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Community Engagement and Performance of Child Centered Development Project in Rwamagana, Rwanda-A case of CCDP/EPR Rwamagana

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Community Engagement and Performance of Child Centered Development Project in Rwamagana, Rwanda-A case of CCDP/EPR Rwamagana

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Abstract

The study aimed to determine the relationship between community engagement and project performance in the Child Centered Development Project in Rwamagana District, Rwanda (CCDP). The objectives were to assess the influences of community participation on project performance, determine the influence of community knowledge and skills on project performance, and assess the influence of community accountability on project performance. The study used both descriptive and analytical research designs, with a sample size of 2056 beneficiaries. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires and interviews for primary data, and documentary review for secondary data. The findings showed minimal participation from respondents in the initial stages of the project, with 47.7% stating their participation was nil and 42.9% small. However, 82% of respondents considered their leadership roles excellent or good. Most respondents believed that community level of understanding was the main factor influencing participation, with 89.1% indicating their knowledge and skills significantly influenced project performance. Additionally, 73.3% reported increased community accountability through participation in project monitoring and evaluation. The Pearson correlation between community participation, knowledge and skills, and project performance was positive and statistically significant, with varying degrees of significance. Multiple regression analysis also showed positive and significant regression coefficients, with a reported $R^2=0.875$ indicating that community engagement significantly contributed to project performance at 87.5%. The researcher recommends that project managers conduct feasibility studies to identify key stakeholders and actively engage them in the project.

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Keywords: *Community Engagement, Performance Evaluation, Child-Centered Development, Rwanda*

1.0 Introduction

Globally, children are the most vulnerable ones, article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, makes the provision of the rights of children to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their view respect, UNICEF (2013) children must not treat as simple objects of affect, but treated them as persons who have the right and their own view, they need to be listened their thought, that why they need to be protected and nourished to prepare they future. While our world has many global issues and challenges of sustainable development such as climate change, poverty, and health crises the world and many NGOs help children and youth fully develop their potential to flourish and shape a brighter future, but not only for poor children; they are here to help any child in need.

Lee and Wong (2022) the child centered community development (CCDP) approach relies on the collective action of civil society to generate the empowerment of children to realize their potential, and on the actions states to live up to their obligations under the UN conventional the rights of the child (UNCRC). In Africa, children facing poverty are a particular concern because they are always depending on their families and care givers for basic needs (Roelen, 2017), the nature needs of children are education, nutrition, health, security and care signifies that children's experiences of poverty may differ from the experiences of the household members De Milliano, *et al.*, (2018). In Rwanda, children take the place of a large percentage of the Rwandan population, with 39% of the population being under the age of fifteen and a median age of 24.4 years.

Community engagement means that project managers must develop a translucent community engagement strategy which all stakeholders must be aware of at project initiation phase. Identify the significance of community participation / involvement and gathering local knowledge during project conception phase. Community engagement on a project is for the purpose of equipping communities; developing competency, ensuring project success, ensuring user satisfaction, and project cost sharing. Thwala, *et al.*, (2012). The goals of community engagement are to build trust, create better communication, and improve overall health outcomes as successful project evolve into increasing collaborations CDC (2011). Community engagement helps in working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situation to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. it often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs and practices CDC, (2011).

1.1 Problem Statement

Several projects have failed and community are dissatisfied due to community was not engaged at different stages of project. Eskerod, *et al.*, (2013) suggest that carrying out a project as planned is no guarantee for success and project may fail because project managers do not engage the community in different project lifecycle. To engage community in development projects is one of the essential practices that drives projects to success. In addition, community engagement helps the community to own up the project, make it theirs and be able to associate with the project. Thereby, increasing the project sustainability. However, community

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engagement is usually neglected in various stages of the project lifecycle. The study by Nyamutera and Warue (2021) in Rwanda shows the significance of community engaged for the purpose of project success and sustainability. If the community is not fully engaged in the project, then the projects are likely to fail and they may not be sustainable for long. The authors show that community engagement contributes 75.8% to project sustainability. In addition, lack of community engagement in many community-based projects has become a real challenge to the no continuity of project activities during phase out. The fact of project failing is that community members are not sufficiently empowered and fully engaged in every stage of project. An addition community lack ownership of project due to their roles and responsibility during project implementation are limited (Mbonimana & Nehemie, 2021). Presbyterian Church in Rwanda (EPR) initiated Child and Community development project (CCDP) to carry out holistic, community-based interventions. Despite the existence of child centered development project there are few literatures about the effect of community engagement and performance of child centered development project in Rwanda. This study undertook to demonstrate the influence of community engagement on performance of projects in Rwanda, taking a case of child centered development project in Rwamagana District, Rwanda.

1.2 Research Objective

The Study aimed to find the relationship between community engagement and performance of child Centered Development Project in Rwamagana District, Rwanda (CCDP).

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Community engagement

Project performance is closely linked with the level of community engagement and lack of project responsibility associated with low engagement and involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making during project initiation. But it is still difficult for any meaningful engagement in project development (Ofuoku, 2011). Community engagement is also the process of working cooperatively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It often involves partnerships and federations that help mobilize resources, influence systems, and change policies and practices (CDC, 2011).

2.1.2 Community participation on performance project

Community participation is a major involve regarding the sustainability of community development projects, and the international community continuously works the less developed world to engage community members in discussing the problems that affect their live. The World Bank and the United Nations distinctly state that the development agencies have a significant role in promoting community engagement approaches. Community participation influences of project outcomes due to a well management community engagement process assists the participants to increase the live standard of humans (Bal, *et al.*, 2013).

Ofuoku (2011) define community participation or involvement as a process where stakeholders' share control and influence of over any development initiatives, making decision and resources which affect them. Community participation affects project implementation and sustainable development; it builds their capacity and empowers community for having ownership and take charges of their own development. Due these two definitions, community

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participation plays a big role in sustainable community development, during participation community can share their experiences, knowledge and skills for contributing to the development. Barasa and Jelagat (2013) shows that participation in a project indicates the involvement of community in direct and executing in the project with papacy of reaching the stated goals, other researchers envisaged community participation differently depending on the project being implemented (Afande, 2013).

2.1.3 Community knowledge and skills on performance project

Empowerment includes increasing an individual's capacity to seek innovation for their daily issues; it also engages community ownership and accountability. Knowledge and skills empowerment in project undertaking training tasks at improving how to manage projects Skills are the capacity needed to carry out a series of tasks that develop from the results of training and experience. Having skills means that people have the capacity to carry out mental activities in order to reach a certain goal. Knowledge is the information and skills acquired through knowing, and this happens after people have sensed a certain object. A demand of community groups to continuously gain new skills acquired in relation to their context, peer learning, and taking advantage of concepts in modeling comes in handy at the community group learning level. Knowledge is the only dominance to offer distinction for a sustainable project; that is, the institution must promote the creation of knowledge and capacity building, which help to transfer skills to the entire organization with the aim of achieving the goal of improving organization performance on long-term advantages determined by how the organization achieved knowledge and skills acquisition practices. Obtaining knowledge is one of the ways in which organizations may achieve their success goals. The collection of information is an important process of knowledge sharing that lets companies achieve their performance goals. Knowledge and skills on resource mobilization at the local level as well as at higher levels through training, workshops, and field visits are thought to contribute to the availability of much-needed resources for performance projects (Njoroge et al., 2016).

2.1.4 Community accountability on performance project

Many scholars and policymakers have assumed that accountability is play a big role of making the public sector more effective and enhancing performance (Dubnick & Yang, 2010) In his study, Mahmudi (2011) defines accountability as an agent's obligation to manage resources, accomplish the tasks, report and release all activities related to the use of resources. Accountability is divided into two categories pre and post action, pre accountability works as a preventive action to shape behavior, post accountability comes after the action, accountability, was established to control the miscellaneous expectations and obligations initiated inside or outside an organization, can influence individuals, groups, and organization (Dubnick & Frederickson, 2014).

2.1.5 Performance of child centered development

Performance indicators aims to help an organization, companies, project managers and individuals to initiate targets, goals and setting strategy, performance can be defined as an optimal work performance by an individual or group, which relates to a certain expertise (Yin., et al., 2011). Stare (2011) showed that many varying reasons may lead to a project's failure, such as poor project schedule, lack of communication, unclear goals and objectives and unclear duties of stakeholders. Project performance make sure that the organization reaching to the profit, minimize cost, the budget covered all expenses and achieving the project's objectives

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on time. Every child requires basic needs to develop and grow to mental and physical and responsible adult in every stage of development of child requires care, protection and love of adult. The criteria of performance child project will be timeline, cost and quality, which are the fundamental basic elements of project success.

2.2 Empirical Literatures

2.2.1 Community participation and performance project

Li *et al.* (2020) explored the role of community participation in urban heritage management in China. The authors used in-depth semi structured interview and centered on community participation in decision-making, social justice, competence and confidence of the participants. The authors found that the degree of community participation is minimal, yet it is important in influencing the sustainability of heritage programs in China. Mbui and Wanjohi (2018) investigated the role of community participation on project performance in Kenya. The authors were interested in community participation in financial management of projects, project governance, in operations and management and in monitoring and evaluation. Using descriptive approach, the authors distributed 211 questionnaires. They found that community participation had weak positive but statistically significant correlation with project performance.

Mbonimana and Nehemie (2021) carried out research on the influence of community participation and performance of project implementation in Rwanda. Primary data were collected using questionnaires distributed to a sample of 89 respondents selected from a population of 850. The study pointed out that community participation in monitoring and evaluation has an influence on performance project, there was a strong positive correlation exists between community participation in monitoring and evaluation and performance the result indicated correlation coefficient of 0.971, but it recommended that community should be involved in the beginning of the project leading up to monitoring and evaluation otherwise their participation in monitoring and evaluation will have no impact.

2.2.2 Community knowledge and skills on performance project

A recent study among more than 200 knowledge management experts in Chile concludes that the lack of understanding about the linkage between knowledge and project performance is still of the major shortages within knowledge research. The purpose of this study was to advance the current understanding on how knowledge-based community is influence of performance project (Arrau 2022). Devis (2013) carried out a study called the socio-economics development project activities and community work ethic in rural community projects were performing participation in project, 25 randomly selected respondents used interview to gain the required data, the principal assumption of the study was the training community and gave same skills to empower them, but many project have a weak start point in design stage where the community were not engaged. Siswanto *et al.* (2021) carried out a study of the effect of knowledge and skills on performance with technology-based competence in Indonesia. The study used 64 respondents from whom primary data was collected. Using explanatory research method, the results showed that Knowledge affects performance, which means that that in organization or institution employees must have knowledge on the ongoing development of science and technology to perform an organizational goal.

In Rwanda, Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018) studied the role of soft skills on project performance with Rwanda Red Cross society as the case study. The authors were interested to find the effect of communication skills, leadership skills and team building skills on project performance. They collected data from 35 participants using close-ended questionnaires. The study showed positive and significant correlations between leadership skills ($r=0.387$, $p=0.021$), communication skills ($r=0.627$, $p=0.000$) and team building skills ($r=0.697$, $p=0.000$) with project performance. The research therefore showed that knowledge and skills that the project team has greatly influence the performance of projects.

2.2.3 Community accountability on performance project

Wanjala *et al.* (2017) studied the effect of monitoring techniques on project performance. In their research, the authors were interested on the monitoring techniques used and one of their concerns is whether monitoring of a project improves transparency and accountability. A sample of 65 state corporations were used and primary data was collected through the use of questionnaire. The findings showed that monitoring techniques significantly affect project performance and facilitate accountability in the project. Okech and Lelegwe (2016) in their research on community participation and project performance in Kenya showed that increased participation in project enhance project performance. This improves even the project reporting and therefore project accountability and transparency.

Karenzi *et al.* (2019) examined the effects of accountability on the performance of socioeconomic development projects in Rwanda. The authors were interested on the various components of accountability such as independent oversight, dialogue with stakeholders and quality information in projects. They used both quantitative and qualitative data and selected a sample of 397 respondents using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Using both descriptive and inferential statistics, the authors found that accountability has significant influence on the project performance. In particular, the study reported an R^2 of 0.794 which indicated that accountability has high influence (up to 79.4%) on the project performance.

2.2.4 Performance of child centered development

Bachir (2010), carried out study to establish the relationship between community involvement, project ethnical climate, commitment to the project and performance of poverty design. The result showed that there is a positive relationship between community engagement and performance of poverty eradication project. Its recommended project managers to encourage teamwork among community, efficient and effective way of doing work in order to increase community' involvement which eventually improves performance of the projects. Andrew (2010) findings about participation model of a given project or development, where community is involved either in the project identification and planning, the study showed that level of community participation in project planning was at the low level while community participation increased in project identification.

The study by Villalba-Romero and Liyanage (2016) carried out the effective of performance measurement important to the success of the project. They evaluated different performance measurement that are used to gauge the success of road projects in Europe. The authors showed that there can be various measurement indicators of project success and if properly utilized can help in monitoring the project performance. Mir and Pinnington (2014) carried out project-based organization and noted one of the process management practices, key performance

indicators was significantly correlated with project success. The performance of the project and the project was regarded as being particularly dependent on community engagement.

3.0 Methodology

The study aimed to determine the relationship between community engagement and project performance in the Child Centered Development Project in Rwamagana District. The study reviewed literature related to engagement, community participation, community knowledge and skills and community accountability. The research adopted both descriptive and analytical research designs based on quantitative and qualitative data while the population of the research was 2056 project beneficiaries. The sample size was made of 335 beneficiaries of the project who were selected using simple random sampling technique and 4 staff. For data collection, the research used questionnaires and interviews for primary data while in secondary data used documentary review. Data was presented using frequency tables and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

4.0 Findings and Discussions

Community participation and performance of CCDP

The first specific aim was concerned on assessing the influence of community participation on performance of child centered development project in Rwamagana District. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher formulated statements aimed at getting the respondents perceptions and participation level in the community development project.

Table 1: On respondents' awareness about community participation

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	243	91.4
No	23	8.6
Total	266	100.0

Source: Researcher (2023)

The respondents were asked whether they were aware of community participation, particularly in community-based projects. Only 8.6% of the respondents said they were not aware, while 243 (91.4%) of the respondents said they were aware. This information was helpful since the majority had a basic understanding of what the researcher was interested in. Hence, they would probably provide the relevant information needed to respond to the research questions.

Table 2: Respondents’ answers on their participation in the project

Statements	Nil		Small		Average		Good		Excellent		Mean	Std.
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Project initiation	127	47.7%	114	42.9%	18	6.8%	0	0.0%	7	2.6%	1.67	.82
Project design	143	53.8%	111	41.7%	6	2.3%	0	0.0%	6	2.3%	1.55	.75
Resource project planning	102	38.3%	113	42.5%	36	13.5%	6	2.3%	9	3.4%	1.90	.95
Problems identification	6	2.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	134	49%	247	92.9%	4.86	.63
Taking leadership roles in the project	6	2.3%	0	0.0%	12	4.5%	301	11.3%	2188	82.0%	4.71	.76
Decision making	6	2.3%	0	0.0%	15	5.6%	75	28.2%	170	63.9%	4.52	.80
Mobilization of resources	7	2.6%	35	13.2%	175	65.8%	36	13.5%	13	4.9%	3.05	.75

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 2 reports the responses obtained from the primary data, where the respondents were asked to indicate their level of participation at various stages or activities of the CCDP in Rwamagana. As the table reports, there was minimal participation by the respondents in the initial stages of the project. That is, the respondents were not fully engaged during the initial stages of the project. This is evidenced by the highest frequency of respondents saying they participated at a nil or small level during the project initiation. Almost half of the respondents, that is, 47.7%, said their participation in project initiation was nil, and 42.9% said it was small. Only 2.6% of the respondents said the participation at project initiation was excellent, while 6.8% said it was average. This may be an explanation for the fact that this project was initiated by donors and partners, who, in this case, developed the project plan and introduced it to the community. In addition, the mean was very low at 1.67, with a high standard deviation of 0.82, confirming a low level of participation. On their participation in project design, 53.8% of the respondents said their participation was nil, and 41.7% said it was small participation. This also showed a low level of participation among the respondents, with a very low mean of 1.55 and a standard deviation of 0.75, which shows divergence in views. The level of community participation, however, will start increasing as the CCDP project takes shape in the district. For instance, for participation in resource project planning, the mean slightly increases to 1.90, though the standard deviation remains high. This is also evidenced by 38.3% of the respondents saying their participation was nil and 42.5% saying it was small. On the participation in problem identification in the project, the majority of the respondents were actively involved, with 92.9% saying the participation was excellent and 4.9% saying it was good. The high mean of 4.86 and low standard deviation of 0.63 confirmed the high level of community engagement in problem identification. On their participation in taking leadership roles in the project, 82% of the respondents said it was excellent, and 11.3% said it was good. Only a small percent of respondents said their participation was nil (2.3%) or average (4.5%). The mean was high at 4.71 with a standard deviation of 0.76, indicating a high level of participation. Further, the

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respondents were asked to indicate their participation in decision-making for the project. Most of the respondents indicated they took part in one way or another in helping with the decision-making process for the project. This is shown by the high frequency: 170 (63.9%) of the respondents said their participation was excellent, while 28.2% said it was good. The mean was also strong at 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.80, indicating that the respondents were highly engaged during the decision-making process. Lastly, the respondents were to indicate their level of participation in resource mobilization in the project. To this end, 65.8% of the respondents said their participation was average, 13.5% good, and 4.9% excellent. On the other hand, 13.2% of the respondents said the participation was small, and 2.6% said it was nil. The mean was 3.05 with a standard deviation, indicating that participation was at an average level for the majority of the participants in this research. Overall, it is clear that the mean score for all the areas of community engagement in community projects ranged from 1.55 to 4.86. The participation of the community was more experienced when the project was running and was scanty involved during the initial stages of the project. These findings are supported by earlier research that showed the significance of community participation in projects. For instance, Li et al. (2020) found that the degree of community participation influences the performance and sustainability of community-based projects. An interview was also conducted to give further details related to the community engagement in the Child-Centered Development Project in Rwamagana District. The interview was face-to-face with four different key informants who were identified because of their involvement in the project as trainers and officers. The interviewee said they are actively engaged in the project as part of the team that helps with its running. They do so through various activities, including resource planning, project initiation, playing leadership roles, and making decisions. They agreed that community participation in the CCDP project is fairly good and that most beneficiaries are willing to be involved in any activity of the project. Moreover, since the project aims at helping the community, most of the community members provide field data and help the project facilitators and leaders in the implementation of the project. This helps the project achieve its mission and objectives. Such results show that the active participation of the community in community-based projects is crucial to the overall performance of the project.

Similar findings are reported by earlier empirical literature emphasizing the significance of community participation in projects. Li et al. (2020) pointed out that the degree of community participation significantly determined the performance and sustainability of such projects. Without community participation, many projects fail to capture the needs and interests of the community. Thereby reducing their viability and long-term effects on the community. Similarly, Mbuyi and Wanjohi (2018) had earlier pointed out that community participation had a statistically significant correlation with project performance. Mbonimana and Nehemie (2021) reported a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.971$) between community participation in monitoring and evaluation and performance.

Community knowledge, skills and performance of CCDP

The second aim sought to determine the influence of community knowledge and skills on performance of child centered development project in Rwamagana District. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher formulated statements aimed at getting the respondents on the knowledge and skills level in the community development project.

Table 3: Factors influencing community in participating in CCDP

Factor	Frequency	Percent
Respect community interest	7	2.6
Responding to community needs	29	10.9
Community level of understanding	143	53.8
Empowering community to find their own solutions	87	32.7
Total	266	100.0

Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 3 relates to the responses obtained concerning the various factors that influence community participation in the Child-Centered Development Project in Rwamagana District. As per the findings, most of the respondents said that community level of understanding is the main factor influencing community participation. This is indicated by 54.8% of the respondents, which is more than half of the respondents. Another key factor was the need to empower the community to find their own solution. This was selected by 32.7% of the participants, while 10.9% of the participants indicated that responding to community needs is another key factor influencing community participation. Including community interests in a project also influences the level of community participation. These responses show that various factors that influence community participation should touch on their knowledge and perceptions. The more the community perceives or feel that the project meets their needs and interests, the more they are going to be committed.

Table 4: Respondents' answers on the community knowledge and skills

Statements	Nil		Small		Average		Good		Excellent		Mean	Std.
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Project implementation	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	4.5%	17	6.4%	237	89.1%	4.85	.47
Project tools	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	32	12.0%	9	3.4%	223	83.8%	4.70	.72
Project reporting	11	4.1%	20	7.5%	18	6.8%	40	15.0%	177	66.5%	4.32	1.14
Designing project format	195	73.3%	45	16.9%	14	5.3%	6	2.3%	6	2.3%	1.43	.87
Analyze project report	210	78.9%	28	10.5%	9	3.4%	19	7.1%	0	0.0%	1.39	.86

Source: Researcher (2023)

Reported in Table 4 are the responses obtained from primary data about their knowledge and skills in community projects in particular the Child Centered Development Project (CCDP). The researcher argued that community awareness, knowledge, perceptions and skills are important factors to improve the community level of engagement in community projects, thereby improving the performance of community projects. As per the findings, 89.1% of the respondents indicated that their knowledge and skills about project implementation would significantly influence project performance while 6.4% said that were at good level. The mean

score was high at 4.85 and low standard deviation of 0.47. This indicated that the responses were homogeneous about the respondents' high level of knowledge in project implementation.

Asked about their knowledge in project tools, majority of the respondents said it was excellent with 83.8% of the respondents while 3.4% said it was good. However, 0.4% of the respondents said it was nil, another 0.4% said small level while 12% said at average level. The standard deviation was high at 4.7 with standard deviation of 0.72, indicating high level of knowledge and skills for the community though with varying degrees among the community members. On the project reporting, 66.5% of the respondents said their knowledge was excellent while 15% said it was good. Very few of the respondents said the know-how on project implementation was nil (4.1%) or small (7.5%) or average (6.8%). The results shown by the mean of 4.32 and very high standard deviation of 1.14 showed that the level of knowledge about project reporting was high but diverse among the community members. Despite the respondents indicating high level of knowledge and skills in project implementation, in project tools and in project reporting, the responses were different for the other knowledge areas.

For the designing project format, the majority of the respondents as shown by 73.3%, said they had nil know-how while 16.9% said they had small knowledge. On the average level, only 5.3% of the respondents were represented, whereas the remaining 2.3% said the level was good and another 2.3% was excellent. Actually, the low mean of 1.43 with a standard deviation of 0.87 confirmed this low knowledge know-how among the community participants. On the ability of the respondents to analyze project report, only 7.1% of the respondents' know-how was good and 3.4% were at average level. Other respondents such as 78.9% said their knowledge was nil and 10.5% said it was small. The low mean of 1.39 (and standard deviation of 0.86) confirmed this low level of community knowledge and skills in respect to analyzing project report. As is evidenced in these results the mean score showed that the knowledge and skill level of the respondents in community engagement in various project levels varied significantly.

Enhancing community knowledge and skills is of paramount importance while dealing with community engagement in projects. This point is supported by previous studies which emphasized the need for the participants' level of understanding while promoting community engagement. Further, the community members participate in activities like report preparation, project monitoring and evaluation. In accordance to the interview discussions, it was clear that active participation is a key component in community engagement. It is imperative that the community get involved in the projects that intend to benefit them. In this way, there can be increased project performance. Increasing the community knowledge and skill can greatly influence their willingness to actively participate in a project. Thereby, improving project acceptance, ownership and project performance. The interviewee also pointed out the need for continuous training of the community towards the project activities, goals and mission. This would greatly empower them to help in the implementation of the project.

Table 5: Respondents’ views on the significance of community knowledge and skills

Statements	Count %	
In your opinion, how does community knowledge and skills influence on the performance of this project	SD	0 0.0%
	D	1 0.4%
	NS	0 0.0%
	A	18 6.8%
	SA	247 92.9%
	Mean	4.92
	Std.	.31

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, NS=Not Sure, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree
Source: Researcher (2023)

Table 5 shows the agreement or disagreement of the respondents about the influence of community knowledge and skills on the performance of CCDP project. According to the majority of the participants, 92.9% strongly agreed and 6.8% agreed. This showed that almost everyone was agreeing that community knowledge and skills are important determinant of project performance through active community engagement. This conclusion is reflected by a strong mean of 4.92 and low standard deviation of 0.31. Hence, the significance of community knowledge and skills in a project cannot be ignored when dealing with active engagement of the community. It is also noted by other researchers such as Siswanto *et al.*, (2021), that active engagement of the community is based on the amount of information they receive. Empowering the community through knowledge and skill sharing increases their commitment in a project, thereby influencing project performance. Other studies by Devis (2013), Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018) and by Arrau (2022) have pointed out the significance of improving the knowledge and skill base of the community in order to empower them to participate in the community projects. Without training and timely information, the community only remain passive and receptors in the projects rather than active participants. In particular, Karuranga and Mulyungi (2018) showed positive correlations for soft skills like leadership skills ($r=0.387$, $p=0.021$), communication skills ($r=0.627$, $p=0.000$) and team building skills ($r=0.697$, $p=0.000$) on project performance in Rwanda Red.

Community accountability and performance of CCDP

The third specific objective assessed the influence of community accountability on performance of child centered development project in Rwamagana District. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher formulated statements aimed at getting the respondents perceptions and participation level in the community development project.

Table 6: Respondents’ answers on community accountability

Statements	Nil		Small		Average		Good		Excellent		Mean	Std.
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Community participates in project monitoring and evaluation	21	7.9%	10	3.8%	11	4.1%	29	10.9%	195	73.3%	4.38	1.22
Documenting the findings in project monitoring forms for future references hence influence performance project	186	69.9%	12	4.5%	2	0.8%	11	4.1%	55	20.7%	2.01	1.66
Information about child centered development project passed to all members hence influence performance project	31	11.7%	2	0.8%	8	3.0%	21	7.9%	204	76.7%	4.37	1.32
Have you been trained on how to be accountable in budget of child centered development project	207	77.8%	0	0.0%	28	10.5%	21	7.9%	10	3.8%	1.60	1.18
Sharing the information on how budget is used influenced performance of child centered development project	6	2.3%	34	12.8%	147	55.3%	48	18.0%	31	11.7%	3.24	.90

Source: Researcher (2023)

In this section, the respondents were asked to indicate their engagement on community accountability and how this influenced CCDP project performance. On whether the community accountability was increased through the participation of the respondents in project monitoring and evaluation, 73.3% said at excellent level while 10.9% said at a good level. 4.1% of the respondents were involved at average level, 3.8% at small level whereas 7.9% of the respondents had nil participation. On whether the respondents were fully engaged in documenting the findings in project monitoring forms for future references hence influence performance project, 69.9% of the respondents said their engagement was nil while 4.5% said it was at small level of engagement. On the other hand, 0.8% of the respondents said their engagement in this activity was average, 4.1% said it was good and 20.7% said it was excellent. The low mean score of 2.01 and high standard deviation of 1.66 was an indication of low level of engagement of the respondents in project documentation.

On whether there was adequate information flow about CCDP project, 76.7% of the respondents said at excellent level and 7.9% at a good level. Only 11.7% of the respondents said the information flow was nil and 0.8% at small level. The mean was therefore strong at 4.37 with high standard deviation of 1.32, indicating varying opinions on the level of information flow in the project. On whether the respondents were adequately trained on how to be accountable in budget of child centered development project, 77.8% said at nil level and 10.5% at an average level. Only few of the respondents said they were fully trained in becoming accountable budget for the CCDP project, with 7.9% saying at good level and 3.8% at excellent level. The mean score obtained was 1.60 and standard deviation of 1.18, an implication low level of engagement. On whether the respondents were fully engaged through sharing information on budgeting, majority said it was only at average level with 55.3% of the respondents. A sizeable number of the respondents, that is 18% and 11.7%, said it was good or excellent level respectively.

Previous studies laid emphasis on the needs for project accountability. With project transparency and accountability, many people come to like the project and are easily blended in such projects. Arifin, *et al.*, (2020) was one of the researchers to point out this that increased transparency and accountability influences community involvement in project implementation. Wanjala, *et al.* (2017) showed that monitoring techniques improves transparency and accountability significantly which in return affect project performance. Karenzi, *et al.*, (2019) reported an R² of 0.794 indicating that accountability has high influence (up to 79.4%) on the project performance.

Table 7: Respondents’ answers concerning the CCDP project performance

Statements	Small		Average		Good		Excellent		Mean	Std.
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
How well have the results of CCDP affected your lives after its performance period until now	0	0.0%	10	3.8%	25	9.4%	231	86.8%	4.83	.47
The project has been successful in meeting its objectives	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	5.3%	252	94.7%	4.95	.22
Many children’s lives have positively changed due to the project	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	19	7.1%	247	92.9%	4.93	.26
The project has been done on a timely basis fulfilling its promise to the beneficiaries	2	0.8%	0	0.0%	26	9.8%	238	89.5%	4.88	.39

Source: Researcher (2023)

The respondents were also asked to indicate how much the Child Centered Development Project at Rwamagana District has changed their lives and how much the project has performed. On how well have the results of CCDP affected your lives after its performance period until now, most of the respondents were positive with 86.8% saying excellently and 9.4% saying at good level. Only 3.8% of the respondents said it was averagely. On how much the project has been successful in meeting its objectives, none of the respondents disputed this,

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with 94.7% saying it was excellent level and 5.3% at a good level. The mean was very strong at 4.95 with very low divergence at 0.22. Again, majority of the respondents said that many children's lives have positively changed due to the project. This is shown by high percent at 92.9% of the respondents who said it was at excellent level and 7.1% at a good level. This was supported by a strong mean of 4, 93 and low standard deviation of 0.26. The other measure of the project success looked at the timeliness in fulfilling project promises to the beneficiaries. To this, 89.5% of the respondents said it was at excellent level and 9.8% at a good level. Only 0.8% of the respondents thought the project failed to fulfill the promises to the beneficiaries on a timely basis. The strong mean of 4.88 and low standard deviation of 0.39 showed favorable results supporting the project performance in fulfilling its promises. Similar results are reported by Villalba-Romero and Liyanage (2016) who showed that there can be various measurement indicators of project success and if properly utilized can help in monitoring the project performance. Mir and Pinnington (2014) reported that performance of the project is particularly dependent on community engagement.

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