

The Role of Improved O&OD Methodology in Promoting Social Economy in Tanzania: A Solution to Sustainable Community Social Development Projects?

Rogers Rugeiyamu

Human Resource Management Department
The Local Government Training Institute,
Tanzania

Abstract

This study uses Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD) to assess whether Improved Opportunities & Obstacles to Development (O&OD) is an effective methodology for promoting sustainable social economy in Tanzania. The study was conducted at Maseyu village in the Morogoro region of Tanzania. A case study design was applied whereby data were collected through observation and interviews and analyzed using content analysis approach. The results revealed that improved O&OD can be an answer to community social development projects sustainability in Tanzania. This is a prerequisite of anticipated social economy if communities change their current mindset of “waiting for the government/development partners to do for them” to “start doing by themselves”. The study recommends communities use the Ward Facilitators (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) proposed by the Improved O&OD Guidelines as a tool to change people’s mindsets to ensure that they plan, implement, and sustain self-initiated projects.

Keywords

Improved O&OD, social economy, social development projects, sustainability

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Rogers Rugeiyamu, The Local Government Training Institute
P.O. Box 1125, Dodoma, Tanzania. Email: okoth3890@gmail.com
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The Genesis of O&OD in Tanzania

Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) methodology was adopted in Tanzania by the government in 2001 as a community planning methodology. The methodology evolved in line with Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP), which introduced the Decentralization by Devolution (D by D) Agenda of 1998 and the subsequent Local Government Policy Paper of 1998. The LGRP was derived from legal framework of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania 1977, Articles 145 and 146, supporting the move of authority to the people and allowing them to participate in planning and implementation of development projects (PORALG, 2019).

The government of Tanzania realized that planning was, in most cases, owned and led by experts and development partners who had always believed they have the control and that they know what the people need. Arguably, this traditional planning approach led to many plans implemented in Tanzania communities not being sustainable, having no relevance to the targeted communities, not reflecting their needs, suffocating of the sense of liberty to adjudicate, and thence deleterious to the entire perspective of community ownership of development programmes (PMO-RALG, 2007).

Therefore, the government introduced O&OD as a bottom-up planning and development methodology to be implemented in all Local Government Authorities (LGAs) to enhance development and service delivery (Cooksey & Kikula, 2005, p. 2). Cooksey & Kikula (p. 26) contend that the methodology be driven by bottom-up planning, starting with opportunities rather than obstacles. This would invigorate the need to seek homegrown solutions to development in every locality, hence promoting ownership and instilling a sense of self-reliance in the community. It operates within the structures of LGAs and in line with overall national plans and budgets and is comprehensive and multi-sectoral. It was anticipated the methodology to be a good move towards building social economy to local communities (Fjeldstad et al., 2010, p. 1). In relation to this study, social economy as used above refers to the set of associations, communities, cooperatives, mutual organizations, and foundations whose activity is driven by values of solidarity, the primacy of people over capital, and democratic and participative governance. All these were the vision of O&OD by transforming Tanzanian communities to ensure cooperation in attaining social development and participative governance (OECD, 2007).

By 2004, O&OD methodology had been rolled out to more than two thirds of all LGAs. In 2004, the government issued the Guidelines for institutionalizing the O&OD in the LGAs as a basis for devolving powers to the people, strengthening democracy, emphasizing human rights and poverty eradication, though it was not clearly used to make plans sustainable. To address this, in 2006 the government, in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), conducted a study to improve the O&OD process (PMO-RALG, 2008, p. 1). It resulted in the O&OD

Handbook Training Manual, The Rural Planning Guide, and The Urban Planning Guide to reflect the proposed changes. The aim was to promote a self-help spirit, mobilize materials and human resources, and enhance transparency in planning and implementation of community projects (PMO-RALG, 2007).

As part of social preparation, the O&OD handbook proposed the use of national, district facilitators (DF) and ward facilitators (WF) to ensure the internalization of the methodology and carry out their facilitation effectively (PO-RALG, 2001). They were supposed to receive in depth training about the process and facilitation skills. However, their understanding remained shallow as Cooksey & Kikula (2005, p. 7) contend that the process was overambitious hence, it was not effective.

During the implementation of O&OD, one of its characteristics was that community members were participating in data collection (community needs). This had community members develop a list of what they wanted and probably not what they felt was needed. After data collection, the government decided which priority to implement first. The people were involved in the planning stage and the government did the rest, including implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This gave the people the feeling that they did not own the projects; they were government projects and hence it was the responsibility of the government to sustain these projects (Fjeldstad et al., 2010, p. 4-5).

Arguably, this can be seen as a bad move towards implementation of O&OD as a methodology. This assertion is raised because people were not prepared to assume their new role as development planners and implementers. They thought that their responsibility was to tell the government what they wanted and the government would do it. There was no liberation mindset among community members (PMO-RALG, 2008). Hence, the developed projects failed to be sustained as the government assumed that the people were aware of what they were supposed to do. So, O&OD was still not an effective methodology towards self-help development and building of a strong social economy.

In connection with that, other factors resulted in this type of O&OD to fail include lack of people's ownership of community projects. The people depended too much on government support. This made them reluctant to play their anticipated role for their own development.

All of these made this O&OD to fail as an approach of making people self-reliant in their own development. PORALG (2019) calls this type of O&OD a Conventional one, which we will refer to as Conventional O&OD. Due to the above challenges, the government revisited its guidelines and conducted more studies to find out what went wrong with Conventional O&OD and developed a new version known as Improved O&OD.

The Birth of Improved O&OD in Tanzania

The challenges confronting Conventional O&OD paved the way for the development of Improved O&OD. Improved O&OD is a methodology to strengthen LGAs' capacity to grasp the reality in the communities, villages/Mitaa (*Mitaa are the administrative areas within the urban authorities' wards. Mitaa are headed by Mtaa chairperson (political post) and Mtaa Executive Officer (MEO) (administrative post). Mitaa are responsible for ensuring the implementation of LGAs functions in their jurisdiction*) and establish community development projects reflecting the reality of the people. Improved O&OD aims to allow communities to implement self-help efforts, nurture them and establish collaborative relationships with the government to realize better service delivery and local economic and social development (PORALG, 2019, p. 3).

This methodology is in line with several government aspirations such as Tanzania Development Vision (2025), Second Five Year Development Plan (2016/17-2020/21), National Five Year Development Plan 2021/22-2025/26 and various other policies. It is anticipated to be most effective methodology for all LGAs to accelerate D by D agenda which intends to provide better service to the people, and it started to be implemented in 2019.

The methodology insists that local development will be realized if LGAs build and sustain collaborative relationships with the communities and promoting Community Initiatives (CIs). CIs are collaborative actions or projects that people proactively plan, implement and reflect to overcome challenges identified by themselves. They are strong community priorities that people make up their mind to start taking actions by themselves without waiting for somebody to do for them. Collaborative relationship for CIs is because it is the juncture where people and government efforts can be joined to bring effective service delivery and local economy. In this regard, under Improved O&OD the government and communities or groups are supporting one another to realize better service delivery and local development. The collaborative efforts include people in their self-organized groups/communities make efforts to overcome their challenges by themselves whenever they can instead of waiting for the government action. Villages/Mitaa function as administrative units so that people can take actions as the main actor to improve their own life and LGAs encourage villages/Mitaa to function as the focal point of people's self-help efforts and facilitate people to boost collaborative activities.

Under collaborative relationship, the role of the government in the implementation of CIs will be community facilitation, and providing moral, technical, and financial support whenever will be needed.

For better implementation of self-efforts based on felt problems, Improved O&OD encourages the establishment of Ward Facilitators (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) to empower groups/community to plan and implement projects based on their self-efforts. WF's will have to support groups/community to identify their challenges and plan to overcome them,

collaborate with villages/Mitaa leaders to monitor and evaluate people's development activities, provide technical support around specialization, identify and train CFs and Ward Executive Officers (WEOs) to deal with challenges beyond their capabilities and link people with different development partners for sustainable development. On the other hand, the CFs will have to collaborate with villages/Mitaa leaders to identify felt needs and take collective actions in response to people's needs, facilitate community members to realize projects. CFs will be selected because of their experience in working for community empowerment. The WFs will be appointed at the ward level and trained so that they can train CFs and community members to realize self-help efforts (PORALG, 2019, 12, 40, 42).

Perhaps the presence of active WFs and CFs is what differentiates Improved O&OD from the Conventional O&OD. Under this methodology, these facilitators live in the specific areas and empower and link community members with local government and other development partners to realize group/community projects. Again, what differentiates Improved from Conventional O&OD is that, in conventional, people were participating in planning and budgeting and leaving the government to implement projects for people while Improved O&OD makes people part and parcel of projects and maintain a collaborative relationship between the government and local communities. Also, Conventional O&OD concentrated on community priorities which sometimes were not their felt need/problem a thing that is addressed in improved O&OD as it focuses on community initiatives which reflect the felt needs of people.

To implement this methodology, the government through Ministry in the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Local Government Training Institute (LGTI) developed guidelines for Improved O&OD together with manuals for implementation including Planning and Implementation manual for Improved O&OD; Community Facilitation Manual, Trainers manual and Trainers of Trainers manual. These manuals are clearly interlinked under the guidelines for Improved O&OD.

The researcher is optimistic that this methodology is theoretically sound and, if implemented well, can enable promoting social economy in Tanzania. However, the worry is if the projects initiated will be effectively sustained because this requires mindset liberation and acting in a positive way, something that contributed to the failure of Conventional O&OD. Changing people's mindset from Conventional to Improved O&OD requires extra effort and ingenuity. This will require training WFs and CFs in removing dependency syndrome, because even if they initiate projects, they will still depend on funding by external organizations for sustainability and will depend on LGAs readiness to implement the guidelines for Improved O&OD.

These concerns lead to some questions. First, will the methodology enable removing dependency syndrome? Next, are people ready to change their mindset? Third, what techniques

are to be used to liberate mindset? Finally, will people be willing to contribute resources for project sustainability without seeking external assistance? These questions lead to a rationale for this study, which is to assess if Improved O&OD is able to liberate people for CIs sustainability. The role of this methodology is assessed by using Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD) framework. The researcher expects the study to help inform the PO-RALG, LGAs, and Local Government Training institute (LGTI) to focus to ensure that Improved O&OD helps people sustain projects established by themselves to advance social economy.

Participatory Local Social Development (PLSD): A Framework for Community Social Project Sustainability

This study was built along PLSD framework. PLSD was developed by Sharma and Ohama (2007) for understanding the planning and implementation of projects at the community and groups level. It focuses on experience, capability, and adequate interventions for empowerment and realization of outstanding community and group development. It aims to show what people can do to promote self-help efforts. The framework suggests five elements that should be considered in sustainability of social development projects. Project sustainability, in its essence, entails the assurance of the continued utilization of projects results after its completion.

Sharma and Ohama (2007) argue that planning, management, and sustainability of community and groups self-help efforts should ensure a balance among norms, organization, resources, capability, and institutional linkage. Self-help efforts which are also equated to social projects are used to entail attempts by communities and groups to address challenges facing them socially and economically without waiting for major interventions from the government. In this framework, it is believed that through the five elements, people will be able to plan, implement, and sustain self-help efforts without waiting external assistance, hence enabling move towards building strong social economy. The framework suggests that, if communities are to sustain initiated projects the mentioned elements should be integrated as the diagram presents and elaborated below.

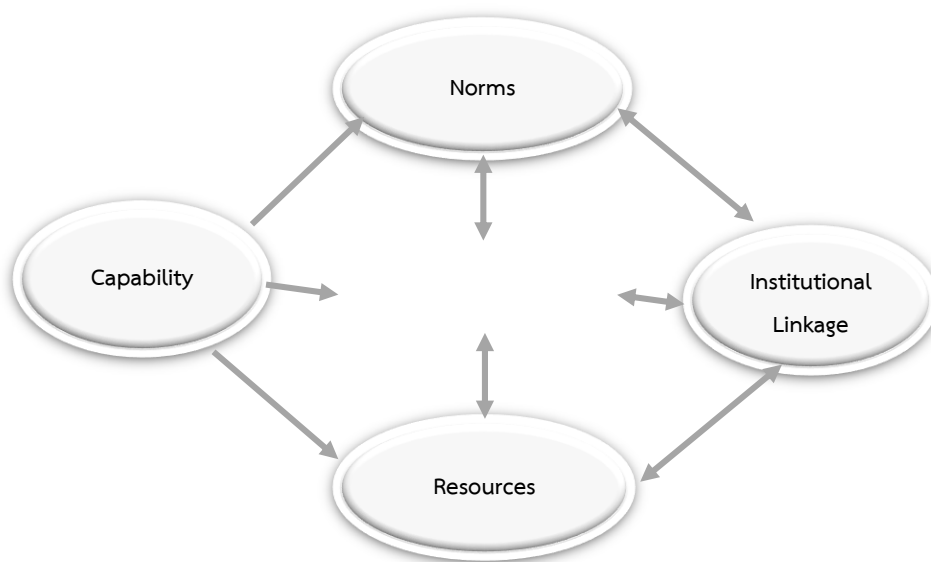


Figure 1. PLSD Framework for Project Sustainability (Sharma & Ohama, 2007)

Norms Element: PLSD suggests that social projects and self-help efforts should ensure that norms are set to regulate the behavior of community members from planning to sustainability. Norms should set clear how community and group members shall participate in the project sustainability. Norms are categorized into two areas. Cognizant norms include culture, values, attitudes, and behavior, where projects should take into consideration the culture and values of the community or group so that people can own the project and take it as part and parcel of the community. Operational norms include regulations and by-laws. The framework suggests that for project sustainability, rules, regulations, and by-laws should be developed in a participatory way to ensure people’s awareness of what they need to contribute for project sustainability. The operational norms will ensure mindset and behavior change among community members as they will be regulated by laws developed by themselves to contribute to their efforts towards project enhancement.

Organization Element: The framework insists that community or group members should be organized in a way that they are in a position of administering projects and have a sense of togetherness. Strong leadership should prevail. Through a democratic approach, members should appoint leaders that are strong and competent to help community and groups attain social development through effective implementation of social projects. Leadership should be able to use set norms to run organizations and guide members towards sustainability of projects.

Resources Element: Resources are important for effective implementation and sustainability of self-help efforts. Community and group members should be aware of the importance of mobilizing resources for projects sustainability. Resources may include financial, human, physical, technological, and time. Community and group members should be able to

contribute and mobilize resources in both the inner and outer system of the community. Inner systems include areas where they have control, such as household and the community, itself. Here, members must contribute resources as they are able without waiting for the government to contribute. Under outer systems, the community or group should develop linkage with outside institutions found in local markets and higher local government to seek assistance which cannot be found in the inner systems. The resources solicited should be utilized for project sustainability as norms and strong leadership will be guiding members to reach their goals.

Capability Element: This element encourages the capacity of communities and groups to initiate, implement and sustain projects. Communities and groups should be empowered to handle small and huge projects. The capability that is insisted here is to identify felt need, plan, implement and sustain self-effort projects. In all the development stages, members should be liberated to implement and sustain projects without waiting for assistance from outside. They must think that they can handle the project. This fastens social development and attainability of individual objectives.

Institutional Linkage Element: Strengthening collaboration mechanisms among different organizations, communities and groups, and establishment of horizontal and vertical linkage with similar sector organizations outside the community is necessary. It is desirable to develop collaborative linkage with external support organizations like Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and LGAs, which will help to build capacity and mobilize resources significant for project sustainability.

Framework's Contribution to the Study

Communities and groups in Tanzania have been implementing projects both with Conventional O&OD and with Improved O&OD. Under Conventional O&OD, they failed to sustain projects because the projects were initiated by the government and people were involved only in the planning stage, making them think that they are government projects. Projects failed as people did not feel they owned the projects as they did not emanate from the people. Improved O&OD treats people as part and parcel of projects, and they participate in all stages of project development. PLSD framework is reflected in the Improved O&OD methodology and is expected to guide communities and groups to be able to sustain projects for social development by considering the suggested elements. In this regard, this framework helped this study by assessing how such elements were internalized in Maseyu village, which started to implement the methodology in 2016.

Study Methods

Study Design

This study applied case study design. This is an interpretive philosophical related design used to generate in-depth and multi-faceted understanding of an issue. Yin (2009) contends that the design can be used to explain, describe, or explore events or phenomena in the everyday contexts in which they occur. In this regard, the study had one case which aimed at assessing how Maseyu village uses Improved O&OD as a solution to sustainable community projects in Tanzania.

Area of Study

The study was conducted at Maseyu village. Maseyu is a village that was established in 1974 during the implementation of Villagization policy in Tanzania. The village is located 45 kilometres from Morogoro town centre, Morogoro region. The village is composed of five hamlets (Vitongoji) including Maseyu, Kitulang'alo, Chatupa, Mazizi, and Mavulu. The village has a population of 2,987, with 1,499 females and 1,538 males. The village is estimated to have 1,105 able to work. The village has a total of 17,742 hectares of land with 2632 hectares being part of the Kitulang'alo forest reserve. The major economic activity of Maseyu village is agriculture, with 90% of the households engaged in this activity and 10% engaged in entrepreneurship. However, the village is also engaged in the extraction of gold ore. This village was chosen due to its implementation of Improved O&OD.

Another reason is that, in 2011, village leaders visited Homboza Village in Kisarawe district, which is among the successful districts in implementing O&OD, to gain knowledge of how Homboza implemented sustaining development projects. The visit was arranged by the village and O&OD team. They learned good leadership, how to establish and administer village groups, how to utilize available resources, how to establish community groups and the better use of self-developed regulations for project sustainability.

The Improved O&OD created Ward Facilitators (WFs) and Community Facilitators (CFs) who functioned to help in identifying community initiatives, increasing the participation of village members on decisions and implementation of development projects, increasing the number of villages participating in village meetings and linking the village to the outer system like other development partners and Higher LGAs.

Currently, the village has managed to establish ten community groups that helps members to solve various challenges. Also, it has managed to implement various projects as presented in results section.

Target Population

This study involved village leadership including chairperson, village executive officer (VEO) and projects chairpersons; village members, Community groups, WFs and CFs. The village leadership category was targeted to find out how the projects were initiated, planned, implemented, and sustained. Village members were targeted as a group which helped to know how far the village understands the Improved O&OD, its implementation, and its role in project sustainability. Community groups were targeted in this study to examine group organization under the Improved O&OD, including establishment, administration, and sustainability. Moreover, WFs and CFs were targeted to find out how they were facilitating community members in planning, management, and sustainability of village projects. Included in the study were one Village Chairperson, one Village Executive Officer (VEO), two Ward Facilitators (WFs), four Community Facilitators (CFs), two committee chairpersons (construction committee and health committee), and the *Wanawake wa Maseyu Tanzania* (WAMATA) group, which had 16 members and 30 Village members, making a total of 56 participants.

Data Collection

Data were collected through observation and interviews. The aim of using these methods was to allow triangulation and how they are used are presented below.

Observation

This is a technique that involves systematically selecting, watching, listening, reading, touching, and recording behavior and characteristics of living beings, objects, or phenomena. Researchers, adopting this method, attempted to understand the behavior and societies by getting to know the persons involved and their values, rituals, symbols, beliefs, and emotions (Patton, 2015). The method was applied whereby the researcher observed the projects that were implemented including class and dispensary. The researcher also interacted with female group members and observed the activities they were implementing within their group. This allowed the researcher to collect data in an effective and efficient way.

Interviews

Interview questions were prepared in advance in relation to a topic that the researcher or interviewer wished to cover. They tended to be more informal and free flowing than in a structured interview, much more like a conversation (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). Conversational style allows for spontaneity and for questions based on the interviewees' responses to develop during the interview. The chief feature of the unstructured interview is to reveal information from the respondent in a more neutral environment with less attached bias from the interviewer (Bowling, 2014). Participants were allowed to be freer in conversation with the researcher and to tell what

they knew about improved O&OD and the way it is helping the village to implement and sustain social development projects.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic approach whereby data of the same themes are grouped into one category. The aim of using thematic approach was to ensure that each of the suggested elements for project sustainability are tested to assess its role in the community and group social development projects.

Results

Social Development Projects

This section presents the social development projects that were initiated and implemented by Maseyu village after the introduction of Improved O&OD. Maseyu. Social projects that were included in this study include Maseyu Dispensary, Maseyu Pre-Primary Education Classroom, and WAMATA Group.

Maseyu Village Dispensary

This is a self-initiated project by the village to solve health service challenges that they were facing. It is a project that currently is in final stages of completion and expected to be helpful to village members. The implementation of this project was triggered by the long distance to access health services due to the village being about 15 kilometres from the nearest health services, a hospital in Pwani Region. Also, the village experienced the problem of lack of awareness of HIV/AIDS among village members, especially youth. Again, a study tour to Homboza Village in Kisarawe District by village leaders organized by village leadership and the O&OD team to gain knowledge in how to initiate and implement small and large development projects was another catalyst. Through self-initiatives, the village managed to solicit internal resources to construct the project. The internal resources included a workforce, blocks, sand, and quarries. Financial resources amounted to 9,282,000 TZS (4,000 USD). Resources solicitation was made possible after awareness creation by WFs in identifying the resources the village had before the implementation of the project.

The project also received external assistance from various sources including financial assistance of 30,000,000 TZS (12,930 USD) from TANZANIA ZONE FAR, a company investing in the village; technical assistance from the Morogoro District medical officer; Tanzania Sand Quarries, a company developing quarries in the village contributed 26,000,000 TZS (11,206 USD); JASCO LTD Mwanza, a construction company investing in the village, contributed 20,854,000 TZS (8,988 USD); Morogoro District Council contributed 24,858,500 TZS (10,714 USD); and JANDU contributed sand. The project spent a total of 123,000,000 TZS (53,058 USD) and is nearing

completion, although it is in operation already. The implementation of this project is a big step towards social development as villagers will have low cost access to health services. The project was made possible due to efforts by village members, strong leadership, regulations, and unity among all parties.

To sustain the project, the village is using the construction committee and health committee to ensure that the project will be sustained. Also, they are aiming at ensuring that the dispensary will upgrade to a health centre so that they can expand services to village members and people near the village. However, the challenge they are facing towards project sustainability is lack of drugs and funds to purchase them. Village leaders are considering approaching the district council for support. In this regard, government intervention is mandatory. Looking at the way they intend to sustain the project highlights the way the dependency syndrome is still in their minds.

Maseyu Hamlet Pre-Primary Education Classroom

This project was self-initiated by the Maseyu Hamlet members, which aimed at ensuring that children in Maseyu village below five years old have access to pre-primary education. It is a project that evolved from a village meeting when members revealed that children below five years were facing a challenge in accessing pre-primary education, because the village hamlets were too distanced from the pre-primary education services. They agreed to create classes to all five Maseyu village Hamlets.

The construction of the class facilities commenced in 2012 and it started to operate in 2018, with students being taught by a teacher from Maseyu primary school. In constructing the class, they solicited internal resources such as a workforce, bricks, sand, and 3,000,000 TZS from the Village Council. Also, they got assistance of 2,000,000 TZS from District council to accomplish the project. The project efforts were made possible by the help of WFs and CFs who played a great role in raising awareness of the significance of implementing the project without waiting for outside assistance. The project took a long time because it started to be initiated before the introduction of Improved O&OD. After its introduction, they managed to progress further in the project's implementation.

The implementation of the project was due to the awareness of members and leaders by WFs who educated them on the importance of implementing self-help efforts and soliciting the required resources by themselves.

The WAMATA Group

WAMATA (Wanawake wa Maseyu Tanzania) is a registered women's group that was self-initiated by members through village leadership support. The goal was to tackle challenges facing women of Maseyu Village. These challenges included economic hardships, increased

dependency on men (their husbands), poverty, and uncertainties of the future. It was established in 2016 and started providing small-scale loans to members.

They also started to keep hens and sell eggs, process groundnuts, and process clothes (Batiki). The group has been successful by increasing awareness to members of how to establish small projects to help them solve problems and raise capital. The group can now loan up to 500,000 TZS (215 USD). Moreover, the group has been participating in supporting community projects like 40,000 TZS for a girls' dormitory of the secondary school in their ward.

Discussion: A Solution to Sustainable Social Development Projects?

The results are discussed by using PLSD framework of understanding the community. As the framework maintains, the sustainability of social development projects requires the integration of Norms, Organization, Resources, Capability, and Institutional linkage. These elements shape a discussion on whether the Improved O&OD is a solution to sustainable social development projects.

Norms and Sustainability of Social Development Projects

Looking at the studied projects at Maseyu, the study opines the village have managed to develop both cognizant and operational norms. Through the Improved O&OD they have developed regulations and bylaws to regulate the behavior of village members towards the implementation of social development projects. Also, they have managed to change the behavior of youth to cooperate with each other in implementing community projects.

Arguably, changed behavior helped the village to initiate and construct a dispensary and a pre-primary classroom. Through bylaws, they have been able to solicit resources and sometimes, with assistance from outside the village, implement projects. The WAMATA group, through its constitution, is able to regulate behaviors of members towards common goals. However, the question has been if the developed norms will help them to sustain the initiated projects? The answer to this question is that mindset change is a significant weapon. A positive factor is that Maseyu village has WFs who help them to initiate and implement projects.

The issue of norms for project sustainability was also raised during interviews. For instance, the Village Executive officer said:

“The issue to be concerned with is if regulations we have developed will help to sustain projects. But we have WFs hopefully they will help us to change people's mindset”

Under the Conventional O&OD, people lacked mindset liberation towards projects established by the government. They did not have the point of view that they owned the projects.

Though theoretically Improved O&OD encourages mindset change, encouragement should also be made practical in sustainability of the projects through WFs and CFs so that communities can be in a good position to use the set norms to sustain the projects.

This can be a solution towards sustainability of projects in most of communities in Tanzania. Using WFs and CFs to change mindset, communities and groups will increase their income. This will be a good move towards building sustainable social economy among communities in Tanzania. The idea of strong norms for mindset change is also in line with Oloyede (2009, p. 62) who comments that sustainability of communities in Africa require cultural bonds of shared commitments, identity, and belief. Also, Oino et al. (2015) encourages that community projects should consider the community's beliefs, norms, and religion in project design and implementation.

Organization and Sustainability of Social Development Projects

PLSD framework suggests that sustainability of projects needs strong organization of community and group members and leadership which will have a vision towards the sustainability of the projects. Through Improved O&OD, Maseyu village has managed to establish strong leadership that leads village members towards implementation of the projects. They have a village council which has a vision of implementation of projects for sustainable development. Also, they have managed to establish various committees which have been tasked to ensure everything is done as planned in their meetings. For instance, they have a construction committee which is responsible to ensure that the dispensary project is completed and sustained as planned.

“We have committees to make follow up. For instance, the construction committee helps us to make follow up in the construction of our dispensary and ensure everything is fine.”

In connection to organization, a WAMATA group member addressing group organization said:

“I trust our leaders; they are always cooperating with us to plan and implement the projects initiated. Our organization is strong.”

The WAMATA has its own leadership appointed through the constitution. The appointed leadership is respected and advised whenever possible towards implementation of the initiated projects. They have managed to achieve the goal of offering loans to their members so they are able to solve economic challenges. During interviews, the WAMATA chairperson said:

“We have a constitution which helps us to appoint leadership. Leaders appointed are respected and advised by members on how to move towards our common goal. Leadership is strong in our group.”

The leadership has been strong in a sense that the group has managed to move from one project implementation and now they are implementing multiple projects, including production of soap and clothes (batiki). If this spirit continues and spreads to other communities, it is possible that the Improved O&OD can be a solution towards building a strong social economy in Tanzania. However, it requires a mindset change among community members who are drivers of their own development.

Strong leadership and management of communities and groups receives attention in the literature supporting the idea that it can be used as tool for project sustainability. For instance, Rees et al. (2004) contend that strong management is essential for securing local resources. Also, Espinosa et al. (2007) argue that leadership is essential to lead community to becoming familiar with tasks that they need to attain social development. Leadership should be appointed according to the group’s constitution, bylaws, and government laws governing LGAs. However, the study found that appointments should be participative and inclusive to ensure its legitimacy and acceptance for development.

Resources and Sustainability of Social Development Projects

Resources are a significant element in a project. PLSD framework suggests that community members should be able to solicit enough resources for project sustainability. Maseyu village has managed to do this for their projects. As presented in results section, they managed to solicit a workforce, blocks, sand, quarries, and part of the 9,282,000 TZS from themselves as internal resources for construction of the dispensary. The chairperson of the construction committee said:

“We managed to raise resources like building materials, manpower and 9,282,000 TZS by asking people to contribute what they could. This is a great achievement for us.”

Though they solicited resources from outside the village, they first committed themselves to contribute towards the realization of the dispensary project. Self-initiation likely contributes toward changing people’s mindsets. This is an improvement over Conventional O&OD in which community members had no self-initiation but waited for the government to fund projects.

Also, through the construction committee, the village is carrying on soliciting resources so that it can help to sustain and run the dispensary, such as lobbying Morogoro municipal

council to help them in running the project. However, this still shows some elements of dependency mindset by the village in project sustainability.

WAMATA managed to solicit financial resources by themselves and lenders' money to members so that they can solve their challenges. This self-initiation contributes to building a strong social economy. If this spirit continues to other communities by assistance from WFs and CFs, communities and groups will contribute to solving people's economic problems in Tanzania.

The idea of self-mobilized resources receives strong support from literature, including UNHCR (2008), Hacker (2012), Mancini and Marek (2004), and Argaw et al. (2007) contending that sustainable community development can be achieved by using local resources mobilized by communities and groups, themselves. Such support shows that the internalization of Improved O&OD among communities in Tanzania can contribute to sustainable projects.

Capability and Sustainability of Social Development Projects

Maseyu people have proven to be capable of handling self-initiated projects. They started implementing small projects like the construction of Maseyu pre-primary education and then started to implement larger projects like the construction of the Maseyu dispensary. This indicates that their capability is increasing. It started with mindset change among villagers as they realized that they were capable of handling big projects. As one of the village members said:

“We are now capable of handling big projects like dispensary. Mindset change among us helped the village to where it is.”

The village chairperson also said:

“Ward facilitators gave us confidence and changed our mindset. We started to think that we can handle other big projects. We are capable now of soliciting resources and following our plans”

Looking at these responses, the use of WFs and CFs under the Improved O&OD methodology allows communities to become capable of implementing self-initiated projects without waiting for the government or other funders to implement development projects for them. WFs and CFs are a good base towards mindset change, bringing community togetherness and the capability to plan and implement self-initiated projects based on the peoples' needs. WFs and CFs build confidence among community members to solicit their own resources, plan, and implement large projects in areas like Maseyu.

Again, WAMATA have proven to be capable of implementing their plans. They are now capable of establishing other projects and implementing them as a group. They have been using WFs to get advice on how they can start projects which will help them to realize their goals. If

Improved O&OD is implemented per its guidelines, Tanzania will build a strong social economy within a few years.

Institutional/Organizational Linkage and Sustainability of Social Development Projects

The PLSD framework encourages communities and organizations to build strong linkages with other communities and institutions in the surrounding areas. The aim of strong institutional linkage is to ensure that organizations can access other resources and assistance from other communities and groups not found in their areas. In fact, Maseyu village have managed to build strong linkage with other organizations to help them implement projects they initiated.

Through linkage with Morogoro Municipal Council, the village managed to solicit financial resources to construct pre-primary education class and the Maseyu dispensary. Also, through good relationship with TANZANIA ZONE FAR, Tanzania Sand Quarries, JASCO Ltd, Mwanza JANDU, and Morogoro Municipal Council, they received financial and technical support to accomplish the Maseyu dispensary. The linkages built between the village and these institutions helped them to efficiently implement the project. This shows how the Improved O&OD can effectively help communities and groups to solicit resources and implement projects without waiting for the government.

Moreover, they have been in talks with the Morogoro Municipal Council to continue helping them to sustain and run the dispensary because, at this time, they cannot run it by themselves. Though it still shows village external dependency, having a good linkage with the council, will enable the village to run and sustain the project. Social economy can be built if there is a good linkage among communities and groups in that they will be helping each other to implement community initiatives. The issue of institutional linkage is also supported by Oloyede (2009, p.60-61) who points that the sustainability of community development requires greater cooperation among local entities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Improved O&OD can be a solution to the sustainability of community social projects and a road to building strong social economy in Tanzania if it will succeed in changing the people's mindset. People need to be liberated from thinking that the government will do everything for them and start to drive development by themselves. Mindset change will assist people in becoming responsible, cooperating, and building a strong economy. To succeed in this, extra effort and cleverness is required in training Ward Facilitators and Community Facilitators as change agents and LGAs in funding the internalization of the methodology.

The study recommends that Tanzania should train as many WFs and CFs as possible and place them in communities to play a role of changing people's mindset. The mindset change will make people responsible for their own development and change the "wait and see" perspective.

Also, communities and groups should be strengthened so that they can be used as a cornerstone of solving socio-economic challenges affecting people. This will create a self-dependence economic mode which will be significant towards alleviating poverty in Tanzania.

Moreover, efforts are required to ensure that all LGAs access the Improved O&OD Guidelines and be trained and mentored on how to best implement them. Not only should LGA leaders be trained but this training should also be extended to extension officers at village/Mitaa level to assist in internalization and easy implementation of the Guidelines. Each LGA should prepare a budget for each financial year to train extension officers (WFs and CFs), which this study believes are closest to people at the community level.

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