



**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ON PERFORMANCE OF DONOR-FUNDED
PROJECTS:**

**A CASE OF KIWASH SANITATION PROGRAMME IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY,
KENYA**

**BY
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DECLARATION

DECLARATION

I, **CHEBII CATHERINE CHERUTO**, hereby declare that this work is as a result of my personal efforts and has never been submitted by any other person in any other institution for any academic award.

Signature: 

Date: 25/10/25

CHEBII CATHERINE CHERUTO

APPROVAL

APPROVAL

We certify that **CHEBII CATHERINE CHERUTO** has done this work entitled "Influence of Community Participation on Performance of Donor-Funded Projects: A Case of KIWASH Sanitation Program in Kakamega County - Kenya" under my supervision as authorized university supervisor.

Signature: *EBwanga* Date: *25/10/25*

Kaase
Assoc. Prof. Bwanga Elizabeth, PhD.
^

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my loving family that has been a great source of inspiration and joy in my daily endeavours, their love and support could never be valued. Profound gratitude goes to all my friends and colleagues; who supported me morally and academically throughout this journey.

May almighty God bless you all

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
OPERATIONAL AND CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Objectives of the study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3.1 General Objective.....	5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	5
1.5 Scope of the Study	6
1.5.1 Geographical Scope.....	6
1.5.2 Content Scope.....	6
1.6 Time Scope.....	7
1.7 Conceptual Framework	7
1.8 Significance of the Study	8
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2 Introduction	9
2.1 Theoretical Review	9
2.2 Conceptual Review	9
2.2.1 Community Participation in Decision-Making.....	10
2.2.2 Community participation in project accountability	11

2.2.3	Community participation in Capacity Building	11
2.2.4	Performance of Donor-Funded Projects	11
2.3	Empirical Review	12
2.3.1	Community Participation in Decision-Making and Project Performance	12
2.3.2	Community Participation in Project Accountability and Performance	15
2.3.3	Community Participation in Capacity Building and Project Performance	18
2.4	Summary of Literature	23
CHAPTER THREE		24
METHODOLOGY.....		24
3	Introduction	24
3.2	Research Design	24
3.2	Study Population	24
3.3	Sample Size and Sampling Technique.....	25
3.4	Data Type and Source	25
3.4	Data Collection Instrument and Method of Data Collection	26
3.5	Measurement of Variables	26
3.6	Validity and Reliability.....	27
3.7	Data Analysis	28
3.8	Ethical Considerations	29
CHAPTER FOUR.....		30
DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION		30
4.1	Introduction	30
4.2	Response Rate.....	30
4.3	Descriptive characteristics of respondents.....	30
4.4	Descriptive Characteristics	31
4.5	Correlations Analysis	32
4.5.1	Community Participation in Decision Making and Project Performance	33

4.5.2	Community Participation in Accountability and Project Performance	33
4.5.3	Community Participation in Capacity Building and Project Performance	33
4.6	Regression Analysis	33
4.7	Hypothesis Testing	35
4.7.1	Community Participation in Decision-Making and Project Performance	35
4.7.2	Community Accountability Mechanisms and Project Performance.....	36
4.7.3	Community Capacity Building and Project Performance	36
CHAPTER FIVE.....		37
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND.....		38
5.1	Introduction	38
5.2	Discussion of Findings.....	39
5.2.1.	Community Participation in Decision-Making and Project Performance.....	39
5.2.2.	Community Participation in Accountability and Project Performance	40
5.2.3.	Community Participation in Capacity Building and Project Performance	41
5.3.	Conclusion.....	42
5.4.	Recommendations.....	43
5.5	Study Limitations	44
5.6	Areas for Further Study.....	45
REFERENCES		46
APPENDIX I		62
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS.....		62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Measurement of variables	26
Table 2 Validity and Reliability	28
Table 3 Response Rate	30
Table 4 Gender, Age, Designation.....	31
Table 5 Descriptive Statistics	32
Table 6 Correlation Analysis	32
Table 7 Regression analysis	35
Table 8 Summary Table of Hypothesis Testing Results	37

OPERATIONAL AND CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS

Community Participation. Community participation is expressed as an active and meaningful involvement of local stakeholders in the identification, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of development projects that affect their lives. In this study, community participation is examined through three dimensions decision-making, accountability, and capacity building which collectively reflect the extent to which communities influence and sustain donor-funded projects such as KIWASH in Kakamega County (Pretty et al., 2020; Zulu et al., 2025).

Decision-Making. Decision-making is referred as the level to which community members are involved in identifying needs, setting priorities, and influencing project policies and implementation processes. Participating factitively in decision-making creates ownership, ensures relevance of interventions, and enhancing sustainability of donor-funded projects (Dudley & Hall, 202, Amudha et al., 2021)

Accountability. (Rijal, 2023), defined accountability as mechanisms through which communities ensure transparency and integrity in project operations. This was supported by (Mizrahi and Minchuk, 2019) involves participation in monitoring, financial oversight, and feedback processes that enhances trust, prevent mismanagement, and promoting project performance.

Capacity Building. Capacity building has been widely defined as community empowerment of all members/stakeholders affected by the project operations through training, mentorship, and skill development to enable them to manage, operate, and sustain project activities beyond donor involvement (Ndonye et al., 2021). It improves technical, managerial, and leadership abilities necessary for long-term project performance (Bahatsi &Amolo, 2023).

Project Performance. Project performance has been defined by (World Bank, 2020), as the level to which donor-funded projects achieve their intended objectives efficiently and effectively. (UNDP, 2021), measured project performance through indicators such as timeliness in implementation, quality of outputs, cost-effectiveness, and the satisfaction of beneficiaries with project outputs

ABSTRACT

The study assessed influence of community participation on the performance of donor-funded projects, specifically focusing on Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (KIWASH) program in Kakamega County, Kenya. Despite significant resources approximately USD 51 million investment from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) between 2015 and 2022, serious concerns persist over performance of sanitation initiatives, with many facilities remaining underutilized or non-functional in Kakamega County. The study was guided by Stakeholder Theory, emphasizes involving communities in decision-making, accountability, and capacity building enhances ownership, transparency, technical support and long-term success. The study adopted descriptive research design, targeting project beneficiaries, community leaders, and project staff, quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 27 involved descriptive statistics, and multiple regression techniques was used to test relationships among variables. Study findings revealed that community participation in decision-making significantly enhances project performance by aligning project goals with community priorities. additionally, community-based accountability mechanisms enhanced transparency in resource use and allocation, participatory monitoring, and feedback sharing positively influenced project efficiency, trust, and sustainability. Furthermore, capacity-building initiatives, including training and technical skill development, had a strong positive effect on project outcomes, equipping beneficiaries to manage and sustain WASH facilities effectively. Conclusions from the study, active and inclusive community participation is a critical determinant of donor-funded project performance. It recommends that future WASH programs institutionalize community-led decision-making, strengthen participatory accountability systems, and prioritize continuous capacity development to improve project ownership and by the community.

Key Words: *Community Participation; Decision-Making; Accountability; Capacity Building; Project Performance.*

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBO:	-	Community Based Organization
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
KIWASH	-	Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF:	-	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	-	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO:	-	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents background, problem statement, objectives, hypotheses, scope, conceptual framework, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background to the study

Donor funded projects, globally have been central to enhancing social and economic development, specifically in sectors such as water, sanitation, health and education. Despite the substantial financial investments through governments and non-governmental organisations, evidence shows that many of these projects face challenges Ranging from performance to sustainability, accountability, and community ownership (World Bank, 2020; UNDP, 2021). In Africa remains instrumental in addressing infrastructure and service delivery gaps in most critical sectors of education, water and sanitation, community health including in politically unstable regions. However, non-aligned priorities and weak governance structures, limited and improper accountability, top-down approaches often undermined performance and sustainability (Magoola et al., 2023 Beshi & Kaur, 2020). Empirical evidence suggests that community participation is vital in ensuring that projects and development initiatives aligns to local needs, resources are properly managed, and beneficiaries develop the capacity to maintain project outputs (Nguyen & Mohamed, 2021; Wolf et al., 2022). In Kenya, donor-funded initiative has been influential in promoting development in areas where the government have inadequate reached. Projects such as water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) projects have significantly contributed to public health

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