Factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects in the Oshana region of Namibia

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Abstract

The Government of Namibia has been promoting and supporting sustainable community-based development projects since independence in 1990. Since the independence, many donors funded CBDPs that have been initiated in the Oshana Region of Namibia. However, it has been noted that once the donor funds are withdrawn from these CBDPs, communities fail to sustain these projects and are eventually forced to revert to conditions of destitution and deprivation. The aim of this study was to explore factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development in the Oshana region of Namibia. Qualitative approach with a phenomenological design using the semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data from the 16 participants from the Oshana region of Namibia. The data from participants was analyzed using content analysis method and data reduction. The result of the study shows that the reasons for initiating the community development programmes rested on the need to respond to HIV/AIDS and unemployment, food security and government needs. The factors that contributed to the unsustainability were found to be climate change, lack of finances, lack of land, lack of qualified management staff, lack of security and lack of empowerment opportunities. Among the measures to reverse the trends of unsustainability, the study found the need for mentors, use of local language for training purposes, the need to involve beneficiaries from the beginning of the projects. The study recommends, the need to empower the project members, to develop policies and implement them as well as enact the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Keywords: Community Development; Community-Based Development; Development Projects; Unsustainability

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1. Introduction

Community based sustainability is a major concern for many organizations but unfortunately the notion of sustainability is not seldom included in programme planning (Cepturreanu et al., 2018). This scenario often results in unsustainability of community-based projects. The concept of 'unsustainability' refers to a process that cannot be maintained at the current rate or level, not able to be upheld or defended while Sustainability is about maintaining and continuing program services after the funding period is over. For the sake of this paper, the concept of unsustainability is used alongside community development projects. Therefore, 'Community-based development projects (CBDP) is an approach that advocates for community participation in decision-making about and management of local development projects. It aims to involve communities in project design and implementation with the goal of using local knowledge and resources to run more effective development projects (Baldwin et al., 2016). The authors of this paper viewed the concept of sustainability as the ethical context for community-based development projects to find ground to reverse the unsustainability of community development projects in the Oshana region of Namibia.

The notion of sustainability embraced by the authors of this paper is rooted in the Brundtland report definition contained in the *Our Common Future*, the report which was presented at the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. The Brundtland Commission Report, defined sustainable development as the developments that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The study of sustainability from this angle, it is leraned that sustinabaility include ecological, social and economic goals. However, the authors of this paper appear to stress the attitude and behaviours of maintaining and supporting the social and economic threshold to allow the perpetuity of community development-based development projects.

The government of Namibia has been extensively promoting and supporting genuine community-based development since independence. The commitment of Namibian to the sustainability in community development is contained in the long-term policy frameworks such as the Namibia Vison 2030, and medium-term policy frameworks such as the Namibia Development Plan 5 and the Harambee Prosperity Plan. The analysis of these national policy frameworks reveals the following assertions and commitments to sustainability. For example, the Namibian Vision 2030 maintains that sustainable development is the type of development that meets the needs of the present, without limiting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It encourages people to take responsibility for their own development and promotes development activities that address the actual needs of the people, and require increasing community contributions to development (Government of Namibia, 2004). On top of that, the Harambee Prosperity plans asserts that "The most effective way to address poverty is through wealth creation, which is done by growing the economy in a sustainable inclusive manner and through the creation of decent employment opportunities" (Government of Namibia, 2017). The National development Plan 5 (2016) stress that by 2022, Namibia should be able to manage her natural resources sustainably through community participation (Government of Namibia, 2017). In general, the national policy frameworks for national development in Namibia embraces partnership between government and communities, NGOs and CBOs, human and institutional capacity enhancement, good governance, democracy and human rights, environmental protection, peace and political stability, gender equality.

In the Namibian context the sustainability concept has been applied in CBDPs. Thus, the efforts of CBDPs have been directed to providing sustainability through education, community capacity-building as well as micro-enterprise development (Shikongo, 2013). CBDPs are planned and implemented by the Oshana Regional Council for a certain period of time, called gestation, after which they withdraw and the community is expected to continue running the projects and make them self-sustaining. Government organizations and NGOs in partnership with communities do establish CBDPs (Shikongo, 2013). However, the project activities collapse following the phase-out of funders' support in the Oshana region of Namibia (Shikongo, 2013). Through the engagement with the Oshana Regional Council, it was estimated that over 50 projects were implemented and subsequently failed. The aim of this study was to investigate factors contributing to the unsustainability of CBDPs in the Oshana region of Namibia.

The authors also conducted an analytic assessment of the available data and this data shows about 68 community-based development projects (CBDPs) that were started in the Oshana region of Namibia. The community-based development projects were initiated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), church-based organizations, by the government through the then Ministry of Trade and Industry, now the Ministry of Industrialization Trade and Small and Medium enterprises (SME) Development (Goaseb and Euseb, 2009). Fifty-five (55) of these CBDPs flourished initially and thereafter stopped operating after withdrawal of donor support. Nearly twelve (12) have established physical structures in some areas of the Oshana region but these structures have ended up being white elephants because of lack of maintenance and protection. The scenario relegates the once self-reliant Namibian communities to a condition of deprivation and such people have to wait for the government to provide food and other basic necessities (Makando, 2008). The CBDPS are important as they could complement the Namibian government's efforts to eradicate poverty, as highlighted in the Vision 2030 document.

2. Statement of the problem

Many CBDPs facilitators and donors have initiated several community-based development projects as an intervention measure in the Oshana Region of Namibia (Shikongo, 2013). These CBDPs include: World Vision, Red-cross, Project Hope, and Orphans and Vulnerable Children Organizations among others. The purpose of these CBDPs is to make communities become self-reliant. These CBDPs initiated projects such as bore holes, health facilities, sewing, bakery, piggery and gardening and irrigation projects. However, it has been noted that once the donor funds are withdrawn from these CBDPs, communities' fail to sustain these projects and are eventually forced to revert to conditions of destitution and deprivation (Nakipala, 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia. The following research questions question were developed to explore the research problem:

- What were the factors considered in the initiation of the Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia?

- What are the factors contributing to the unsustainability of Community Development Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia?

- What measures could be implemented to reverse the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia?

3. Theoretical framework

The study to explore Factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development in the Oshana region of Namibia was guided by the empowerment theory. Rathakrishnan and Padma (2013) argues that empowerment is a process of transition from a state of powerlessness to a state of relative control over one's life, destiny, and environment. Based on this definition, it can be argued that of the key purposes of the tenets of empowerment theory is to foster professional practices and effective production of outputs in a community. Moreover, Zimmerman (2000) maintains that the theory of empowerment suggests a distinct approach for developing interventions and creating social change. The empowerment theory captures the logic of community development because it restores abilities required to make changes and mastery of issues that may affect the transformation process.

The literature mention four cognitive dimensions of psychological empowerment. The first of these dimensions is *meaning* which refers to the value that a community member ascribe to their work in relation to their own values, beliefs, ideals, behavior, and standards. Competence describes community members' sense of self-efficacy and belief in their ability to accomplish certain work goals while s*elf-determination, is* about community members need to choose choice and the possibility to autonomously act regarding work-related decisions, methods. The last dimension is impact, which refers to community member's state of mind on making a difference and of having the opportunity to influence outcomes in connection with strategic and administrative issues (Spreitzer, 2008; Weidenstedt, 2017). The empowerment theory embraced herein refer to community members preparation through communication, education, training and awareness programs that make them realize how they could make positive changes in their lives on their own.

The review of literature conceptualizes three interwoven processes that could inform and characterize the empowerment theory. First is individual empowerment, which occurs in the course of active participation in social change processes in groups and organizations it has a special value for both the individual and the environment. Second is community empowerment which is seen as a referring to the giving of confidence, skills, and power to communities to shape and influence what public bodies do for or with them. Thirdly, empowering professional practice is methodical intervention aimed at encouraging processes of individual and community empowerment. Empowering professional practice is professional activity that stems from social systems with the aim of encouraging processes of increased control of those individuals and communities in whose lives these systems intervene (Adamson and Bromiley, 2013). In the authors view, these processes that characterize the empowerment theory seems to suggest the need for participation, partnerships, prosperity and above all the provision of educational opportunities to the benefit communities.

The authors of this paper borrowed ideas about cognitive dimensions of psychological empowerment and the characteristics of the empowerment theory to inform the study. In that regard, the focus of the empowerment theory is on *meaning that* community members ascribe to the unsustainability of community-based development and and on the c*ompetence* needed to accomplish community-based development projects. The notions of *self-determination* and i*mpact* become important as these relate to c*omm*unity member's ability to choose and to have an opportunity to influence outputs in community-based development projects in the

Oshana region of Namibia. These views are in line with Puncreobutr and Watttanasan (2016) who argues that anyone who obtains high level of individual empowerment would possess high level of organization commitment. Thus, the empowerment theory is adopted because it rests on connecting community member's broader social and administrative process leading to the acquisition of competencies for project design and implementation and maintaining sustainability of projects.

4. Material and methods

This study was of a qualitative nature. With this type of inquiry, the researcher carries out research about people's experiences, in natural settings, using a variety of techniques, such as interviews and observations, and reports findings mainly in words rather than use of measurements and quantities (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014). The qualitative study approach embraces a phenomenological design, which focuses on the subjective experiences, meanings and essence of lived experiences (Mertens, 2015). The participants took part in the study had understanding and shared lived experiences of sustainability in the CBDP in Oshana region of Namibia.

4.1. Population and sampling and Research instruments

The population for this study was all the CBDP beneficiaries, managers and donors in the Oshana region of Namibia. This amounted to 68 CBDPs Managers, 100 beneficiaries, 20 donor agencies located in the Oshana region of Namibia, based on the estimated number provided by the Oshana Regional Council. Time and reasons pertaining to accessibility facilitated by researcher employment at the Oshana Regional Council, it was then decided to undertake the research in the Oshana region of Namibia.

The study employed a purposive sampling method whereby the researcher selected people who could best help him or her to understand the phenomenon (Cresswell, 2012, p. 206). The participants in the study were people who were responsible for CBDPs (managers, beneficiaries and donors). The advantage of the sampling method is that the participants have knowledge about the topic and they can give reliable information, which will help the researcher to reach the objectives of the study. The participants with knowledge on the topic were those who had experience regarding the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia. The names of the CBDP managers, CBDP donors and CBDP beneficiaries were placed in different bowls and then were selected one by one until the required number was reached.

The sample consisted of 20 participants and these were composed of five (5) CBDP managers, ten (10) CBDP beneficiaries (2 participants per project) and five (5) CBDP donors. The CBDP were selected based on the fact that they are all from the same geographical region, all are community based and they all have the related goals. The number seems to be little, however, Cresswell (2012) accentuate that a typical sample size for a phenomenological design can be between 5 and 25 individuals, and as long as they have direct experience with the phenomenon being studied.

Interviews were conducted to collect the relevant information to ensure that the research questions were answered. Three (3) different semi-structured interview guides were used: one for CBDP beneficiaries, one for CBDP managers and one for CBDP donors. The semi-structured interview guides were used to obtain in–depth

information from the respondents about the factors contributing to the unsustainability of CBDPs in the Oshana region of Namibia.

4.2. Data collection procedures, analysis, and ethics

One of the researchers collected data by establishing appointments with research participants. The respective research participants' consent was also obtained during that meeting. The participants were then interviewed on a face-to-face basis and individually. The researcher made use of a tape-recorder and also took notes during the interviews to ensure accuracy and to gather as much information as possible from the participants.

The recorded interviews were transcribed from the tape-recordings and analysed using the content analysis method. This method involves the categorization of verbal data for the purpose of classification, summarization and tabulation (Struwig and Stead, 2001). Moreover, content analysis is the process of summarizing and reporting written data, its main contents and the messages it contains. Content analysis is a strict and systematic set of procedures that embraces rigorous analysis, examination and verification of the contents of written data (Cohen et al., 2011).

The researchers read through the transcribed notes several times and placed the data into categories depicting the source of that data. This process included assessment of the collected and transcribed data in order to identify the appropriate responses. The data reduction process was also applied as part of the content analysis. Though this process, the multitudinous empirical data was ordered into meaningful parts using index codes.

Prior to the actual data collection process, ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Namibia's Centre for Research and Publications (CRP) with the ethical clearance code (FOE/181/2017). The Permission to conduct the study in the Oshana region of Namibia was also obtained from the Chief Regional Officer for the Oshana region. Consent forms were designed with the information on the overall purpose of the study as well as the benefits of the study. This information was read to the participants before they started with the interviews. Confidentiality was guaranteed by making sure that participants did not provide their names or personal particulars to be linked to the information provided. Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time from the study were emphasised and the participants were protected by making sure that all research activities did not lead to any physical or mental harm. The researcher explained all of the above to the participants and asked their permission to record the interviews using a voice recorder.

5. Results

The target for this study consisted of 20 participants and these were composed of 5 Community Based Development Managers and 10 Community Based Development Beneficiaries and 5 Community Based Development Donors. The collected data were used to show the factors that were considered in the initiation of the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia, factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects and the recommendations to reverse the unsustainability of community based developmental projects in the Oshana region of Namibia. The index codes shown in Table 1 are used to report the understandings of the respondents.

Table 1. The index code for study participants in the Oshana region of Namibia

Code	Description
B	Beneficiaries
D	Development practitioner
M	Managers

5.1. The Factors that were considered in the initiation of the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia

Table 2 shows the Factors that were considered in the initiation of the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia. It shows that the donors (D) initiated projects according to the needs of the government or owners of projects while the managers (M) maintained that the projects are initiated because of the people that did not do well in school. Moreover, the beneficiaries (B) mentioned that it was because of the response to HIV/AIDS. In general, these results show that the respondents have different experiences relating to how the projects were initiated. In fact, it is shown that the project initiation process did start from the grass roots level but either from government or an interested party.

Table 2. How projects were initiated in the Oshana Region of Namibia

B	"This started as a support group for people living with HIV and AIDs, we started sharing information about HIV and AIDS, however we decided to change or divert it into a project so that we can get some income." "My late disabled mother started this project because she had many skills that she acquired while she was hospitalized in Windhoek, she was given different machines to sew and that is how the project started." "I just joined the project and do not have any idea on how the project was initiated, I heard that it started way back in the 80's I was not even born by then, however most of the projects are initiated to improve the livelihood of the people."
D	The project was started by community members who decided to work together to combat the issues of unemployment." "Most of the projects are initiated with different reasons, some are initiated by project owners, others are initiated based on the need of the government or other organizations, and however I have no idea about the initiation of this particular project, the project beneficiaries will be in the better position to tell you."
M	"As the manager and founder of the project, the project started way back as a small project and I use to sew and sell clothes because I did not do well in school. I was later introduced to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare and they supported me financially." "We started the project with the reason of food security, we had an earth dam which was not used and we decided to use it to harvest fish, we were involved in the initiation of the project because we are the ones who started the project."

5.2. Factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects

Table 3 shows the factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects. It shows that for Beneficiaries (B), the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects are the issues of funds and climate change. The Donors (D) mentioned that the factors that contribute to unsustainability are the issue of land, reasons for starting projects and lack or no policies in place. The Managers (M) mentioned that number of project members and empowerment, members not involved at the initiation of the project and working in vague without a policy in place are some of the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana region of Namibia. The results show that there are indeed different and related factors that lead to the unsustainability of projects.

Table 3. Factors contributing to the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects

B	"The issue of funds is really a challenge, when we started, we just contributed as project members and some project members do not really contribute as a result, we sometimes stay without money to buy food for our chickens." "The issue of climate change, less rain and the fact that we do not have tap water, our earth dams are drying up quickly so we cannot sustain our project." "The project is struggling because of the lack of finances to run and it is also very difficult for us because we do not have a full-time project manager, the one that we have is having an eight to five job so it is also not easy for her."
D	"Land, in most cases the project is operating at one of the project members place, especially the one who started the project, that in it already intimidate the other project members and they will not have a sense of ownership." "Reasons of starting a project, the reality is not everyone who starts the project understand, some individuals start projects without an idea, no knowledge or skills all they want is improvement in their lives and this contribute to project unsustainability." "There are no policies that govern the project; however, they have a constitution in place that govern them on day-to-day operations."
M	"Number of project members and empowerment plays a major role, what I have picked up is that most of the projects that are doing well have few members and they are really empowered, projects with so many members are not always sustainable and they have projects members that are not empowered and not doing well." "Maybe it is because some project members were not involved during the project initiation; they will join however they will later feel as if it is not their project. Lack of security, machines and other materials are being stolen because there is no safety." "We are not working based on any policy however we just set our own rules that we set up."

5.3. Measures to reverse the unsustainability of community based developmental projects in the Oshana region of Namibia

Table 4 shows the measure to reverse the unsustainability of community based developmental projects in the Oshana region of Namibia.

Table 4. Participants measures to reverse the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects

B	"I feel in the future we need to be trained in order for us to understand the importance of projects, we also need mentors to be helping us so that we can go on well with our projects. I also feel the government is not doing a lot when it comes to giving us individuals such as councillors to help us run our projects." "If we can be involved in the project process from the beginning, we will understand the project better and be part of it but now we are given projects at times while we cannot even manage them." "If we are given an opportunity to visit other projects that are doing well, we may be encouraged to work hard." "It is important to be monitored and evaluated, to be told what we are doing well and be praised and to be corrected were we are not doing so well." "If only our training manuals will be in our local language so that we can continue reading and use them as guidelines when we are stuck." "Good communication skills, respect among project members and project manager can be the good medicine to project sustainability."
M	"At some points the government is not even involved in the planning as well as the implementation of the community projects because the involvement of the government may allow the projects to work well." "Government visits can play a major role, if we can be visited by the government in some cases we may be encouraged to work hard." "Workshops need to be on going because the way we use to work in the project a year ago will be different because even the technology is moving forward." "We as project members also need training on how to run the projects."
D	"Most of the projects are not known by the government or responsible individuals in the region, I would recommend that all community projects to be registered because the active ones are the only ones that are getting assistance in terms of funding." "I feel some community members are not ready to work on their own when the projects are handed over to them by the donors or other organizations, they need to be ready before the handover." "For projects to run well, project members or managers need basic financial management training in order to run the projects." "The government need to provide funds as a starting capital to project members because the community members that are project members are bringing the unemployment number down."

The table shows that the beneficiaries (B) recommended that they need projects that are doing well, improve monitoring and evaluation, translate the training manual in the local languages as well as improve communication. The Managers (M) recommended more government involvements and more workshops and training opportunities. Finally, the Donors (D) recommended registration of projects, government involvements and provision of financial managements for beneficiaries. These results show diverse but complementary recommendations to reverse the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia.

6. Discussions

The discussion of data is centered on factors that were considered in the initiation of the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia, factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects and the measures to reverse the unsustainability of community based developmental projects in the Oshana region of Namibia.

6.1. The factors that were considered in the initiation of the projects in the Oshana region of Namibia

The study reveals that factors that were considered in the initiation of the Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia are that the CBDP beneficiaries-initiated projects to respond to issues of HIV/AIDS. The projects can raise funds for patients' transport to and from the hospital to go and collect their medication. Some projects were initiated because they were believed to contribute to food security. Moreover, some projects may be initiated to get funds for campaigns to educate community members on the prevention, the importance of knowing your HIV status as well as living positively with the HIV/AIDS virus. The Donors initiated projects according to the needs of the government or owners of projects. Owners of the projects may also think about what they need in their lives and decide on the type of the project to embark on. The Community Based Development Managers explained that projects are initiated because of the people that did not do well in school. Most of the people who did not do well in school may want to bring about positive changes in their lives; they may want to provide for the families, pay for their children school as well as to maintain their households on a daily basis.

The study findings are also supported by Trevor (2004, p.22-23) who indicated that different projects may have different reason for establishing them. It asserted that some may be initiated by the senior management while others may come from the donors or even someone who see a need to address specific needs. It seems that the finding is related to the literature on CBDP which is about the need to complement the country effort to eradicate poverty as highlighted in the Vision 2030 document, Harambee Prosperity Plan (2016-2020) and the National Development Plan [NDP 5] (2017-2022).

6.2. Factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects

Factors contributing to the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects in the Oshana region of Namibia as per the CBDP beneficiaries seem to point to climate change and availability of funds. It appears

that individuals work hard in their projects but when there is change in climate change, that is beyond their control and there is nothing that they can do. For example, when one is involved in a gardening project and their source of water is the rainfall even if they are determined to work hard such projects owners may not succeed due to lack of water. It seems that climate change is a major challenge because the climates have changed and one may not know when it will rain, when you will have lack of rain or when you will have floods. One issue that came out from the Community Based Development beneficiaries is the issue of funds. Projects may become unsustainable if there are no funds to run them. Another factor is related to the misuse of funds. This happens when project managers or individuals use project money on activities that are not part of the project. In cases where there are funds issues, the project members may feel demoralized thus they may leave the project and that will lead to the unsustainability of projects. The other factors that contribute to unsustainability are the issue of land. This happens when the projects operate on a land that does not belong to the project or project members, they may feel uncomfortable since the land belongs to someone else. The owner of the land may also behave in a way that would make the project members uncomfortable. Moreover, it is outlined that some factors that contribute to the unsustainability is lack of policies. Policies are supposed to be rules and guidelines that individuals need to work based on, policies are made as a guiding tool to guide on how to operate. Most of the projects do not have policies in place that they operate in vague.

Another factor is about the lack of interest in the project. For example, some community members may start a project because there are calls for projects to be funded and not that they want that project. Moreover, it appears that funding organizations have areas they are willing to fund which may not be what the community members want, but because of the available funds, community members may settle for what the donor or funding organization wants. In this regard, the project may not be a priority to them and this may lead to the unsustainability of projects. Another factor that is mentioned is the lack of empowerment opportunities. Empowerment is a very important aspect when it comes to projects, more especially community projects. Individuals need to be empowered in order for them to take the full ownership of the project and work hard to sustain the project.

Norman (2012) indicated that the unsustainability of community-based development projects is caused by factors such as poor management, lack of community involvement in the project, lack of monitoring and evaluation by government and private sectors responsible for the project, lack of access to funds management and lack or failure to consult local people. Empowerment is also highlighted in the literature as one of the factors to unsustainability of community-based development projects. Usadolo and Caldwel (2016) indicated that empowerment is a very important component thus community involvement in decision making and implementation allows the project to continue after the development experts and donors withdraw from the process and this is further supported that empowerment programme for the locals through the involvement in decision and implementation of projects to ensure the success of a project.

6.3. Reversing the unsustainability of CBDPS in the Oshana region of Namibia

Participants of the study listed a number of recommendations to reverse the unsustainability of Community Based Developmental Projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia. These are (a) the project members need to be part of the project initiation phase and (b) each project needs to have a policy in place. It is further indicated that the project members need to own the project and they need to be empowered. Norman (2012) indicated

that monitoring must be intensified by community leaders and government officials, he further indicated that project members must be made aware that projects are not established to make them rich and must be motivated to work hard for the growth of community projects. It is recommended that when the community members understand the importance of projects, they will stop vandalizing the project materials. The findings are in agreement with Usadolo and Caldwel (2016) who indicated that community involvement in the decision making and implementation allows the projects to continue after the development experts and donors withdraw from the project.

7. Summary and recommendations

This article addressed the factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects in the Oshana Region of Namibia. The article shows that indeed the projects can be sustainable and that if the projects are sustained, the results may contribute to the poverty change rate that is stipulated in the Namibia Development Plans, Harambee Prosperity Plan as well as Namibia Vision 2030. The reasons for initiation of projects were dependent upon needs of different stakeholders. For example, the beneficiaries-initiated projects to respond to issues of HIV/AIDS so that they could raise funds for patients' transport to and from the hospital to go and collect their medication. Moreover, some projects may be initiated to get funds for campaigns to educate community members on the prevention. The Donors initiated projects according to the needs of the government or owners of projects while some CBDP Managers explained that projects were initiated because of the people that did not do well in school in order bring about positive changes in their lives, pay for children school as well as to maintain their households on a daily basis. Among that the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of CBDPs in the Oshana Region, were poor management, lack of community involvement in the project, lack of monitoring and evaluation by government and private sectors responsible for the project, lack of access to funds management and lack or failure to consult local people. The sustainability challenges faced by the CBDP managers, beneficiaries and donors point to a combination of factors, including natural, financial and human challenges. The natural challenges related to climate change while the financial challenges are about lack of money. The human resources challenges are lack of skills and knowledge, lack of communication, no project managers in place and lack of respect among the project members. It shows lack of empowerment needed by community members to develop a sense of self-efficacy and belief in their ability to accomplish CBDPs goals. In terms of reversing the unsustainability of CBDPS in the Oshana region of Namibia, the study revealed need for project members to be part of the project initiation phase and that each project needs to have a policy in place. It was further indicated that the project members need to own the project and they need to be empowered. The need for government support, as well as supplementary income for those who did not do well in school so that they can improve their quality of life and maintain livelihoods.

Based on the results reported in this study, the following recommendations can be made. The recommendations target the CBDP beneficiaries, mangers, donors, the Oshana Regional Council and the entire community.

7.1. Recommendations to the CBDP beneficiaries

- The beneficiaries need to participate in the initial planning, implementation and evaluation of the projects. When people are involved in the whole process of the project, they are likely to understand what is expected of them at the different stages of the project. Moreover, individuals may take ownership of the project when they are fully involved.

- Beneficiaries must be coached to understand the importance of making in kind contributions to projects, in cases where there are no donors, projects members need to be coached to contribute to the projects in terms of goods and services.

- It is important that beneficiaries assess their motivations, interests and intentions of being project members. When they are sure of what they are interested in or why they need to be part of the project, they tend to be more committed than people who are not so sure why they want to be part of the project.

- Beneficiaries need to undertake research on the projects well before they decide to embark on them. This is very important because they will understand the type of project that will suit them well and the ones that they will be able to handle and manage.

- Communities in the Oshana region need to establish a committee which would see to it that project members sign a performance agreement with the committee members.

7.2. Recommendations to the CBDP donors

- The donors must be urged to ensure that the project members and managers are trained in financial management, effective communication and project management during the operation of the projects.

- The monitoring and evaluation of projects need to be frequent as it motivates the project donors to give an indication of how the project is progressing. The result of monitoring and evaluation may give individuals hope to continue and also to rectify issues that need to be addressed, should there be any.

- The donors must be urged to provide grants that are sufficient to support the initiated projects. This recommendation is necessitated by the findings that sometimes the project members receive insufficient funds that cannot even help them to start a project.

- The donors must be urged to create a system of empowerment and opportunities for beneficiaries so that they develop a sense of ownership in the projects.

7.3. Recommendations to the CBDPs managers

- Project managers need to be trained before the project is initiated so that they understand their roles and duties.

- Project managers must be able to identify the skills needed by project beneficiaries, and different training given for different skills.

- Managers must identify projects that are doing well and take the project members to see how the other projects are doing.

- The issue of security has to be taken seriously. The study findings indicated that some projects lost valuable goods and machinery because of a lack of security at the project sites.

7.4. Recommendation for general community members

- Community members need to be coached to understand the importance of CBDPs and start supporting project members instead of putting them down and vandalizing the projects.
- It is important that community members get involved in the process of planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the community projects so that they can provide their inputs. This can be done continuously at different stages of the project.

7.5. Recommendations to the Oshana Regional Council

- The Oshana Regional Council should be urged to compile a profile of all the CBDPs in the region. This is important for them to know how many projects are in the region. Having a profile can also help them in planning and they can be able to advise possible donors on which projects to fund.
- The Oshana Regional Council needs to motivate the youth to be part of CBDPs. Being energetic and active, they can play a major role in the projects; they are still at the level where they can conduct research on how to better manage the projects.
- The Oshana Regional Council needs to assign staff members to projects. These assigned staff members must develop standards and measures for accountability and report on the projects operating in the region.
- The training division of the Oshana Regional Council needs to embark upon workshops/training as an ongoing activity to empower project members in the region with project management skills.
- The Oshana Regional Council needs to initiate community meetings that would help the community to understand the importance of CBDPs.
- The Oshana Regional Council needs to increase the budget line for CBDPs.
- The Oshana Regional Council needs to develop a CBDP policy that can be used throughout the country. The study findings indicated that most of the projects are operating without rules and regulations as there is no policy in place that guides them. The policy needs to insert a clause which compels the donors to support the CBDPs until they become independent and self-sustainable.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to report on the factors contributing to the unsustainability of community-based development projects in the Oshana region of Namibia. The notion of community development projects and sustainability is an important in Namibia as outlined in Namibia national documents. It appears that some development projects tend to perform well and contribute positively to the livelihoods of individuals as well as the employment rate, while other projects tend to die a natural death or turn into white elephants. However, reasons or factors as to why these fails or succeed is not being documents been documented. This is one of the reasons why there is a dearth of literature on unsustainability in the Namibian literature. However, this study

will make a great contribution to CBDPs facilitators as it identifies and put forward challenges encountered. The study findings may complement the Namibian government's efforts to eradicate poverty, as highlighted in the Vision 2030 document. The recommendations of this study focus on the need to empower the project members, outline the importance of projects, to develop policies and implement them, setting up security measures at the projects sites as well as enacting monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as part of the projects. This study focused on one region only but there are fourteen regions in Namibia. A study can be conducted to cover all the country regions and get the national views on the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of Community Based Development Projects in Namibia in general.

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