

MBABAZI EMMANUEL (2011-MO92-20024)

The State of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in Community Empowerment Projects: A Case Study of Lubaale Community Development Project in Gomba District.

The study aimed at examining the state of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) in community empowerment projects through the case of Lubaale Community Development Project (LCDP), a community empowerment project in Gomba district. It was guided by three objectives, namely, establishing the role of PM&E in the empowerment of community beneficiaries; the challenges faced by LCDP staff in implementing PM&E; and the strategies of improving PM&E of LCDP in Gomba district.

Due to the need for a qualitative analysis, a case study research design was used and primary data collected through interviews whereas secondary data were gained through documentary analysis. A total of 67 respondents (including 57 beneficiary households and 10 key informants) participated in the study. A review of the recent literature was also done and gaps filled by the study were identified. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis.

Research findings revealed that PM&E played a great role in community empowerment of LCDP beneficiaries in Gomba district. The positive roles included helping community members to gain the capacity to operate and maintain services and facilities provided by the project in case they withdraw, ability to organise and influence change on the basis of their access to knowledge and ability to reflect on experiences and learn from them among others. A few failures were also reported by the project stakeholders including the failure to fulfil people's expectations and provision of low quality education among others. The challenges faced by the project staff in conducting PM&E were: Inadequate facilitation of the exercise, shortage of time, gender issues and the illiteracy of community members, others included having prior project implementation positions before involving the beneficiaries, lack of trained technical personnel, lack of the zeal to work on ones' self and being over dependent on others. The strategies for improving PM&E of LCDP in Gomba district were; creating awareness among the stakeholders, involving community members in initial identification and dissemination of programmes, providing transport facilities to the community members and, timely communication by the project staff. In conclusion, the results revealed that PM&E played a great role in community empowerment of LCDP beneficiaries in Gomba district. In order to improve PM&E, however, this study recommends that project management should involve the community in project planning and implementation to ensure that the project is sustainable and answers real and urgent local needs. In addition, the government should provide adult education programmes to the local people to enable them get introduced to reading and writing and, increase community mobilisation by the project staff through local and religious leaders.

Key Words: State, Participatory, Monitoring & Evaluation, Community Empowerment, Development Projects, Gomba District.