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Project Design Implementation and Sustainability of Donor Funded Potato Projects in Kabale District South Western Uganda

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High points

- The effect of potato project design and implementation in boosting the participation of farmers in project monitoring and evaluation to sustain donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.
- knowledge increment and livelihoods improvement of potato farmers that last beyond the project duration
- Potato project design and implementation boosted the participation of farmers in project monitoring and evaluation to sustain donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.

Abstract

Background: This study was set to establish the effect of project design and its implementation, on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District- South Western Uganda. The elements of project design and implementation included project feasibility, stakeholder training, decision making, and reporting.

Objective: To determine the effect of the feasibility study, project stakeholder training, and decision-making on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.

Methods: A descriptive survey design was adopted with potato farmers used as the unit of analysis. Data was collected in the means of administering a questionnaire survey from a sample of 196 potato farmers. Structural equation modeling was used to test hypotheses.

Results:Project design and implementation were significantly associated with the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District ($r = .424, P \leq .01$).

Conclusion and recommendations: Participatory project stakeholder mapping, involving the setting up of problem and objective tree analysis, as well as project logical framework allows beneficiaries the beneficiaries to own the potato projects and hence the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District. Participation of Potato project beneficiaries in project design, implementation, and feasibility studies are recommended.

Key Words: Project Design and Implementation, Potato Farmers, Sustainability of Donor Funded Potato Projects, Kabale District

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Introduction

The research was carried out to examine the effect of project design and implementation on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District South Western Uganda.

Feasibility study and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects

Villalobos *et al*(1), lamented that potato project feasibility studies determine the successfulness of the potato project. Ngos, *et al*(2) desired that if principles and recommendations of feasibility studies done by project beneficiaries on potato projects are well implemented in a participatory way, potato projects sustainability is recognized by both the donor and the community members. Karanja (3), noted that potato project

feasibility studies are vital for controlling a community's decision-making procedure either to take on the project or not. They can offer unbiased, third-party proficient investigation including cost-benefit analysis, alternative options, and confirmation which can lead to potato project sustainability in the long run. The fourth study by Cousins,(4) supports the ideas from the above scholars saying potato project feasibility findings are vital for the sustainability of the donor-funded projects if the community has participated in them. Finally, Airey (5) confirms that feasibility findings substantiate whether a project is sustainable or not by involving the community. However, the information given above does not show how potato projects are feasible and how the feasibility findings are disseminated using community members.

Project Stakeholder training and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects

Stakeholder's training stimulates sustainability of donor-funded projects; once project supporters are involved in project training, at the initial stages up to donor exit they will take up the project hence project sustainability (Kuria,*et al*)(6). Building stakeholders in project mutual inspection and monitoring of the project by themselves lead to project efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance to the recipients. It takes into account the importance of allowing community members to participate in the activities of the project hence project sustainability. Building capacities for local people's perspectives into account and giving them a greater chance in planning and managing the evaluation process leads to the sustainability of donor-funded projects. Nely, (7) asserted that indigenous people, community organizations, and other stakeholders decide together how to measure results and what actions should follow once

this information has been collected and analyzed. Mutonga,(8) asserts that community participation in project management training is a significant gadget in creating self-governing and permitted communities, motivating community members for collective action and decision-making.

Decision-making and sustainability of donor-funded projects

A study by Oino et al, (9) asserts that potato project beneficiaries' participation in project design and implementation, will help them to participate in decision making hence project ownership becomes easy and clear during project design, planning and implementation. This study depicts that leaders and donors these days call all stakeholders to participate in meeting so that, they can have a say in the project implementation. Again Oino *et al*(9) explained that there are 70% of potato project beneficiaries are literate and have been empowered with potato project management skills.

This study identified strategies through community empowerment on how community members should participate in these project meetings so that they can participate in decision making, identify strategies aimed at building the capacities through training by ensuring that skills are developed to embrace the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects.

The hypothesis of the study

To give the route on the trail towards realizing the desired findings and outcomes of this study as specified below as the aim and intention of this research investigation. Within the context of the research topic, the objective is to examine the effect of project design and implementation on the sustainability of donor-funded potato

projects in the Kabale District. Furthermore, to examine the relationship between the variables (project design and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects), the following hypotheses are postulated and specified in their alternative forms:

H₁: There is a positive significance between project design and implementation on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District S-Western Uganda.

Objective

To determine the effect of the feasibility study, project stakeholder training, and decision-making on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.

Materials and Methods

The study inquiry used a descriptive research design. In the prevalence study design, a particular occurrence is considered at a

particular period. Prevalence study designs are suitable for studies aimed at discovering out the appearance of occurrence, situation, problem or attitude, by ascertaining a certain group of the population at a given period. Therefore, the prevalence research design is a form of observational study that discovers data collected from a population, or a representative subset, while correlational research design is a quantitative approach of research in which there are two or more variables from a similar group of subjects from which association can be determined if it happens or not

The study population comprised 198 respondents. The study comprised of 131 potato individual farmers, 24 potato farmer groups, 10 district marketing, and production department, 13 community development officers, and 13 sub-county chiefs. The total target number was 196 respondents. Therefore $338+26+10+13+13=196$. In sum, the total size of the target population is four hundred.

Table 1 Sample size strategy

Population category	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Potato individual farmer	338	131	Simple random sampling
Potato farmer groups	26	24	Simple random sampling
District marketing and production department	10	10	Purposive
Community Development officers	13	10	Purposive
Sub County Chiefs	13	10	Purposive
Total	400	196	

Data Quality Control (Validity and Reliability)

All research is concerned with ethically producing valid and reliable knowledge. The

data quality control techniques were ensured that the data collected was valid and reliable; the instruments were tested first to ensure validity and reliability through the following:

Validity of Research Instrument

According to Amin (10), Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure, The researcher ensured the validity of the instruments for efficiency and effectiveness of the tools to arrive at the dependable findings, conclusions, and recommendations demanded by the study objectives and topic. The instruments were designed and discussed with experts in the field to ascertain whether they are comprehensive, clear, simple, and relevant to the study objectives. A Content Validity Test was conducted using the CVI whose formula is;

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Number of relevant items}}{\text{Total number of items}} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{100}{110} \times 100 = 99.9$$

Summary of the reliability statistics

Judge 1. = 190/196=0.969

Judge 2. = 192/167= 0.979

Judge 3. = 189/167= 0.964

Judge 4. = 185/196=0.944

Therefore $0.969+0.979+0.964+0.944=3.856$.
 $3.856/4=0.964$

These results implied that research instruments were valid to be used for the data collection on the community participation and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District. A previous study by Amin (10) reports that for instruments to be accepted as valid the average content validity index (CVI) no. of items declared

valid divided by the total No. of items = at least 0.7. Since the CVI value is above 90%, then the instruments were valid.

Reliability of the questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire is the extent to which a questionnaire produces the same result on the repeated trials, hence the stability or consistency of scores over time. The reliability of the questionnaire was ensured by training of researcher assistants before the study, pretesting the questionnaire, and calculation of Cronbach.

Pretesting of the questionnaire and Cronbach alpha test

To determine the Cronbach alpha, the questionnaire was pretested through a pilot study conducted in Rubanda District. Rubanda District is found in South Western Uganda which is neighboring Kabale District in the North, the Republic of Rwanda in the South, Kisoro in the Southwest, and Kanungu and Rukungiri Districts in the East. Therefore, the population is likely to have similar characteristics to those of the intended study participants. A total of 15 respondents took part in the pilot study. The data collected from the pilot study/ test was entered in SPSS version 23 and analyzed for reliability using the Cronbach alpha test, SPSS version 23. Analysis of data was done based on the demission of the independent variable as below

Table 2. The Dimensions of the Independent Variables

Variable	Reliability statistics
Project design and implementation	0.890

Project resourcing	0.904
Project monitoring and evaluation	0.941
Sustainability	0.866
Total	3.601
Average	$3.601/4=0.900$

Cronbach's Alpha was 0.900. a reliability coefficient (alpha) of 0.7 range is considered acceptable and those above 0.9 are considered good. Therefore, the questionnaire had good reliability.

Data Analysis:After the fieldwork, the data were input into Statistical Package for Social Science(SPSS) version 21 and exposed to a systematic cleaning before hypothesis testing.Two statistical software packages were applied for dissecting the data collected.Specifically, SPSS version 21 was used for preliminary data analysis, while Analysis of moments of Structures (AMOS) version 21 was used for Structural Equation Modelling(SEM) guided by confirmatory factor analysis.

The Results

Summary of the findings on project design and implementation on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District

Project design and implementation on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District

Statements for which participants were subjected to 3 point likert scale include the following as seen in the table below:

1. I have been participating in the project design of donor-funded potato projects.
2. I have participated in the project design of donor-funded potato projects;
3. I have been oriented fully to participate in the donor-funded potato projects.
4. I have been involved in potato project feasibility studies of donor-funded potato projects.
5. I have been involved in stakeholders' training of donor-funded potato projects.
6. I have been able to participate in stakeholder meetings throughout the potato projects.
7. I have participated in donor-funded potato project decision-making during project planning and implementation.
8. I have participated in resource utilization.
9. I have not observed corruption during project planning and implementation of donor-funded potato projects.
10. I am convinced that donor-funded potato projects will be sustainabl

Table 3: Participants answer to survey questions

Srstatements	Disagreed No(%)	Undecided No (%)	Agreed No (%)	Mean	SDr
1	72 (36.8)	19 (9.7)	105 (53.5)	3.2041	1.63274
2	135 (67.9)	14 (7.1)	48 (24.5)	2.2092	1.37080
3	135 (68.9)	14 (7.1)	47 (24.0)	2.1633	1.32969
4	133 (67.9)	20 (10.2)	43 (21.9)	2.1990	1.25214
5	134 (68.4)	17 (8.7)	45 (21.9)	2.2602	1.21330
6	140 (71.4)	13 (6.6)	45 (23.0)	2.1224	1.21330
7	139 (70.9)	12 (6.1)	45 (23.0)	2.1582	1.27721
8	138 (70.4)	13 (6.6)	45 (23.0)	2.1224	1.27513
9	48 (24.5)	37 (18.9)	111 (56.6)	2.3633	1.34980
10	137 (68.9)	13 (6.6)	48 (24.5)	2.1378	1.46284

The table above indicates analyses on ten (10) statements that were given to the respondents from answers and to measure project design and implementation and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District. The descriptive statistics from the table above are explained as follows;

Respondents were asked whether they have been participating in project design and implementation of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District and the majority of (105) respondents with 53.5% agreed with the statement compared to 36.8% of the (72) respondents that disagreed leaving 19 respondents with 9.7% undecided with a mean of 3.2041 and standard deviation of 1.63274.

On whether respondents have participated in project design of donor-funded potato projects 67.9% of the respondents disagreed compared to 24.5% that agreed to leave 7.1% of the respondents that were undecided with a mean of 2.2092 and standard deviation of 1.37080. When asked whether they have been oriented fully to participate in the donor-funded potato projects, 68.9% of the respondent disagreed with the statement compared to 24% of the respondents that

agreed to leave 7.1% of the respondents who were undecided with a mean of 2.1633 and standard deviation of 1.32969.

When asked whether they have been involved in potato project feasibility studies of donor-funded potato projects, 21.9% agreed, and 67.9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement leaving 10.2% of the respondents undecided with a mean of 2.1990 and a standard deviation of 1.25214.

On whether potato project beneficiaries have been involved in stakeholders' training of donor-funded potato projects, 68.4% disagreed with the statement compared to 22.9% who agreed to leave 8.7% of the respondents that were undecided with a mean of 2.2602 and standard deviation. Respondents were asked if they have been participating in stakeholders meeting throughout the potato projects, 71.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement compared to 23% of the respondents that agreed to leave 6.6% of the respondents with a mean of 2.1224 and a standard deviation of 1.21330.

On whether potato project beneficiaries have been participating in donor-funded potato project decision making, 70.9% of the

respondents disagreed with the statement compared to 23% of the respondents that agreed to leave 6.1% of the respondent's undecided with a mean of 2.1582 and a standard deviation of 1.27721 Potato beneficiaries were asked whether they have participated in resource utilization, 70.4% of the respondents disagreed with 70.4% unlike 23% of the respondents that agreed to leave 6.6% of the respondents undecided with mean of 2.1224 and standard deviation of 1.27513. Potato project beneficiaries were asked if they have observed corruption during project planning and implementation, 56.6% agreed with the statement compared to 24.5% that agreed to leave 18.9% of the respondents' undecided with a mean of 2.3633 and a standard deviation of 1.34980. Respondents with 68.9% disagreed saying that, they are not convinced whether donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District will be sustainable.

We tested the stated hypotheses to be able to generalize the findings from the samples to the population. This was done by inferential statistics. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to establish whether there was any relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the magnitude and direction of the relationships and to establish the relationship model and test the two hypotheses.

To verify the alternative hypothesis that project design and implementation positively affect the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District, The Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was thus, used to determine the magnitude of the relationship as shown in the table below:

Correlation analysis on project design and implementation and how it positively affects the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District

Table 4. Correlation analysis

Correlations	Sustainability of donor-funded potato projects	Project design and implementation
Sustainability of donor-funded potato projects	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 .424** 196
Project design and implementation	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.424** .000 196

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

The table 4 above shows a correlation coefficient of 0.424 shows that project design and implementation have a positive correlation with the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in the Kabale District. A regression analysis was hence, run to

determine the strength of the relationship between project design and implementation rates and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects that is, how much of the variance in the independent variable would affect the dependent variable. The coefficient

of determination.424a implies that project design and implementation influence the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in the Kabale District.

A significant positive relationship exists between project design, implementation, and sustainability of donor-funded potato projects. Thus, the more community involvement in project design and implementation, the stronger the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District. Hence project design and implementation contribute 42.4% to the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.

The result again revealed a regression coefficient of .424 at 0.01 significance level hence a positive significance. Results further confirm that project design and implementation have an influence on the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District with a Beta value of 0.424 at a 95% level of confidence. Therefore, the researcher holds an alternative hypothesis which states that “project design and implementation positively affects the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District. Hence project design and implementation contribute 42.4% to the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in the Kabale district

Discussion

Uganda and Rwanda are facing the same challenge as China and India where the majority of donor-funded potato projects are failing due to minimal participation of beneficiaries. This has been because potato project beneficiaries are not fully involved in project design and implementation This is a pointer that allowing potato project beneficiaries in the project design and implementation are important in the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects. The sustainability of the donor-

funded potato project has remained a nightmare due to the lack of community participation from the project design planning to the implementation stages. The sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Uganda is facing many challenges. Udensi *et al*(11) explain that in Rwanda community participation has not been a priority toward potato projects sustainability.

Munga and Muriungi, added when involved to participate in the potato project design during project development, potato project beneficiaries will express their perspectives on different issues concerning what is to be done to achieve the target set goals and objectives of the project after donor exit and take a decision. The researcher contends that by communicating to people during project design, they become more loyal to decisions that are made hence project sustainability.

Oinoet *al*(9) desire that potato project beneficiaries are key in the sustainability of donor-funded potatoes. Udensiet *al*(11) agreed that most of these committees are influenced by those whose status quo is high in the community. Ronoet *al*(12) agreed with Udensiet *al* (13) that potato farmers are not participating actively and genuinely in potato project design, planning, and implementation and this will hinder them to participate in the decision. However, this does not give conclusive evidence about the role of community participation in the project design, planning, and implementation of potato projects.

Karanja(14) reports that potato project feasibility studies have not been done in a participatory way yet they are vital for controlling a community's decision-making procedure either to take on the project or not. Cousins(15) supports the ideas from the above scholars saying that, potato project

feasibility studies results are not shared among the potato project beneficiaries which has affected the sustainability of donor-funded projects. Airey (16) confirms that feasibility findings substantiate whether a project is sustainable or not by involving the community.

Mutonga(17) explains that donors are not involving all project stakeholders in the potato projects training. Few are involved which in long run affects the potato project sustainability.

According to Schulzet *al*(18) in Ethiopia, the majority of donor-funded potato projects have failed after donor exit due to a lack of involving potato beneficiaries in potato project training during the potato project design stage. According to Tjønneland *et al*(19), donor-funded potato projects in Norway are facing the same challenges due to the lack of stakeholders in the potato project initial design stages.

This has affected the efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of donor support on potato-funded projects. Lack of involving potato project beneficiaries in project training has affected its sustainability. Potato project beneficiaries have not been given a chance to understand the purpose of the project which has affected their sustainability. Kuria *et al*(20) asserted that indigenous people, community organizations, and other stakeholders decide together how to measure results and what actions should follow once this information has been given to them during fast project training.

Mutonga *et al*(21) assert that community participation in project management training is a significant gadget in creating self-governing and permitted communities, motivating community members for collective action and decision-making, however, it is not done during the potato

project design stage. This has also affected the project implementation as well as project monitoring and evaluation. It is also believed to be influential in addressing marginalization and inequity, through clarifying the desires, priorities, and insights of different groups within the community; which is not being done.

According to Nely(22), potato project beneficiaries' have been denied chances to participate in decision making and project ownership about project design and implementation, of potato project which would in an actual sense help the donor-funded potato projects to be sustainable after donor exit.

Newly adds that however leaders and donors are not involving potato project stakeholders in project decision making from the project design which is conception up to the end. Shunka *et al*(23) confirm that limited participation of potato farmers in project decision-making has affected the sustainability of potato projects in Irish land in America and the manual has been taken up by the Chinas. China and the Scandinavian countries are leading in potato productivity.

According to Biryomunisho(24), potato project beneficiaries no longer participate in stakeholder meetings so that, they can participate in decisions of the project during potato project implementation. He explained that there are 70% of potato project beneficiaries are not literate about potato project decisions and have not been empowered with potato project management skills. We have tried to identify strategies through community empowerment on how community members should participate in these project meetings, decision makings, identify strategies aimed at building the capacities through training. They do this by ensuring that skills are developed to embrace

the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects.

Conclusion and Recommendations

We concluded that community participation through project design influences the sustainability of donor-funded potato projects and therefore policymakers, government departments donors and other potato stakeholders should ensure that all stakeholders involved in donor-funded potato projects should be mobilized and sensitized about participating in potato projects from the project idea generation up to project termination. This will give the potato farmers morale to own their funded project and participate in decision making.

We recommend that project beneficiaries should always participate in project design, feasibility studies so that they are owners of the project. This implies that, during project stakeholder mapping, setting problem tree analysis, setting objective tree analysis as well project logical framework, project beneficiaries should be always available.

When it is done participatory, the beneficiaries of the project will own the potato projects hence sustainability of donor-funded potato projects in Kabale District.

Abbreviation

List of abbreviations

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science
 AMOS: Analysis of Moments Of Structures
 SEM: Structural Equation Modelling

Ethical issues

None

Consent for publication

This manuscript does not contain data from any person. Not applicable. The authors declare they have reviewed this manuscript and agree to submit it to the Special Journal of Politics and Economic Sustainability from Department of Management Science, Kabale University, Kabale,

Data/materials access

The datasets used and analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare they have no competing interests with study design or final report, no financial or personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence this research.

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