



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

International Journal of Current Research
Vol. 3, Issue, 5, pp.197-201, May, 2011

RESEARCH ARTICLE

EFFECTS OF ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NANDI SOUTH DISTRICT

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 21st February, 2011
Received in revised form
19th March, 2011
Accepted 25th April, 2011
Published online 14th May 2011

Key Words:

Capacity building,
Civil society,
Community,
Development.

ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, there has been an explosion in the number of civil society organizations in Kenya. The rapid increase has been as result of development gaps left by the government, which needs to be filled; significantly as well there has been increased competition for the scarce donor funds among Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) which donors prefers currently to be utilized on intangible projects like capacity building, while on the other hand the community prefer physical projects like construction of school which answers their needs directly. The study sought to establish the effect of organizational capacity building on community development. The study was based on systems theory by Miller and Rice (1967). The study adopted the Ex Post facto research design and incorporated research instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, observations and focus group discussions in data collection among the samples of 198 respondents selected through simple random and stratified sampling. The study established that; firstly, there are two forms of organisational capacity building secondly, training has a positive impact on community development and thirdly, community engages in monitoring and evaluation fourthly, CSO's have attained their objectives to some extent. The study concluded that, CSOs offer Civic education, training, and engages in advocacy and that CSOs are dependent on donors and that is why they to have a weak financial base and are not self sustaining. The study recommended that CSOs should diversify on their sources of funds and review their systems and structures.

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INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s and now in the new millennium, awareness has been growing on the role played by capacity building in the development process. Today capacity Building is recognized as central in the fight against poverty and attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). The problem of development in many African countries, Kenya included, is that of scarcity of resources coupled with an ever increasing population growth. When these limited resources are invested, local communities at the grassroots level do not appreciate, as they are not fully involved in the project implementation by development agencies as expected (Chitere, 1999). Development agencies like NGO's, FBO's, CBO's, and other development actors have come up to address the issue of rural underdevelopment. The activities of these development agencies have become essential dimension of public life at all levels and in all parts of the world (UN, 1995). They aim at involving the people so as to achieve sustainable development, which is a basis for national development through participatory approach that provides a sense of ownership of the process. The national council of NGO's special issue No 10, 1996 observes that development agencies play a central role in the country's social economic development.

These agencies in collaboration with various governments and other stakeholders play a significant role in improving the living standards of people. Government if left alone may not achieve the goal of creating a new world of reduced suffering and basic well being. This is because of the ever- increasing population growth rate and scarcity of resources. Therefore, if this goal of improving the living standards of the poor in rural areas is to be achieved, all the development actors should be involved and not leaving behind the people of the country (Serageldin, 1995).

In summary, the CSOs around the world are recognized as an important avenue for promoting participation of citizens in democratic governance. Kenya in general and Nandi south in particular has had growing increase in the number of civil society in the recent past. CSOs in Nandi South District carry out a number of programmes in the Community such as; water projects, health projects, gender and governance programmes, human rights programmes, environmental concerns programmes among others. Civil society capacities are crucial if they are to deliver on their mandate. Moreover the ultimate goal of capacity building programmes is to support the development of better skilled and oriented individual, more responsible and effective institutions and a better policy environment for pursuing development objectives. Key message is the importance of going beyond mere skills transfer towards supporting country leadership and strategic

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decision making, accounting systems and culture of learning and innovation. The study was important because the findings will be useful to the civil society, government, researchers and donors interested in getting a better understanding of the effects of capacity building in the development of a country. The term capacity building became popular during the 1990's as a result of the limited success with technical and externally induced development. It focused attention on the abilities required to organize and sustain development efforts. More recently, capacity has returned to the centre of international debate on development and in the new Millennium, awareness has been growing on the role played by capacity building in the development process UNDP, (2005).

The term capacity is often used in varied ways with varied implications. It can refer to anything from training individuals to large-scale institutional reforms. For example donors often use the term in the same breath as donor harmonization and sector wide approaches, and as the reason for introducing there 'right' policies and institutional frameworks. Civic society equates it with empowerment of local actors, bottom-up development of local organisations and networks and societal transformation. UNDP (2005). The notion of community has been central to the analysis of social and political life and was one of the central concerns of the 19th century social thinkers who were among the founders of sociology in Europe and United States. Modernity, urbanization and capitalism all seemed to threaten traditional patterns of life. (Thomas Bender, 1978). The most common sociology definitions used today tend to focus on community as an aggregate of people who share a common interest in a particular locality; territorially based social organizations and social activity define a community. Community development on the other hand is the process of helping to strengthen a community and its leadership so that it can resolve, through its own initiative, the problems which face it; Rowland, (1990). The community members investigate, analyse and evaluate constraints and opportunities and make informed and timely decisions regarding development projects. In addition, Community development is an aspect where by the community members understands their roles as citizens and do monitoring and evaluation of the ongoing projects.

Community development seek to empower individual and groups of people by providing these groups with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. These skills are often concentrated around building political power through the formation of large social groups working for a common agenda. Community developers must understand both how to work with individual and how to affect communities' positions within the context of larger social institutions. (Wikipenda, the Free Encyclopedia). Civil society is understood by others to be all institutions of non-state nature in a country, (such as professional and employers associations). That means civil society is understood as a sphere beyond the market and the state (Bliss Frank, 2003). Civil society can exist in both organised and unorganised ways, for example Non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Community based organisations (CBO's) and Faith based organizations (FBOs) are all forms of the organised sector of civil society. When citizens oppose a decision by a chief in a *baraza* or engage in an unplanned demonstration, they are acting as an organised civil society.

Most CSOs share a common vision; to reduce poverty, advance human development and manage natural resources. In sustainable fashion they believe that local participation and control is important to success of sustainable development. (Rao, 1996). Although CSOs in Africa are less numerous than those in Asia and Latin America, they are nevertheless important agencies of change and development in Africa. (Rao, 1996). During colonial period, churches and missionary societies were the principal providers of health and formal education services, especially in rural areas. (Bratton M.1989). In addition, many local CSOs in Africa have limited interest in increasing their activities or influencing government strategies for alleviating poverty. It is worth noting that at the grassroots level, CSOs can provide their members with greater financial and negotiating leverage than they would have as individuals, and provide a public voice for members' views (Rao, 1996).

Studies of successful CSOs have found that they are relatively effective at reaching the poor, mobilizing local resources, delivery of services and solving similar problems. A study of 30 Successful Latin America service CSOs found that they generally benefited the "middle Poor" but many very poor households were indirect beneficiaries. Carroll, 1990. On the contrary, CSOs may have relatively weak managerial skills and little technical expertise. Their survival and growth also may depend on public policies such as laws that govern the formation and operation of grassroots Organisation. Many CSOs fail, in that they do not achieve their objectives because they are not innovative and are as rigid as government departments. In addition some have been criticized for having limited technical capacity for complex projects, for an inability to replicate successful projects, for a limited ability to sustain them after initial outside help was withdrawal due to their reliance on external funding and weak resource and relatively weak and managerial and organizational skills. (Brown *et al.*, 1989).

Civil society around the world is recognized as an important actor in fronting for greater accountability and responsiveness from governments. The activities of civil society are an important avenue for promoting participation of citizens in democratic governance. The character and number of CSOs in country depend to a significant extent on the approach taken by the government. Many developing country governments are uncomfortable with CSOs as opponents unlike the industrialized countries who have learned to live with CSOs as both opponents and proponents of governments programs. CSOs cannot however, compete with governments, nor can they pass laws and they do not have the resources to manage national programs. (Richard. 1990) and Clarke (1991), suggests that CSOs are likely to relate to the state in one of the three ways; complementing the state, opposing it or reforming it. They complement by filling the gaps by providing the services that they are better equipped to provide. They oppose directly or by lobbying at local governmental or international levels, they even oppose, even to the point of organizing demonstration. They reform by representing the interest of groups they work with at the grassroots level to the government and by working with the government. The UNDP human development report (1992) observes that CSOs in general can be of great assistance in developing countries. But they often work under great duress, in opposition to powerful vested interests both official and non-official. The relationship

between government and CSOs can be strong determinant of CSOs activity in a country. The purpose of CSOs projects also influence the government response. Government in developing countries often regard as desirable non-controversial projects such as child immunization or clean water programs, but not warmly welcome CSOs working in areas such as basic human right advocacy (Bratton, 1989). In conclusion, CSOs success on their focus on development of the people in many countries has moved them into a fully collaborative relationship with the state. Government are beginning to realize that CSOs which are small, flexible and has good grassroots and contacts are often suited to carry out of development than is a large bureaucratic machine (UNDP, 1990)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was based on systems theory. System theory postulates that organisations are like open systems which of necessity engage in various mode of exchange with the environment (Katz and Kahn, 1960). The theory emphasizes the consideration of the relationship between the Organization and its environment as well as what goes on within the Organization. According to this theory an Organization is a system, which is open and prone to inference because both internal and external support will have to be provided for an Organisation to perform. Maximum control has to be applied to ensure that constant interaction of the Organisation performance with internal and external environment should not affect the system performance. The study was conducted in Nandi South District, the total population was all CSO,s which comprise of 20 NGO's, 6 faith based organizations (FBO's) and 1010 community based organisations (CBO,s). The study collected data from 193 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. The repondents included 145 members of CBO's, 23 from NGO's and 15 from FBO's. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussions and observation. Descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis were used in analysing the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of organisational capacity buiding

The study established that there are two forms of capacity building which include resources and management. Resources include those things traditionally thought of as "hard capacities" such as infrastructure, technology, finance and human resource. Management is concerned with creating the conditions under which appropriate objectives are set and achieved. Three types of management which are important include. Strategic leadership, programme and process management, networking and linkages with groups.

Resources: Source of funds and coping with inadequacy

The study found out that, 37.5% NGO's/FBO's facilitators said they acquired their funds from their contribution, 59.3% from external donors, 9.47% from government and 18.8% others (well wishers, friends and grants). It further established that, 90% Of CBO's acquired their funds from their contribution, 11% from donors and government and other 7% (loans from microfinance institutions). On how to cope with

inadequate funds, 59.3% got through external support and 40.6% through local fund raising. This showed that most of NGO's obtain their funds from external donors and most CBO's from their contribution. This further indicates that most CSO's are not self sustaining and are more dependent on donors. This explains why most CSO's undertake certain projects /programs and incase donors pull out it becomes their end.

Resource Availability and Utilization

The study found out that, the resources available in Nandi South District which can be utilized by CSO's included Natural resources, financial resources, Human resources, Technology and infrastructure and capital (machinery). It was further established that they had not fully utilized these resources. It was evident that CSO's in Nandi South District are endowed with resources but the challenge is on how the resources can be fully utilized. This shows that, many CSO's in Nandi South District lack organizational capacity, which is the potential for engaging resources and skills in optimum combination in order to perform relevant activities and task in line with the organization strategy.

Suitability of CSO's facilitators (Human Resource)

The CBO's members affirmed that the NGO's /FBO's facilitators were suitable to facilitate the community activities. They rated NGO's training offered to them as 33% very good, 58 % good and 9% poor. The 9% were among those who had developed negative attitude toward training and also they had not attended any training organized by NGOs/ FBOs. Although male facilitators were many, female facilitators were also represented. 70% were male and 30% were female. This concurred with what Akelo, 1999 said that, "Despite a noticeable improvement in gender awareness worldwide, data on women's work and economic contribution have remained far from comprehensive". The study established the following; on level of education 12% had attained secondary certificate 50% had attained diploma certificates from tertiary colleges and 38% had attained university degree. In addition 53% had worked for a period of between one and two years, 22% a period between three and four years, 16% period between five and nine years and 9% period over ten years. 56% worked elsewhere before joining their current organization and 44% had not. All 100% had attended seminars .The study therefore, found out that CSO's facilitators had skills and experience required to engage in community mobilization so as to involve community in the process of defining and transforming their social problems. From the responses on interview conducted on NGOs / FBOs personnel the study found that, recruitment of facilitators was done on an open system whereby the vacancies were advertised through media and churches, then qualifying candidates short listed and invited for an interview. It also revealed that the assessment of their work was done through monitoring and evaluation of their activities and they submit monthly reports and the program managers visit them at the field.

Collaboration and Networking

On collaboration and reasons of networking, the study found out that CSO's collaborate and network with other development actors. It further revealed that what had enabled

them to work together was interdependency, common community needs and differentiation. In addition it revealed that, collaboration had affected their development work. This shows that CSOs have discovered that networking was crucial in that, it helps to overcome problems through information exchange and sharing experiences outside their domain, while dealing with common community needs. The study also found out that the capacity building needs of the CSOs in Nandi South included, Training needs 66%, organization development 28%, skills and development 40% and awareness creation 69%. With awareness creation ranked the highest, it was evident that many CSOs entry strategy to the community was still a challenge; many begin their activities without first identifying themselves with the communities.

Effects of training, civic education and advocacy

The study found out that, CBOs have training programs arranged for their members. It was further established that, NGOs / FBOs offer training to CBOs. In addition, on whether they had attended such training, 71% of CBOs respondents said YES and 29% said NO. All this indicates that most of the CBOs members have had a chance of attending training programs whether organized by their own CBO or by NGOs / FBOs. The study revealed that most members have attended training programmes which lasted for a day. According to ECWD, 2004 training and civic education can be effective when an individual attends three or more workshops. On the method of training, 57.7% was through workshop/ seminar, 44.1% lecture, 11.03% films and audio and 26.9% other which includes field days and visiting of projects site. The study found out that, most CSOs adopts the formal method of using workshop, seminar and the lecture method. This poses a problem especially when the process is not participatory.

Development Needs

The study found out that most of the CSOs had carried out research to identify the main development needs. This indicates that many CSOs have realized the importance of conducting the formative needs assessment (baseline survey), in order to identify the program needs. The study found out that HIV/AIDS, Environment concerns, Poverty reduction strategies and affirmative action were ranked as the first four, these confirms what is in the District development plan 2002-2008 on major development challenges which includes poverty, HIV / AIDS, gender inequality and environmental conservation and management. It also emerged that most CSOs have their target group as general which in this case means all groups. It further shows that men and the physically challenged attention are still minimal. The study also found out that there is discrepancy between what the donors want to fund and on what the community wants to be funded. These were revealed when most of the participants in the focus group discussion suggested that they prefer tangible projects to be funded like building of school. On the other hand donors are currently shifting their interest and want to fund intangible projects like advocacy.

Participation in monitoring and evaluation

The study found out that the community is involved in monitoring and evaluation and that, the community contributes in monitoring and evaluation in the following ways; Decision making, labour provision, material provision,

provision of checks and balances. The fact that the community contributes in all of the above ways shows that they are involved in all the stages of a project cycle and the participatory approach of monitoring and evaluation is practiced by the community members.

Success in obtaining objectives

The current state of the projects / programs that the CSOs have been undertaking for the last five years was as follows; 15% on going, 45% succeeded and 40% did not succeed. The study further established the following reasons why some projects/programs failed. Mis-appropriation of funds, lack of commitment and sense of project ownership by the community members, lack of qualified personnel and underestimation of project requirements. At least the 40% of the succeeded projects / programs shows the attainment of objectives of the specific CSOs in regard to their capacity building which its main two forms are resources and management. Resources in this case is the good management of funds and selection of qualified personnel and management is all about leadership, on how to involve the community so that there is a sense of ownership on projects and the proper planning on estimation of project requirements. It emerged that although CSOs try as much as possible to attain their organization objectives and satisfy the stakeholders needs, they encounter the following challenges; political interference and lack of management skills, corruption, illiteracy and traditional attachments and uncooperative community members. All this explains that CSOs have their own problems, are also faced with government interference and receives resistance from the community.

Conclusion

The study sought to investigate the effects of organizational capacity building on community development. The study concluded that CSOs two main forms of organizational capacity are resources and management. Resource includes hard capacities such as financial resource, human, natural, infrastructure and technology. Management is concerned with creating the conditions under which appropriate objectives are set and achieved like networking with other organizations. On source of funds, which is the financial resource and is of great importance to CSOs many NGOs/ FBOs main source is external donors and CBOs is members contribution. This further explains why many CSOs projects / programs are not sustainable especially when the donors pull out and why many CBOs are only active when they are undertaking a funded activity then becomes dormant immediately. On human resource, CSOs have suitable facilitators who are professionals and have the skills to carry out their activities. CSOs in Nandi South District have the following other resources available at their disposal, natural, technology and infrastructure and capital but they have not fully utilized these resources. They however, network and collaborate with other development actors because they deal with the common community needs. CSOs capacity building needs which contributes to management which is one of the main forms of organizational capacity building includes training needs, organizational development, skill development and awareness creation. The study further concluded that, CSOs offer Civic education, training, and engage in advocacy. CBOs have training programs for their

members and NGOs / FBOs also offer training to CBOs members to enable them acquire knowledge and skills. Majority of the members have attended the training occasionally and there is need to arrange for more training so that it can be more effective. Civic education and training can be effective when; an individual attends three or more workshops.

In addition, many of CSOs carries out baseline survey, which enables them to identify the main development needs of their target groups and community at large, with this the community is involved and fully participates in monitoring and evaluating of the ongoing community projects. The training has also enabled the community members to actively participate in monitoring and evaluation. Finally, all CSOs have specified objectives that need to be achieved. CBOs are involved in various community activities whose main objective is to generate income and improve their standard of living. Through their involvement in diversified community activities they have been able to achieve these objectives despite the fact that, they encounter a number of challenges. There is no doubt that CSOs have played a significant role in community development. Although some NGOs/FBOs programs/projects have failed, some have significantly succeeded and have been completed within the timeframe set and resource limit allocation. The study therefore recommended that: sources of funds should be diversified, CSOs to review their systems and structures, CSOs entry strategy to the community should be improved, and the local community should be empowered so that they can fully understand their roles as citizens.

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