

Stakeholder Involvement in the Implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Uganda

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper was to assess stakeholder involvement in the implementation of youth livelihood programme in Uganda; a case of Rubanda district. A cross sectional, quantitative and qualitative designs were employed. A sample of 181 was targeted and the response rate was 71.8%. The study identified the challenges and strategies for stakeholder involvement in the implementation of youth livelihood programme in Uganda. Youth livelihood programme need to involve all the stakeholders during the implementation of Youth livelihood projects in Uganda. The study only covered one district in western Uganda. So the findings may not necessarily represent the views of all Ugandans. This was the first study carried out in the region.*

Keywords: Stakeholder involvement, Project implementation, Uganda, Youthlivelihood projects

1. Introduction

Projects that engage their stakeholders in decision making perform better than projects that do not. Doloi (2012) reports that projects that have involved numerous individuals and groups are completed on time and do not face a challenge of cost overruns. Effective stakeholder involvement in a project increases collaboration between stakeholders, mitigates the likely negative impacts, increases economic sustainability and the final quality of the project (Heravi, Coffey, & Trigunaryah, 2015). Stakeholder engagement further provides opportunities to further align business practices with societal needs and expectations, helping to drive long-term sustainability and shareholder value. The success of a project is largely dependent on the appropriate management and involvement of diverse stakeholders. This is because stakeholders have a strong power position and major influence on projects due to their political responsibility, financial resources, authority, skills and expertise (Ekpobomene, 2012). Stakeholder involvement is the systematic and strategic process of identifying and including individuals, groups, and institutions in the planning, development, and execution of a project. For a project to be successfully implemented, the interests, influence, and contributions of these stakeholders must be recognized. Without meaningful stakeholder engagement, a project is not likely to succeed (Bal, Bryde, Fearon, & Ochieng, 2013).

Although studies have been carried out on stakeholder involvement, most of them have been carried out in developed countries. Yet, less emphasis has been put to developing countries like Uganda that are experiencing project performance issues such as budget overruns, not completed on time and not meeting customer satisfaction. The purpose of this paper thus was to examine the extent to which stakeholders are involved in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda District. This paper will thus add new information to existing literature on stakeholder involvement from the perspective of a developing country.

1.1 Problem statement

Despite huge government funds invested in the programme, Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County, Rubanda district has not been successful (Rubanda Local Government Report, 2017). The Programme is faced with cases of misappropriation of youth funds, lack of clear roles of youth members and the committees within the group, lack of supervision of youth projects and the non-active members who just sign on project documents without contributing to the project success. This could be as a result of some stakeholders failing to perform their roles.

It is against this background that the study seeks to find out the extent to which stakeholders are involved in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County, Rubanda District.

1.2 Research Objectives

- 1) To establish the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County.
- 2) To establish the challenges of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County.
- 3) To suggest strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County.

1.3 Research questions

- 1) What is the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County?
- 2) What are the challenges of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County?
- 3) What strategies should be put in place to enhance stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Bubare Sub-County?

1.4 Justification of the Study

Since Youth Livelihood Programme is implemented under Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), the study will inform the programme implementers within the ministry and also at the district levels on the stakeholder involvement as well as the challenges faced. This will consequently be very instrumental in devising strategies aimed at promoting programme sustainability so as to improve on the livelihood of youths through wealth and job creation in different parts of Uganda and Bubare Sub County in particular.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Level of Stakeholder Involvement

According to Nangoli *et al.* (2016), most of the stakeholders in Ugandan NGO's especially beneficiaries are never involved in project design. NGOs only inform them of the new project that has come up. This is against the theoretical view that stakeholder involvement increases project sustainability (Bakenegura, 2003; Nangoli, Namagembe, Ntayi, & Ngoma, 2012). Nangoli *et al.* (2016) considered three levels of stakeholder involvement; consultation, decision making and active role involvement for health projects in Uganda. The study findings revealed low levels of stakeholder involvement justified by the low consultation of stakeholders. The empirical findings confirmed that beneficiaries were rarely consulted on the project needs or even in the project activities.

One of the key elements of stakeholder involvement especially in government projects supported by international development partners is; stakeholder ownership particularly government led and country owned projects (Bourne, 2011). According to Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014), a country-owned project is one in which all stakeholders share responsibility and accountability for the plan, especially when a variety of financial and technical resources are needed to achieve a country's goals. Although the government may be at the driving seat, a truly inclusive development process, informed by a range of in-country stakeholders, is important to the successful implementation of projects.

According to Griffiths, Maggs, and George (2008), the level of stakeholder involvement depends on the closeness between stakeholders. For instance, employees and employers are more likely to have a greater role in an intervention than Non-Governmental Organisations except in few exceptions such as government's impact. Similarly, Heravi *et al.* (2015) indicates that stakeholders have the ability to interact with one another in order to facilitate intervention change.

A study done on the practice of stakeholder management in the Nigerian oil and gas industry found out low levels of stakeholder involvement in most of the oil and gas activities (Ekpobomene, 2012). This study revealed that only Shell Petroleum Development Company (Shell), Total Exploration and Production (Total) and Nigerian Agip Oil Company (AGIP) practiced some stakeholder involvement

mechanisms in order to manage their relationships with the local communities. It was revealed that there were a number of petroleum companies operating in Nigeria that faced opposition from the community due to their failure to address issues of environmental protection, intimidation and manipulation of community members.

According to Gambe (2013), lack of attention and understanding of individual stakeholder roles reduces project implementation success. Bal *et al.* (2013) argues that it is impractical and unnecessary to engage all stakeholders within a group to the same level of intensity throughout the project process. It saves time and money if stakeholders to be involved in a project are known, why and when they are going to be involved. This is the idea behind stakeholder prioritization during project implementation. In situations where the stakeholders are too many for an organization to cater for their needs, the organization may ignore some of them especially those with less influence (Doloi, 2012).

2.2 Factors inhibiting Stakeholder Involvement in Projects

Nangoli *et al.* (2016) indicates that involving stakeholders by consulting them does not guarantee that project implementers put in consideration beneficiary ideas and concerns. Besides, the exercise of stakeholder involvement often consumes huge budget expenditures which may not necessarily reach down at community level to improve livelihoods of community beneficiaries because it may end up being swindled by the project implementers. Bashir (2010) had earlier found out that public projects in Uganda in particular NAADS lacked adequate stakeholder involvement. It was revealed that farmers in Kotido who were the project beneficiaries were never involved in the project activities. The exclusion of local farmers NAADS project activities in Kotido district brought about low commitment of community members to embrace the programme resulting into 100% failure rate.

Several factors that inhibit stakeholder involvement include but not limited to;

Power relations, status and experience were found to be one of the challenges hindering stakeholder involvement (Doloi, 2012). This is because they discourage some stakeholders from being involved as a means to achieve predetermined objectives. According to Pacagnella *et al.* (2015), there are cases in project implementation when project managers work with stakeholder representatives and end up leaving out key stakeholders or those with the necessary external expertise.

Conflict among stakeholders is another inhibiting factor of stakeholder involvement in projects. This is because projects involve a number of stakeholders and yet each of them has a specific requirement and interest with respect to the problem (Bal *et al.*, 2013). The main challenge is that the project managers need to consider and satisfy individual requirements from end-users, consumers, designers, contractors and the maintenance team.

According to Griffiths et al.(2008), resistance from stakeholders is also one of the major challenges during project implementation. The resistance of stakeholders is categorized into mild, moderate and severe. Mild resisters are easily moved from one position to another and lack awareness of the benefits of being involved in project implementation. Moderate resisters are unlikely to change without compelling evidence of project benefits while the severe resisters are unwilling to change given that they fail to see any benefits of being involved in a project (Doloi, 2012). Such type of resistance is often influenced by vested interests. Project resistance comes up due to stakeholders only fulfilling their own agenda, failing to work in partnership with others and the unwillingness to share information or contribute to project undertaking within a community (Griffiths et al., 2008).

According to Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014), differences in culture and habits between project team members and other stakeholders is a key challenge in project stakeholder involvement. Based on their study findings, cultural differences resulted into disrespect, mistrust and rivalry among the stakeholders of construction projects in Finland. In another study, Heravi et al.(2015) found out cultural differences, competing organizational goals and political agendas as big challenges of stakeholder involvement in project implementation.

Taschner and Fiedler, (2009) report cases of stakeholders overlooking important issues, under-prioritization, failure to engage all stakeholders, designing of schemes that do not cater for the interests of all stakeholders as some of the challenges common in project implementation. It is argued that stakeholders must own the processes in order to support subsequent decisions made on the project. Stakeholders who are not contented with the processes may make the project delay or even stop its implementation.

2.3 Strategies to Enhance Stakeholder Involvement

Several strategies have been suggested by different scholars. Nangoli et al. (2016) proposes consultation of stakeholders before project implementation particularly holding consultative meetings in which community beneficiaries are given an opportunity to offer their views and opinions towards the project. There is need for the stakeholders to be consulted on the project needs and also give them an opportunity to participate in leadership positions in spearheading the project implementation.

Relatedly, Nangoli, et al. (2012) in a study on citizenship projects in Uganda found out that intra-project communication as well as extra project communication had a significant influence on stakeholder involvement. This is because communication builds commitment of project managers and the community beneficiaries. In this regard, creation of an appropriate atmosphere where there is effective project communication was found out as a key strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement in project implementation in Uganda and elsewhere (Nangoli et al., 2012).

Gender mainstreaming in project activities is one of the key strategies of enhancing stakeholder involvement. The inclusion of women as stakeholders has the potential to achieve better management of the resource base and improved community welfare (WWF, 2005). Gender analysis needs to be done before project implementation (Taschner & Fiedler, 2009). In gender analysis, the relative positions of women and men in terms of representation and influence as well as the benefits and disincentives associated with the allocation of tasks are often examined. Griffiths et al. (2008) presents partnership as one of the key strategies of enhancing stakeholder involvement in project implementation. This is because the strategy brings synergy effects given that partnerships results into the designing of clear, achievable and realistic plans.

Relatedly, Taschner and Fiedler (2009) proposed provision of training and coaching for strategic project team members as one way of enhancing stakeholder involvement. This strategy was found effective in a project to improve organizational effectiveness and outcomes for children and families in Los Angeles, United States of America. The training and coaching of stakeholders can be extended to families, youth, department leaders as well as the administrators. Similarly, Bussy and Kelly (2010) shows the need to provide basic knowledge and skills to enable them be in position to participate in project activity execution including understanding of their roles in a project.

Formation of committees and teams to handle different project components is another strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement. According to Gambe (2013) in a study done in Harare, Zimbabwe, Msasa Park residents working together with the government administrators were able to find a lasting solution to the water problems affecting their communities. They formed resident committees to assist in planning, used water wisely and made early payments and others offered technical assistance in terms of repairing water pipes and designing of water infrastructures. The local residents had complained about being sidelined in water crisis meetings and instead called upon city leaders to work hand-in-hand with the city dwellers solve the water problems (Gambe, 2013).

According to Griffiths (2011), mutual respect and trust amongst stakeholders enhances stakeholder involvement in project implementation. This is because mutual respect and trust enables stakeholders to learn from each other and negotiate for solutions utilizing scientific alongside local knowledge. Additionally, Bussy & Kelly (2010) maintains that trust and respect generate diverse and impressive arrays of project implementation outcomes.

Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014) proposes stakeholder identification, classification, analysis and management as a strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement. This approach involves classification of stakeholders as primary and secondary stakeholders with respect to the control of project resources. This strategy enables the project managers to understand and manage the roles and requirements of various stakeholders. This is because project managers have an advantage of being facilitators, collectors and packers of various project requirements aimed at ensuring satisfactory

conditions for all parties (Doloi, 2012). Stakeholder involvement is enhanced by identifying the parties whose interests and influence are relevant in the project environment. This is supplemented by understanding the factors that motivate them such that they can be involved where possible to generate mutual benefits during project implementation. This also involves understanding of the behaviour of the stakeholders during the life cycle of the project with an aim of performing actions that meet their expectations (Pacagnella et al., 2015).

Utilization of indigenous knowledge and local people in sensitizing the public on project implementation and progress is yet another strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement (Griffiths, 2011; Pacagnella et al., 2015). This approach has been applied in Brazil and Exmoor Mires in which media network utilized indigenous journalists to disseminate information to the farming community from a farming perspective. Similarly, the approach also involved utilization of farmers as facilitators to disseminate project information in the best way focusing on a farmer's perspective. This helped to open communication channels between the project managers and the farming community (Griffiths, 2011). Pacagnella et al. (2015) calls for project managers to identify right audiences and involve the right stakeholders in order to increase stakeholder ownership in the project implementation.

3. Methodology

The research adopted cross sectional survey design in examining the stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda District. Cross design was preferred because it involved data collection at a single time interval compared to several data collection intervals thereby minimising interviewers bias, memory lapse, respondents fatigue and non-response errors (Frechtling, 2002). A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches served as a strong basis for drawing compelling conclusions and recommendations in line with the objectives of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The study population included 340 stakeholders who are involved in the Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district (Kabale Local Government Report (2016). They include youth beneficiaries, youth interest group leaders, project management committee, Youth Procurement Committee, Social Accountability Committee, district technical leaders (Chief Administrative Officer, Community Development Officer, Sub-County Financial Officer), politicians (Local Council 1 Chairperson, Councilors, Parish Chief, Resident District Commissioner), police, NGO coordinators, elderly and Persons with Disabilities. The study population was chosen because the Youth Livelihood Programme document published by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development indicates that all the above stakeholders are expected to play key roles in the implementation of YLP (MoGLSD, 2013).

A sample size of 181 respondents was determined using the sample determination table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Simple random sampling technique was used to select

beneficiaries of Youth Livelihood Programme. A list of all stakeholders of the programme was obtained to serve as a sampling frame. The names of the stakeholders were written on pieces of paper, folded and mixed in a box. Using lottery method, the researcher randomly picked papers, one piece at a time without replacement because the population is finite (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Out of 181 respondents targeted, only 130 usable questionnaires were received giving a 71.8% response rate. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select respondents for key informant interviews. Purposive sampling was used to get in-depth information on the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme from individuals on the ground who are familiar with what has been transpiring with the programme.

3.1 Data collection methods and instruments

Survey and interview are the data collection methods that were used in the study. Data collection instruments included a questionnaire and interview guide. A questionnaire was employed to collect data from stakeholders. The questionnaire was used because it helped us collect information from a large sample in a short period of time and it is free from interviewers bias (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A likert scale was anchored to measure the items in the questionnaire as follows; 1-represents Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Not Sure, 4 -Agree and 5-Strongly Agree. Means close to 1 or 2 represent disagreement, while means close to 4 or 5 show agreement with the issue at hand (Kothari, 2004). An interview guide was used to collect data from with Youth leaders, district technical leaders, politicians, police, NGO coordinators, elderly and Persons with Disabilities. Interview guides provided in-depth information about a particular research issue or question and they helped in understanding stakeholder's impression or experiences, or learn more about their answers as compared to questionnaires (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3.2 Validity and Reliability of the instruments

Validity and reliability of the instruments were taken care of to ensure accurate study findings. The validity of the research instrument refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it sets out to measure. Experts in the fields of project management and community development were consulted to review the tool to ensure its consistency. The experts rated each item as either relevant or not relevant. The validity of the research instrument items was estimated using the Content Validity Index (CVI). The CVI of 0.7 was accepted to indicate that the instrument is valid. (Nunnary, 1978).

On the other hand, reliability of the instrument measures the degree to which research instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. The reliability of the instrument was determined through pretesting the research instrument in Rubare Sub County of Ntungamo district. A sample of 37 respondents was considered during the pretest after which the results were analyzed in SPSS to determine the Cronbach alpha coefficient.

Table 1: Content Validity and reliability results

Questionnaire Section	No of Items	CVI	Alpha values
Level of stakeholder involvement	11	0.818	0.856
Factors inhibiting stakeholder involvement	10	0.808	0.854
Strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement	9	0.888	0.854
Total	37	0.842	0.749

After computations, Content Validity Index (CVI) of all items generated was above 0.7 that is considered for a valid research instrument as recommended by some scholars (Kothari, 2004; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of all variables were found to be greater than 0.7 implying that the research instrument was reliable (Mugenda & Mugenda., 2003).

3.3 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS v 21) for descriptive statistics and factor analysis (Amin, 2005). Descriptive statistics helped in determining measures of central tendency such as mean and standard deviation. The results were presented using frequency distribution tables, pie-charts and bar graphs.

Qualitative data analysis involved both thematic and content analysis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Qualitative data was collected through interviews in which summary findings was transcribed by writing down in a notebook. A tape recorder was used among participants that accepted its use. Atlas.ti, a computer based qualitative data software that helps to establish patterns, similarities and regularities in the data was used in the analysis of qualitative data. Content analysis was used to edit qualitative data and reorganize it into meaningful shorter sentences. Thematic analysis was used to organize data into themes and codes and the results were reported in verbatim using quotation marks (Golafshani, 2003).

4. Results

Background characteristics of the respondents

The background characteristics included; gender, age, marital status, and education levels

Gender of the respondents

The findings reveal that majority of the youth livelihood programme beneficiaries who responded to the study were males 53.8% in comparison to their female counterparts 46.2%. The high number of males was attributed to the fact that majority of the males joined youth livelihood group with the hope of earning some income for their families.

Age distribution of respondents

The study findings show that majority of the respondents were aged between 25-29 years (42.3%) and these were followed by 30-34 years (30.0%). The results indicate that there were fewer stakeholders aged below 20 years (8.5%). This implies that many project beneficiaries are attracted to projects after 20 years.

Education level of the respondents

The study findings indicate that most of the respondents had attained secondary education (36.9%) and these were followed by those with primary level education (33.1%). There was quite a big number of respondents who had no formal education (15.4%). These respondents with no formal education were asked in local language since the researchers was familiar with it.

Marital status of respondents

The study findings showed that the biggest number of YLP stakeholders were married (51.5%) followed by who were never married (40.0%). The highest number of married people could be an indicator of youths having responsibility and with a spirit of hard work that motivates them to cater for the livelihood of their families.

Main activity engaged in by youth respondents

Respondents were asked about the main activities that they engaged and the findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Main activity engaged in by youth respondents

Main activity engaged in	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Crop Farming	39	30.0
Livestock	38	29.2
Poultry	18	13.8
Apiary	9	6.9
Agro-forestry (citrus, mango, apple & passion fruits)	26	20.0
Total	130	100

Source: Field Data

The study results in Table 4 indicated that most of the respondents interviewed during the study were engaged in crop farming (30.0%) followed by livestock (29.9%) and agro-forestry (20.0%) respectively. There were only 13.8% of the respondents who were engaged in poultry (13.8%). Only a small proportion of the respondents were engaged in bee keeping (6.9%).

Key informant interview with district officials revealed the different youth livelihood projects that were approved in the financial year 2015/2016 and 2017/2018 on Youth Livelihood Programme thus:

One of the key informants had this to say;

In the financial Year 2015/2016, Youth Livelihood Programme projects that were approved by Rubanda district included; Kirwa Youth piggery project, Habutiki goat rearing, Mumuyanje youth Irish potato growing, and Bubare T/C youth piggery project. In the financial year 2017/2018, we approved the following groups: Kataraga Irish potato growing project, Murushekye Youth Irish potato growing, Kyarujumba Youth Irish potato growing and Rukinda Youth piggery.

Further, qualitative study findings revealed that the youth are engaged in different activities that have uplifted their welfare especially those who took the activities serious thus:

Many youth have benefitted from the Youth Livelihood Programme. Many of them are busy

practising piggery, irish potato growing, goat rearing, honey bulking, fruit growing, local produce buying and selling and cattle rearing among others. I have some who have constructed houses out of these projects although they are still few

Level of stakeholder involvement in the Youth Livelihood Programme

In order to establish the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme,

descriptive statistics were computed following respondents' opinions on statements stated pertaining to stakeholder involvement. Descriptive statistics in terms of minimum, maximum mean and standard deviation were generated to clearly bring out the level of stakeholder involvement through the laid down indicators explaining it. The findings are presented using likert scale in which; 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3=*Not sure*, 4= *Agree*, 5= *Strongly Agree*. Means close to 1 or 2 represented disagreement, while means close to 4 or 5 represented agreement with the issue at hand.

Table 3: The level of stakeholder involvement in Youth Livelihood Programme

Descriptive Statistics	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Youth are allowed to choose projects of their choice before YLP fund disbursement	1	5	3.34	1.29
In this project, all group members participate in decision making of project activities	1	5	3.45	1.23
I am involved in demonstrations and training under Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.38	1.22
I am empowered to express views on Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.66	1.19
Youth within a group work together to realise project objectives	1	5	2.88	1.30
The youth group leaders endeavour to account for all monies received	1	5	3.12	1.36
All the political leaders are in support of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	2.95	1.38
The police and other security organs are involved in enforcing funds recovery among youth defaulters	1	5	2.80	1.42
Local government staff are involved in monitoring and evaluation of YLP implementation	1	5	2.45	1.30
NGOs have been key in conducting capacity building programmes to the youth in project management and financial literacy	1	5	2.74	1.34
The Youth Livelihood Programme takes in consideration multi-sectoral approach in its implementation	1	5	2.90	1.39
Valid N (list wise)	130			

Source: Field Data

The findings in Table 4 reveal that out of the 10 items that were asked on the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of YLP, 9 had a mean of above 2.5 indicating that the level of involvement was high in Youth Livelihood Projects. For instance, the youth are allowed to choose projects of their choice before YLP fund disbursement (3.34), in this project, all group members participate in decision making of project activities (3.45), the youth are involved in demonstrations and training under Youth Livelihood Programme (3.38), youth within a group work together to realise project objectives (2.88), the youth group leaders endeavour to account for all money received (3.12), all the political leaders are in support of Youth Livelihood Programme (2.95), the police and other security organs are involved in enforcing funds recovery among youth defaulters (2.80), NGOs have been key in conducting capacity building programmes to the youth in project management and financial literacy (2.74), and the Youth Livelihood Programme takes in consideration a multi sectoral approach in its implementation (2.90).

However findings show that Local Government staff are not involved in monitoring and evaluation of Youth livelihood projects (2.45). This implies that Local Government officials are not doing what is expected of them to ensure the success of these projects.

However, an interview with one of district officials revealed that the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme is high. He had this to say

'For us at the district level, we try as much as possible to get involved in all government programmes that are rolled out in all the

subcounties of the district. This is because of the benefits associated with those projects as far as social –economic development is concerned

Furtherstill, findings from the qualitative interviews indicate that the police and RDC have a role to play in enforcing funds recovery among project defaulters. The CDO had this to say;

'The RDC is the president of the district. He is the overseer of all projects including Youth Livelihood Programme. He has the capacity to order arrests of youth defaulters on the money. The police only come in when there is a problem. The GISO is also part of the security and comes in to see if members exist or they are ghost members receiving Government funds'.

An interview with Police in charge indicated that the Youth Livelihood management team at the district had not engaged police in running the affairs of livelihood project. Regardless of the information police were hearing about youth misappropriating the funds disbursed to youth project groups, police had not been consulted on how they can be of any help to arrest the defaulters of Youth Livelihood Funds: The Police had this to say;

'For us as police we have not been approached by the sub-county authorities handling Youth Livelihood program to see how we can work with them to arrest the defaulters. We hear that some youth have mismanaged the funds they were given but we can only act if we are officially told to do so. May be the people in-charge of managing the

YLP at sub-county are still following up on the defaulters'.

Challenges of stakeholder involvement in Youth Livelihood Programme

The second objective of this study was to establish the challenges of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood in in Rubanda district and the results were generated using descriptive and factor analyses. Descriptive analysis was conducted and

descriptive statistics were generated in terms of minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation representing the opinions of the respondents on the challenges of stakeholder involvement in the YLP. The findings in Table 4 are presented using likert scale in which; 1= *Strongly Disagree*, 2= *Disagree*, 3=*Not sure*, 4= *Agree*, 5= *Strongly Agree*. Means close to 1 or 2 represented disagreement, while means close to 4 or 5 represented agreement with the issue at hand.

Table 4: Factors inhibiting stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme

Descriptive Statistics	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Project resistance in the community limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.26	1.34
Differences in culture and habits limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.32	1.23
Competing demands and organizational goal among stakeholders has limited the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.33	1.17
Competing agendas of political parties in Uganda affects the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.24	1.25
Some officials demand for bribes from youth before approval of Youth Livelihood Programme funds	1	5	3.88	1.04
Some youth are made to sign for bigger amounts of money than what they actually receive	1	5	3.57	1.16
The youth lack supervision from district officials which results into poor performance of their projects	1	5	3.55	1.29
The youth lack intensive training on project management and financial literacy	1	5	3.65	1.15
Cases of funds misappropriation meant for particular approved projects limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.74	1.19
There are youth who resist paying back the Youth Livelihood programme funds	1	5	3.68	1.09
Global Mean			3.52	1.19
Valid N (list wise)	130			

Source: Field Data

The findings in Table 4 revealed that out of the 10-variable parameters that were asked to the youth on the challenges of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme, all of them agree that there are several challenges of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme.

Findings thus indicate that some officials demand for bribes from youth before approval of the Youth livelihood programme funds (3.88), Some youth are made to sign for bigger amounts of money than what they actually receive (3.57), the youth lack supervision from district officials which results into poor performance of their projects (3.55), the youth lack intensive training on project management and financial literacy (3.65), cases of fund misappropriation meant for particular approved projects limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme (3.74), and there are youth who resist paying back the Youth Livelihood

Programme funds (3.68), project resistance in the community limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme (3.26), differences in culture and habits limits the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme (3.32), competing demands and organizational goal among stakeholders has limited the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme (3.33), competing agendas of political parties in Uganda affects the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme (3.24).

Strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement in Youth Livelihood Programme

Descriptive statistics in terms of minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation were generated to indicate opinions on strategies of enhancing stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme. Means close to 1 or 2 represented disagreement, while means close to 4 or 5 represented agreement with the issue at hand.

Table 6: Strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement in Youth Livelihood Programme

Descriptive Statistics	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Development of stakeholder involvement guidelines will enhance stakeholder involvement	1	5	3.76	1.08
Gender mainstreaming in all programme activities should be emphasized	1	5	3.75	1.07
Stakeholder dialogue should be introduced in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.75	1.07
Stakeholders working together as partners will enhance stakeholder involvement	1	5	3.68	1.09
Continuous training and capacity building of youth in project and financial management enhances stakeholder involvement	1	5	3.73	1.04
Regular communication messages to be sent to youth livelihood programme stakeholders using mobile phones	1	5	3.30	1.33
Using of community radios enhances communication on programme activities, successes and failures	1	5	3.38	1.25
Mutual respect and trust amongst stakeholders is key in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme	1	5	3.75	1.09
Local leaders should regularly monitor the implementation of youth livelihood projects	1	5	3.79	1.13
Global Mean			3.65	1.13
Valid N (list wise)	130			

Source: Field Data, 2017

It was found out that out of the 9-variable parameters YLP youth beneficiaries were asked on the strategies to enhance stakeholder in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district, all items had a mean of 2.5 and above and this indicates support of the suggested strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district.

The suggested strategies include; development of stakeholder involvement guidelines (3.76), gender mainstreaming in all programme activities (3.75), stakeholder dialogue (3.75), formation of partnerships (3.68), continuous training and capacity building of youth in projects and financial management (3.58), mutual respect and trust among stakeholders (3.75), and regular monitoring of youth livelihood projects by the local leaders (3.79), regular communication messages to youth using mobile phones (3.30), and usage of community radios to communicate on programme activities, successes and failures (3.46).

The qualitative findings support the quantitative findings by revealing the importance of sensitization and rigorous training of the youth on the utilization of the funds from the Youth Livelihood Programme. One of the interviewees had this to say;

I think, the youth in Rubanda district need an intensive sensitization to make the members understand that Youth Livelihood Programme funds are not for free. Before, a group gets the money, they need to be trained first and there is need to have a guideline book to follow in the project activities. This guideline book should clearly spell out the role of each of the group members to avoid some being redundant and leaving the tasks to one or few members.

In addition, key informants revealed the need to make stakeholders work together to enhance their involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme. One way proposed is for the members to do work themselves and not money in some of the project activities like feeding of goats. One interviewee had this to say:

Our group members have realised the need to use our hands to implement our project activities since money cannot do everything. Besides, the money resource is not enough. Each member in our group brings food to our goats and they also participated in the construction of their shelter. While working together, it has also helped us to develop friendship amongst ourselves. This is a good progress on our part.

5. Discussion of findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The study findings indicate that majority of the stakeholders reported that there was low stakeholder involvement in the

implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme. Most of the respondents indicated that the youth were not allowed to choose projects of their choice before YLP fund disbursement, there was less participation of youth in decision making, no youth trainings and demonstrations, poor accountability of youth funds, lack of political support towards YLP, no involvement of police in fund recovery as well as lack of monitoring of youth projects by district officials.

This is in agreement with Nangoli et al.(2016) who reported that most of the stakeholders in Uganda involved in health related projects including project beneficiaries are never involved especially in the NGO sector. It was reported that NGOs only inform them of the new project that has come up against the tenets of the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) that emphasize stakeholder involvement. Their study further reveal low levels of stakeholder involvement justified further by the low consultation, decision making and role involvement.

It is also consistent with A study done on the practice of stakeholder management in the Nigerian oil and gas industry found out low levels of stakeholder involvement in most of the oil and gas activities (Ekpobomene, 2012). This study revealed that only Shell Petroleum Development Company (Shell), Total Exploration and Production (Total) and Nigerian Agip Oil Company (AGIP) practiced some stakeholder involvement mechanisms in order to manage their relationships with the local communities.

However, the Youth Livelihood Programme document under the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development stipulates that the responsibility of implementation of youth livelihood rests in hands of youth interest groups. It also indicates that under supervision of technical officials from the district or sub-county, the youth management committee is mandated to manage the project implementation on behalf of the group. The youth project management committee convenes a youth interest group meeting on regular basis atleast once a month to approve activity plans and have an inclusive involvement in the project management (MoGLSD, 2013). Despite the above, on the ground in Rubanda district, the above recommendations stipulated in the YLP project document seem not to be followed as evidenced by the study findings. This disagrees with Bourne (2011), who noted that one of the key elements of stakeholder involvement especially in government projects supported by international development partners is stakeholder ownership particularly government led and country owned projects.

However, Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014) argues that a country-owned project is one in which all stakeholders share responsibility and accountability for the plan, especially when a variety of financial and technical resources are needed to achieve a country's goals. Although the government may be at the driving seat, a truly inclusive development process, informed by a range of in-country stakeholders, is important to the successful implementation of projects. For example, a plan that involves only the government, donors, and international non-governmental organizations and did not involve stakeholders such as local

nongovernmental organizations and the private sector was likely to fail to recognize the essential role played by all actors. This is contrarily to Griffiths, Maggs, and George (2008) who indicated that the level of stakeholder involvement depends on the closeness between stakeholders. For instance, employees and employers are more likely to have a greater role in an intervention than Non-Governmental Organisations except in few exceptions such as government's impact. This is contrarily to Gambe (2013), who opined that lack of attention and understanding of individual stakeholder roles reduces project implementation success.

However, Bal et al.(2013) argues that it is impractical and unnecessary to engage all stakeholders within a group to the same level of intensity throughout the project process. It saves time and money if stakeholders to be involved in a project are known, why and when they are going to be involved. This is the idea behind stakeholder prioritization during project implementation. Doloi, (2012) also noted that in situations where the stakeholders are too many for an organization to cater for their needs, the organization may ignore some of them especially those with less influence.

5.1 Challenges of stakeholder involvement in Youth livelihood programme

The study findings indicated that there were a number of stakeholder involvement challenges in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme and these included; bribery before approval of the Youth livelihood programme funds, youth signing for bigger amounts of money than what they actually received, lack of supervision from district officials, lack intensive training on project management and financial literacy, fund misappropriation meant for particular approved and youth resistance in paying back YLP funds.

In support of the study findings, other studies indicate that conflict is a key challenge of stakeholder involvement in a project. This is because projects involve a number of stakeholders and yet each of them has a specific requirement and interest with respect to the problem (Bal et al., 2013). The main challenge is that the project managers need to consider and satisfy individual requirements from end-users, consumers, designers, contractors and the maintenance team. According to Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014), conflicts do not only arise at the setting of project objectives but also at the changes in management. According to Griffiths et al.(2008), resistance from stakeholders is also one of the major challenges during project implementation. The resistance of stakeholders is categorized into mild, moderate and severe (Doloi, 2012). Such type of resistors are often influenced by vested interests. Project resistance comes up due to stakeholders only fulfilling their own agenda, failing to work in partnership with others and the unwillingness to share information or contribute to project undertaking within a community (Griffiths et al., 2008).

According to Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014), differences in culture and habits between project team members and other stakeholders is a key challenge in project stakeholder involvement. Based on their study findings, cultural differences resulted into disrespect, mistrust and rivalry

among the stakeholders of construction projects in Finland. In another study, Heravi et al.(2015) found out cultural differences, competing organizational goals and political agendas as big challenges of stakeholder involvement in project implementation.

Taschner and Fiedler, (2009) report cases of stakeholders overlooking important issues, under-prioritization, failure to engage all stakeholders, designing of schemes that does not cater for the interests of all stakeholders as some of the challenges common in project implementation. It is argued that stakeholders must own the processes in order to support subsequent decisions made on the project. Stakeholders who are not contented of the processes may make the project delay or even stop its implementation. Pacagnella et al. (2015) calls for project managers to identify right audiences and involve the right stakeholders in order to increase stakeholder ownership in the project implementation.

Griffiths (2011) shows how lack of trust brought about poor implementation of Exmoor Mires Restoration Project (EMRP) to restore the Exmor National Park. It was revealed that the land owners were affected by the changes in wetland policy being implemented by the Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA). Karlsen, Græe, and Massaoud (2008) in their article on building trust in project stakeholder relationships showed that trust improves communication skills, behaviour, commitment, sincerity, competence, integrity, working on a common goal as well as achievement of project milestones.

Research findings reveal that stakeholder involvement was time and money consuming which in the long run generated marginal benefits in the project implementation. Nangoli et al. (2016) indicates that involving stakeholders by consulting them does not guarantee that project implementers put in consideration beneficiary ideas and concerns. Besides, the exercise of stakeholder involvement often consumes huge budget expenditures which may not necessarily reach down at community level to improve livelihoods of community beneficiaries because it may end up being swindled by the project implementers. Bashir (2010) found out that public projects in Uganda in particular NAADS lacked adequate stakeholder involvement including their commitment to implement it.

Power relations, status and experience has been found to be one of the challenges hindering stakeholder involvement (Doloi, 2012). This is because they discourage some stakeholders from being involved as a means to achieve predetermined objectives. According to Pacagnella et al.(2015), there are cases in project implementation when project managers work with stakeholder representatives and end up leaving out key stakeholders or those with the necessary external expertise. For successful Youth Livelihood programme implementation, key programme stakeholders such as the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development must play a key role in spearheading it.

5.2 Strategies to enhance stakeholder involvement in Youth Livelihood Programme

The study findings revealed that majority of the respondents were in support of a number of strategies in a bid to enhance stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district. The respondents agreed that development of stakeholder involvement guidelines, gender mainstreaming in all programme activities, stakeholder dialogue, formation of partnerships, continuous training and capacity building of youth in projects and financial management, mutual respect and trust among stakeholders and regular monitoring of youth livelihood projects by the local leaders. The qualitative study findings also underscored the importance of sensitization and rigorous training of the youth on the utilization of the funds from the Youth Livelihood Programme as well as strong partnerships amongst the stakeholders especially through using of their hands instead of cash for their project activities.

This is in agreement with Nangoli, Namagembe, Ntayi, & Ngoma, (2012) in a study on citizenship projects in Uganda who found out that intra-project communication as well as extra project communication had a significant influence on stakeholder involvement. This is because communication builds commitment of project managers and the community beneficiaries. In this regard, creation of an appropriate atmosphere where there is effective project communication was found out as a key strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement in project implementation in Uganda.

Similarly, Taschner and Fiedler (2009) proposed provision of training and coaching for strategic project team members as one way of enhancing stakeholder involvement. This strategy was found effective in a project to improve organizational effectiveness and outcomes for children and families in Los Angeles, United States of America. The training and coaching of stakeholders was extended to families, youth, department leaders as well as the administrators. Bussy and Kelly (2010) added that the need to provide basic knowledge and skills to stakeholders enables them be in position to participate in project activity execution including understanding of their roles in a project.

Furthermore, Nangoli et al. (2016) proposes consultation of stakeholders before project implementation particularly holding of consultative meetings in which community beneficiaries are given an opportunity to offer their views and opinions towards the project. There is need for the community beneficiaries to be consulted on the project needs and also give them an opportunity to participate in leadership positions in spearheading the project implementation.

Formation of committees and teams to handle different project components is another strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement. This is in agreement with Gambe (2013) who noted that forming committees to assist in planning, used water wisely and made early payments and others offered technical assistance in terms of repairing water pipes and designing of water infrastructures.

Griffiths (2011) also noted that creation of mutual respect and trust amongst stakeholders enhances stakeholder involvement in project implementation. This is because mutual respect and trust enables stakeholders to learn from each other and negotiate for solutions utilizing scientific alongside local knowledge. Bussy & Kelly (2010) supported that trust and respect generates diverse and impressive arrays of project implementation outcomes.

In addition, Aapaoja and Haapasalo (2014) proposes stakeholder identification, classification, analysis and management as a strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement. This approach involves classification of stakeholders as primary and secondary stakeholders with respect to the control of project resources. This strategy enables the project managers to understand and manage the roles and requirements of various stakeholders. This is because project managers have an advantage of being facilitators, collectors and packers of various project requirements aimed at ensuring satisfactory conditions for all parties.

Stakeholder involvement is also enhanced by identifying the parties whose interests and influence are relevant in the project environment. This is supplemented by understanding the factors that motivate them such that they can be involved where possible to generate mutual benefits during project implementation. This is in agreement with Pacagnella et al., (2015) who noted that stakeholder involvement also involves understanding of the behaviour of the stakeholders during the life cycle of the project with an aim of performing actions that meet their expectations.

Utilization of indigenous knowledge and local people in sensitizing the public on project implementation and progress is yet another strategy of enhancing stakeholder involvement this is in support to (Griffiths, 2011; Pacagnella et al., 2015) who noted the importance of utilization of a network of indigenous journalists to disseminate information to the farming community. Similarly, the approach also involved utilization of farmers as facilitators to disseminate project information in the best way focusing on a farmer's perspective. This helped to open communication channels between the project managers and the farming community.

5.3 Conclusion

From the study findings, it can be concluded that the level of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme is quite low in Rubanda district as there are cases of fewer group members participating in decision making, lack of demonstrations and trainings, low working relationships amongst youth members, poor financial accountability, low political support of the YLP, low engagement of police and other security organs in enforcing funds recovery among youth defaulter and lack of monitoring and evaluation of youth projects by Rubanda district officials, low capacity building inputs from NGOs.

On the challenges faced as a result of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme, cases of bribery from officials before approval of project funds, lack of supervision from district and sub

county officials, lack of training on project management and financial literacy, fund misappropriation by the youth, project resistance from the community as well as cultural differences were reported.

In a bid to enhance stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme, the respondents proposed a number of strategies; development of stakeholder involvement guidelines, gender mainstreaming in all programme activities, stakeholder dialogue, formation of partnerships, continuous training and capacity building of youth in projects and financial management, mutual respect and trust among stakeholders, and regular monitoring of youth livelihood projects by the local leaders.

5.4 Recommendations

There is need for the youth to actively participate in project activities rather than looking for money to use. This is aimed at reducing resistance in the community and among youth group members. It is expected that this will make each member feel that they are contributing towards the success of the Youth Livelihood Programme and in the end, it will also enhance cooperation amongst the members.

The youth and Rubanda district leaders need to be sensitized on the dangers of bribery and corruption tendencies given that they sabotage the progress of Youth Livelihood Programme. This is because the study found out that there were high cases of corruption tendencies in which the youth were asked for some money to sign their project documents and others were made to sign for large amounts of money than what they actually received from the Youth Livelihood Programme.

A project activity guideline should be developed as a mechanism of improving stakeholder involvement. This is because the findings showed that some youth group members and also other stakeholders like the police did not know their roles well. The guidelines should elaborate the category of the different stakeholders involved, their roles, at what stage of the project that they should be involved and also strategies in which stakeholder involvement can be made effective.

Stakeholder's dialogue on Youth Livelihood Programme should be conducted in Rubanda district. The Community Development Officer with support from the Subcounty, district and Youth Livelihood programme secretariat should convene at least quarterly gatherings where the youth project beneficiaries, district officials, project management experts and officials from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development among others exchange information on progress and challenges associated with project activities. The media such as radio talk-shows could also be used to supplement stakeholder dialogue initiatives.

There should be gender mainstreaming in all programme activities among the youth. Youth groups with a good mix of males and females helps to minimize connivance amongst some particular members to misuse project funds hence are likely to minimize cases of fraud and swindling of funds.

This is because the findings showed cases of funds misappropriation and some youth resisting to pay back the Youth Livelihood Programme funds.

6. Limitations of the Study

This study was collected from a district in western district of Uganda. This means that the findings may not be generalized to the entire country. Also cross sectional study has a challenge of collecting or getting peoples opinions at one point in time.

7. Areas of Further Research

The research concentrated on stakeholder involvement in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district. Given that it was out of study scope, the study did not dwell on project sustainability and yet from the field visits, there seemed to be challenges in project sustainability given that in some youth groups, some members had withdrawn from youth livelihood project activities. There is need for a comprehensive study on project sustainability in the implementation of Youth Livelihood Programme in Rubanda district.

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