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Research Article

An Examination of the Effectiveness of CDF on Youth-Led Empowerment Agricultural Projects: A Study of Young Farmers' Clubs in Monze

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in empowering youth-led agricultural projects, specifically focusing on Young Farmers' Clubs in Monze Constituency, Zambia. The research aims to evaluate how these youth-led initiatives access CDF resources, assess the impact of CDF on the success and sustainability of their projects, and identify challenges faced by young farmers in leveraging this funding mechanism. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys, interviews, and document reviews involving stakeholders such as club members, local government officials, and agricultural extension officers. Preliminary findings suggest that while CDF has facilitated access to resources like inputs, equipment, and training, issues like delays in fund disbursement, limited stakeholder engagement, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms persist. The study aims to provide recommendations for policy adjustments and strategic interventions to optimize CDF's impact on youth-led agricultural development in Monze. Test cases included assessing the efficiency of CDF fund disbursement, stakeholder involvement in the process, and the overall sustainability of youth-led agricultural projects, thereby contributing to improving rural youth participation in sustainable agriculture through targeted financial support mechanisms like CDF. Recommendations include strengthening participatory decision-making processes, improving fund allocation transparency, and providing capacity-building programs tailored to youth needs. This research contributes to understanding the role of decentralized funding mechanisms in empowering youth in agriculture and offers insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and development practitioners aiming to optimize the impact of CDF on rural development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This section presents the study background, problem statement, study objectives, and research questions, provides the rationale of the study, the study scope, the literature review, and theoretical framework.

1.1. Background

Zambia has faced high rates of youth unemployment, with approximately 10.5% of young people aged 18-35 being unemployed in 2014, compared to a general unemployment rate of 7.4% (Central Statistical Office, 2015). This high unemployment rate is a significant challenge, especially considering that Zambia is a youthful country, with 80% of its population under the age of 35 (Central Statistical Office, 2012). Developing countries, including Zambia, have adopted various strategies to address these developmental challenges. One such strategy has been the introduction of Constituency Development Funds (CDF), a budget allocation mechanism designed to channel a specific portion of the national budget to constituencies represented by Members of Parliament (MPs) to finance local small-scale development projects. These projects often include the construction of school facilities, health clinics, and water supply systems (International Budget Partnership, 2010; Keefer & Khemani, 2009; Policy Forum, 2009). Lumba (2014) argues that in Zambia, the introduction of the CDF was a government intervention aimed at financing micro-community-based projects to alleviate poverty.

1.2. Statement of the problem

In Monze, the youth are faced with a series of challenges that include lack of employment opportunities; every year a total number of 300,000 youth graduate from diverse tertiary institutions, but due to slow economic growth, corruption, nepotism and demand for experience, 75% of these youth remain unemployed. The other greatest challenge was based on youth empowerment and participation that encompasses the involvement of youth in transformative activities. Many of the youth were left out in participating in public forums as they are seen as idle, immature, disrespectful, and not concerned about the community's well-being. These young people needed to be included in platforms where they could speak and express themselves and inspire belief that could catalyze impact through youth led development initiatives (Liebrandt & Mlatsheni, 2004). Lack of exposure to education and training on the other hand had resulted in denying the young people access to quality education due to high costs, poverty and lack of appropriate facilities resulting to high school drop outs, (World Bank, 2004c). It was further learnt that; the young people also lacked the necessary skill set for self-employment due to either none completion of university or college or completion of university or college courses where they did not have adequate training and exposure. Young peoples' access to finance was also identified as a huddle due to their passive inability to comply with the high transaction costs, lack of collateral, appropriated financial documentation and difficulty in managing and accessing the youth's profile thus a prerequisite for the lending institutions to avoid the youth.

1.3. Objectives of the study

- i. To establish how Young Farmers access CDF for their agricultural projects in Monze
- ii. To Examine how CDF has helped youth agriculture clubs' projects in Monze
- iii. To establish the challenges Young Farmers, face in accessing CDF in Monze constituency.

1.4. Research questions

- i. What are the beneficiaries of CDF funds in Monze?
- ii. What are the challenges youth face when accessing CDF Funds?
- iii. What measures can be put in place to ensure that, CDF funds are utilized for the intended purpose?

1.5. Theoretical framework

Community Development Theory: This theory emphasizes the role of community involvement and participation in development initiatives. It can provide a lens through which to analyze how CDF funds are utilized within the community context and the impact of youth-led agricultural projects on community development.

Youth Development Theory: This theory explores the unique needs, assets, and challenges faced by young people as they transition into adulthood. It can provide insights into how CDF-funded agricultural projects contribute to the holistic development of youth participants, including their skills development, empowerment, and socio-economic well-being.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Overview

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is a decentralized funding mechanism designed to address grassroots development needs. In Zambia, the CDF is intended to enhance community participation in decision-making and improve resource allocation to underserved populations, including youth. Recognizing agriculture as a key driver of rural development, the fund has been leveraged to empower youth-led agricultural projects, fostering entrepreneurship, employment, and food security.

2.2. Objective one

to establish how young farmers access cdf for their agricultural projects in monze. Accessing the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is a critical step for young farmers seeking financial support for their agricultural projects in Monze. This objective focuses on understanding the mechanisms and processes through which young farmers interact with the fund. The effectiveness of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) as a tool for youth empowerment in agriculture has been widely debated, with researchers focusing on its capacity to address local development challenges. This review explores key themes from existing literature to provide context for the study. Constituency Development Fund Global Perspective Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) are central government funds given to members of parliament for expenditure on their constituencies, in some countries also called electoral districts. According to Constituent Development



Funds Scoping Paper (2021), CDFs were first adopted in India. India has two CDF systems: the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) at the national level and the Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Fund (MLA-LAD) for the Legislative Assembly of each of India's 28 States. The MPLADS scheme was instituted in India in 1993. Under the MPLADS, an equal amount is allocated yearly to each parliamentary constituency.

2.3. Objective two

to examine how CDF has helped youth agriculture clubs' projects in Monze

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is designed to support grassroots development, including youth-led agricultural initiatives. This objective focuses on evaluating the tangible and intangible contributions of CDF to youth agriculture clubs' projects in Monze. To ensure that the level of living in communities is raised, CDF was established in most African countries to support ongoing development projects (Jepchirchir, 2021). CDF was first implemented in Zambia in 1995 with the intention of enhancing the community well-being in accordance with the communities' desires. Members of parliament were responsible for initiating and carrying out initiatives in their individual constituencies, just like in other nations (Chibomba, 2013; Lewanika, 2019). The improved state of the nation's infrastructure, including roads, hospitals and schools, was given priority.

2.4. Objective three

To establish the challenges Young Farmers, face in accessing CDF in Monze constituency

Access to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) is crucial for empowering young farmers to initiate and sustain agricultural projects. The CDF is a fund that is allocated to each constituency in Zambia for funding development projects. The CDF is managed by a Constituency Development Fund Committee, which is composed of the Member of Parliament for the constituency, the mayor or chairperson of the local authority, and representatives from civil society and the private sector. The CDF can be used to fund a variety of development projects, including the construction and rehabilitation of schools, clinics, and other public infrastructure;) Provision of water and sanitation facilities; Agricultural development; Poverty alleviation programmes; Youth empowerment programmes and Bursaries to secondary and tertiary education institutions.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The study methodology used to collect data from the field by the researcher in Agricultural Youth Projects of Monze was the mixed one: qualitative and quantitative. It covers the research design, sample, instrumentation, procedure, data analysis, and ethical issues such as permission, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity.

3.2. Research design

Parahoo (1997) describes a research design as a plan that

describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed. The study used mixed design; quantitative and qualitative methodological paradigms with the questionnaires and semi structured interviews as main data collection tools. The data analysis was analyzed by Excel.

3.3. Target population

Parahoo (1997) defines population as the total number of units from which data can be collected such as individuals, air facts, events or organizations. The study's target population included all young men and women and youths who were drawn from the 5 selected cooperatives, which include Chibuyu, Tushomeke, Kaliyangle, Palm tree and St. Mary's Cooperatives of Moomba and Monze, Constituencies respectively.,

3.4. Sample size determination

Burns and Groove (2001) refer to sampling as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behavior with which to conduct a study. The study employed purposive and simple random sampling methods. Purposive sampling was used for selection of two (2) constituencies and simple random sampling was used for respondents that were randomly selected from the five (5) cooperatives. The sample size of a study is only a subset of the population determined by characteristics of the study population (Mack *et al.*, 2005).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussions of the study as captured in the analysis of the objectives.

4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The socio-demographic variables covered in the study-included age, sex, level of education, employment and Marital status. The age of respondents ranged from 15 years to 35 and above years with the modal age being 25 years. The age of the respondents were into five-year intervals. Respondents within the 35 and above constituted 36.7 percent; those within the 20 – 25 years fell on (26.7%). Overall, the age distribution of respondents showed that, most of the respondents were young adults with the majority falling between the ages of 25- 45. This was in line with the UN Habitat (1987) view on age distribution of informal settlement dwellers.

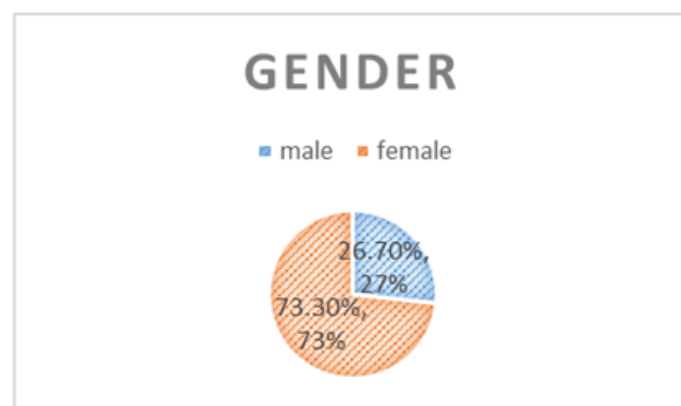


Figure 1. Gender of the participants

Figure 1 above reveals that 73.3% of the participants in the



youth-led agricultural projects/clubs are female. While, male participants constitute 26.7% of the total participants. While their representation is comparatively lower, it is still important to acknowledge their involvement in the projects. The chart above indicates that, cooperatives comprised of both male and females. The majority of the participants were females.

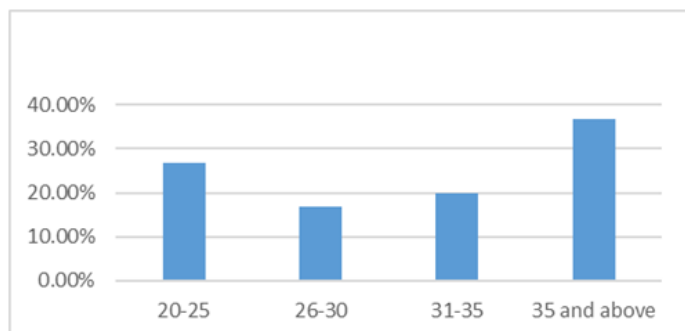


Figure 2. Age Range of the respondents

The figure above indicated that, most of the people in the cooperatives/clubs are 35 years and above, which was represented by 36.7%. The second category of the respondents were between 20 and 25 age range and were represented by 26.7%. The third category were between 31 to 35-age ranges, and were represented by 20.0%, while the last, but not the least were represented by 16.7% with the age range of 26 to 30. The bar chart illustrates that, the participants comprised of the ages from 20 to 35 years and above. An important composition had both young and old.

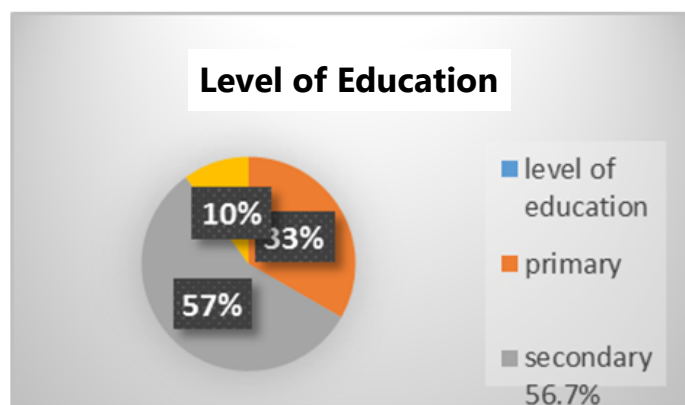


Figure 3. Level of education

The above figure indicated that, majority of the respondents attended secondary education, represented by 56.7%. The second category reached primary level, with the percentage of 33.3, while the last category went up to college level with a representation of 10.0%. Most of the respondents attained the secondary education that means they were able to manipulate some concepts that, were found on CDF projects.

The Figure 4 indicated that, most of the participants were married as indicated by the scale of two, and the percentage of 43.3. The second category of the participants were single with 36.7%, and were represented by the scale of one. The

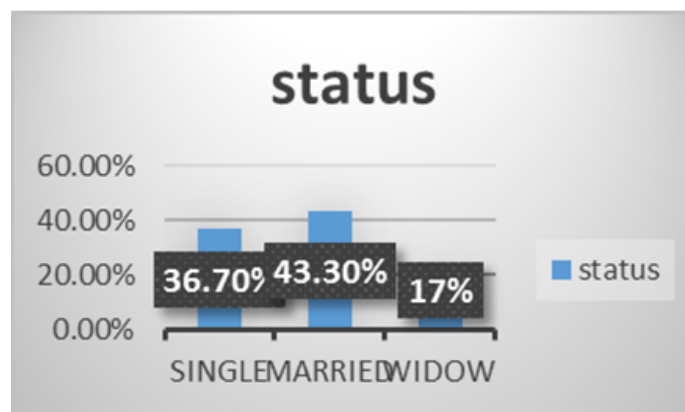


Figure 4. Marital status

third category were widows with a representation of 16.7%, on the scale of five, while the last one was divorced with a percentage of 3.3, on a scale of three. The findings established the cooperatives were dominated managed by people who were married, that means they were responsible.

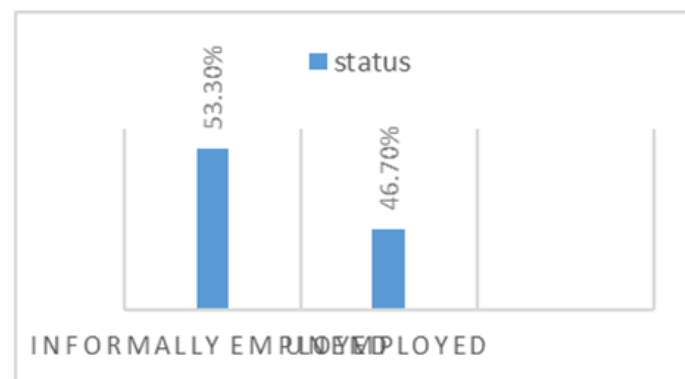


Figure 5. What respondents do for their living

Most of the respondents were informally employed as indicated by Figure 5 above, as shown by 53.3% of their response, while 46.7% indicated that, they were unemployed. The majority of the respondents were self-employed, while the minority were unemployed, an indication that, they had some hands on experience on certain projects they were running.

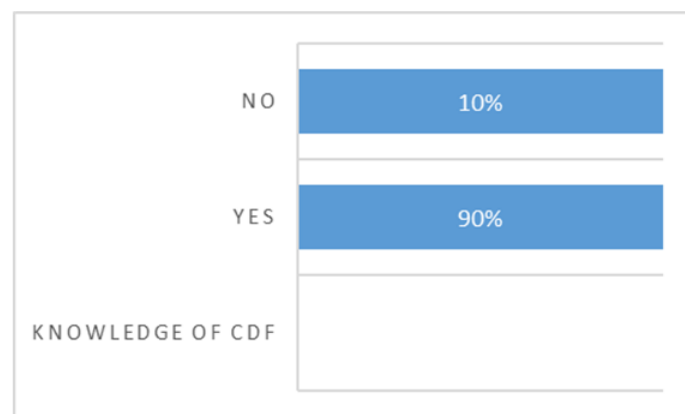


Figure 6. illustrates the knowledge of CDF

The above figure indicated that, 90% of the respondents had the knowledge CDF, while 10% indicated that, they had no knowledge of CDF. It is clear from the chart above that, the majority of the respondents were vested with the knowledge of the CDF, that made them to execute well their cooperatives.

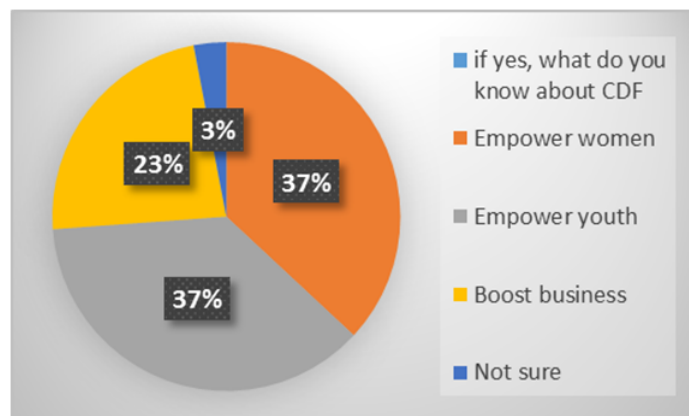


Figure 7. If yes, what do you know about CDF please explain

The above figure indicated that, two figures have same percentage of 36.7 each emphasizing that, CDF empowers women and youth and improve the lives of people respectively. While 23.3% of the respondents indicated that, it helps people to do business and 3.3% of the respondents indicated that, they were not sure. The above findings indicated that, the cooperatives mostly empowered both women and youth.

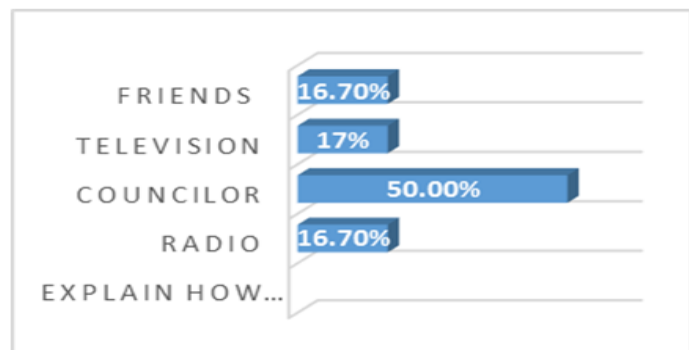


Figure 8. Illustrates how the people knew about CDF

50% of the respondents indicated that, they knew CDF through the Councilor, while the rest of the respondents, which were represented by 16.7% each indicated that, they knew CDF through, listening from the radio, watching Television and from getting information from their friends. The chart above indicates that, most cooperatives got the knowledge of CDF from their Councilors, while the rest got the knowledge from the radio, Television and Friends.

The Figure 9 indicated that, 43.3% of the respondents bought goats as their benefits from projects. 20% of them benefited through the serving of money, 16.7% of them benefited through school bursaries, the third groups of 10% each benefited through the purchase of pigs and the development of the community. Most of the beneficiaries bought goats as their benefits, as indicated the findings.

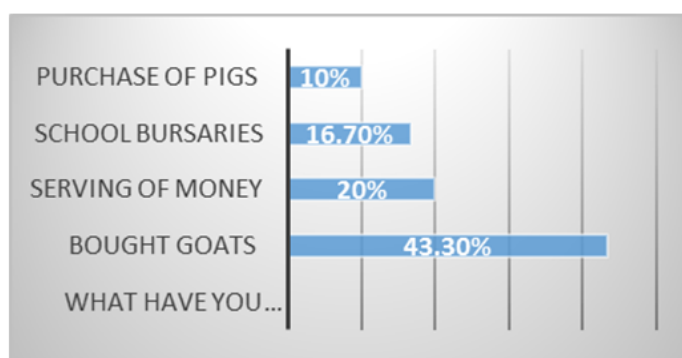


Figure 9. What have you benefited from this project?

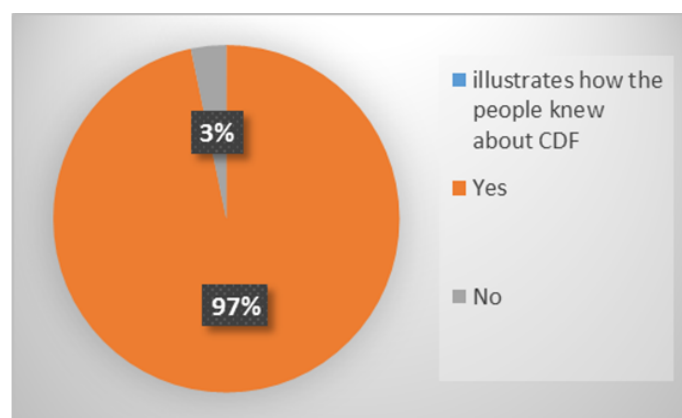


Figure 10. Do you think CDF provides opportunities for the community members to participate in the identification and allocation of CDF projects

96.7% of the respondents indicated that, CDF provides opportunities for the community members to participate in the identification and allocation of CDF projects, while 3.3% indicated that, it did not. The chart above indicates that, most of the participants were actively involved in the identification and allocation of CDF projects; an indication that, they choose their own projects.

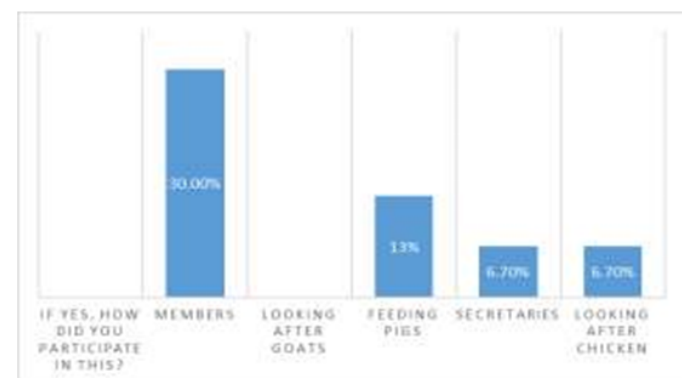


Figure 12. if yes, how did you participate in this?

The above figure indicated that, majority of the respondents participated in CDF projects as members the same way they looked after the goat which is shown by 30% for each of them. The second category participated as people who drew water, feeding the pigs that are represented by 13.3% for each of

them, and the 6.7% of each of the remaining of the respondents indicated that, they participated as secretaries and as people who looked after chickens. Most of the respondents indicated that, they were involved in the running of the project by looking after the goats and being regular members.

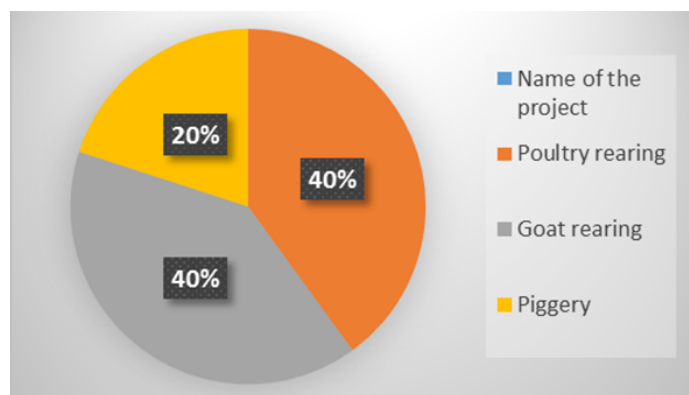


Figure 13. Name of the project

The majority of the respondents gave equal percentages of 40 showing that, they ventured in poultry rearing and goat rearing, which translated into 80% of their responses, while 20% of the respondents indicated that, they ventured into piggery. The findings indicated that, most of the projects that were done were poultry rearing and goat keeping.

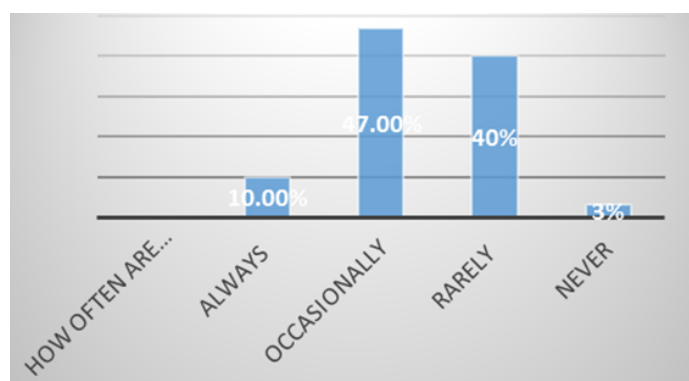


Figure 14. How often are you updated on the progress of CDF projects aimed at improving the socio-economic well-being

The majority of the responses indicated that, 46.7% of them were occasionally updated on the progress of the CDF in their area. The second group indicated by 40% were rarely updated on the progress of CDF in their area. The third category indicated by 10% were always updated, while the 3.3% group were never updated on the progress of CDF projects in their area. From the above findings, most of the clubs were occasionally informed on the progress of the CDF projects in their area.

Majority of the respondents indicated by 96.7% percentage responded that, the district council had put in place structures through which they could participate in CDF projects. While the other 3.3% of the respondents indicated that, the district did not put structures through which they could participate. Above findings indicates that, most of the respondents responded that, the Council had put structures through which they could

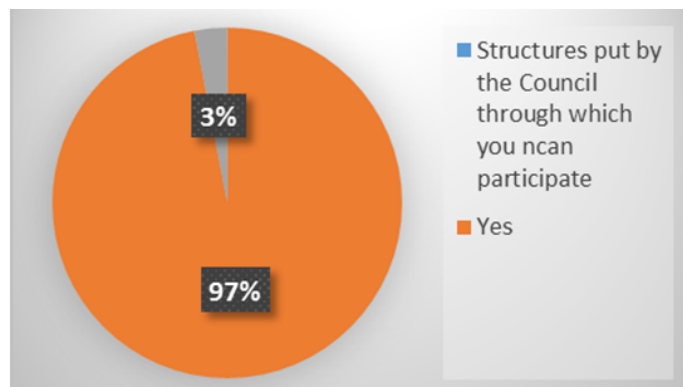


Figure 15. Did the Council put in place structures through which you can participate in CDF projects

participate in CDF projects, which means they were easily accessible.

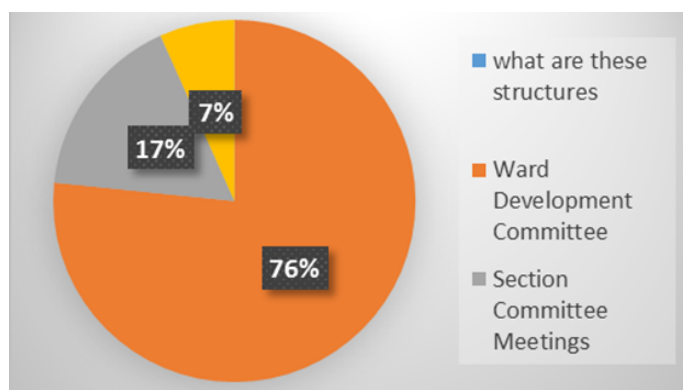


Figure 16. If yes, Q 29, what are these structures of community participation?

Most of the responses indicated by 76.7% said that, they participated through ward development committee meetings, the second group represented by 16.7% indicated that, they participated through the section committee meetings, while 6.7% of them indicated that, they participated through Constituency Development Fund Committee (Representative). Most the respondents indicated that, they participated in meetings pertaining to the Constituency Development Fund projects.

4.2. Discussions

This section provided results about the benefits of the CDF on the community development. Respondents were exposed to five items in the questionnaire the majority of the respondents were vested with the knowledge of the CDF, that made them to execute well their cooperatives according to figure 14. The findings on figure 15 indicated that, the cooperatives mostly empowered both women and youth by benefiting chickens, goats and pigs.

Figure 16 illustrated that, most cooperatives got the knowledge of CDF from their Councilors, while the rest got the knowledge from the radio, Television and Friends. Most of the respondents knew where CDF funds were coming from, as shown by the majority response of 'yes'. The figure 1 indicated that, an

anonymous 'yes' was given by the participants to show that, they knew the purpose of the CDF Funds. In the figure 2, the Majority members of the cooperatives had not read the CDF guidelines that entails that, it not easy for these cooperatives to follow the guidelines on how to utilize the funds efficiently and effectively.

Objective i. CDF empowers women and youth and improve the lives of people with 37% each respectively. While 23.3% of the respondents indicated that, it helps people to do business and 3.3% of the respondents indicated that, they were not sure. The above findings indicated that, the cooperatives mostly empowered both women and youth. These results was answering the first objective.

Objective ii. the majority of the respondents gave equal percentages of 40 showing that, they ventured in poultry rearing and goat rearing, which translated into 80% of their responses, while 20% of the respondents indicated that, they ventured into piggyery. The findings indicated that, most of the projects that were done were poultry rearing and goat keeping. The young people benefited from venturing into these business ventures.

Objective iii. Most of the responses indicated by 76.7% said that, they participated through ward development committee meetings, the second group represented by 16.7% indicated that, they participated through the section committee meetings, while 6.7% of them indicated that, they participated through Constituency Development Fund Committee (Representative). Most the respondents indicated that, they participated in meetings pertaining to the Constituency Development Fund projects. Figure 16 indicated that, 43.3% of the respondents bought goats as their benefits from projects. 20% of them benefited through the serving of money, 16.7% of them benefited through school bursaries, the third groups of 10% each benefited through the purchase of pigs and the development of the community. Most of the beneficiaries bought goats as their benefits, as indicated the findings.

5. CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that the Constituency Development Catalyst Fund has been supporting and funding cooperatives that were keeping Goats, rearing Chicken as well as Piggyery in different areas of the monze district. It is tool for Women and Youth empowerment. It further become a catalyst for water, roads and school projects that are very crucial for development and welfare of the people.

The same was found to the study of Abdalla (2014) about the effectiveness of the constituency Development catalyst fund in reduction of non-Income poverty in Zanzibar. The study exposed that, there are variety of social services supported by CDCF including education and water projects that has directly impact to the community. The study further made clear that the Constituency Development Catalyst Fund (CDCF) is beneficial. The study discovered that, lack of awareness of rights and opportunities for participation in CDF projects account for the low level of community participation. The CDF projects were lacking proper monitoring and evaluation by Ward Development Committees/WDCs, Councilors and Member of

Parliament (MP), so that they become effective in each and every constituency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that sub-district structures such as WDCs/Constituency Development Committees, Councilors and other structures supposed to take up the responsibility of sensitizing local communities to enable them make informed in order to increase community participation.

The local authorities should increase community participation in identification and prioritization of projects in order to actually address the real issues affecting the people and create ownership of the projects among the people.

The local authorities should teach the communities CDF guidelines in order for the people to know them.

The local authority should put some on social media such facebook, in order to enhance Information on CDF projects.

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