Community Management: An Effective Strategy For Enhancing The Sustainability Of Community Development In Udenu Local Government Area Of Enugu State

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Abstract

Considering community management as an effective strategy for enhancing the sustainability of community development, the study was aimed at assessing the extent of employment of community management strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State. The community management strategies include planning, implementation, and operation and maintenance strategies. The researcher formulated 4 research questions and tested 2 hypotheses. The descriptive survey research design was adopted, and simple random sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 320 respondents from a population of 378, who responded to a 33-item COMESESCOD structured questionnaire that was designed, developed and constructed by the researchers. The instrument (questionnaire) was face validated by 3 experts in Education Research Method from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability co-efficient of 0.92 was established using Cronbach Alpha estimate, before the final administration on the respondents. The collected data were analyzed by computing and comparing the mean scores and the standard deviation, and by the use of t-test for analysis of the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that the major development projects that communities manage are civic centres, rural roads, rural electrification, bore-holes, market stalls and schools. Also, the major planning and mobilization strategy employed is the identification of the development activities, while the major implementation strategy is the supervision of development project activities. Finally, the findings showed that the major operation and maintenance strategy is the over-seeing of financial administration and cost recovery. Therefore, there is urgent need for improvement on the situation. The recommendations proffered include that the communities should be empowered to operate as autonomous management units with full responsibility, authority, and control of all the community development projects within their locality.

Introduction

Community development is nothing new. From the earliest period of human history, people have banded together to seek in common the development of their communities. The term

represents a new name for a social activity, which is as old as the hills, and signifies a modern and invigorating approach to community problems (Anyanwu, 1992: 39). It is based on the experience of the past. It marks the stage in the life of a community, at which the people plan and act together for the satisfaction of their felt-needs. Its programme, therefore usually grow out of deliberate efforts to bring about social change. Obetta (2004: 14 – 15) viewed community development as a process of promoting the voluntary participation of the people in efforts aimed at developing themselves which will invariably lead to the improvement of economic, social, political and physical condition in the community so as to raise their standard of living, with as much realize as possible on community resources, supplementing these resources when necessary with services and materials from government and non-governmental agencies.

Based on the fore-going, Gajanayake and Gajanayake (1993:1) stated that the current challenge facing community development circles is to search for "human-centred" development strategies which emphasize active participation of the people at the grassroots level. Attempts are being focused on evolving an approach to development based on "bottom-up" initiative and self-reliance. Such endeavours have resulted in a mass transformation from a welfare-oriented approach with the masses as passive beneficiaries to community development approach aimed at helping communities to help themselves through active participation. According to Anyanwu (1999: 5), the aims of community development include:

- to educate and motivate people for self-help;
- to develop responsible local leadership;
- to inculcate a sense of citizenship and a spirit of civic consciousness;
- to introduce and strengthen democracy at the grassroots;
- to initiate self-generative, self-sustaining and enduring process of growth;
- to enable people establish and maintain co-operative relationships, and
- to bring about gradual and self-chosen changes in the life of a community.

The changes brought about by community development approach are directed to enable men and women to work to control their physical environment and to conserve and exploit their natural resources in such a way as to raise their standard of living. Mc Common, Warner and Yohalem (1990: 9) noted that the sustainability of community development projects depends on more than community participation alone. They therefore advocated for community management.

Therefore, community management refers to the capability of a community to control, or at least strongly influence the development of its development projects (Mc Common, *et al* 1990: 10). It is concerned with all issues pertaining to responsibility (ownership), decision-making, authority and control over project development and systems operations. According to Yaccob in Obetta (2010: 346 – 347), community management of development projects must be seen as the culmination of a long-term effort by the community, the government, and often, the private sector striving to help the community become self-reliant and gain control over such development. Community participation in the execution and management of community development projects are not new in Nigeria. This has been demonstrated in communities building and managing schools by providing the teachers and equipment. Amujiri (2010: 366) affirmed that communities are also known to have participated actively in building and managing health centres, providing rural electricity, pipe-borne water and constructing roads. Also, Gajanayake and Gajanayake

(1993:3) stated that some of the major categories of community development programmes are projects addressing primary health care, water and sanitation, leadership development, rural credit, eradication of illiteracy, infrastructural development, and income generation.

The benefits of community management are enormous. According to Amujiri (2010: 370), they include:

- ❖ it helps to define community needs and priorities much more accurately;
- ❖ it reduces cost by mobilizing unused local, human and material resources;
- ❖ it helps people to appreciate, understand and sympathize with government policies and actions;
- ❖ it contributes to political stability;
- ❖ it speeds up the process of social change among the people;
- ❖ it results in better decision compared with those determined solely by professionals and administrative bureaucracies, and
- ❖ it is a useful learning experience which provides much of the motivating forces needed in the execution of such projects.

Also, Mc Common, *et al* (1990: 33) affirmed that the concept of community management has received increasingly favourable attention in recent years. This is because; the systems based on this principle appear to be more sustainable than those managed externally. According to Warner (1981: 15), the benefits of community management systems appear to accrue in three stages:

i. immediate behavioural changes including short-term improvements in system performance and greater community support for system maintenance.

ii. changes in support conditions which include long-term improvements in available resources and complimentary investments.

iii. Long-term impacts including anticipated health, social well-being, economic and environmental quality changes.

Furthermore, when community participates in all stages of a project, the opportunity to consider the financial consequences of various service levels is presented early on. It thus enables the users to debate the pros and cons of various options and to select the system most appropriate for their perceived needs. Based on the need for community management, discussion is based on the following management strategies:

- ▪ Planning and mobilization strategies.
- ▪ Implementation strategies.
- ▪ Operation and maintenance strategies.

On planning and mobilization strategies, Gajanayake and Gajanayake (1993: 19) emphasized that a systematic understanding of the current situation in a given community sets the stages and provides the basis for the community project development process. Understanding the community which is one of the planning processes enables community practitioners to gain useful insights regarding the prevailing circumstances and helps them to consider how changes could be made to achieve certain goals and ideals. The planning project activity is the central component in the project development process. Gajanayake and Gajanayake (1993: 76) noted that identifying project activities is the most important step in the project planning phase. Time and effort invested in this activity guarantees an increased potential for success. The identification of project activities has to be carried out with the involvement of all stakeholders in a participatory way. The activities identified should be based on the objectives of the project, taking into consideration the resources and constraints.

Considering the need for mobilization as an aspect of community management strategy, Olaitan (2008: 169 – 170) stated that mobilization covers areas like awareness, interest creation and decision-making. According to him, the individuals should be made to be familiar with the problems and needs of the community. Also, the contact group should be able to increase the interest of the philanthropists in helping the community through illustrations or observations of what is happening elsewhere which have involved philanthropists elsewhere. Through the discussion between the contact group and philanthropists, there may be an agreement reached for the philanthropists to yield to the request of the community in providing a project that is beneficial to the generality of the community. Olaitan (2008: 170) further noted that good planning yields the following benefits:

i.   improving recognition by members of the community;
ii.   recording somebody's name in the history book of development in the community;
iii. laying down legacy for future generation of youths and philanthropists;
iv.   laying examples for others to copy within and in other neighbouring communities;
v.   boosting one's recognition before the government beyond the local environment;
vi.   helping to improve the philanthropists' wealth through appreciation by recognized government, and
vii. helping to improve the political status of the individuals within and outside the community.

In all, it is essential to identify and list the major activities and sub-components of each activity. This is because; the ability to determine the appropriate series of activities and the sub-components of each activity is an important skill that project planners should possess.

Another community management strategy is the implementation, which implies carrying out what has been planned. It involves a number of activities. Among the major activities are securing community participation for launching the project, coordination of activities, monitoring, and taking care of contingency situations (Srinivasan, 1990: 43). According to him, the first implementation strategy is to launch the project with full participation of the community. Here, a number of groups, institutions, and individuals in the community will be involved in implementing a project. In addition, constant project co-ordination is necessary to prevent duplication of activities, promote efficiency, and reduce costs. Co-ordination, which is the process whereby two or more organizations work together to deal collectively with a shared task may be assigned to a single individual or a team/group of individuals, in consultation with all the parties concerned (Hafner and Reed, 1989: 104). Another implementation strategy is project monitoring. Monitoring is necessary to check whether work is proceeding according to the plan, and if there are shortcomings or problems encountered, to take stock of the situation and effect the necessary corrective actions. The moment a development project is launched, it is necessary to monitor the different activities and ensure that the appropriate strategies and sequence of actions are being followed (Gajanayake and Gajanayake, 1993: 113). Contingency management is another type of implementation strategy. Taking care of contingencies when difficulties arise, exploring alternate solutions, and implementing the most feasible options are necessary steps in the whole implementation process. According to Srinivasan (1990: 45), the approach enables managers to encounter the uncertainties that affect planning processes by visualizing probable uncertainties and planning how to respond, and mitigate them. Contingency management involves preparing a plan to take effect in case an emergency occurs, or

preparing in advance a course of action to meet an emergency situation which cannot be totally foreseen.

On the operation and maintenance strategy, the community takes on the dominant functions of system manager and operator. The decision-making activities in this phase include supervising operation and maintenance, monitoring and evaluating the system, overseeing financial administration and cost recovery, planning for system improvements and expansion, and collaborating with external agencies (Mc Common, *et al,* 1990: 29 – 30). The operation and maintenance phase are considered to be recurrent investments. It is concerned with periodic staff training, hygiene education, project fee collections, tariff revisions, replacement and rehabilitation, and system monitoring and evaluation. Important principles that underlie the operation and maintenance strategies are:

- It should be a continuous activity.
- It should be a participatory activity.
- It should be a constructive activity.

In Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State, many development projects are managed by community elected/appointed councillors (committee members). However, there is no record in the local government area to show that any assessment has been carried out on the community management of development projects. Therefore, the problem of the study is to assess the planning, implementation, and operation and maintenance strategies as effective strategies for enhancing the sustainability of community development in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1. to find out the various development projects that communities in Udenu Local Government Area manage.
2. to identify the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ the planning strategies in the management of development projects.
3. to ascertain the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects.
4. to find out the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ the operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects.

Consequently, the following research questions were formulated and posed to guide the study:

1. What are the various development projects which communities manage in Udenu Local Government Area?
2. To what extent do communities employ the planning strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?
3. To what extent do communities employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?
4. To what extent do communities employ the operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?

Also, the following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

$H0_1$ There is no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean ratings of married and unmarried members of community development associations on the extent to which

communities employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area.

H0₂   There is no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean ratings of male and female members of community development associations on the extent to which communities employ the operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area.

Methodology

The survey research design was used to conduct the study. This is because the researcher was interested in the assessment of the strategies communities employ in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population for the study was three hundred and seventy-eight (378) members of community development associations (CDAs) in the nine (9) communities that make up the local government area. Their characteristics vary in terms of sex, age, marital status, educational qualifications and occupational profiles. Using random sampling technique, three hundred and twenty (320) members were selected as sample. It represented 84.66 per cent of the entire population. The researcher designed, developed and constructed a 4-point structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The instrument named COMESESSCOD Questionnaire has 33 items that are in line with the four research questions. The instrument was face validated by three experts in educational research methods. Two of the experts were from Adult Education Department while the third expert was from Science Education Department, both of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. To determine the reliability of the research instrument, the researcher administered the questionnaire to fifteen (15) members of Eha-Alumona Community Development Association in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The chosen community has similar characteristics with the study area in terms of adherence to belief, religion, values, norms and social ceremonies. After the correlation of the data, Cronbach Alpha estimate was used to determine the reliability co-efficiency of the instrument. Reliability co-efficient of 0.92 was obtained, which signified that the instrument was reliable. Finally, the researcher administered copies of the questionnaire to the three hundred and twenty members of the CDAs that constitute the sample. It was done through the aid of two research assistants who were trained by the researcher. The questionnaire return rate was 93.75 per cent as only three hundred (300) copies of the questionnaires were correctly filled and returned. The data collated were analyzed using weighted mean and standard deviation. The mean cut-off was 2.50. It infers that items with mean score of 2.50 or above were regarded as accepted, while items with mean score below 2.50 were regarded as rejected.

Results

Research Question One: What are the various development projects which communities manage in Udenu Local Government Area?

Table 1: Community Development Projects which Communities Manage

S/No	Community Development Projects	Total Score	$\overline{x}$	SD	Decision
1.	Rural electrification	1074	3.58	0.692	Accepted
2.	Bore-holes	1047	3.49	0.738	Accepted
3.	Rural roads	1138	3.79	0.515	Accepted
4.	Food processing machines	621	2.07	0.935	Rejected
5.	Market stalls	868	2.89	0.989	Accepted
6.	Health centres	586	1.95	0.891	Rejected
7.	Schools	837	2.79	1.037	Accepted
8.	Civic centres	1174	3.91	0.400	Accepted
9.	Stadia and amusement parks	416	1.39	0.770	Rejected
10.	Post offices	317	1.06	.0.327	Rejected
11.	Petrol filling stations	378	1.26	0.638	Rejected
12.	Rural libraries	483	1.61	0.953	Rejected
	Grand Mean		**2.48**		

Table 1 above indicates the various types of development projects managed by communities in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State. It was found out that the respondents who agreed to the management of rural electrification had a mean score of 3.58 while those who agreed to the management of bore-holes had 3.49 as the mean score. Others are: management of rural roads (3.79); food processing machines (2.07); market stalls (2.89); health centres (1.95); schools (2.79); civic centres (3.91); stadia and amusement parks (1.39); post offices (1.06), petrol filling stations (1.26), and rural libraries (1.61).

It therefore infers that the development projects that communities in Udenu Local Government Area manage to a great extent are civic centres, rural roads, rural electrification, bore-holes, market stalls and schools.

Research Question Two: To what extent do communities employ the planning strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?

Table 2: The Extent of Planning Strategies Employed in the Management of Development Projects.

S/No	Planning Strategies	Total Score	$\overline{x}$	SD	Decision
1.	Identification of the development activities.	1067	3.56	0.727	Accepted
2.	Making individuals to be familiar with the problems and needs of the community.	701	2.34	1.105	Rejected
3.	Increasing the interest of the philanthropists in helping the	954	3.18	0.999	Accepted

		Total			
	community.				
4.	Organizing regular community mobilization meetings.	1060	3.53	0.811	Accepted
5.	Having development project agreement between community, development agency and financing institution.	464	1.55	0.885	Rejected
	Grand Mean		**2.83**		

Table 2 above shows the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ the planning strategies in the management of development projects. The respondents who agreed on identification of the development activities had 3.56 as the mean score. Others are: Making individuals to be familiar with the problems and needs of the community (2.34); increasing the interest of the philanthropists in helping the community (3.18); organizing regular community mobilization meetings (3.53), and having development project agreement between community, development agency and financing institution (1.55).

Therefore, it can be deduced that the major planning strategies employed in community management of development projects are identification of the development activities, organizing regular community mobilization meetings, and increasing the interest of the philanthropists in helping the community.

Research Question Three: To what extent do communities employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?

Table 3: The Extent of Implementation Strategies Employed in the Management of Development Projects.

S/No	Implementation Strategies	Total Score	$\overline{x}$	SD	Decision
1.	Securing community participation for launching the development projects.	1112	3.71	0.750	Accepted
2.	Making decisions in the mobilization of local resources.	606	2.02	1.145	Rejected
3.	Assembling materials and equipment.	882	2.94	0.934	Accepted
4.	Awarding of contracts for the development project execution.	551	1.84	0.959	Rejected
5.	Supervision of development project activities.	1153	3.84	0.571	Accepted
6.	Monitoring and controlling construction.	1069	3.56	0.622	Accepted
7.	Training of construction and operational staff.	380	1.27	0.641	Rejected

8.	Taking care of contingency situations.	570	1.90	0.883	Rejected
9.	Systematic handing over of the completed system to the owner-operators.	867	2.89	0.977	Accepted
	Grand Mean		**2.66**		

Table 3 above reveals the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects. The data show that the respondents that agreed on the securing community participation for launching the development projects had mean score of 3.71 while those that agreed on making decisions in the mobilization of local resources scored 2.02 as the mean. Others are: Assembling materials and equipment (2.94); awarding of contracts for the development project execution (1.84); supervision of development project activities (3.84); monitoring and controlling construction (3.56); training of construction and operational staff (1.27); taking care of contingency situations (1.90), and systematic handing over of the completed system to the owner-operators (2.89).

Therefore, it can be seen from the above analysis that the major implementation strategies that are employed in the community management of development projects are supervision of development project activities, securing community participation for launching the development projects, monitoring and controlling construction, assembling materials and equipment, and systematic handing over of the completed system to the owner-operators.

Research Question Four: To what extent do communities employ the operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area?

Table 4: The Extent of Operation and Maintenance Strategies Employed in the Management of Development Projects.

S/No	Operation and Maintenance Strategies	Total Score	$\overline{x}$	SD	Decision
1.	Supervising routine operations and maintenance.	1059	3.53	0.823	Accepted
2.	Periodic staff training.	507	1.69	0.954	Rejected
3.	Organizing regular hygiene education.	683	2.28	1.118	Rejected
4.	Monitoring and evaluating the system.	956	3.19	0.914	Accepted
5.	Over-seeing financial administration and cost recovery.	868	2.89	0.979	Accepted
6.	Planning for system improvements and expansion.	1139	3.80	0.499	Accepted
7.	Proper collaboration with external agencies.	596	1.99	1.044	Rejected
	Grand Mean		**2.77**		

Table 4 above indicates the extent to which communities in Udenu Local Government Area employ operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects. The analysis shows that supervising routine operations and maintenance had a mean score of 3.53, while periodic staff training had 1.69 as the mean. Others are: organizing regular hygiene education (2.28); monitoring and evaluating the system (3.19); over-seeing financial administration and cost recovery (2.89), planning for system improvements and expansion (3.80), and proper collaboration with external agencies (1.99).

From the above analysis therefore, it can be seen that the major operation and maintenance strategies are planning for system improvements and expansion, supervising routine operations and maintenance, monitoring and evaluating the system, and over-seeing financial administration and cost recovery.

$H0_1$ There is no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean ratings of married and unmarried members of community development associations on the extent to which communities employ the implementation strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area.

Table 5: T-test Mean Ratings of Married and Unmarried Members of CDAs on the Extent of Employment of Implementation Strategies in the Management of Development Projects.

Variables/Marital status	$\overline{x}$	SD	No	Df	Level of Significance	t. Cal	t. Crit	Decision
Married members	1.41	1.07	254					
				298	0.05	1.440	1.960	Accepted
Unmarried members	1.25	1.83	46					

Table 5 above shows the t-test mean ratings of married and unmarried members of CDAs on the extent of implementation strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area. The analysis indicted that the calculated t-value of 1.440 is less than the critical t-value of 1.960 at degree of freedom of 298, and at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

$H0_2$ There is no significant difference ($P < 0.05$) in the mean ratings of male and female members of community development associations on the extent to which communities employ the operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area.

Table 6: T-test Mean Ratings of Male and Female Members of CDAs on the Extent of Employment of Operation and Maintenance Strategies in the Management of Development Projects.

Variables/sex	$\bar{x}$	SD	No	Df	Level of Significance	t. Cal	t. Crit	Decision
Male members	1.21	1.04	229					
				298	0.05	0.924	1.960	Accepted
Female members	1.56	1.92	71					

Table 6 above reveals the t-test mean ratings of male and female members of CDAs on the extent of employment operation and maintenance strategies in the management of development projects in Udenu Local Government Area of Enugu State. The analysis showed that at degree of freedom of 298, and at 0.05 level of significance, the critical t-value of 1.960 is greater than the calculated t-value of 0.924. This showed that the null hypothesis is upheld.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that the major development projects that communities in Udenu Local Government Area manage are civic centres, rural roads, rural electrification, bore-holes, market stalls and schools. The findings are in line with the assertions of Amujiri (2010: 366) that communities are known to have participated actively in building and managing health centres, providing rural electricity, pipe-borne water and constructing roads. However, the study revealed that the development projects that are managed by communities are few as shown by the grand mean of 2.48. Briscoe and de Ferranti (1988: 9) asserted that community itself must be the primary decision maker, the primary investor, the primary maintainer, the primary organizer, and the primary overseer. As such, the primary role of government agencies and donors must change from that of direct providers and financiers of services to that of facilitators.

The findings of the study further showed that the major planning and mobilization strategies employed in the management of development projects are identification of the development activities, organizing regular community mobilization meetings, and increasing the interest of the philanthropists in helping the community. Gajanayake and Gajanayake (1993: 76) stressed that the identification of project activities is the most important step in the project planning phase, and has to be carried out with the involvement of all stakeholders in a participatory way. This also involves the arousing of interests of the philanthropists in helping the community. It is based on this that Olaitan (2008: 169 – 170) emphasized that the planning strategy in development projects should cover areas like awareness, interest creation and decision-making.

On the implementation strategies, the findings showed that supervision of development project activities, securing community participation for launching the development projects, monitoring and controlling construction, assembling materials and equipment, and systematic handing over of the completed system to the owner-operators are

the major strategies employed in the management of development projects. On this, Gajanayake and Gajanayake (1993: 113) noted that monitoring is necessary to check whether work is proceeding according to the plan and to ensure that the appropriate strategies and sequence of actions are being followed. However, the implementation strategies should include making decision in the mobilization of local resources, awarding of contracts for the development project execution, training of staff, and taking care of contingency situations. According to Srinivasan (1990: 45), taking care of contingency situations enables managers to encounter the uncertainties that affect planning processes by visualizing probable uncertainties and planning how to respond, and mitigate them.

The findings of the study also revealed that the major operation and maintenance strategies are planning for system improvements and expansion, supervising routine operations and maintenance, monitoring and evaluating the system, and over-seeing financial administration and cost recovery. Supporting the findings, Mc Common, *et al* (1990: 29 – 30) stated that the strategies should include supervising operation and maintenance, monitoring and evaluating the system, overseeing financial administration and cost recovery, planning for system improvements and expansion, and collaborating with external agencies. However, there were poor ratings on the collaboration with external agencies, periodic staff training and organization of regular hygiene education, which Mc Common, *et al* (1990: 29 – 30) regarded as essential parts of operations and maintenance strategies.

Finally, the test of hypothesis on table 5 showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of married and unmarried members of CDAs on the extent of employing the implementation strategies in the management of development projects. It means that both married and unmarried members of CDAs agreed that the implementation strategies are employed to a great extent. Also, the test of hypothesis on table 6 showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female members of CDAs on the extent to which the operation and maintenance strategies are employed in the management of development projects. It means that both male and female members of CDAs agreed that the operation and maintenance strategies are employed to a great extent.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were proffered:

- Communities should be empowered to operate as autonomous management units with full responsibility, authority, and control of all the community development projects within their locality.
- Government should ensure that there is adequate development project agreement between communities, development agency and financing institutions. Detailed outlines of responsibilities are useful as activities of the government should be redirected, and those of the community and private sectors redefined.
- Communities should periodically train their construction and operation staff. It would go a long way to helping the staff to be acquainted with appropriate means of catering for contingency situations and be able to make adequate decisions concerning the mobilization of local resources.
- Communities should form committees or boards to manage each of the development projects in their communities. These committees or boards should have clear responsibilities to make decisions regarding the system, and to represent the interest

of the users. Also, women should be part of the committees or boards as they are very active in the project maintenance and fee collection.

Conclusion

Community management as a strategy for enhancing the sustainability of community development emphasizes that communities should be responsible for the operation of their new systems and have the authority to make operational decisions and control their execution. As such, communities form committees and the members are trained in the management responsibilities which include planning, implementation, and operation and maintenance strategies. Community management is without doubt an appealing solution to the current sustainability problems rural communities are experiencing. Community responsibility therefore appears to have the potential to ensure internal support and thus reduce the high rates of non-use, breakdown, and misuse that have plagued new systems in developing countries. The researcher affirms that if the recommendations proffered are religiously taken, then communities concerned are equipped with necessary skills to move to higher levels of management capabilities where the external agencies should always remain as facilitators rather than active providers and managers.

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