methodology

Descriptive research design was used to identify the same comment on events produced and on the interpretation of events in terms of opinions, attitudes, values and characteristics. The population used in this research included 5 technical staff of the project, 120 peer farmers and paravets, 1,520 households targeted by Jyambere project. Hence, the total population of this study totaled to 1645 persons. Slovins formula was used thus, the sample size of this study resulted to 322 respondents. The Stratified sampling technique was used in this study by the researcher in sorting out respondents from direct beneficiaries who are smallholder farmers, peer farmers and paravets as they helped the researcher to get accurate information. In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha statistics was computed using SPSS and the results displayed in Table 3.2 gave alpha=0.821, which implied that the research instrument was reliable enough to be used for data collection.

4.0 Results and Discussions

Table 1: Correlation analysis

		Sustainability	Capacity Building	Material Resource	Partnership
Sustainability	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	298			
Capacity Building	Pearson Correlation	.772	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	298	298		
Material Resource	Pearson Correlation	.631	.117	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.044		
	N	298	298	298	
Partnership	Pearson Correlation	.615	.176	.712	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.000	
	N	298	298	298	298

Table 1 reports the Pearson’s correlation analysis between the indicators of beneficiaries’ empowerment and project sustainability. In this study, three key indicators of beneficiaries’ empowerment were used, namely, capacity building, material resource and partnership. The Pearson correlation analysis was also used to test the stated null hypotheses. This was done by investigating the p-values of the correlation. As a rule of thumb, if the p-value is less than 5%, then the null hypothesis is rejected. As shown, capacity building was found to have a positive and statistically significant correlation ($r=0.772$, $p=0.000$) with project sustainability.

The first null hypothesis stated as follows:

H₀₁: Capacity building has no significant influence on sustainability of a Send a Cow Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

Since the p-value was less than 5% threshold, then null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that capacity building has a significant influence on the sustainability of projects in Rwanda, and more specifically to the send a cow Jyambere project. In addition, this correlation results implied that capacity building influences project sustainability, where an increase in capacity building would improve the project sustainability.

For material resource, the null hypothesis was stated as follows:

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t3090>

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between material resource and sustainability of a Send a Cow Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

Since the p-value on Pearson correlation analysis was less than 5%, then the null hypothesis was rejected. If the null was rejected, the alternative must be statistically correct. This means that there is a significant and statistical relationship between material resource and sustainability of send a cow Jyambere project in Rwanda. It also showed that the correlation was positive and statically significant ($r=0.631$, $p=0.000$), which implied that material resource is positively related to project sustainability.

Similar findings are shown in the Pearson correlation analysis between partnership and project sustainability. In this case, the null hypothesis was stated as follows:

H₀3: Partnerships has no significant influence on sustainability of a Send a Cow Jyambere Project in Rwanda.

Since the p-value was less than 5%, then the null hypothesis was also rejected, hence upholding the alternative. This implied that there is a significant influence of partnership on sustainability of send a cow Jyambere project in Rwanda. Further, the correlation ($r=0.613$, $p=0.000$) results implied a positive and statistically significant relationship. In conclusion, it was observed that all the indicator variables have positive correlation with project sustainability, and that this relationship is significant since the p-values were less than 5%. Hence, all the null hypotheses were not supported, which meant that the alternative hypotheses supporting significant relationships were upheld.

Table 2: R-squared analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.955 ^a	.913	.912	.09134

The researcher also performed the regression analysis where the Table 2 reports the analysis of R-squared for this model. The involved variables are the three indicator variables, namely, capacity building, material resource and partnership, which were analyzed to find their effect on project sustainability. Using the R-squared analysis, this study was able to adequately measure the effect of empowering beneficiaries on project sustainability. The R-square results ($R^2=0.913$) showed there is strong effect between empowering the beneficiaries and project sustainability. It also showed that 91.3% of the variations in project sustainability can be attributed to project sustainability.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	25.632	3	8.544	1024.073	.000 ^b
1	Residual	2.453	294	.008		
	Total	28.085	297			

Table 3 reports the results of multiple regression analysis of variance (the ANOVA). As per the findings, the regression output (F=1024.073, p=0.000) shows that the regression model was statistically significant since the reported p-value is less than the 5% threshold. Therefore, this meant that the analysis between empowerment of beneficiaries bears significant effect on the sustainability of projects in Rwanda.

Table 4: Multiple Regression analysis of the coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	(Constant)	-.394	.086		-4.560	.000
1	Capacity Building	.511	.013	.688	39.314	.000
	Material Resource	.374	.023	.403	16.420	.000
	Partnership	.201	.024	.206	8.332	.000

Further, the researcher observed the regression coefficients for each of the indicator variables of beneficiaries' empowerment. That is, each of the three variables, namely, capacity building, material resource and partnership, were analyzed in a model to determine their contributing effect on project sustainability. This was better captured by analyzing the multiple regression coefficients. As shown in the table, capacity building ($\beta_1=0.511$, p=0.000) reported a regression coefficient that is both positive and statistically significant since the p-value is less than 5%. This implies that capacity building has a positive contribution to the project sustainability for projects in Rwanda, and more specifically for Jyambere project. Again, it also showed that a one percentage increase in capacity building would lead to increase in project sustainability by 51.1%.

Similarly, for material resource ($\beta_2=0.374$ p=0.000), the results reported a regression coefficient that is both positive and statistically significant since the p-value is less than 5%. This implies that material resource has a positive contribution to the project sustainability in Rwanda. More specifically, a one percentage increase in material resource would lead to improved project sustainability by 37.4 percent. Lastly, the regression analysis for partnership ($\beta_1=0.201$, p=0.000) reported a regression coefficient that is both positive and statistically significant since the p-value is less than 5%. This implies that partnership with development partners has a positive contribution

to the project sustainability in Rwanda. This also showed that partnership importantly improves the performance of projects in Rwanda in terms of their sustainability, again, the results showed that a one percentage increase in partnership would lead to an increase in project sustainability by 20.1 percent. In addition, the regression analysis gave a negative constant which implied that in order to improve project sustainability, project managers must be active enough to include factors like capacity building, material resource and partnership in the project. Failure to do so would result to negative implications to the project sustainability.

5.0 Conclusions

This study focused on investigating the effect of empowering project beneficiaries on the sustainability of projects in Rwanda, taking a case of Send a Cow Jyambere project. In order to achieve this general objective, the researcher identified three key areas of interest as regarding to empowering beneficiaries. These included capacity building, material resource provision and partnership with development partners. Hence, the researcher endeavoured to find out the effect of each of these indicators on the project sustainability. This required formulation of specific objective and questions, which helped to gather necessary information from the respondents using structured questionnaires and interview guide. Through descriptive statistics and inferential analysis, the researcher was able to provide detailed analysis of the responses obtained from the field. In this way, it was possible to capture the effect of each of the indicator variable on the project sustainability. The analysis of the findings showed that most respondents were in agreement on the importance of capacity building, material resource and partnership on the project sustainability. In addition, the analysis conducted using Pearson's correlation and regression analysis showed that a positive and significant correlation exists between capacity building and project sustainability, between material resource and project sustainability and between partnership and project sustainability. All these variables have a positive and significant contribution to the project sustainability as revealed by the regression coefficient analysis. The reported R^2 was also strong while the model revealed that the analysis was significant since the p-value was less than 5% threshold.

6.0 Recommendations

This study has empirically demonstrated that beneficiaries' empowerment plays a significant role in ensuring that projects are sustainable. Through empowerment, the beneficiaries are able to actively embrace the project and therefore are constructively engaged to help the project succeed. Therefore, the researcher recommends that project managers should embrace best practices that enhance beneficiaries' empowerment such as incorporating capacity building, provide necessary material resources that equip beneficiaries with the capacity to work by themselves as well as partnering with other development agencies that can help in building successful community projects. Moreover, this study concentrated on Send a Cow Jyambere project which is a community-based development project.

The success and sustainability of such projects is beneficial to all the members of the community as well as to the development of a nation. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the government and the regulatory bodies should be keen to promote such projects which are community-based. This can be achieved through creating enabling environment for such projects to thrive. In addition, the government should enter into private-public partnership to increase the visibility of the government-initiated projects while at the same time supporting the private sectors in engaging in such projects. The findings point out the need for community participation during

the project designing and implementation, especially with focus on empowering the community towards creating sustainable projects. Therefore, the researcher also recommends that project managers should actively engage the targeted beneficiaries. The identification of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders should be carried out early on to ensure that proper stakeholder mapping is done. With this, it is possible to increase the level of participation of the respondents and consequently improve their empowerment opportunities. The findings of this research also focused on the needs for continued beneficiaries' empowerment that can create sustainability within these projects.

REFERENCES

- Bloom, D. E. (2011). *Population dynamics in India and implications for economic growth*. St. Gallen, Switzerland: WDA-Forum, University of St. Gallen.
- Ile, I., & Boadu, E. S. (2018). The paradox of youth empowerment: Exploring youth intervention programme in Ghana. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 4(1), 1528709.
- Odhiambo, F. O., Laserson, K. F., Sewe, M., Hamel, M. J., Feikin, D. R., Adazu, K., ... & Vulule, J. M. (2012). Profile: the KEMRI/CDC health and demographic surveillance system—Western Kenya. *International journal of epidemiology*, 41(4), 977-987.
- Ostrom, T. (2020). *Considering sustainability factors in the development Project lifecycle: A framework for increasing successful adoption of improved Stoves*.
- Purvis, B., Mao, Y., & Robinson, D. (2019). Three pillars of sustainability: in search of conceptual origins. *Sustainability science*, 14(3), 681-695.
- Uphoff, N. (2010). *Farmer Participation in Improving Irrigation System Management for Sustainable Agriculture in Asia*. FAO: Bangkok Washington D.C.
- Vega, D., & Roussat, C. (2019). Toward a conceptualization of humanitarian service providers. *The International Journal of Logistics Management*.