

## Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation in the Sustainability of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects in Kenya

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**Type of Review:** Peer Reviewed.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss.v7.n1.p6>

### How to cite this paper:

**Biwott, T., Egesah, O., & Ngeyo, J.** (2017). Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation in the Sustainability of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Projects in Kenya. *IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences* (ISSN 2455-2267), 7(1), 45-51.  
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss.v7.n1.p6>

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**ABSTRACT**

*The Kenya Government Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects contribute immensely in initiating and implementing sustainable development projects in all parts of Kenya, and it is essential to track processes and impact of such projects. Monitoring and Evaluation helps project managers in keeping track the implementation of the projects and its prudence in the utilization of the resources. It provides decision makers with a strategy to plan for sustainability of the projects and guidance for future endeavors. Sustainability is key to stakeholders who in real sense need to be involved throughout the project and program cycles. This study evaluates the role of monitoring and evaluation on the sustainability of Kenya Government Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects in Kenya. Literature review was used to collect information which was peer reviewed by a team of four. Findings show a great influence of monitoring and evaluation on the utility and sustainability of the projects implemented through CDF funding. It is therefore, prudent to embed Monitoring and Evaluation in all the Projects funded by the Kenya Government through constituency development fund (CDF).*

**Keywords:** Monitoring, Evaluation, Sustainability, Development, Project, Community

**INTRODUCTION**

Most evaluators agree that projects should contribute to public change of some kind by creating a favorable environment (King Jean, 2008). Evaluators can choose from, and skill themselves in, a wide range of available methods and techniques. Complex challenges in the society today are in need of multifaceted interventional strategies that include monitoring and evaluation, which is key for meaningful and sustainable development (Van Der, (1998).

Since the early 1970s, there has been growing consensus that there are limits to the capacity of the world to adjust to the increasing use of natural resources (Meadows, Meadows, & Randers, 2004; Meadows, Meadows, Randers, & Behrens III, 1972). The concept of sustainable development was introduced by the publication of the Brundland report having a basis of meeting the needs of the current situation while considering the upcoming generations in meeting their needs too (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). While the concept is true, achievement of the sustainable development has no clear and definite route (Becker, Jahn, Stiess, & Wehling, 1997; Walker & Kubisch, 2008).

Challenges in the society entail those in the production and those in the consumption (Beck, 1986). It is therefore prudent to use a variety of evaluation that includes systems evaluation and developmental evaluation (Imam, LaGoy & Williams 2007; Patton, 2008). Challenges linked to sustainable development needs knowledge development and a clear link between science and society (Funtowicz & Ravetz, 1993; Gibbons et al., 1994; Jasanoff, 2004; Nowotny, Scott, & Gibbons, 2001). Management of project sustainability requires continuous improvement of ways and update of tools of governance (Voss, Bauknecht, & Kemp, 2006; Hajer, 2003; Loorbach, 2007; Rotmans, Kemp, & Asselt, 2001).

Projects are best placed when they make the most sense to purposed primary uses and when it provides probable solution to the community challenge (Patton, 2008; Gibbons et al. 1994; Nowotny et al. 2001; Regeer & Bunders, 2009). Communities face complex and varied problems, characterized by inherent uncertainty that spans for long time therefore calling for effectively planned strategies that are based on situational, iterative and best suited experimentation (Voss et al., 2006). There should be a link between reflection and action (Giddens, 1984), participation of stakeholders create a complex structure and behavioral change of actors hence need clear role demarcation as well as constant update of progress in the undertaking (Eoyang, 2007; Parsons, 2007). Monitoring and evaluation in its course must consider existing structures while suggesting probable changes in the lifetime of the project (Churchman, 1970; PMI 1996). While many evaluation were set up to assess projects of national or global magnitude of issues pertaining sustainable development, it has scaled up to looking at the goals viz a viz results of

interventions intended to contribution of sustainable development (Abma, 2001; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Evaluating sustainability of projects needs innovation of processes that captures indicators as per the nature and placing of the project (Kemp, Parto, & Gibson, 2005; Becker et al., 1997; Bell & Morse, 2004). These indicators should give room for linkages of the complex relationships between social, economic, ecological and political systems (Hildén & Rosenström, 2008; Kemp et al., 2005). Performance management has contributed to growth of measurement of performance together with evidence of impact and effectiveness (De Lancer Julnes, 2006; Lehtonen, 2005; Patton, 2008). It has also increased sharing of Knowledge got from the implementing process and getting the best way forward due to results of discussion (Marra, 2004; Dart & Davies, 2003; Friedman, 2001).

Best Evaluation is based on the laid down goals despite its constant changes (McCoy & Hargie, 2001; Hisschemöller & Hoppe, 1996; Friedman, Rothman & Withers, 2006). An intervention is put in place in consideration of its inputs, its expected outcomes, agreed relationships between them, and mechanisms relating to expected programme outlook at the end and how it will influence the next stage, however this does not make evaluator to control the factors (Chen, 1990; Rosas, 2005; Yampolskaya, Nesman, Hernandez, & Koch, 2004; Patton, 2008; Christie & Alkin, 2003; Parsons, 2007). It is not an easy task to determine link between policy interventions and their outcomes since academic theories are not at all times translated into practice without the community and other stakeholders' full participation (Perrin, 2002; Dyehouse, Bennet, Harbor, Childress, & Dark, 2009; Forrest, 2007; Patton, 2008; Imam et al., 2007; Friedman, 2001; Argyris and Schön, 1974, 1978)

## **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

Many projects are left in poor state after the completion of the implementation if the community involvement is not taken care. Such a scenario makes sustainability of projects poor or even none. Sustainability is Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). A stakeholder if involved buys the objective of the project and protects it by ensuring that in every step, the standards are met with prudent implementation. In this case Technical, Social/Environmental, Financial, and Institutional criteria of standards are upheld to the fullest for long-term objective achievement. The monitoring framework task consists of indicators and scoring system. The framework is the basis of sustainability. The framework constitutes sets of sustainability monitoring indicators (Karamouz et al., 2002; Raju et al., 2000; Kamalesh & Shashi, 2008)

Developing countries initiates and implements many projects in order to improve infrastructure and standard of living of communities among them through CDF projects. A large amount of budget is geared towards community development projects, which therefore needs stringent measures to ensure prudence in fund utilization. This can only and well be done through embedding monitoring and evaluation to the projects lifespan. Many project initiators and managers have not recognized the need and usefulness of monitoring and evaluation. This paper outlines the roles of both monitoring and evaluation in successful implementation and sustainability of projects and how these can be applied.

The study therefore intends to provide information on the role of the Monitoring and evaluation on the sustainability of projects specifically CDF projects.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study process was divided into two parts, one part being the literature review and second part being the review by a team of four. The agreed standard and outcome was adopted and presented.

## **FINDING**

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are in most cases seen as one though they are different. Monitoring is a process of getting information and using such information to assess project effects and it is aimed at determining whether or not the intended objectives have been met. Evaluation draws on the data and information generated by the monitoring system as a way of analyzing the trends in effects and impact of the project. Monitoring information could change the project expectations, which can call for an evaluation to determine the assumptions and premises based on project design (Kerzner, 1997, 1998; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006; Midgley, 2007)

### **Project Design Concepts**

Project is an activity undertaken using specific inputs to improve situation of the beneficiaries. Projects are based on a design meant to counter a challenge for a short and long-term basis; therefore it includes a defined process. Project inputs, outputs, effects, and impact need to be checked and shared by all stakeholders to ensure sustainability and long-term benefits. Project monitoring is a process of gathering information to compare the actual use of project inputs and completed outputs with the planned use of inputs and completed outputs, while Project evaluation is the gathering information to assess the effects and impact of a project (Attenborough, 2007; Armitage, 2008; Broerse 1998).

### **Role of Monitoring**

Monitoring is the continuous assessment of a programme or project in relation to the established schedule. It is a management tool that provides continuous feedback on the project implementation as it identifies potential successes and constraints that may guide in timely decisions. Monitoring assesses Physical and financial progress of project or programme activities against established schedules and indicators of success; It assess Process which account for progress of activities or success of output production. It also assess the Impact By Measuring the initial responses and reactions to project activities and their immediate short-term effects.

Projects are monitored to ensure; stakeholders understands the project; to minimize the risk of project failure; to promote systematic and professional management; and to assess progress in implementation (Zweekhorst, 2004; Cartland et al., 2008)

### **Role of Evaluation**

Evaluation is a process which determines systematically and objectively the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of activities in the light of a project / programme performance, focusing on the analysis of the progress made towards the achievement of the stated objectives (Burke, 1989; Cabrera, Colosi & Lobdell, 2008)

Evaluation assists in determining the degree of achievement of the objectives; determining and identifying the problems associated with programme planning and implementation; generating data that allows for cumulative learning which, in turn, contributes to better designed programmes, improved management and a better assessment of their impact; assists in the reformulation of objectives, policies, and strategies in projects / programmes. Evaluation therefore is a process that determines the viability of programmes / projects and facilitates decisions on further resource commitment. Evaluation may be mid term (interim evaluation), may be terminal or Ex-post (Haag 2007; Guba 1989)

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring and evaluation when carried out correctly and at the right time and place are two of the most important aspects of ensuring the success of many projects. Unfortunately, these two although known to many project developers tend to be given little priority and as a result they are done simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most funding agencies without the intention of using them as a mechanism of ensuring the success of the projects. Findings and recommendations from the assessment are often used to decide whether or not to stop the project or when a new phase is under consideration. Sometimes external consultants are used to carry out evaluation however the internal mechanisms should be established to enable continuity of evaluations even when the external ones are not available especially for the Government which should take the lead in promoting this aspect. It should also be noted that each project may have unique requirements for this and that in such circumstances, project managers and developers should attempt to develop suitable monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

It is recommended that further training be given to many CDF project managers in aspects of monitoring and evaluation so as to encourage them to use these tools often and correctly to inculcate sustainability of the intention of the projects implemented.

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