

Assessment of the Extent of People's Participation in Socio-Economic Projects for Community Development in Rwanda. Rubavu District

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Abstract:-The study attempted to assess the extent of people's participation in socio-economic projects for community development in Rubavu district, Rwanda. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches on 302 respondents. It was revealed that, the extent to which people participate in socio-economic projects is still at the low level of participation because many projects implemented in different sectors are conceived by planners at the district level, thus local people are not participating actively in their own development and do not know the role they should play in these different activities. The study recommended that the enhancement of the level of people's participation in socio-economic projects for their development is crucial by involving people in the whole process of socio-economic projects since the identification of needs, formulation of projects up to their closure instead of leaving them in the hands of planners, administrators and community elites at the district level. This would be possible by putting more emphasis on Empowered people and Empowered Participatory Governance.

Key words: Participation, Socio-economic projects and community development

I. INTRODUCTION

Rwanda embarked on performing decentralization policy which, was enacted in 2000; to Rwanda's Government, Decentralization was viewed and is still viewed as important because it gives opportunities to the local citizens, especially at the grassroots level to participate in matters of their concerns like identifying their own problems and propose solutions to them. The Government of Rwanda (GOR) also views decentralization as a way to promote national reconciliation, power-sharing and participatory development at all the local level. (Ministry of local Government and social affairs, 2000). The improvement in the living conditions of a people can be depicted in the meaningful economic growth, reduction of poverty and a wide participation of the people in public life. Thus, Local Communities can and must play a leading role especially in reducing poverty. The other institutions involved in development process should work in partnership with the local communities in order to attain the expected output for development of community. (Community Development policy 2001:3).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of people's participation in community Development

The arguments of participation seem to converge on the relationship between three key concepts, namely "taking part", "influence", and "power" in community participation (CP). Moreover, any participation process seems to have two components irrespective of the context, situation or objective: a decision-making process and an action process to realize the objective decided upon.

While emphasizing on the relationship between the three concepts suggested above, it was realized that time had come for people to take greater control of their own lives including in the realm of development. People will only develop themselves by what they do; they develop themselves by making their own decisions, by increasing their own knowledge and ability and their own full participation as equals.

According to Mulwa, F. (2003),

Authentic community development is therefore perceived as a process by which: "... a community of people strives to make it possible for all its members to satisfy their fundamental human needs and to enhance the quality of their lives... It is not about objects, things, services given to them. The purpose of objects, things, services and indeed the economy is to serve the people".

As far as the influence of people in decision making is concerned, Bhatnagar, B. and William, A. (1992:2) conceptualize participation as:

"... a process by which people, especially disadvantaged people, influence decisions that affect them... Participation means influence on development decisions, not simply involvement in the implementation or benefits of a development activity, although those types of involvement are important and are often encouraged by opportunities for influence"

People should, of necessity, participate in decisions that affect their lives. This serves to influence local responsibility as well as enhancing their sense of dignity and worth. It is believed that people will give their total support to initiatives that help to create. So; people are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about empowering people and expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value.

Thus, Social development can be promoted by increasing local self-reliance. Since people themselves know what they need, what they want and what they can afford, only close co-operation between project implementers and the community can lead to project effectiveness. The project area continues to develop after the withdrawal of development agency staff.

The only meaningful way to let people feel responsible of all decentralized activities and enjoy their results for long is the participatory approach where people themselves participate in identifying, planning, implementing and managing policies and projects of development related to their livelihood. Therefore, program activities of participatory development must be based on 'bottom-up' as stated by Oakley, P. (1999:162:

“Programme activities must be based upon a ‘bottom-up’ approach. Only through this sort of approach can the program attain any meaningful and lasting success. The community’s awareness of the necessity and effectiveness of their active participation in their own development will ensure that progress shall continue even after the formalized project ends”.

The programme’s next purpose is to nurture the enthusiasm and capabilities of the target group in order that they may attain self-sufficiency. The group members will be encouraged to identify and utilize whatever resources, however meagre, available to them. Outside inputs shall be limited to the role of stimulants, only assisting the group in more effectively utilizing their own assets. Under this perspective, the following features are observed:

- *People generally act on the basis of self-interest; consciousness-raising along every day issues e.g. water, land eviction, gets early success.*
- *Move from simple, concrete short-term personal issues to more complex, abstract, long-term and system issues.*
- *The establishment gives people the opportunity to become angry and militant.*
- *Tactics against the powerful should be within the experience of the powerless, and outside the experience of the powerful.*
- *Throughout the organizing process, people make their own decisions (Castillo, C.T. 1983:487).*

Therefore, Community Participation is an indispensable part of any programme or project encouraged by national

governments, UN agencies and Non-governmental organizations. Vandana and Potter (2002) argue that there are various reasons why Community Participation is deemed desirable from the point of view of development agencies and governments.

These include the following:

1. People have right to participate in decision-making which directly affects their living conditions.
2. Social development can be promoted by increasing local self-reliance. Since people themselves know what they need, what they want and what they can afford, only close co-operation between project implementers and the community can lead to project effectiveness. The project area continues to develop after the withdrawal of development agency staff.
3. Demonstrating that the people and the government can work together and make political capital.
4. Co-opting a strong but manipulable community leadership can increase political or social control.

The shift in participative argument is however, towards empowerment of the less powerful. In developing countries, resources for development have always been very scarce, but reassurance for their allocation from various interested groups have progressively increased. The poor, since they have neither socio-economic nor political power, do not generally gain access to the decision-making processes and hence are unable to influence them. Therefore, the poor have not benefited from economic growth but in fact have become worse off. Oakley and Marsden, (1984) cited in Vandana and Potter, (2002) state in this regard:” meaningful participation is concerned with achieving power: that is the poor to influence the decisions that affect one’s livelihood”.

In essence, citizen engagement in the development and implementation of policy can help to generate a heightened sense of public value for what government does. Listening to citizen preferences, providing citizens with an opportunity to analyze available options and determine a preferred option, and providing feedback through performance measurement and monitoring and evaluation are all likely to help ensure that the public will value more highly the publicly funded services they receive. Boeninger, (1992) concluded that:

”the involvement of citizens in development planning and implementation enables the formulation of realistic plans that are in line with local circumstances and conditions. Administratively, decentralisation is considered as a key strategy that provides solutions to overloaded and over-centralized agencies.

As adapted to this study, the participation in planning theory holds that, decentralization of services delivery system influences the internal efficiency of the local people by choosing their priorities (needs) and making decisions

concerning development of their staging area. Once applied, this system can lead to the real effectiveness of citizens' participation. Thus, people are the ones who know their felt needs and therefore can plan activities and projects of development related to their livelihood.

The arguments for participation in development

Despite an apparent widespread recognition of the importance of participation in development, not everybody is convinced either that it is necessarily always a "good thing" or that to date it has clear practical advantages for development projects. Many planners would argue that there are potential risks and costs implicit in greater people's participation.

Those could include:

- Project start-up delayed by negotiations with people;
- Increases in staff required to support participation;
- The possibility that, when consulted, people might oppose a project;
- Unpredictable participatory methodologies;
- Over-involvement of less experienced people.

Indeed, a World Bank study (World Bank, 1996) even suggested that "governments might prefer rural people to participate only in projects implementation since their involvement in projects identification and assessment might give rise to increased expectations. Furthermore, there has been a tendency for some writers to be dismissive of many of the arguments for participation as being merely "lofty sentiments" or "popular faddishness". Midgeley, J. (1996) refers to the "emotionally appealing case for participation but argues that it is important to disentangle ethical issues from theoretical and practical considerations. There is an element of justification in these criticisms and it could also be argued that in many projects the participation is more evident as an emotional commitment than a practical aspect of the project. Indeed, Uphoff, N. (1986) refers to a state of "pseudo participation" and rightly argues that in many projects, the participation is more illusory than real. Current practice suggests that undoubtedly that in many development projects participation is stronger in rhetoric than in practical reality; that there is a good deal of lip-service to the notion of participation but less commitment to the changes in direction and style that would be required to implement it. It would be wrong however, to assume that the arguments for greater people's participation in development are based purely on idealistic, humanitarian or egalitarian grounds.

There are a number of substantive arguments for "participation" as an essential ingredient in development projects. Uphoff, N. (1986), for example suggests a number of reasons why governments might gain some net benefit from promoting participation, despite political cost:

- ✓ More accurate and representative information from the needs; priorities and capacities of local people; more reliable feedback on the impact of government initiatives and more programmes

- ✓ Adaptation of programmes to meet local conditions so that scarce resources can be employed more efficiently;
- ✓ Lower cost of access to the public for agricultural extension programmes, nutrition education, immunization, supervised credit, etc., through local organizations and institutions;
- ✓ Tapping local technical information that can otherwise be costly to obtain or to learn about the fact that rural people have more technical expertise than usually recognized;
- ✓ Mobilization of local resources to augment or even substitute for central government resources...
- ✓ Improved utilization and maintenance of government facilities and services; and
- ✓ Co-operation in new programmes, which is more likely to occur when local organizations having the confidence of rural people share the responsibility for the innovation (Uphoff, N. 1986).

Participation and Government

A major controversy around the practice of participation concerns the potential role of Government and the extent to which it can facilitate or is an evitable obstacle to the process of participation. Oakley, P. (1999) suggested that the issue is "controversial" for two main reasons:

- First, in the analysis employed by some studies, government and its bureaucratic apparatus are seen as essentially hostile to the whole notion of reducing central control, devolving decisions to local level and supporting demands made by rural people for the kind of radical changes that might be required to find lasting solutions for the poverty they suffer.
- Second, in many regions, it could be argued that it is the government which is the basic instrument for maintaining the status quo and, correspondingly, for perpetuating the wretched quality of poor people's lives. Implicit in genuine government for participation are such bureaucratic mechanisms as decentralization and local-planning structures, yet the evidence suggests that few governments have willingly devolved these bureaucratic control to the local level. There is little in the practice to date to suggest that many governments have committed themselves to supporting moves to promote mass involvement in development processes. The reasons are not difficult to understand.

It is the fact however, that in several countries such as Ethiopia, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania and Rwanda national ideologies overtly encourage people's participation; other nations wide programmes, such as Harambee in Kenya and decentralization in Nepal, seek to establish a basis for participation. Midgeley, J. (1986) concludes this point and argues that "A major failing of the advocates of participation has been their assumption that the

state has a little positive role in promoting participation. On the contrary, he argues that:

“The role of the State has expanded enormously during this century and today State intervention in all spheres of contemporary life has reached a level that is historically unprecedented. The state is the prime initiator and promoter of development effort in most Third World nations and, in the field of social development, State provisions has grown rapidly. Accounts for popular participation should deal with these realities and incorporate them into a comprehensive approach that embraces the disparate elements of statist and participatory development”.

Decentralisation and community involvement

Decentralization entails the transfer of power, responsibilities and finance from central government to sub-national levels of government at provincial and/or local levels. Africa has a long history of formally centralized rule which dates back to colonial times and in some instances much beyond. Independence constitutions did provide, at least in the former British colonies, for a fully established system of local government with elected councils. These had responsibilities for the delivery of services such as education, health, roads, water supply and agricultural extension, as well as a level of resources. Although attempts at state centralization in independent Africa might not have been as successful as intended, the imperative of nation-building, the realities of single-party or military rule and the necessities of centralized planning led to the marginalization or outright suppression of these elected local and district councils and their competencies throughout the late 1960s and 1970s (Gordon, C. et al 2008).

It has been noted that decentralisation is not guarantee for involvement of the people in development activities. Kiggundu, S.(1998), while reaching decentralisation and its effect in Luwero, observed that in a bid to improve health standards 40 bore holes were dug by Volunteer Effort for Development Concerns. The community was never involved and many of these were badly located making which made it difficult for the local people to use the water sources. The fact that **decentralisation did not lead to direct involvement of the people has Kiggundu, S. (1998)’s research** indicate that projects could not be owned by the people.

In the same perspective, Aliyu, F. (2002) in the study, which focused upon the impacts of decentralisation on local development, particularly on how the local perceive the decentralisation policy in their own perspectives, he notes that:

“there had been little or no effort made to achieve a genuine decentralisation aimed at

changing the living conditions of the local people. The local people were not involved in decision-making that affects their lives. The involvement of the local people was a false impression of participation in decision-making through meetings without the consideration of their views at all. There was no well-established framework where the people and the government discuss local problems, issues and policies, which are affecting the local people”.

Community empowerment and Decentralization

Community empowerment is based on the form of decentralization; first the more decentralization moves toward democratic devolution, the greater the space for communities and citizens to exercise voice with local officials, and the space for local officials to exercise discretion in response to citizen preferences. As noted above, the distribution of LG authorities has an impact on how this space can be exploited. Without such space, though, community empowerment mechanisms will have difficulty functioning.

Second, delegation and devolution call for higher levels of LG capacity, and thus capacity deficits may constrain the chances that LGs can respond to citizens’ preferences. Third, increasingly democratic forms of decentralization do not necessarily reduce the incentives for poor and marginalized groups to seek client list relationships. These findings confirm that as the potential for positive democratizing synergies between decentralization and community empowerment expands so too does the need for local government capacity. The necessary capabilities involve skills that may not be strong among local officials. They will be called upon to conduct town or neighborhood meetings, explain policies and options, mediate conflicts, and work toward consensus.

Local Government capacity alone cannot ensure that local discretion will result in choices that are citizen-responsive or democratic. It may simply enhance the power of local elites without checks and balances across levels of government. The triangles of accommodation discussed by (Migdal, J.S.1988) often link local officials, politicians and strongmen in tight networks, limiting citizen access through the formal mechanisms of government. In some cases, the local penetration of the central state is so weak that strongmen can predominate with little outside interference.

III. METHODOLOGY

Kothari, C.R. (2006) regards a research design as “...an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure...the conceptual structure within which research is conducted” This study was qualitative assessment on the extent of people’ participation on socio-economic projects for community development; in Rubavu District, Rwanda. The study relied on primary and

secondary data. It adopted a triangulation of methods; combining information from different sources of data collection namely interviews, focus group discussions, review of secondary literature, use of questionnaires.

Sample size determination

Barreiro and Albandoz (2001) affirm that a sample is deemed necessary because it is not possible to carry out an investigation over the whole population due to constraints of resources, time and money. To determine the sample population of respondents who answered to the questionnaire, the research used Norbate, P. (1998)’s formula. He argues that one of the suitable methods for establishing appropriate sample size is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where: n = sample size

N = estimated population

e = margin of error (5 %)

N = 1233 Employees

e = 5%

$$n = \frac{1233}{1 + 1233(0.05)^2} = 302$$

Using the above technique, then n = 302 employees

Data Analysis

In analysis of qualitative data, patterns and connections within and between categories of data collected were established. Data was presented in form of notes, word-for-word transcripts, single words, brief phrases and full paragraphs (Powell & Renner, 2003). Data was interpreted by content analysis composing explanations and substantiating them using the respondents open responses. While analysing qualitative data, conclusions were made on how different variables are related. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0) was used for data analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 1 Gender characteristics of Respondents

Sex of Respondents		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	154	51.0	51.0	51.0
	Female	148	49.0	49.0	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

The table 1 presented above refers to the frequency of respondents based on their sex. It is clear that 51% of respondents are male, while 49% are female; the difference

between both males and females is not significant as their apportionment in economic activities is almost equal. As far as the sample covered all categories of population either in public or private sector, formal and informal; it was observed that males are more slightly represented than female in economic activities, as well as in decision making entities in Rwanda.

Table: 2 Level of Education of Respondents

Level of education		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary	97	32.1	32.1	32.1
	Bachelor degree	199	65.9	65.9	98.0
	Master’s degree	6	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

The table 2 above presents the frequency of respondents based on their educational level. It identifies that among 302 respondents, 32.1% hold a secondary certificate, and 65.9% hold a bachelor’s degree, while 2% hold master’s degrees. The fact that all of respondents are educated with different certifications, they also have supplementary views on the extent of people’s participation on socio-economic projects for community development in Rwanda.

Table 3: Respondents’ views on whether in Rubavu district people actively participate in socio-economic development projects

In Rubavu district people actively participate in socio-economic development projects.		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	9	3	3	3
	Agree	127	42.1	42.1	45.1
	Not Sure	133	44.0	44.0	89.1
	Disagree	10	3.3	3.3	92.4
	Strongly Disagree	23	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

Based on the table 3 above, among the 302 respondents 45.1% agreed that in Rubavu District people actively participate in socio-economic development projects, while 54.1% were not sure and disagreed with the statement. It is clear that there is absence of active participation of people in socio-economic development in Rubavu district as far as the big number of respondents is rejecting the statement. In addition to that, one of respondents from Cyanzarwe sector said:

“We are invited at the sector office to sign projects included in the performance contract prepared, sometimes the target is

high at such that it seems hard to reach it; we are implementing what have been prepared by others”.

Local leaders should mobilize people to participate actively in socio-economic development projects instead of deciding for them. This participation should include all partners with the purpose of the mutual learning experience for the rural development and development is made by people themselves as pointed out by Nyerere, quoted by Oakley, P. et al, 1999:2). He stresses that:

“Rural development is the participation of the people in the mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agent and outsiders’ resources. People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves by participation in decision and co-operative activities which affect their well-being. People are not being developed when they are herded like animals into new ventures.”

Table 4: Respondents’ views on whether Local people know the role they should play in socio-economic development projects

Local people know the role they should play in socio-economic development projects.		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	51	16.9	16.9	16.9
	Agree	90	29.8	29.8	46.7
	Not Sure	119	39.4	39.4	86.1
	Disagree	20	6.6	6.6	92.7
	Strongly Disagree	22	7.3	7.3	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

The table above illustrates that 16.9% strongly agreed that local population know the role they should play in socio-economic development projects, 29.8% have agreed with statement, therefore the overall agreement with the statement comes to 46.7%, which is below the medium and this indicates that people do not know their role in socio economic development. 39.4% are not sure whether local people know their role in socio-economic development projects. 6.6% have disagreed and 7.3% have strongly disagreed with the statement. In general, the majority is not sure whether local people know their role in socio-economic development, there is still a task of sensitizing local people to ensure they know their role to increase the current status. It is advisable that Local leaders of Rubavu District have the responsibility to work hands in hands with rural poor in developing structures and organisations which can help them to become self-reliant and play their role in participating in the design and

implementation of local projects. This is in the line of Oakley, P.(Ibid.) who emphasised that:

“Rural poor are able to organise themselves and through their own organisations are able to identify their own needs and share in the design, implementation and evaluation in the participatory action. Such action is self-generated, based on their access to productive resources and services other than their labour and the continued security of that access”.

In the same spirit, one of respondents declared:

“We are implementing projects formulated by the district but ideas from people are somehow not considered, some times in the meeting we are raising those issues and asking our role in planning activities without any response from the leaders” (Inhabitant of Rubavu Sector).

This approach seems to be a top-down rural development approach where external planners design and implement projects, the rural poor from this area do not know their role, they are either passive collaborators or excluded onlookers and they are treated as objects of change as suggested by Sethi. (1987)

“Conventional modes of rural development, explicitly or implicitly, treat people as objects of change and the relation between the development agent and the people often take the form of a subject acting upon an object: (rural) people have been told what to do. The outcome is a delivery approach- that is, an attempt to bring development to people through deliveries of knowledge and resources from outside”.

Table: Respondents’ views on whether local needs are embodied socio-economic development projects implemented

Local needs are they embodied in Socio-economic development projects implemented in Rubavu District?		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	80	26.5	26.5	26.5
	Agree	40	13.2	13.2	39.7
	Not Sure	161	53.3	53.3	93.0
	Disagree	16	5.3	5.3	98.3
	Strongly Disagree	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

Respondents presented their views whether local needs are they embodied in Socio-economic development projects

implemented in Rubavu District? 26.5% and 13.2% of respondents have respectively strongly agreed and agreed with the statement while 53.3% are not sure, 5.3% and 1.7% have respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed. In general, a small number of respondents represented by 39.7% realized that local needs are embodied in socio-economic development projects, while a big number of respondents did not agree with the statement. This trend shows clearly that in Rubavu district the decentralized planning is in the hands of planners and administrators with small consideration of the needs of people. The findings indicated that participation for the masses becomes listening to what is being planned for them and what will be done to them as suggested by Buye (2004:19): *“If control of a project and decision-making power rests with the planners, administrators and community elites, participation for the masses becomes listening to what is being planned for them and what will be done to them. True participation is gender, age and status sensitive and extremely hard to achieve yet critical to true development”*.

However, this practice in Rubavu district of not including necessarily peoples’ needs and initiatives in their decentralized planning is not a guarantee for the sustainability of the socio-economic projects implemented in the district as suggested by Oakley,P. 1999) because they are mainly based on top-down instead of bottom-up approach: *“Program activities must be based upon a ‘bottom-up’ approach. Only through this sort of approach can the program attain any meaningful and lasting success. The community’s awareness of the necessity and effectiveness of their active participation in their own development will ensure that progress shall continue even after the formalized project ends”*.

In the same view, Boeninger (1992) advised that plans involving people are realistic:

“The involvement of citizens in development planning and implementation enables the formulation of realistic plans that are in line with local circumstances and conditions. Administratively, decentralisation is considered as a key strategy that provides solutions to overloaded and over-centralized agencies”.

Table:6: Respondents’ views on whether there is any impact of socio-economic development on the lives of community

In socio-economic development People would willingly contribute financially as type of resources.		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Agree	11	3.6	3.6	4.6
	Not Sure	42	13.9	13.9	18.5
	Disagree	134	44.4	44.4	62.9
	Strongly Disagree	112	37.1	37.1	100.0
	Total	302	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2019

The table above summarizes the opinion of respondents on whether there is any impact of socio-economic development on the lives of community. According to the findings, it has been realized that only 1% and 3.6% have respectively strongly agreed and agreed with the statement while a big number of respondents 44.4% and 37.1% have respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that the impact of socio-economic projects implemented in Rubavu district is not contributing significantly to raise the standards of living of the people because the projects may not satisfy all people who are seeking for job due to the fact that job seekers are many while job opportunities are limited. One of interviewee suggested:

“I have looked for the job in projects implemented by the district several times, but I didn’t be blessed because job seekers are too many. In absence of daily small jobs, my family can spend even two days without eating because we do not have other means for surviving due to poverty.”

The poverty is serious a barrier to the people of Rubavu district especially those from rural areas because most of them are living under the line of poverty and are living in extreme poverty as corroborated in Rubavu District Development Strategy, 2018 which confirms that the rate of extreme poverty is 14.6% compared to 16% at national level. This situation necessitates more attention on socio-economic development projects to be planned by taking into consideration people’s priorities with the purpose to reduce the rate of extreme poverty.

As far as local people are invited to participate in planning meeting organized by administrators and elite group and not involved in the planning process, such projects will not have any significant positive impact on the lives of people considered as first beneficiaries of socio-economic development projects. Mweene (2006)’s views concluded that poor people should be largely informed to local development projects and then development will be truly understood. He noted that:

“Specific development interventions should be seen as a local phenomenon largely informed by poor’s perceptions about their conditions and directed their active participation at different level. It should comprise of tailor own needs and not only to passively receive from charity. Only then will development be truly understood by those it is intended for as need oriented, endogenous and sustainable.”

V. CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the extent to which citizens participate in socio-economic projects for community development is still at low level of participation because many socio-

economic projects implemented in different sectors of Rubavu District are in the hands of the planners, administrators and community elites at the district level, thus, participation for local people and disadvantaged becomes listening to what is being planned for them and what will be done to them.

Recommendations

In linking the study of people's participation to development projects for community development in Rwanda, Rubavu district, the study recommended the following:

- (i) To enhance the commitment and capacities of ordinary people to make sensible decisions through reasoned deliberation and empowered participation because they attempt to tie action to discussion
- (ii) To establish new channels of communication to identify needs for those most affected by targeted problems such as ordinary citizens and officials in the field from the lowest level of administration
- (iii) The involvement of ordinary people and inclusion of marginalized groups in deliberative policy making are argued to advance social justice and confidence in societies for their wellbeing
- (iv) To reinforce local organizational capacity that empower communities both to engage with public agencies in service delivery partnerships and to undertake autonomous collective action.
- (v) To increase the financial support for local development projects aimed at enhancing community initiatives for their development.

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