

**PARTICIPATION AND OUTCOMES OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

MA (DEVELOPMENT STUDIES) THESIS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. Other people's work used in this study have been fully acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis first, to my mum and late dad who showed me the veracious path to education. Secondly, to my loving husband Manford Evans Nhlane for he stood with me, encouraged and supported me throughout the whole work; to my brothers and sisters for their financial and psychological support; and above all, to God Almighty for the strength and opportunity He gave me to pursue this study.

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him and I am helped. Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him” (Psalm 28:7).

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ABSTRACT

In Malawi, Local Development Fund (LDF) projects use community participation to achieve community development. This study assessed the nature of community participation and its influence on infrastructure development project outcomes in Lilongwe and Chikwawa. Qualitative data was collected from participants who were purposively sampled from 6 LDF projects in Traditional Authority Chiseka's area in Lilongwe and Makhwira in Chikwawa. The study revealed that the nature of community participation on its own had little influence on development outcomes. The results indicated that the community participation found in Lilongwe and Chikwawa were similar but the differences on development outcomes were determined by the leadership and interaction of institutional climate which is defined as the policies, laws, strategies and the implementers of those policies, together with social structures and community collective assets. It was found that the leadership of T/A Chiseka in Lilongwe built unity, awareness, transparency and accountability to its village members on the construction of the projects, while in T/A Makhwira in Chikwawa there was mistrust and conflicts due to land disputes and nepotism practiced by the leaders. The study also found that interaction of policy, social structures and community collective assets in producing the desired outcomes was very high in Lilongwe compared to Chikwawa. The study suggests that if development project procedures and forecasts of the desired outcomes could be communicated to all community members, it could assist in creating a clear direction of community participation in achieving the projected outcomes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADC	Area Development Committee
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBDO	Community Based Development Organization
CDA	Community Development Assistant
ESWAP	Education Sector Wide Approach Programme
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FISP	Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme
GVH	Group Village Head
LDF	Local Development Fund
KI	Key Informant
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NTAC	National Technical Advisory Committee
PTA	Parents Teachers Association

PWO	Public Works Office
SANCO	South African National Civic Organization
SMC	School Management Committee
T/A	Traditional Authority
TST	Technical Support Team
VDC	Village Development Committee

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents brief background information of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, significance of the study and the conceptual framework adopted.

1.1 Background information of the study

1.1.1 The purpose of community participation and its outcomes

It is believed that development programs are moving from centralized top-down forms of planning to bottom-up through participatory and community based strategies. It is also understood that community participation enhances the implementation and outcomes of development activities because it puts people at the centre of development and it promotes collaboration for mutually defined objectives of the development activities. In the collective action, through community participation, significant development outcomes provide improvements in quality of life, protection of resources, and reduction in social exclusion and inequality (Gutberlet, 2009).

In the context of development, participation refers to an active process in which beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receiving a share of project benefits (Bamberger, 1986). Recently, The World Bank

(2001) defined participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policy making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services. Community participation, on the other hand, is defined as the active involvement of local communities in development initiatives, where community members actively pursue the identification of their needs and establish mechanisms to implement their choices (The World Bank, 2001).

It can be argued that, the purpose of participation offers recognition of people's right to have a say in choices that impact their lives, hence being a moral duty of citizenship. In addition, participation improves programme quality, whereby the needs of the people are addressed within their local context. As a result, a more relevant, efficient and effective programme or project to the local communities could be produced. Participation also establishes a level of ownership that helps increase the intervention's chance of success and its longer-term connectedness and sustainability. It increases security in a way that resources used for development projects are secured due to the established relationship of trust among the stakeholders. Apart from that, participation supports and increases local capacity, for instance, the local structures involved in the implementation of the projects have their capacity strengthened through their involvement in planning and mobilization of resources on their own for other developments. Participation also gives a voice to traditionally marginalized groups and individuals. The marginalized are assisted by increasing their confidence to speak out, to take decisions and to act as well as to reduce discrimination through participation (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action [ALNAP], 2003). If community participation in

development is taken in these lines, it can have an influence on the outcomes of community development.

In Malawi, community participation is used as a tool for implementing development projects and programmes by both Government and NGOs. The Government of Malawi operationalized participatory development through decentralization programmes and projects. Among other decentralized programmes are the Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF), which was established in 1995, and the Local Development Fund (LDF) programme which was operationalized in 2009. The latter programme is executed in all districts. It takes a community demand development approach as a planning and implementation tool. The LDF programme aims at empowering local communities to take part in the decision making process through improved local governance and development management, in order to reduce poverty and improve service delivery (Malawi Government, 2010). Under this programme, not all the districts produce equal results of development outcomes after using the participatory approach as the implementation tool (Blantyre Synod, 2012).

Different studies on community participation in Malawi have been conducted. For instance, in 2003 Dulani assessed the depth and scope of community participation and whether participation generated the benefits associated with the new approach of community development for MASAF. The findings of the study showed that what constituted 'community participation' in the three sampled MASAF projects which were assessed was very narrow and very limited, taking on a very passive and indirect nature. It was also

discovered that what constituted ‘community’ represented a narrow group of individuals who captured the participatory process for their interests, promoted as those of the community.

Chilinde (2007) examined the nature of participation in community driven development and its contribution to improved accessibility of services among the urban poor in Lilongwe City under the MASAF project. The study showed that participation in urban poor residents was determined by socio-economic characteristics such as period of residence, ownership of a house, ethnicity, politics, age and source of income, level of education and sex. Chilinde’s study differs from this study in a way that this research’s focus was on the influence of the participation by looking at the end results of development outcomes. This was done by comparing two categories which had higher and lower performance on the completion of the infrastructure projects.

In this study, development is defined as a process of improving the quality of all human lives through raising peoples’ living levels, self-esteem, and increasing peoples’ freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choices (Todaro, 2010). Outcome is defined as the end result. In this case, the study adopted the development outcomes as the positive end results produced by development projects or programmes that can be measured through the indicators of development such as standard physical infrastructure, empowerment which looks at community’s capability to plan and implement projects, freedom of choice, increased self-esteem and sustainability of the projects. These indicators were used in this study because they were of great importance particularly for monitoring changes and

identifying challenges. Also the indicators were used to assess performance and change on a number of dimensions of development such as education and social. In addition to this, they were useful for monitoring developments over a period of time. Indicators which were used were taken from Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action of 2003 Report. These indicators showed that participation is a moral duty, it provides a right of citizenship and voice, and establishes ownership, sustainability and security to resources for development projects. In addition, participation strengthens local capacity in planning and mobilizing resources on their own for other developments. This study was interested in analyzing whether the community participation on infrastructure development projects assisted community members to produce these benefits and outcomes of participation.

1.2 Problem statement

Throughout the world, a number of projects and programmes employ community participation for the successful implementation of development outcomes. Different results of community development projects and programmes are obtained after financial, human, social and natural resources are invested. Several studies in Malawi on participation, as some stated at the beginning of this chapter in paragraphs 5 and 6, were conducted especially focusing on analyzing and evaluating participation as an implementation tool, as compared to analyzing the end results that are produced.

The Malawi Local Development Fund programme, especially projects on infrastructure development, use community participation as the implementation tool. The outcomes of the 2010 to 2012 construction of teachers' houses and school block projects under Malawi

LDF were different. The development outcomes of those projects varied, yet the procedures and materials for the construction projects for all districts were the same. For instance, Lilongwe District was rated as one of the best districts in the execution of local development programme on construction of teachers' houses and school blocks, while Chikwawa performed poorly. The Blantyre Synod's Kalondolondo survey report (2012) indicated that Lilongwe was the only district amongst the sampled 9 districts that achieved a 100% completion rate in teachers' houses. Machinga and Nkhata-Bay were next at 85% and 80% respectively. The worst performers were Chikwawa and Dedza at 39% and 54% respectively. For Chikwawa, 70% of the teachers' houses under the same programme were incomplete yet resources were available.

This study focused on participation as an end, not as means as many studies analyzed that part. Participation as means considers the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the project while participation as an end goes beyond the implementation of the project. It includes defining projects and policies and it entails empowerment that has been gained by participants through the participatory processes (Tizifa 2009). Rosener (1993) also stated that the measurement of participation which is viewed as an end requires looking at the causal relationship between a participation program or activity and some desired end. Hence, the study was done with the purpose of addressing the knowledge gap of understanding the causal relationship between participation and the desired development outcomes, with exploration of the policy and social structures that were involved in the implementation of the projects for Lilongwe and Chikwawa, Malawi.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to assess the nature of community participation and its influence on infrastructure development project outcomes in Lilongwe and Chikwawa.

Specific objectives:

To achieve this aim, the following specific objectives were formulated to guide the study:

- To establish the infrastructure development projects undertaken in the area.
- To analyze the development outcomes produced in the infrastructure development projects.
- To identify the nature of participation in the local infrastructure development projects.
- To investigate the role of formal and informal grassroots' structures in producing local infrastructure development outcomes.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What were the infrastructure development projects undertaken in the area?
2. What were the development outcomes produced in the infrastructure development projects?
3. What was the nature of participation in the local infrastructure development projects?
4. What role did formal and informal grass-root structures play in producing local infrastructure development outcomes?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study was important as it revealed some participation aspects which could be considered to ensure positive local development outcomes and sustainability of projects. It also provided information on why some projects were not sustained by communities or even failed despite being well-funded and the communities being empowered.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Different studies have been conducted in analyzing participation on governance, social funds, power and development in general. A lot of literature highlights approaches to participation in practice as indirectly people-driven change. This change is stimulated by both Government and NGOs through people's participation as their tool in achieving community development. This chapter reviews empirical and theoretical literature on what social fund programmes are in relation to development, community participation and development outcomes.

2.1 Social funds

Social funds reach out effectively to the rural poor and operate in some of the most remote areas in the countries. They offer financial and professional assistance to communities who identify their own development priorities. Social funds are large development programmes that help local governments and communities in developing countries to build basic infrastructure. External support agencies, particularly the World Bank, provide the grants or loans. The finances are normally kept separate from those of the host governments. Each social fund follows the overall development policies of the host government and is governed by a wide range of people from national and local government, and NGOs (The

World Bank and AFRICATIP, 1997). The attractive feature of social funds is that they use the comparative strengths of each of the governments, private sectors, and community organization partners and coalesce them into an integrated whole. The communities identify, design, and help implement projects such as schools, health clinics, roads, and water supply that serve their needs. The government provides financing, monitors and supervises the projects, and ensures that the operation and maintenance of these facilities is adequate (The World Bank and AFRICATIP, 1997). This helps the communities to build infrastructure and to learn useful managerial and development skills. This system enables community members to manage their own projects and to acquire valuable life skills. It helps elected officials and local authorities to work together to set criteria of eligibility and to prioritize project proposals from communities. The system also provides various line ministries, for whom co-ordination is often a difficult problem, with the means to work together more effectively (Social Fund Africa, 2009). Malawi is one of the countries which is also benefiting from social funds. Among others, Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) and Local Development Fund (LDF) are some of the programmes which are under social funds. Different studies have been conducted to assess the impact of the social fund projects and programmes to the communities by looking at participation of the local people.

In Malawi, studies have been done zeroing in on participation in governance compared to participation versus development outcomes. For example, an analysis was conducted on examining the role of Malawian local government in community development and the context of community involvement in local governance. The study was primarily based on

documentary research, which included journal and newspaper articles and interviews with senior district assembly officials and local people. The major conclusions which were drawn were as follows: firstly, the decentralization process was featuring the district assembly very highly, with little clarity on how community-based institutions were integrated into the local government system. Secondly, the political, socio-economic and administrative factors prevailing at the local level needed to be addressed pragmatically for efficient and effective community participation in development (Malawi Government, 2009).

Dulani (2003) assessed the depth and scope of community participation and whether such participation could generate the benefits associated with the participatory approach of development. He also analyzed the nature and type of community participation in three Malawi Social Action Fund projects (MASAF) carried out in Mangochi District of Southern Malawi. The results of this study indicated that all the three projects failed to empower the poor in identifying their needs and choosing projects that addressed their priority community needs. This was so because community participation in these projects was very narrow and limited, taking a passive and indirect nature.

For further understanding, this study investigated what type or nature of participation produces desired and undesired development end results by looking at the roles of institutional climate, local government, community-based formal and informal structures and community members' contributions on the projects.

2.2 Community participation

The notion of community participation in development discourse is commonly used to refer to the involvement of local people in decision-making processes and evaluating development projects and is associated with empowerment and respect for and use of local knowledge (Shahrokh and Wheeler, 2014). It is believed that participation in decision making can improve one's life choices and assets. It has been shown to have empowering individual and community outcomes. This is a result of the shift from centralized top-down forms of planning to bottom-up participatory and community based strategies. It is assumed that through this shift, local citizens are capable of collective action that can result in such significant development outcomes as improvements in quality of life, protection of resources and the reduction in social exclusion and inequality (Salmon, 2007 and Roche, 2008). The study therefore, made an investigation on whether local citizens' participation in the choices and implementation of the infrastructure projects had influence on the desired end results.

Nevertheless, development is always the result of decisions which require choices about whose needs are to be prioritized. Some interests can be accommodated only at the expense of others. A logical consequence of this is the likelihood that conflict can develop among different interest groups or segments of the community. On this Mohan (2008) pointed out a weakness of participatory development projects, it treats communities as if everyone in them is the same. It enables a few "handpicked" local voices to speak as a rubber stamp to prove participatory credentials. Participatory development procedures tries to give voice to communities, development agencies mainly elite members of a group there by re-enforcing

local inequalities. Conflict also arises in situations where some groups feel neglected in decisions affecting their lives. This in turn may enhance the possibility of different interest groups within a single community opposing each other (Nelson and Wright, 1995). Competition among community-based organizations and other popular movements for access to scarce development resources and power is a major constraint preventing proper participation. It is participatory project management that provides opportunity for individuals to expand their leadership skills, engage in collective organization, and participate in transparent and democratic decision-making which holds accountable the institutions that affect their lives. Empirically in Brazil, participatory project management which involved individuals, community and government working together encouraged participation, contributed to individual and community empowerment, generated safe spaces for collaborative and inclusive policy development, and stimulated citizenship building (Tremblay and Gutberlet, 2010).

However, every stakeholder has different interests and objectives. For rural communities, participation is a way to identify and implement prioritized rural development activities through better use of existing resources. To do this, communities analyze the existing situation (constraints as well as resources available), identify and agree upon priority problems, develop action plans to address the priority problems, take charge of implementing the action plans, and pressurize the service providers and development organizations to provide the necessary assistance. Communities also identify incremental resources needed and organize themselves to try to mobilize these resources. For local government, the use of participatory methods in a large number of villages provides the

information needed to establish development programs (including the use of regional and local development funds) that respond to local demands and needs (The African Network on Participatory Approaches, 2000).

It is clear that each community consists of a variety of social groups with differing interests and different perceptions of their actual and desired role in society. In heterogeneous communities, people are often less likely to participate due to divisions of language, tenure, income, gender, age or politics, than in less diverse communities (World Bank and AFRICATIP, 1997). With the differences in interests, individuals and groups engage in development projects for different reasons. Some, very often, do not share a common vision and objectives regarding the future development of their community, which is almost a guaranteed recipe for conflict. In this regard, Stiefel and Wolfe (1994) stated this as ‘difference in rationalities’. What is perceived as negative by one interest group can very often have a positive meaning for another.

White (1996) explained the typology of interest on what participation means to the implementing agency and to the community on the receiving end. The agencies, which consist of the local government, community based organizations and law enforcers activate participation with the following interests. Firstly, legitimacy- to show they are doing something; secondly, efficiency, to limit funders’ input, draw on community contributions and make projects more cost effective; and thirdly, for sustainability which aims at eluding creating dependency and empowerment, to enable people make their own decisions, work out what to do and take action. On the other hand, local people participate with the

following interests: firstly, inclusion and retaining some access to potential benefits; secondly, community members put into consideration cost of time spent on a project before making up their mind to be involved in the development activities; thirdly, leverage, by looking at how much they could influence the shape of a project and its management; and lastly, local people would be interested in the participatory development project with the purpose of empowerment, deciding and acting for themselves. It can be argued that the development agencies are implementing participatory practices in ways that serve their own agendas and this process sometimes delays the achievement of the goal. Jennings (2002) criticized participatory development in a way that it is costly and slow. A project may take longer if one has to engage, work and come to consensus with local communities than if one did have to do the things.

This study was also interested in analyzing all key players who were involved in the sampled projects starting from identification of the project, implementation and evaluation of the LDF infrastructure. This was done with the purpose of finding out the outcomes produced in relation to the interests.

A critical factor influencing the motivation to participate is often the composition of a community. In informal settlements, for instance, besides political and cultural differentiation, there are also the new arrivals versus the old timers, the tenants versus the owners, the old versus the young, male versus female, unemployed versus employed, formally employed versus informally employed among others. The stratified and heterogeneous nature of communities is a thorny obstacle to promoting participatory

development (World Bank and AFRICATIP, 1997). In essence, improved community participation results in improved community living conditions. The relationships among factors associated with community participation, however, remain unclear. A question was asked on what factors determine community participation. The issue of measuring such effectiveness was addressed by Rosener (1993), who pointed out that though citizen participation mandate increases, yet there exists little agreement among the players on the goals and objectives of participation. In evaluating the effectiveness of participation, Rosener asked a question on whether the goal of participation was just participation itself. If so, the measurement of effectiveness would quite simply be to count the number of people involved in a given process. Indeed, one could argue that for many participation forums, there is always the target of counting number of people. This counting approach is particularly relevant to attempts by local government to gather or disseminate information.

The measurement of participation which is viewed as a means to an end requires looking at the causal relationship between a participation program or activity and some desired end. This means that at the outset of any evaluation, two questions need to be asked. First, what are the goals and objectives that participants are expecting to achieve? Whose goals and objectives are they: the citizens, the public administrators, the elected officials, or a combination of these?

The second question is how it will be known that there is a cause and effect relationship between what is being proposed as a participation activity and the achievement of the desired goals and objectives (Rosener 1993). Therefore, this study was interested in finding

out the causal relationship between community participation and desired development outcomes. In addition to this, the study wanted to discover the policies, laws, rules and regulations which enforced participation goals and objectives.

2.3 Power and dominance

Leadership in a community also plays a crucial role in mobilizing people to participate in the development of the community. Chilinde (2007), with empirical evidence stated that what determines participation in community projects include leadership qualities. A part from this, literature shows that more dominant groups have often deprived the weaker and more vulnerable social segments of participation in community affairs. This may also lead to self-centeredness and selfish development decisions. Experience has shown that it is often very difficult to reach the poorest and that initiatives and leadership will often come from people with higher social status (Roodt, 1996). In the South African context, Roodt (1996) expressed a concern on the way in which certain groups and individuals monopolized power and development resources at the local level and in the process excluded or prevented other groups and individuals from participation. Kaseje (1992) also shared experiences of how the roles of local elites led to mismanagement and almost destruction of a rural health programme in Kenya. Davies (1993) reported the serious problems in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, which arose in cases where one strong interest group like the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) attempted to act as a development agency (a role in which they seldom had any capacity or competence) and in the process interfered with the activities of established community based development organizations (CBDOS). Gilbert (1987) generally agrees with the benefits of popular

participation. He believed that its achievements in practice was vastly exaggerated and its outcomes damaged the interests of the weaker groups in society mainly because its advocates had often played down the political dimension of community participation.

The present study was interested in discovering how chiefs, who have power in their communities could influence community participation for the infrastructure development outcome.

2.4 Community structures and participation

Gaigher et al. (1995) also mentioned that poor community penetration by NGOs and CBOs is one of the main impediments to community participation. Since many community organizations were not democratically elected, the involvement of chiefs often represented the voice of a group of self-appointed people, and might not accurately reflect the views and perspectives of the broader community. This easily runs the risk of the project being co-opted by certain groups or interests. However, Tremblay and Gutberlet (2010) explained that organizational structures in the community were crucial for the way in which people gathered together and socialized to address common concerns and problems. The organization and mobilization of a community depend on the structures that initiated development and social cohesion among its members and concern for community issues. Without community structures, participation could be difficult to use to achieve the desired outcomes. This study was also interested in finding out community structures and understanding not only how these structures influenced community participation to produce the desired development outcomes, but also the kind of participation which could

affect the development outcomes despite different interferences on participatory development. For example, World Bank had learnt of the difficulties for beneficiaries to be active in community participation when the country did not have a social tradition supportive of participation such as inadequate technology which inhibits proper service delivery. Mostly the Government achieved their interest by perceiving beneficiaries as a satisfactory medium when it reluctantly built participation into project designs (Paul 1987). On the other hand, successful community development generally occurs when local actors express their shared interests in their locality and interacted with the intent of solving their community problems, improving their quality of life, and shaping their future well-being (Theodori 2000).

2.5 Institutional climate

In this study, institutional climate is an environment created by laws, policies, strategies, rules and regulations which provide guidance on the implementation and achievement of the development programmes (The United Nations, 2012). Rules of the game through policies and laws also provide a mechanism to control the behaviour of the people. They offer a framework to cope with competing demands. Risks of corruption are reduced when policies, laws, guidelines, rules, rights and duties are clearly defined, implemented and enforced (The United Nations, 2012). Torjman (2005) also pointed out that policy is created in the context of perceived problems or needs in society. Public policy, according to Torjman, seeks to achieve goals that are considered to be in the best interest of the whole society, often by targeting specific groups within society. The policy provides guidance for addressing a concern through a process of formulation that involves the identification of a

desired goal, and the identification and analysis of a range of actions that can result in promoting the realization of that goal in society.

Ribot, Lund and Treue (2010) also stated that without credible sanctions, community members have no ability or capacity to monitor corrupt officials, who know that allegations of misappropriation can be denied or ignored with impunity. In contrast, they note that in Senegal, which lacked support from higher tiers of Government and commensurate mechanisms to sanctions, community members had no ability or capacity to monitor corrupt officials, who knew that allegations of misappropriation could be denied or ignored with impunity.

Reimer et al. (2009) analyzed Sustainable Development Act and Green Procurement Policy passed by the Manitoba Government in 1997 by looking at the aim of the Act and achievements they made to the society. The Act mandated the Cabinet to “establish a provincial sustainable development code of practice to assist in the integration of sustainable development into the decisions, actions and operations of provincial public sector organizations” (Government of Manitoba 2007). The Cabinet was also directed to establish and integrate the principles of sustainable development into the procurement practices, regulations, and manuals of the government as well as to set procurement goals and to see that organizational actions were taken to meet those goals.

The act was successful in two senses, it established some concrete measures such as the Sustainable Development Round Table and the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund. The act was used by environmental lobby groups to pressure the government and crown corporations to incorporate sustainability measures into their policies and programs. However, they found that the Act was ineffective; although indicators were established to measure the sustainability of Manitoba's economy and communities, the Act was simply a vague statement of principles without targets, making it effectively unenforceable. The implementation of the principles in practice was therefore based on the political will of the current government and the obligation it feels to appear to be abiding by the principles of the act. This study was interested to know and understand the institutional climate and how effective it was to the implementation of the infrastructure projects. For the desired goals to be achieved in the development project, existence of the institutional climate is important.

2.6 Development outcomes

In collective action by local citizens, significant development outcomes provide improvements in quality of life, protection of resources, and reduction in social exclusion and inequality, (Gutberlet, 2009). This is in line with the definition of development by

Todaro (2010) who defined development as a process of improving the quality of all human lives through raising peoples' living levels, self-esteem and increasing peoples' freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice. This is the definition that is adopted in the present study.

It can be argued that human beings are drivers of development for their communities and community participation could activate the development outcome in simple ways due to the collective actions, resources found in communities with the control of community members. Every project and programme are evaluated based on the outcomes produced. An outcome is defined as an objective of a project or program, for instance a longer term result aimed for at the end of a project or program (International Council for Mining and Metals 2013).

Dionne, Kramon and Roberts examined the effects of aid on development outcomes by focusing on analysis of aid allocations and developmental improvements in Malawi in the period of 2004 to 2012. On the effect of aid on development outcomes, they found out that there was no clear relationship between more aid and improvements in development outcomes. However, from the results, it was concluded that districts with high need experienced greater improvement, and greatest improvement appeared to occur in districts that received little or no aid.

This conclusion made by Dionne, Kramon and Roberts, it can be refuted in this study by looking at the studied districts, Chikwawa is the district with a high need in terms of development projects compared to Lilongwe. However basing on the Blantyre Synod Kalondolondo Report (2012), Lilongwe experienced greater improvement than Chikwawa. The greater improvement could depend on a number of factors such as technical support in implementing the development projects, and not only aid.

Katz and Sara (1997) cited inadequate technical support from project implementers as one of the key reasons for the failure of water projects in the global review. They noted that in the absence of community supervision or management, projects were often left in the hands of private contractors whose incentives can be suspect. Community members were unable to make informed choices about the type of project to build, monitor the work of contractors, or maintain projects after they were constructed without adequate training.

Isham and Kahkonen (2002) made similar points in their analysis of water projects in India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. They find that communities often require considerable support in understanding the technical aspects of projects. In Pakistan, however, it was found out that it was different especially on projects which had technical aspects. Khwaja (2004, 2009) found out that community engagement facilitated substantially improved project maintenance (the main outcome of interest) but only when participation was confined to non -technical aspects of the project. When communities got involved in technical project decisions, participation was detrimental. Communities were less able to maintain projects that were technically complex or new. This research aimed at finding out how participation influences the development outcomes of infrastructure projects: whether it also depended on the technical support or not. Indicators of development outcomes were used and guided the study to understand the impact of participation on community development infrastructure. Some of the indicators of development outcomes which were useful in this study were standard physical infrastructure, ownership, empowerment, economic improvement and transparency and accountability.

2.7 Conceptual frameworks

The study used the Typology of Participation Model and the Empowerment Analytic Framework. The Typology of Participation Model assisted in categorizing the nature of participation which was undertaken by the communities on the projects. The Empowerment Analytical Framework on the other hand provided a further analysis of the categorized levels of participation. This was done by looking at the interaction of community members with the institutional climate and social structures in producing the development outcomes for the identified categories from the typology of participation model.

2.7.1 Typology of Participation Model

Agarwal's Typology of Participation Model gives an explanation of the type of participation levels in a ladder. Figure 1 provides the framework. The arrows on the framework provide the ladder which signifies that the participation levels start from nominal participation to interactive participation level. The study established that categorizing participation into levels could assist in understanding the type of development results produced by each category or nature of participation adopted by the communities. The Typology of Participation Model was used to identify the type of participation level which Local Development Fund projects followed in the 6 assessed projects. It assisted in providing a clear picture of the type of development outcome. This model was adopted, compared to other models of participation such as, Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, and Pretty's Typology of participation because aspects of the levels of participation of this framework were similar with the type of characteristics of the

participation activities of the Local development fund projects involved in the study. However the model does not provide the development results which are expected to be produced by each level of participation, hence the second theory of the Empowerment Analytical Framework was used



Form/level of participation	Characteristic features
Interactive (empowering) participation	Having voice and influence in the group's decisions
Active participation	Expressing opinions, whether or not solicited, or taking initiatives of other sorts
Activity-specific participation	Being asked to (or volunteering to) undertake specific tasks
Consultative participation	Being consulted or asked for an opinion in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decisions
Passive participation	Being informed of decisions <i>ex post facto</i> ; or attending meetings and listening in on decision-making without speaking up
Nominal participation	Membership in groups (by numbers)

Figure 1. Typology of Participation Model

Adopted from Agarwal, (2001)

2.7.2 Empowerment Analytic Framework

The framework explains that the interaction of opportunity structures and agency of the poor produces the development outcomes. The diagram that follows shows the summary and the arrows' combination of institution climate with social and political structures interacting with the other combination of individual and collective assets and capabilities for the production of development outcomes, Holland and Bertelsen (2006).

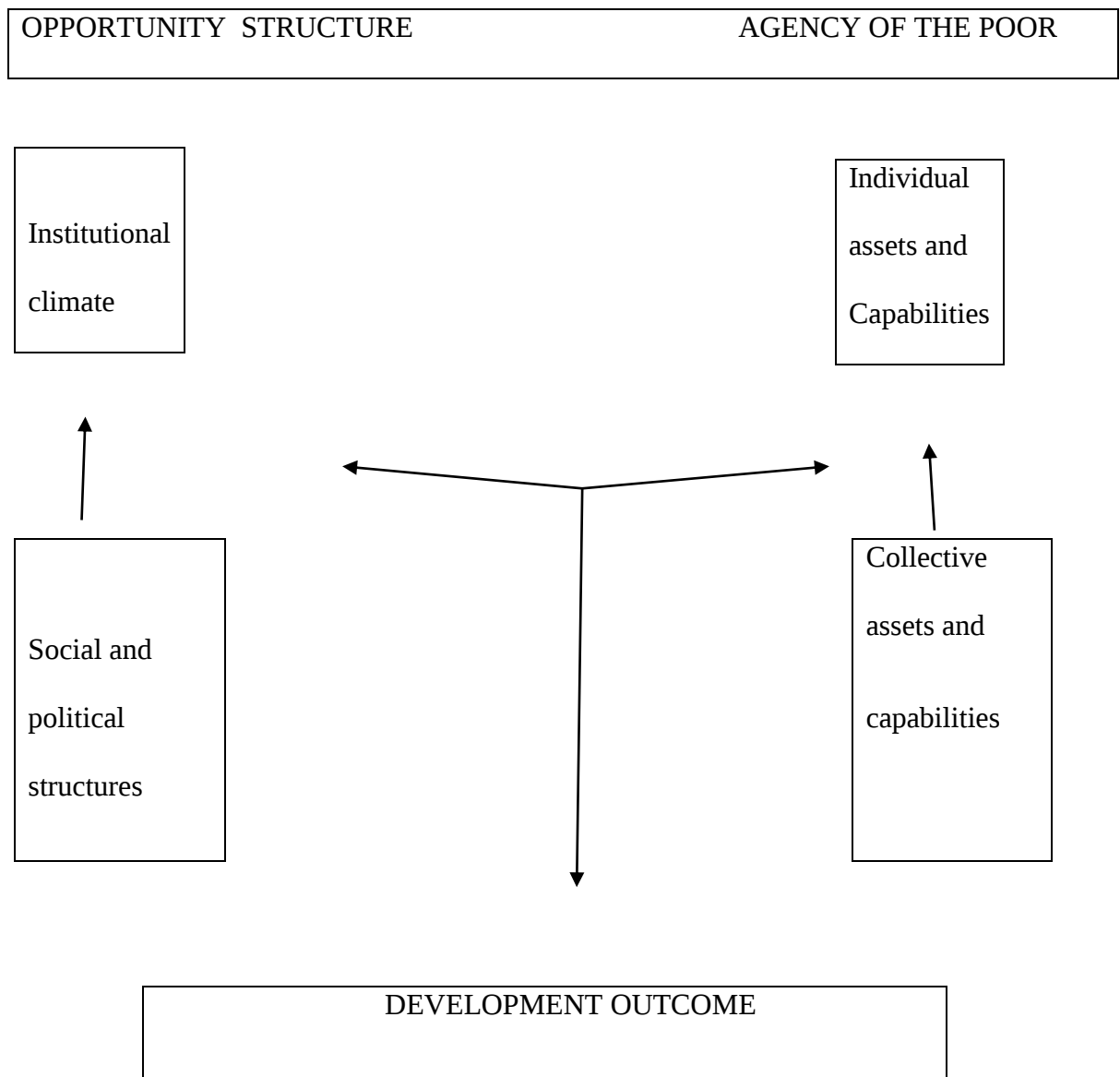


Figure 2: Summary of the Empowerment Analytic Framework

Source: Holland and Bertelsen (2006)

The Empowerment Analytic Framework assisted the study in analysing the interactive agency relationship with the opportunity structures that were available and used in the LDF programme. In this study, agency is defined as an actor's or group's ability to make purposeful choices, that is, the actor is able to envisage and purposively choose options. Opportunity structures are institutions which are defined as rules of the game devised by societies to shape and constrain human interaction and individual choices. These institutions can be formal and informal (Holland and Bertelsen 2006). The study examined the effectiveness of participation through assessing the interaction of the community members' capacity in having assets such as knowledge, natural resources, physical, financial, human and social capital and how both formal and informal institutions allowed people to translate these assets into effective utilization and achievement of the required and desired goals. Institutional climate, in this research is viewed as the laws, policies, strategies, rules and regulations which are available and provide guidance on the implementation and achievement of the development programmes through the participation concept (Holland and Bertelsen 2006). The framework was also used in examining the social and political structures which were available and enabled the participation to take place at local level to achieve community development. Furthermore, all the opportunity structures were assessed based on how much they interacted with individual and collective assets and capabilities in the community towards the achievement of development outcomes. Development outcomes were the end results which produced impact on the community; these were identified through development indicators. The indicators which assisted to show significant development outcomes were based on

standard physical infrastructure, ownership, empowerment, transparency and accountability. These development indicators were chosen because they were related and significant in showing how development outcomes for community participatory infrastructure projects provided the improvement of quality of education services and life, protection of resources and reduction of social exclusion and inequality.

The main reason for the adoption of the framework was that it provided the setting and environment for participation. Its concepts were relevant with the community participation as the agency of the poor indicates the capabilities and assets of the individual and community and linking to the development outcomes. The framework formed the features of the participation of the Local Development Fund projects which were studied. However, this framework did not give different levels of participation, but it was explaining one type of participation level of the Typology of Participation Model, hence the combination of the two theories.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, research sites, targeted population and sampling strategy used in this study. It also includes data collection tools and the methods of data analysis which were used.

3.1 Research design

The study adopted a comparative research design with a qualitative approach as it sought to understand the social phenomena in two contrasting cases of Chikwawa and Lilongwe. This was done through inductive, exploratory and interpretative meanings of people's experience of the social world. David and Sutton (2011) explained that qualitative research is seen as ideally suited to the task of demonstrating the validity of ways of life and beliefs that might otherwise be misunderstood. The research was qualitative since quantitative approach has a weakness of failure to take the account of people's unique ability to interpret their experience and construct their own meaning. Henceforth the qualitative approach was used for expanding the better understanding of community participation concepts and ideas rather than their applicability in practice (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002).

3.2 Research sites

The study was done in Chikwawa and Lilongwe Districts. The two sites were purposively selected based on performance shown on the implementation of construction of school blocks and teachers' houses LDF projects. Specifically, the study was conducted in Lilongwe in Traditional Authority (T/A) Chiseka, and for Chikwawa, in T/A Makhwira. The two T/As were chosen based on the following reasons: Firstly, in Chikwawa, out of 11 T/As, T/A Makhwira's area had the lowest completion rate of LDF infrastructure projects (Chikwawa LDF Report 2012). This area has good arable land for farming activities and most of the members of the community were involved in agriculture production and farm produce businesses. With that characteristic, the assumption was that the local people were unable to participate because of the agricultural activities they had ventured into. Similarly, the selection of T/A Chiseka's area was chosen based on similarities of agricultural activities that it had with T/A Makhwira. T/A Chiseka is located in Mitundu where agricultural activities and businesses are done as well. The assumption was that due to agricultural and business activities community members were unable to participate in the projects especially in T/A Makhwira. The specific projects which were used for this research were the construction of teachers' houses and school blocks from 2010 to 2014 under the LDF programme.

3.3 Population

The research focused on the population of each district at T/A area level and narrowed it down to group villages where the selected projects were found. Parahoo (1997) defined population as the total number of units from which data can be collected such as

individuals, and events or organizations. The targeted population of this research project was the 6 group village members, 3 from T/A Chiseka, residents of group village Mkaka, Chingala and Chumula, and the other 3 from T/A Makhwira, group village Mmodzi, Savala and Mpangowalimba. These residents were chosen because LDF projects for teachers' houses and school blocks were constructed in these areas. The targeted groups of people were the members of the community who took part in the construction of the projects, such as school management committees, village development committees, chiefs and local village members who were not under either school management committee or village development committees. In addition, District Council officials who were involved in the implementation of the local development programmes, the community development and public works officers were also part of the participants in this study. They were involved with the purpose of understanding the role of institutions in implementation of the LDF projects.

3.4 Sampling

Burns and Groove (2001) referred to sampling as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study. The sampling strategy used in the research field was non-probability. In this strategy, there is no need to be representative (Sarantakos 1998). Purposive sampling was the type of the non-probability sampling which was used. David and Sutton (2011) explained that purposive sampling involves the selection based entirely on the researcher's opinion of who are the most appropriate respondents to select. The nature of the research problem required to collect information from participants who were involved in the execution of the programme. The criterion for

the selection of respondents was mainly those who participated and benefited in the construction of the LDF projects because they had a memory of what was happening and it was easy to identify the nature of their participation. Some of these respondents unwillingly participated in the projects and they were able to speak for themselves and on behalf of the non –participants of the projects especially on the reasons why others did not take part in the implementation of the projects. Purposive sampling was ideal for the selection of the 75 participants from each district making a total of 150 respondents who were pertinent to provide information on the research topic. These 150 respondents were directly involved in the implementation of the projects.

3.4.1 Selection of respondents

Participants in all 6 projects were selected purposively depending on their positions and participation towards the construction of the projects. 6 respondents were the district council officers who worked directly with the communities in the LDF projects from the two departments of Public Works and Community Development. Four were public works officers while 2 were community development officers. Chiefs, school management committee members and village development committee members were selected based on their positions in managing the project. Village members were selected depending on their involvement in the project but did not belong to any committee that led the project. Table 1 indicates the number and type of respondents per district who were involved in this study.

Table.1: Participants

NO	Respondent	Chikwawa	Lilongwe
1	Public works officers	2	2
2	Community Development Assistants	1	1
3	Chiefs	3	3
4	School Management Committee	24	26
5	Village members	45	43
	Total	75	75

The chiefs, Community Development Assistants and public works officers were handy in helping identify people within their locations and social structures that had ordinary participant and a committee member for the community development in the implementation of the projects.

Out of 150 respondents 92 were males, while females were 58. These participants were from 6 schools where the study was conducted, three schools from T/A Chiseka in Lilongwe and the other three schools from T/A Makhwira in Chikwawa. Interviews were held with key informants as follows: 4 public works officers, 2 community development officers, 6 chiefs and FGDs with 138 village members. Out of the 138, 50 were community members who were in School Management Committees. 30 participants out of the 138 were Village Development Committee members. The remaining 58 were village members who participated in the projects as community members but were not part of the two committees which led the development in their areas.

Table 2 below summarizes the characteristics of the respondents.

Table 2: Respondents' characteristics

N O	Respondent	District				Total	
		Lilongwe		Chikwawa		Female	Male
		F	M	F	M		
1	Public Works Officer	0	2	0	2	0	4
2	Community Development Assistant	1	0	0	1	1	1
3	Chiefs	0	3	0	3	0	6
Focus Group Discussions							
4	School Management Committee members	6	20	5	19	11	39
5	Village Development Committee members	6	9	10	5	16	14
6	Village Members	17	11	13	17	30	28
	Total	30	45	28	47	58	92

3. 4.2 Selection of schools

A list of school projects under LDF was obtained from Public Works Department in Chikwawa and Lilongwe. A total number of 6 projects was purposively selected, and for each T/A, the study chose one teacher's house and two school block projects. In Chikwawa, T/A Makhwira's area was selected because it had the highest number of projects which had not been completed on time. Out of 11 school projects which were found, 4 were completed while 7 were incomplete. For the study 3 were selected, 1 from the completed projects in order to understand the reasons why other projects were completed in the same area. 2 projects were selected from the category of incomplete projects. These were

targeted because they were long overdue and the condition they were in, for the purposes of understanding how participation played a role in those outcomes. T/A Chiseka's area in Lilongwe was chosen because it had similarities with T/A Makhwira on characteristics of farming and business activities. A list of LDF projects in T/A Chiseka's area was obtained from the Department of Public Works and three projects were selected out of 13 school projects. One project in Chikwawa which was successful was chosen purposively to understand why it succeeded compared to two others in the same location of T/A Makhwira.

3.5 Data collection methods

The study collected primary and secondary data for the purpose of searching for interpretive patterns by looking at what was already documented and the current situation. The secondary data which formed the literature review of this study was collected from journals and books from LDF, libraries and the internet. These documents were vital in informing and complementing data collected using other methods. The study adopted interviews and focus group discussions for the primary data.

3.5.1 Interviews

In-depth interviews were administered using a semi-structured interview guide. Since it was a comparative study, the semi structured interview guide assisted in asking same questions in all the sites. Interviews were chosen with an aim of understanding how participants assessed their world, and constructed meanings on issues of participation on development projects. Also this tool was used to capture conscious reasons for community

members' and organizations' actions or feelings, motives and standards of behaviour during the participation in development activities. The interviews were conducted with key informants, such as 6 chiefs and 6 district council officials involved in LDF and community development activities. In total, 12 interviews were done, 6 from each district. Interviews with these key informants were useful because they were key persons with the full information in each project that was studied.

3.5.2 Focus group discussions

A guide was developed to conduct focus group discussions using open ended questions with the purpose of giving an opportunity of capturing numerous ideas and opinions from people. The number of participants in a group ranged from 8 to 12. In total, the number of the focus group discussions was 18, i.e. 9 from each district. 6 focus group discussions were groups of village members, 6 groups of members of School Management Committees (SMCs) and 6 groups of Village Development Committees (VDCs) who made contributions on construction of the infrastructure, human resources, ideas and other resources. These committees were targeted as focus groups because they were already in a group at same time, focus groups were chosen with the purpose of saving time in capturing data through groups compared to one to one interviews. In addition to this, in a group, there is an assurance of getting the right answers with the consensus of a good number of people. These groups had both male and female members since it was not possible to have a complete focus group of females ranging from 8 to 12 members. This was so because, in these committee structures, there was a combination of the males and females. The total number of each committee had a minimum of 10 members. The range of 8 to 12 people in

a group was easier to handle and it assisted and motivated almost every participant to make a contribution as compared to a big group. In total, from all the 18 focus group discussions, 138 participants were involved, with 80 being males and 58 being females. Data in these focus group discussions was captured using the focus group question guide and answers were recorded against each question.

3.6 Data analysis

According to Polit and Hungler (1997), data analysis means to organize, provide structure and elicit meaning. In this study, collected primary data was analyzed based on the themes of the empowerment analytical frame work. This was used in categorizing the data into concepts of the theory. These concepts were development outcomes, formal and informal social structures, institutional climate, and collective and individual assets which were grouped according to the nature of participation. Comparison of codes was done in order to find out consistencies and differences of levels of participation, formal and informal structures, institutional climate, and development outcomes from the two districts.

3.7 Limitations

Generalization of this study's findings to the entire nation is the major limitation. The outcome could only tell group and individual peoples' experiences but cannot highlight trends or patterns. Moreover, as Bryman (2004) pointed out, the respondents interviewed in qualitative research cannot represent the opinion of the entire population.

However, since this research was based on an analytical framework, lessons on development practice can be drawn and learnt from the conclusions made. Mikkleson (2005) confirmed that research based on a theoretical framework in general served as a foundation for generalizations and that may be adjusted as case study results that could provide new evidence.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Academic research rules on data collection were followed. According to Sarantakos (1998), data collection is guided by the following principles: interviewing skills, appropriate manners, techniques of persuasion, knowledge, and skills of obtaining relevant information and recording responses accurately, establishing standards of value neutrality, ethics, anonymity and confidentiality. Permission was granted from both Chikwawa and Lilongwe District Councils to visit the LDF projects and carry out interviews and focus group discussions within their jurisdiction. Community leaders in this study were briefed on the objectives of the study and they all welcomed the study to be conducted in their areas. Consent was granted by all participants in this study. Respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study before conducting interviews and focus group discussions. Their participation in this study was voluntary. Confidentiality was also one of the principles which was considered. All responses and interview reports were kept confidential and no name of any person was mentioned in the write up. These ethical considerations were pivotal to the success of this research.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the results of the study. Research findings are based on research objectives which were set out in the proposal and other themes which emerged from the data generated from the field by this study. The discussion of the findings in this chapter provides issues addressed in this study with the guidance of the conceptual framework and notions of other researchers reviewed in this study.

4.1 Local Development Fund infrastructure projects

Social funds have invested substantial resources in upgrading school infrastructures, (Ondrik and Asian Development Bank, 2011). Social fund programmes which LDF falls under allow communities to identify, design, and help implement projects such as schools, health clinics, roads, and water supply that serve their needs. The first objective of this study was to identify LDF infrastructure projects found in the areas.

The projects which were targeted in this study were school projects because more projects were under this category compared to health clinics, roads and water supply. In this study, 6 projects were assessed; two were teachers' houses while four were school blocks. The table below is the summary of the type of project, year the project commenced and year of completion.

Table 3: Type of project, year of commencement and year of completion

No	Name of School	Type of Project	Year of Commencement	Year of Completion
T/A Chiseka Lilongwe				
1	Mitundu	Teacher's house	2011	2012
2	Tsekwere	School block	2013	2014
3	Mkaka	School block	2013	2014
T/A Makhwira Chikwawa				
4	Mzogwe	Teacher's house	2010	Uncompleted by the time study was done
5	Wolewole	School block	2012	2014
6	Tsapa	School block	2012	2014

Source: Field Data

Participants in all the identified projects were asked to mention the year the projects started and completed. According to what was found as presented in Table 3, all assessed projects in T/A Chiseka were completed in a period of almost one year while in T/A Makhwira, two classroom block projects exceeded one year and the staff house project which started in the year 2010 was incomplete in 2016 . Although Wolewole school block was completed, in 2015 strong winds blew off the roof and during the time the study was conducted, learners were not using it. According to the Public Works officials, the maximum duration for infrastructure construction in these projects was 9 months.

4.2 Development outcomes in the infrastructure projects

The second objective was to find out the development outcomes produced in the infrastructure development projects. Development outcomes in this study were measured through the indicators of development and these were standard physical infrastructure ownership, transparency and accountability and empowerment which looked at the community's capability to plan and implement projects, freedom of choice, increased self-esteem and sustainability of the projects (UNDP 1996). These indicators were in line with targets of the Social Fund which focus on assisting communities to build infrastructure and to enable communities to learn useful managerial and development skills (Social Fund Africa, 2009). In this study participants were asked to mention changes or outcomes brought by the project in their communities. Responses which were captured were both long and short term changes. The following were the findings and they were grouped according to social development indicators.

4.2.1 Standard physical infrastructure

The Government uses the LDF mechanisms to fast track implementation of primary school infrastructure in the country. In T/A Makhwira, respondents from Mpangowalimba explained that the completed school block improved safe learning environment for their children. The Chief said:

“Makalasi awiriwa asanamangidwe, ana a sukulu amaphunzirira pansi pa minthuzi ya mitengo. Malo amenewa sanali abwino chifukwa ana amakhala pa umbalambanda wa dzuwa ndi mphepo akamaphunzira. Ndipo makalasi amemewa anathandizira kuthetsa vuto limeneli.” (KI, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

Before the school block was built, learners were using tree shades during lessons. Children were exposed to harsh weather such as wind and sun. It was not a good learning environment. This school block has assisted in solving that problem,

Wolewole school block in the same T/A's area was completed and later on strong winds took off the roof as figure 3 below shows. One of the key informants narrated that:

“Palibe kusingha komwe kulipo kunabwera ndi chitukuko chimenechi panopa chifukwa ana anthu sakugwiritsa ntchito makalasi awiriwa mmene mukuoneramu, mphepo yakhuntho inasasula ndenga.” (Chief, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa). There is no change with the development of the infrastructure since the winds damaged the school block and our children are not using it as you can see.



Figure 3: Wolewole school block damaged by strong winds

Source: Field picture

At Mzogwe School, village members in a focus group discussion expressed their failure in accomplishing the standard infrastructure. One of the members in this focus group discussion said:

“Palibe chomwe tinganene pa kusintha komwe kunabweretsa chitukukochi chifukwa sitinamalizitse. Tinakanika kumalizitsa nyumbayi chiyambireni 2010 pakana pano, tikanayesetsa kutulutsa nyumba yomwe ikanalowedwamo panopa ndi a hedi a sukuluyi.” (FGD of Village members T/A Makhwira, Chikwawa).

There is nothing we can say on the change brought by this project because we did not finish it. We failed to complete the house since 2010 up to date. We could have produced a building which would have been occupied by the head teacher now.



Figure 4: Incomplete Staff house at Mzogwe School

Source: Field Picture

In T/A Chiseka's area Lilongwe, respondents were asked to explain changes which they got from the completed school blocks and staff house. At Mkaka School where a school block was built, the head teacher who was part of the School Management Committee (SMC) explained the change which was brought by the school block. He pointed out that:

“Pali kusintha kwakukulu chifukwa cha chitukuko cha makalasi awiriwa. Ana amaphunzirira pansi pa mtengo, nthawi zina maphunziro awo amaimitsidwa kukakhala kuti nyengo silibwino ngati nthawi ya mvula.”

(Head teacher T/A Chiseka, Lilongwe). There is a big improvement which has been brought by this classroom block. Children were learning under a tree and most of the times classes were cancelled because of weather conditions such as rain.

Another change which was brought by the construction of the infrastructure was the accessibility and proximity of education services to children. Additionally, the school blocks increased enrolment of learners. Participants from both districts mentioned that the coming of new classroom blocks increased the enrolment of learners at the institutions. In T/A Chiseka, Tsekwere School had classes from standard 1 to 7 but the additional school block increased the classes and the enrolment of standard eight learners. Also, village members in a focus group discussion said that their children were attending other schools that had standard 8 which were not in their group village headman's area, but the construction of the additional school block brought back their children. One of the members of the village in a focus group discussion said that:

Chitukuko cha zipinda ziwiri zophunziriramozi zathandiza kuchepetsa nkhanza kwa ana, monga ana akazi kugwiridwa kumene kumakonda kuchitika mu nyengo ya mvula chifukwa cha mitunda italiitali yomwe ana amayenda kupita ku sukulu zomwe zinali ndi kalasi ya 8 chifukwa poyamba sukuluyi inalibe kalasi ya sitandade 8. Izi zimapangitsanso ana akazi kuleka sukulu akafika sitandade 7. Panopa zinthu zasintha ana akazi ndi otetezedwa komanso nambala ya atsikana osiyira sitandade 7 inatsika chifukwa tikumawalimbikitsa kuti apitilize maphunziro awo (FGD for Village members, T/A Chiseka Lilongwe).

This project led to reduction of child abuse like rape during rainy seasons that were occurring due to long distances. This school at first had no standard 8 and our children were attending other schools which were far. This led to girls dropping out of school when they reached standard 7. However, safety for the girl child has been secured and school drop outs decreased after attaining standard 7 because we are encouraging our children to continue with their education.

Another key informant from the Department of Public Works in Chikwawa was asked a question on what they expected the community to produce in infrastructure projects. The respondent in an interview said that as a department they expected infrastructure built from high standard materials that could produce good quality, reliable and durable buildings which could be used by communities. From the results found in T/A Chiseka, all three projects were of good quality. These structures were being used by the time the study was conducted. In T/A Makhwira in Chikwawa, only one classroom block was being used. It can be concluded that the infrastructure projects improved the quality of education in both T/As although two projects in Chikwawa did not produce reliable buildings. On this, participation fulfilled the purpose of achieving development in a community as Ondrik and Asian Development Bank (2011) stated that participatory development programs usually invest a good deal in building community infrastructure, especially in communities which

lack adequate infrastructure in the poorest communities. It is expected that devolving responsibility to the local level in a participatory development projects produce outcomes that would not only better aligned with the preferences and needs of final users, but also of high quality (Ondrik and Asian Development Bank, 2011). In this study this expectation has only been proven for 3 projects in T/A Chiseka in Lilongwe and 1 project in T/A Makhwira in Chikwawa.

4.2.2 Empowerment

Empowerment was another development indicator which looks at capability of the community to plan and implement projects, freedom of choice, increased self-esteem and sustainability of the projects. Through the construction of the projects, community members were empowered with the capacity to implement projects. In both districts, public works supervisors highlighted that one of their roles in working with the communities was to train School Management Committees (SMC) and Village Development Committees (VDC) on project management.

SMC FGD from Mkaka School in Lilongwe pointed out that construction of the school block brought knowledge and skills in managing the project, supervision, record keeping and division of labour. The group revealed that,

Kupambana kwathu pomalizitsa ntchito ya chitukuko chimenechi, kunali pa kutsatira ndondomeko ya ntchito yomwe timagawana. Membala aliyense wa mukomiti yathu amapatsidwa ntchito yomwe timasinthanasithana ndicholinga choti wina aliyense aphunzire komanso timapanga mosabisa ndi mwachilungamo.

Wina aliyense amadziwa chomwe chimachitika mu ntchito ya chitukuko chimenechi. Chifukwa cha ichi mamembala amagwira ntchito molimbikitsika mpakana tinamaliza, (FGD for SMC members, T/A Chiseka)

Part of our success in completing the project was due to the duty roster which we were following. Every SMC member was assigned one duty and there was rotation of work for each activity with the purpose of teaching every member. Transparency and accountability was being practiced. Each one of us was aware of what was happening in the project. This motivated members to continue doing the work up to its completion.

In Chikwawa, one of the projects had some challenges on coordination among the village heads. This was found out at Wolewole School. There was division due to land disputes and power relations among chiefs surrounding the project. There were fewer villages that made their contributions than villages which benefitted. The SMC explained that:

Panali mavuto omwe tinakumana nawo pachitukuko chimenechi, midzi yozungulira kuti itenge nawo mbali zimavuta chifukwa cha kusagwirizana komwe kunalipo pa nkhani ya malo ndi ufumu. Sitimathandizana chifukwa anthu a midzi yoyandikana nafe analetsedwa kutenga nawo gawo pa ntchito imeneyi chifukwa mafumu awo sanali ndi ubale wabwino ndi amfumu athu, (FGD for SMC Wolewole School).

This school block faced challenges on contributions from other surrounding villages because of some disagreements on land issues and power. There was no cooperation at all because village members from other villages were banned from taking any part in this project just because the village head was not in good terms with our chief.

In addition to this in Chikwawa, one of the chiefs lost his position, respect and trust from people due to a theft which he led. Community members who were in a focus group discussion expressed their disappointment as follows:

Tinakhumudwitsidwa ndi mtsogoleli wathu ndipo sitimayembekezera. Anaba ndikugulitsa matumba a simenti okwana 50 omwe timayenera kumalizitsira ntchito ya chitukukochi. Chidwi ndi chikhulupiriro chathu mwa a mfumuwa ndi komiti yomwe imayendetsa ntchitoyi china choka chifukwa amapangira limodzi zinthu. Izi zinapangitsa chitukukochi chisamalizike komanso a mfumuwo anatula udindo wawo pansi, (FGD for Village members T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

Our leader let us down and we did not expect it. He stole and sold 50 bags of cement which were meant for the completion of the project. We lost our trust and interest in him even in the SMC because they were doing this together. This led to non-completion of the project and he stepped down from his leadership.

This extract, signifies that strong, exemplary, honest and prominent leadership in social structures matters for community participation to influence the development outcomes. Leaders play a big role for participation to be effective. This agrees with Chilinde (2007) who emphasized that leadership qualities determines participation in community projects. However, the setup of the approach of community participation in achieving this indicator of empowerment, it does not cover the entire community being empowered in different skills. The empowerment of the community on managerial and development skills, it only goes to a group of number of people involved in the leading development project committees and not the whole community.

4.2.3 Ownership

Ownership as another development indicator was observed firstly in chiefs especially in T/A Chiseka. Chiefs developed the passion for the development of their areas and improved protection, security and ownership of resources that were communal. At Mkaka School in Lilongwe, out of the planned construction of the school block and a toilet project, they managed to build a school office with the same resources as figure 5 below shows.



Figure 5: Mkaka school block and office

Source: Field picture

This shows that there was proper management of resources, sense of ownership, planning skills and unity among community members and their leaders. The achievement of this office structure which was projected to be completed after mobilizing their own resources as a community was due to their creativity in maximizing resources and unity and was a sign of ownership of the project. Therefore, it can be argued that respect coming from leaders to community members through involving them in decision making can motivate their active participation in achieving development activities.

4.2.4 Transparency and accountability

Another development outcome which was produced was transparency and accountability. This study found that transparency and accountability could be one of the keys for success in development. In Lilongwe, at Mkaka School, a focus group discussion of village members revealed that transparency and accountability were shown by their leaders and SMC. This was done through reporting frequently to village members on the total cost of the project and the progress and this motivated them to participate. On the contrary, in Chikwawa, this indicator of development was not found in all the projects. For example, at Tsapa School, village members explained that progress reports were not shared and there was some resistance by community members to continue taking part in the project. Villagers were only involved through their contributions of labour, collecting sand and molding bricks. This brought misunderstandings on information for the implementation of the project as one of focus group discussions explained:

Ena mwa ife tinkangova mphekesera kuti panali ndalama zomwe zimayenera kuthandizira ntchitoyi ndipo chithandizo chanthu sichimafunikanso. A sukulu komiti amagwiritsa ntchito ndalama zimenezi

ku zinthu zina zosakhudzana ndi chitukuko ichi. Ndipo izi zimapangitsa kuti ena mwa ife kukhala ndi mtima wa chikaiko ngakhale timatengapo mbali. (FGD for Village members, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

Some of us were hearing rumors that funds were allocated for the bricks and sand and our contributions were not needed. The School Management Committee (SMC) was using those funds allocated for buying bricks and sand for other things which were outside the project. This made some of us to participate with doubts in our hearts (FGD for Village members, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

Mistrust was built which made community members withdraw from participating in the project. Mistrust was also found in the two other projects. At Wolewole School, community members together with the SMC had doubts in the District Council because they were not aware of the total amount of money for the project. SMC members said:

A kwa DC sanatifotokozere za ndalama zonse zomwe zimayenera kugwiritsidwa ntchito pa sukuku buloko imeneyi kwa ife a komiti, amangotipatsa ndalamazo pang'ono pang'ono (FGD for SMC members, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

The officers from the District Council did not explain to us the total amount of money for the whole construction. This was not disclosed to us as a committee. We were just being given money in portions.

According to respondents in a focus group discussion at Mzogwe School, community members complained that School Management Committees together with other development committees were not sharing feedback reports on the progress, success and way forward and this was a setback to their participation. Village members said:

Amangofuna thandizo lathu, amatikakamiza kuti tipange zomwe zimafunidwazo, kupanda kutero ana athu amathamangitsidwa makalasi mpakana ife tikagwire ntchito yotuta mchenga ku mtsinje kubweretsa pa nyumba yomwe imamangidwayo (FGD for Village members T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

They were only demanding our contributions and forcing us to obey orders failing which our children were chased out of the classes until we contributed labour by collecting sand from the river to the project site.

From the results and comparison of Chikwawa and Lilongwe projects on this indicator, it can be concluded that participation should go together with knowledge, transparency, and accountability for it to have a positive influence on development activities. Where there is clear information, transparency, and accountability, community members become cooperative in making contributions which affect the development outcomes positively.

4.2.5 Economic improvement

In Chikwawa, some respondents appreciated that the project increased employment opportunities for some of the community members who were builders. They were employed during the construction of the project and this made some changes in their lives economically. In Lilongwe, this did not come out as one of the responses.

4.3 Nature of participation in local infrastructure development project

The third objective of the study was to identify the nature of participation. Community members participated in the development projects in different ways and stages such as need identification, planning, implementation and evaluation stage. In this study, the following were the findings of community participation in the 6 sampled projects.

4.3.1 Identification and planning of the project

According to what was documented by the LDF-Technical Support Team (TST), the project identification process is normally done by local authorities in consultation with community members and political leaders. The communities analyze the existing situation, identify and agree upon priority problems, develop action plans to address the priority problem. They prepare proposals and submit them to the LDF-TST. The team sends proposals to the LDF National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) to review and approve. Once approved, the TST sends the money to the local authority for collaborated implementation with communities (Malawi Government- LDF 2013). Another way of identifying a project in the Education Sector Wide Approach Programme (ESWAP) under LDF for the construction of educational infrastructure is based on assessment of needs that is done at the education zone level by local authorities in conjunction with District Education Managers (Malawi Government-LDF- ESWAP 2014). This study used Agarwal (2001) model of Typology of Participation to categorize the nature of participation which was observed in the 6 projects. Typology of Participation as explained in chapter one (page 21) in the conceptual framework, the model has 6 types of participation, starting with nominal participation, passive participation, consultative participation, activity-specific

participation, active participation to the highest level called interactive (empowering) participation. In this study, these categories were used to analyze participation level in the 6 projects.

In Chikwawa, one out of the three projects adopted the identification process of the Technical Support Team and this project was Wolewole school block. The identification of the project was done by the community members, chiefs, and Village Development Committee (VDC) which led development activities at group village level. They prioritized the need and the VDC requested for the project from the District Council through the Area Development Committee (ADC). This identification process through community participation belonged to the highest level on the ladder and it was interactive participation. Community members had a voice and influence through taking part in prioritizing the project they needed. On the contrary, according to participants' responses, in two projects at Tsapa and Mzogwe School community members were not involved in the identification of the classroom block and staff house project. At Mzogwe, the community members in a focus group discussion said:

Kudziwa za chitukuko chimenechi tinadziwira pamene amatifunsa kuti titenge nawo gawo loumba njerwa ndi kututa mchenga kuchokera ku mtsinje ndi kubweretsa pamalo pomangira nyumbayi. Mmene anasankhira chitukuko chimenechi sitikudziwa (FGD for village members, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

We only heard that there was a project after being asked to make labour contributions through molding bricks and collecting sand from the river to

the site of the building. However, the way this project was identified we don't know.

Another participant from the same community said,

Ndinava za purojekiti imeneyi ku msonkhano wa makolo ndi aphunzitsi umene anatiitana ndi pamene amatifotokozera kufunika kwa nyumba ya aphunzitsi (FGD for village members, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

I heard about this project in a PTA meeting to which we were called as parents and they briefed us on the need for a staff house at the school.

The head teacher of the school who was part of the SMC was asked how the project was identified. He explained:

Ntchito ya chitukuko chimenechi inachokera ku ofesi ya zamaphunziro ku Boma, kudzera mu komitiyi ya makolo ndi aphunzitsi, a mfumu a dera lino anadziwitsidwa za kufunika ndi ubwino wokhala ndi nyumba ya aphunzitsi pa sukulupa ndipo anapemphedwa kuti anthu awo atenge nawo mbali yopeza njerwa, (FGD for SMC, T/A Makhwira Chikwawa).

It came from the District Education Office and they informed the chief of this area through PTA on the need and importance of having a staff house around the school. The chief was asked to mobilize the community for contribution of bricks.

At Tsapa School, the chief said:

Ogwira ntchito kwa DC anabwera kudzayendera sukulu ndipo anatitsimikizira kuti pamafunika kuonjezera makalasi. Anafotokozanso kuti ntchito imeneyi kuti itheke, pokhapokha anthu anga atasonkhanitsa njewra ndi mchenga Nditakambirana ndi anthu anga, tinagwirizana nazo poona kuti pamafunika kuonjezera makalasi chifukwa ana athu ena amaphunzirira pansu pa mtengo. (Chief, T/A Makhwira, Chikwawa).

Some officers from the District Council came to make a school assessment and recommended a classroom block and explained that if my community could mobilize bricks and sand, the project could be done. After discussing it with my community, we agreed that the need was indeed there because our children were learning under a tree.

From the information gathered, the two projects from these schools were identified through education zone assessments by local authorities in conjunction with District Education Managers. This type of identification made community participation to be in second level of passive participation as community members were informed of a decision which was already made and they listened. Also, they were consulted in a specific matter of building classroom blocks and teacher staff house without guarantee of influencing decisions. While in Lilongwe, only one project at Tsekwere School was proposed with the guidance of district education sector where it was observed that the school had not enough classrooms for standard 8. However, community members agreed and supported the whole project for the introduction of standard 8 class in their location. The other two projects followed the process of identifying the problems which they wanted to address as a community and they sent their needs through VDC and ADC to the District Council for LDF funds. Below is the summary of the participation levels on the identification process of the 6 projects basing on the Typology of Participation Model.

Table 4: Summary of the level of participation on the identification process

Identification process	Level of Participation	Chikwawa Project	Lilongwe Project
Community's decision through Chiefs VDC, ADC meetings	Interactive participation- the highest level on the ladder.	1	2
Recommended decision by the District Education Office	Consultative and Passive participation- third and second level on the ladder	2	1

Out of the 3 projects in Lilongwe, 1 project was suggested by the District Education Office and was accomplished. In Chikwawa 2 projects out of 3 were also recommended by the District Education Office, however, 1 was successful while the other failed.

On identification of the project, it can be concluded that participation levels in Lilongwe and Chikwawa were almost similar. Both had passive, consultative and interactive participation on identification process of the projects but mixed results were produced. Although one procedure of the identification of the project through the District Education Office making recommendation of the projects for the communities to work on, was not proper in the social fund projects. It was inappropriate because the setup of the community participation on the social fund projects targets communities to identify the projects on their own, while the Government provides financing, monitoring and supervising the projects and ensuring that the operation and maintenance of the infrastructures is adequate,

(The World Bank and AFRICATIP, 1997). Even though the projects were identified by the District Education Office, taking the level of passive and consultative participation, the study concludes that this did not determine the outcomes of the project. At first it was assumed that their outcomes would be undesired since the idea of the project came from the District Education Office.

4.3.2 Implementation

At this stage of implementation, there were similarities in all the 6 projects. It was in this way because the LDF infrastructure projects required community contributions of building materials that were found locally such as bricks, sand, and water and this constitutes 25% of the project. For the award of the LDF infrastructure project, the community is required to contribute this 25% of the building materials (Local Development Fund-ESWAP 2014).

The differences were that in Lilongwe, in all the 3 projects, community members were not only involved in contributing resources in form of labour, different skills for molding bricks, and sand collection, but also in quarry collection. In addition, there was financial contribution for the transportation of the quarry and river sand to the building site and payment of guards for their security services on the building materials funded by the LDF. Furthermore, at Mkaka School these finances were used for buying food for the builders and community supervisors during the construction of the projects.

However, in Chikwawa, community members in all projects only provided sand, bricks and water as their contribution. It was only at Tsapa School in group village Mpangowalimba that at a certain point, village members were asked to make monetary contributions for the payment of the contractor due to the delay in his payment by the District Council. The type of participation in this phase of implementation for all projects on the ladder was active participation, the fifth category where by participants were taking initiatives of other sorts. This level of participation was similar in all the districts because activities which were taken by the community members were the requirements for the projects funds to be approved by the Government.

4.3.3 Monitoring

In all projects, monitoring was done by the development committees and School Management Committees and they were representing the whole community. However, the only difference which was noted through this research was that in all the three projects in Chikwawa, community members were complaining that the development committees were not sharing the monitoring and progress reports. In Lilongwe, in all the assessed projects, community members in group discussions appreciated that development committees were providing feedback on the progress of the work, challenges, resources that were used and remaining resources in a transparent and accountable manner. Monitoring reports were provided every fortnight at Mkaka School while Mitundu and Tsekwere School provided them monthly. Community members were briefed on the progress of the project and discussed ways of dealing with the challenges encountered. The level of this type of community participation on monitoring falls under the highest level of interactive

participation, whereby members of the community had a voice and made decisions in solving the problems which were encountered during the implementation of the projects. The difference was on how T/A Makhwira and Chiseka involved the community members. In Makhwira it was only development committee members who were making decisions representing the entire community. On the other hand, at T/A Chiseka, the whole community was involved in making decisions after sharing the monitoring reports of the project.

It was assumed that the highest level of participation produced the desired development outcomes for the community as the Typology of Participation Model provides the levels of participation from lowest to highest. The results from studied projects show that T/A Chiseka and T/A Makhwira had similar levels of participation. For example, two projects with one from each T/A, Tsapa school block and Tsekwere school block projects had the lowest level of participation on the identification of the needs, and the outcomes which were produced were of the recommended standard of physical infrastructure. Moreover, the remaining four projects, two from each T/A, also had similar levels of participation starting from the stage of identification, implementation and monitoring of the projects. However, the results which were produced at T/A Makhwira by the two projects, Wolewole school block and Mzogwe teacher's house were not satisfactory in terms of quality and usage. Nonetheless, in T/A Chiseka, all the three projects, Mitundu teacher's house, Mkaka and Tsekwere school blocks accomplished the desired outcomes on time. The outcomes produced in these projects were not determined much by the type or nature of participation.

From the results of this study, it can be said that the nature of participation has minimal influence on the development outcomes. Nonetheless, the great impact of the nature of participation towards the development outcomes depends on good behaviour, positive attitude and the skills of participants in a collective group. These aspects can matter for the participation to affect prominently the desired development outcomes. Furthermore, according to what was observed through this study, collective action by community members is successful due to the following reasons which were captured in the successful projects in Lilongwe, at Mkaka, Tsekwere and Mitundu schools, and in Chikwawa in one project at Tsapa School:

- Passion of the community and leaders for the development of their area.
- Good leadership and coordination among village heads and community members.
- Division of labour per village for the resource mobilization and supervision of the whole work. Equal opportunity for community members to participate in development activities can provide motivation for good performance in contributing to the participatory projects. Equal involvement of villagers could make them feel honored hence motivated to fully take part in the project.
- Transparency and accountability through reporting to village members contributed to the success of community participation in influencing the development outcomes.
- Good relationships among development committee members, leading the project, community members and contractors.

- Proper management of the resources, for example, for Mkaka school block project in T/A Chiseka resources were managed and maximized, while for Chikwawa at Mzogwe School in T /A Makhwira, the staff house project was not completed because of mismanagement of resources.

It can be argued that the development outcomes could be influenced positively by community participation if the above practices are applied in the participatory infrastructure development projects. On the other hand, participation can be affected negatively due to the following reasons:

Leadership with nepotism has negative impacts on community participation. In Chikwawa, all community members who were involved in this study mentioned nepotism as one of the problems. The preferential treatment of chiefs towards specific members of the community hindered the participation of other community members who were not targeted for those activities. A focus group discussion showed that issues of coupons for the Farm Inputs Subsidy Programme (FISP) were commonly mentioned by village members who were in the focus group discussion. This programme assists community members with agricultural inputs for food security. Coupons used for buying farm inputs are distributed every year through chiefs. Nepotistic behaviour among chiefs on programmes such as FISP towards particular people consequently affects negatively the participation of village members in other projects. During a focus group discussion, participants said:

Ntchito za chitukuko zozithandiza tokhazi zomwe zili zaulele timazinyanyala kwa amfumu athu kuti awagwiritse ntchito anthu omwe amawakondera omwe amawapatsa ma koponi a mbeu ndi fetereza nthawi zonse. (FGD Village members, T/A Makhwira, Chikwawa). We boycott self-help development projects that are for free and ask our chief to use his favoured people who were always targeted in farm inputs subsidy programme to work for the projects

Secondly, if community members' ideas are not valued and respected by their leaders, community participation could be affected and so could the results of development also.

For example, in Chikwawa, community members said:

Sitimawerengedwa ngati anthu ofunikira, nthawi zina mamembala a makomiti a zachitukuko amatha kuchotsedwa komanso kulowetsedwa m'malo mwa ochotsedwayo ndi a mfumu ife osadziwa koma chonsecho ndife amene timasankha mamembala mu makomitiwa. Izi ndi zomwe zimatipangitsa kuti tisatenge mbali pa ntchitoyi chifukwa pamakhala palowa kachinyengo ndithu, bwanji amatidutsa ife osatiuza? (FGD for Village members, T/A Makhwira, Chikwawa). We are not considered as important. Sometimes members in the development committees were eliminated and replaced by chiefs without our knowledge yet it was us who elected those members. This forced us not to participate and we always think that corruption has taken place. Why by-passing us?

This may form part of the conflict which could lead to delays and incompleteness of the project. Nelson and Wright (1995) also explained that conflict also arises in situations where some groups feel neglected in decisions and in turn this enhances the possibility of different interest groups within single community opposing each other. As a result it affects the development outcomes.

Other factors had to do with issues of unfaithfulness, transparency and accountability of chiefs and development committee members on development project resources and information. This created mistrust towards chiefs by community members, hence low participation. Some community members did not take part fully in the construction of the projects in Chikwawa because of lack of unity and poor coordination. This problem was between school management committee and chiefs in the implementation of the project. This led to some challenges in mobilizing community members for their participation. Unlike in Chikwawa, in all studied projects in Lilongwe leaders were able to mobilize village members for their contributions towards the development work and almost all community members were able to do so. On this point, the study agrees with what Fatch and et al (1998) stated that mobilizing participation in community projects could only be possible where leaders are strong and influential. In Chikwawa, it was discovered that the behavior of the leaders also influenced and demotivated community members from taking part in development projects. Ramos and Roman (1986) also explained that good and active leadership encourages and offers greater awareness about effectiveness of collective action and influence the poor to participate in community matters.

4.4 Formal and informal structures

Community structures play a good role in coordinating community members and implementation of participatory development. Without the structures, it could be difficult for participation to achieve the desired outcomes for the projects and programs. Tremblay and Gutberlet (2010) also stated that the organization and mobilization of a community depends on the structures that lead development and social cohesion among its members

and for addressing community issues. The study investigated the role of formal and informal grassroots structures in local infrastructure development outcomes. Firstly, the identification of the structures was done for both formal structures that were recognized by the government and structures that were informal which were formulated by the communities themselves. The following were the findings;

Table 5: Formal and informal structures

NO	Formal	Informal
1	Area Development Committee (ADC)	Youth fellowship (church group)
2	Village Development Committee (VDC)	
3	School Management Committee (SMC)	
4	Parents Teachers Association (PTA)	

4.4.1 Roles of the formal structures on infrastructure development

Respondents from all the projects had similar answers on the roles of formal structures found in their areas and these were:

Area Development Committee (ADC): A committee found at T/A area level. Its role in the development projects was receiving and sending reports on the identified projects from Village Development Committees to the District Council. The committee was also involved in monitoring and evaluating projects.

Village Development Committee (VDC): This structure was under ADC and was found at group village level. Its roles were community mobilization in identifying and prioritizing problems and needs to be addressed; Report writing on the identified project to ADC and after the project received funds, the committee supervised the work of the project led by

School Management Committee (SMC). The committee was also involved in monitoring and evaluation of the project and providing guidance to SMC, chiefs and community on development. According to Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, ADC and VDC are indeed structures which lead development projects in local communities. Refer to Appendix 1.0 for their terms of reference.

School Management Committee (SMC) looked at development projects at school level and it is exactly what the committee is mandated to do by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST). The function of the SMC is maintaining school buildings and providing the school with adequate furniture (MOEST 1982). In the assessed projects, this committee was leading the implementation of the projects because they were school projects, managing the projects, analyzing the problems encountered in the project and reporting the matter to chiefs, VDC and entire community for solutions. Moreover, they were in-charge of procurement of building materials, supervising the work of builders and making payments for contractors. The committee was also involved in monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

Parents Teachers Association (PTA) in all the projects supported the work of SMC by encouraging parents to make their contributions on the project. At the same time, they were also involved in the contributions and sourcing of building materials found in their communities. According to the MOEST handbook (1982), a PTA committee is mandated to encourage the community to plan and build equipped schools and keep them well. Additionally, it should also encourage parents to undertake self-help projects at the school.

These structures were the ones which were involved in supporting and implementing the LDF school projects. However, SMC was fully involved in leading the results of the development in these projects.

4.4.2 Institutional climate

The Departments of Public Works and Community Development made contributions in all the projects. They created institutional climate through the formal structures for the community participation to take place. Institutional climate in this study was viewed as the laws, policies, strategies, rules and regulations which were available and provided guidance on the achievement of the development projects through the participation concept. The World Bank and AFRICATIP (1997) emphasized that each social fund follows the overall development policies of the host government governed by a wide range of people from national and local government and NGOs. The consideration of development is easier with development policy already in place because, it gives the community the guidelines for investigating resources and implementation of the development project. It assists in maintaining focus on the priorities of the community for investment of time and resources. It provides a tool to assist in evaluating progress and in providing accountability to communities and funding agencies (Lynos et al. (2001). It is in this line that it can be argued that effective participation to produce desirable outcomes depends on the policies. One of the policies which was found in this research was the Decentralization Policy.

Decentralization is the transfer of powers, functions and responsibilities from the central government to local assemblies (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development 2006). The Decentralization Policy set off the devolution of power and functions to the Local Assembly. The process ensures that meaningful participation of people in development process is attained and geared towards empowering the local people in identifying their problems, finding ways and solutions to problems, implementing those solutions and evaluating the process. The aim of decentralization is to create a democratic environment and institutions in Malawi for governance and development with people participation. It includes enhancing community participation in development issues. Another aim is to mobilize masses for socio-economic development. (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 2006). This policy encourages community members not to rely on local government in identifying their needs and plan on how to address the needs on their own. The policy gave a good platform for local communities to gain their right to participate and make proposition of the activities they wanted to do according to their needs. Community members were given power to make decisions basing on their problems and contributions when coming up with solutions by providing 25% of the resources of the projects. The policy provided a good environment for participation to be available in the projects.

The Decentralization Policy played a role in the projects which were sampled in this study. The District Assemblies enforced this policy implementation using the structures found in the communities by training them on how to manage projects and guiding the structures on how they can implement the activities using community participation. The District

Councils used community development assistants and building supervisors in enforcement of the Decentralization policy in the implementation of the projects. All these were analyzed in this study to understand the interaction of the individual and collective assets of community members with the institutional climate in producing the development outcomes.

It is believed that in participatory development, without institutional climate and social structure working together with individuals and collective assets (resources like land, labour, and skills) and capabilities, there could be some struggles in producing desired outcomes. This could be so because community structures activate the collective assets and resources to be used effectively and efficiently. Community structures are useful for participation to influence the achievement of the desired outcomes. Tremblay and Gutberlet (2010) also explained that organizational structures in the community are crucial for the way in which people come together and socialize to address common issues. Village Development Committees (VDCs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) were the formal structures which assisted and led the development projects in all the sampled projects. They had an influence on the project but, without institutional climate, these structures would not have performed well.

The Decentralization Policy provided an environment which allowed community structures to mobilize individuals and collective assets to be translated into effective utilization and achievement of the required and desired goals. This study looked at how individual and collective actions interacted with institutional climate and social structures to produce development outcomes using the Empowerment Analytic Framework adopted from Holland, Berthelsen and Alsop (2006), as explained in the conceptual framework in chapter one.

4.4.3 Informal structures

One informal structure was found in Lilongwe at Mkaka School where a youth fellowship group assisted in the construction of the school block. This group was involved because of the good relationship they had with the school management, since they were using a classroom for their prayers at the school. Hence they supported the construction project by collecting bricks from the oven to the building site.

4.4.4 Challenges encountered by the school management committees in managing the 6 Projects

In managing the projects, SMCs faced the challenges outlined below.

In Chikwawa, Wolewole School faced a challenge on late transaction of money from the District Council to the community. This delayed payment to the contractor and it is claimed that this was a contributing factor to the delayed completion of the project. However it can be argued that the community was not empowered enough in claiming their right of engaging the District Council to fulfill its responsibility towards the project at the right time.

There was also inadequate supervision from the Local Government. This was expressed by the SMCs from all the 3 projects. The reason which was behind inadequate supervision was that the Department of Public Works had a limited number of staff to move around for the monitoring and supervising on a frequent basis. Similarly, in Lilongwe, there was inadequate staff for supervision. However, in T/A Chiseka, formal structures were working closely with the Department of Community Development services where community development assistant found in the area had frequent monthly monitoring and supervision of the projects.

Nevertheless, SMCs were successful on the projects because of the support they had from Community Development Assistants and Building Supervisors. They assisted SMCs through the roles which they performed in the construction of the projects. Community development assistants in both districts said that they were involved in sensitizing communities on their participation and 25% contributions to the project through materials such as bricks, sand and water.

Community Development Assistants and Building Supervisors trained SMCs and VDCs on project management together with the Building Supervisors. They were also supervising, monitoring and evaluating the projects; and assisted the community in the identification of the contractors. In Lilongwe, the Community Development Assistant was encouraging transparency and accountability and she said.

In monitoring the projects I was advising and guiding the SMC members in my area, to be involved in every transaction and activity under the projects. I instructed them to have a duty roster for every committee member to be assigned with tasks and sharing of information with the chiefs and community members (Community Development Assistant, T/A Chiseka Lilongwe).

Building Supervisors from the Department of Public Works rendered their support by providing assistance on the project site selection through setting up the building foundation, depth of the structure and checking out all procedures of construction so that high standard buildings should be achieved. Furthermore, Building Supervisors were checking out the

quality of materials bought by the SMC and trained SMC on construction principles. In Lilongwe at Mkaka School, the SMC appreciated the Building Supervisors for the training and they said that committee members were able to instruct the builders when the mixture of sand and cement was not in right quantities.

It can be concluded that community participation could be a tool for achieving development outcomes due to the collective actions and resources found in communities with the combination of social structures and institutions. In all the T/As, there were some similarities in terms of the social structure. All projects were led by SMC, VDC, ADC and PTA. These structures stimulated community participation together with the chiefs, community development assistants and building supervisors. Another similarity was on the Decentralization Policy which was used and this guided the whole implementation of the LDF projects.

However, differences were on how the policy enforcers and social structures assisted the community members in understanding the project during sensitization, and implementation of the project on issues of transparency and accountability, supervision and project management. In Chikwawa, it was found that in the 3 projects, the Community Development Assistant and Building Supervisors played the role of sensitization at the beginning of the project but not much was done on supervision and empowering the structures to practice transparency and accountability. This study repudiates the argument that community participation is low due to policies that allow the community to participate at project implementation level only (Chilinde 2007). However, it is about how much the

community members are aware of the policy and act on the requirements of the policy guidelines. Also it depends on the supervision by the policy enforces, in making sure that the guidelines are followed and encountered problems along the way of implementing the policy being solved for the achievement of the development goals.

At Wolewole School, SMC claimed that although they were leading the implementation of the project, they had no information on the total cost of the project and the funds were received in bits. Similarly, at Mzogwe, it was reported that community members had no knowledge of LDF project processes; the information was with the committee which led the project. They were only involved in the contribution of the building materials and they were forced to contribute. At Tsapa School, community members had misconceptions on monetary management of the project by the SMC. Knowledge dissemination to the communities was not done well and this was the role of institutional climate enforcers. Mozammel and Schechter (2003) pointed out that knowledge dissemination becomes the important facet in empowering the poor to demand priority. Chilinde (2007) also explained in his study on participation that where the community was aware of a project, more people became interested to participate as compared to a situation where knowledge was disseminated to a few.

In this study in Chikwawa, all SMC members had more knowledge on how the LDF projects were supposed to be implemented compared to community members. There was lack of understanding on issues of transparency and accountability in terms of providing feedback to the community members. This hindered some community members from participating in the development projects. Consequently, this affected the development outcome such as social cohesion and the standard physical infrastructure. There was lack of ownership as shown in an uncompleted project at Mzogwe School in Chikwawa.

On the contrary, in Lilongwe, it was observed that community members were aware of all the projects in their areas. Supervision was adequate for instance; the community development assistant was monitoring the projects every month. They encouraged SMCs and VDCs together with chiefs to practice transparency and accountability through providing feedback to local members on how their contributions were used. This contributed to the completion rate of the three projects successfully.

Hence it is concluded that the results of the projects in Chikwawa and Lilongwe were different also due to the interaction of institutional climate enforcers with individual and collective assets in translating those assets into desired development outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to assess the nature of community participation and its influence on infrastructure development project outcomes in Lilongwe and Chikwawa. In this chapter conclusions and implications of the study are provided.

5.1 Conclusions

The study discovered that the nature of community participation had little influence on development outcomes. The results of the study indicated that the nature of participation which was found in the 6 projects in Lilongwe and Chikwawa was similar. However, the development outcomes which were produced were different due to diverse leadership styles and how interaction of institutional climate, social structures with community assets were set up for the community participation to take place. The following are the conclusions:

The author argues that for community participation to have more influence on development outcomes, it depends on the behavior, knowledge, skills, creativity, motivation and empowerment of participants. For these to be in the community members, it depends on the type of the leader who could persuade, guide, mobilize, and motivate people to

participate in the development projects. The leadership of T/A Chiseka and T/A Makhwira in Lilongwe and Chikwawa respectively was different. For Lilongwe, it was discovered that chiefs built unity, awareness, transparency and accountability to its village members on the construction of the projects. Community members were encouraged to practice transparency and accountability so that confusion should not arise and to win the trust of community members; and they did that and it worked very well. In Chikwawa, however, there was mistrust and conflicts due to land dispute and nepotism in leaders. Some community members were demotivated to participate in the projects due to the behavior of their leaders. The researcher also argues that this difference made Lilongwe perform better in influencing the desired development outcomes than Chikwawa.

It can also be concluded that the success of community participatory development is also determined by the good interaction of institutional climate, social structures and community collective assets in producing the desired outcomes. For the community to be blamed for low and non-participation in the development projects there should be a critical analysis and understanding of the social structures which led the project, and also how the policy and procedures played their role in assisting social structures to translate the assets and resources into the desired development outcomes. The study found that the policy enforcers were conversant with their work in both districts.

However, the difference was on the way they imparted the knowledge to communities. Unlike in Lilongwe, in Chikwawa more information of the project implementation and procedures was with SMC, VDC and chiefs than community members. The full knowledge was only with the leading development committees and this developed misunderstandings and misconceptions on the community's participation, henceforth low participation which affected the development outcomes.

Furthermore, inadequate supervision by the policy enforcers contributed to mismanagement of resources by the community and led to delays in accomplishing the projects in Chikwawa. Community development assistants and building supervisors were also not monitoring the projects frequently. The researcher concludes that this difference could be another reason why Chikwawa had late completion and incomplete projects. If there had been frequent monitoring and supervision by local authorities in Chikwawa, other challenges could have been dealt with and controlled. Policy enforcers monitoring the communities on the implementation of participatory development can therefore be useful for the achievement of the community development.

5.2 Implications

The following are implications for community participation to influence the desired development outcomes:

Influential leadership that inspires the followers towards participation can assist in achieving the development outcomes. For community participation to produce good results it must go along with good and influential leadership which motivate and empower community members. The leadership that incorporates transparency and accountability in participatory development could encourage community participation which would influence desired development outcomes.

Effective community participation also depends on how community's assets and social structures such as development committees work together with technical expertise in producing the desired outcomes. The transition of community assets into development outcomes could depend on policy, community participation working together with social structures and policy enforcers.

Information on development projects that require community participation should be shared with every community member involved, for collective efforts to influence effective participation to achieve the development outcomes. Successful community participation could be from community members that are aware of the project demands and procedures. Community participatory development implementers should share projections of the development results to participants, to provide a clear direction to guide the participants to work towards the desired outcomes.

If monitoring is done in development projects by experts and act on any deviations found during the monitoring, desired results can be achieved. Frequent monitoring and supervision on community participatory projects by policy enforcers could guide, provide solutions to challenges and prevent obstacles for the achievement of the desired outcomes

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1.0: Glossary

Agency: An actor's ability to consider and purposely choose options (Holland, Berthelsen and Alsop 2006).

Development: A process of improving the quality of human lives through raising peoples' living levels, self-esteem and increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choices (Todaro, 2010)

Institutions: Rules of the game (Holland, Berthelsen and Alsop, 2006).

Institutional Climate: An environment created by rules of the game which are Laws, policies, strategies, rules and regulations which provide guidance on the implementation and achievement of development (The United Nations ,2012).

Opportunity Structure: The institutional context that influences an actor's ability to transform agency into action (Holland, Berthelsen and Alsop, 2006).

Outcomes: End results (Dictionary)

Participation: the active involvement of local communities in development initiatives, where community members actively pursue the identification of their needs and establish mechanisms to implement their choices (The World Bank, 2001).

Appendix 2.0 Terms of References for Area Development Committee (ADC) and Village Development Committee (VDC)

Area Development Committee	Village Development Committee
• Assisting in the identification, prioritization and preparation of community needs which encompass more than one VDC and submit them to the District Executive Committee. • Supervising, monitoring and preparing project proposals from VDCs.	• VDC is mandated to perform these roles; leading in identification of projects, developing work plans and schedules and supervising the projects. • Ensuring that resources provided by external support agencies are well managed and controlled. • Monitoring and evaluation of the projects in the area.

Source: Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Training Manual, 2006

Appendix 3.0 Data Collection Instruments

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

A. Key informant, Chiefs

Identification of key Informant Date:

NAME OF DISTRICT:

T/A: VILLAGE:

.....

NAME OF KEY INFORMANT:

.....

SEX: EDUCATION LEVEL:

POSITION: OCCUPATION.....

DISTRICT OF ORIGIN OF INFORMANT:

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Identification of infrastructure of teachers' houses and school blocks in 2010 to 2014 period

1. What are the LDF infrastructure in this area?
 - a. How many school blocks?
 - b. How many teachers' houses?
 - c. Which year were you given the funds for the projects?
 - d. In which year were they completed?

Development Outcomes produced

2. What changes has the project (s) brought to your community?
3. In what way did the project empower you as a leader of this community?
4. Why did people participate in this construction project?
5. What results were produced after community members' contributions?

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Nature of Participation

6. How was the project identified?
7. What was your role in the construction of this project?
8. Why did you choose to participate in this infrastructure development project?
9. What did the community do to accomplish this project in order to address the need?

Challenges encountered

10. What were the challenges in these processes of participation?
11. What were the causes of those challenges?
12. How did you overcome them, in order to produce these outcomes?
13. Were there any social norms which were followed to initiate and enforce community participation?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASSROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Formal structures

14. What are the committees which are recognized by the government that assisted in the construction of these school blocks and teachers' houses? (Formal structures).
15. What was their role in the construction of this project?
16. What were some of the challenges faced by these committees during the performance of their duties?

Informal structures

17. Apart from the structures mentioned above, what other committees or groups found in your area assisted in the construction of these projects?
18. What was their contribution?
19. What was their significance?
20. How did they relate to formal structures or committees mentioned above?

B. KEY INFORMANT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT (CDA)
IDENTIFICATION OF KEY INFORMANT DATE:

NAME OF DISTRICT:

NAME OF KEY INFORMANT:

SEX:

POSITION:

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Role of CDA on LDF

1. What is your role as CDA in LDF projects?

Development Outcomes produced

2. What kind of results do you expect the communities to produce in the infrastructure projects?
3. Are there any policies, procedures, rules and regulations which you follow to initiate desired development outcomes? (if it is yes)
4. What are these policies, procedures, rules and regulations?

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

Nature of Participation

5. How did the community take part in the construction of the infrastructure project?
6. What was the role of the chiefs and community members?
7. What was your expectation on participation of community in infrastructure development projects as the Community Development Assistant?

Challenges encountered

8. What were the challenges in these processes of participation on infrastructure development?
9. What were some of the causes of these challenges?
10. How did you overcome them, in order to produce the desired outcomes?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASSROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Formal structures

11. What formal structures at grass root level assisted in the construction of school blocks and teachers' houses?
12. What were their roles in infrastructure development?
13. How did these committees accomplish their responsibilities towards the construction of development projects?
14. What was your role in assisting these committees in performing their duties?
15. What were some of the challenges faced by these committees?

Informal structures

16. Apart from the structures mentioned above, what other structures not recognized by your department assisted in the construction of these projects?
17. What was their contribution?
18. What was their significance to this infrastructure development?
19. What political structure, initiated community participation for the achievement of infrastructure development project?

**C. KEY INFORMANT: PUBLIC WORKS OFFICERS FOR LDF
IDENTIFICATION OF KEY INFORMANT DATE ...**

NAME OF DISTRICT:

NAME OF KEY INFORMANT:

SEX:

POSITION:

**OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN
THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**

Role of CDA on LDF

1. What is your role in these LDF infrastructure projects?

Development Outcomes produced

2. Which results do you expect the communities to produce in the infrastructure projects?
3. What are the standard procedures, rules and regulations that must be followed in order to produce these outcomes?
4. Are there any policies, and strategies which you follow to initiate desired development outcomes? (if it is yes)
5. What are these policies, and strategies which you use?
6. What indicators guide you to assess results of participatory development projects?

**OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Nature of Participation

7. How did the community take part in this infrastructure project?
8. What was the role of the chiefs and community members?
9. What was your expectation on participation of community on infrastructure development projects?

Challenges encountered

10. What were the challenges in these processes of participation on infrastructure development?
11. What caused these challenges?
12. How did you overcome them in order to produce the desired outcomes?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASS ROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Formal structures

13. What formal structures at grass root level assisted in the construction of school blocks and teachers' houses?
14. What were their roles on infrastructure development?
15. How did these committees accomplish their responsibilities towards the construction of development projects?
16. What was your role in assisting these committees in achieving and performing their duties?
17. What were some of the challenges faced by these committees?

Informal structures

18. Apart from the structures mentioned above, what other structures not recognized by your department assisted in the construction of these projects?
19. What was their contribution?
20. What was their significance to this infrastructure development?
21. Which political structures, initiated community participation for the achievement of infrastructure development project?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

School Management Committee

NAME _____ OF _____ DISTRICT: _____

T/A: _____ VILLAGE: _____

CHARACTERISTIC OF THE GROUP: _____

NO. OF FEMALES..... NO. OF MALES..... TOTAL
NO.....

DATE: _____

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

1. Which LDF projects in this area, have you initiated?
2. What have you achieved in this LDF project?

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

3. How was the project identified?
4. How was the community mobilized to take part in this project?
5. How did the community participate in this development project?
6. What contributions did the community make towards the project?
7. What were the challenges in implementing this project?
8. What were the causes of these challenges?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASSROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

9. Which policies, procedures did you follow?
10. How did you work with the District Council in this project?
11. What challenges did you face as a committee in leading this type of community development?
12. What other groups did you work with in this project?
13. How did you work with those groups?
14. What kind of support did you get from those groups?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Village Development Committee

NAME OF DISTRICT:

.....

T/A:VILLAGE:

CHARACTERISTIC OF THE GROUP:

NO. OF FEMALES..... NO. OF MALES..... TOTAL
NO.....

DATE:

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

1. Which LDF projects in this area have you participated in?
2. What have you achieved in this LDF project?

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

3. How was the project identified?
4. How was the community mobilized to take part in this project?
5. How did the community participate in this development project?
6. What contributions did the community make towards the project?
7. What were the challenges in this project?
8. What were causes of these challenges?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASSROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

9. Which policies and procedures did you follow?
10. How did you work with District Council in this project?
11. What challenges did you face as a committee in leading this type of community development?
12. What other groups did you work with in this project?
13. How did you work with those groups?
14. What kind of support you get from those groups?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

(Village Members)

NAME OF DISTRICT:

.....

T/A: VILLAGE:

CHARACTERISTIC OF THE GROUP:

NO. OF FEMALE: NO. OF MALES..... TOTAL
NO.....

OBJECTIVE 1: TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME PRODUCED IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

1. How was this infrastructure project identified in your area?
2. Why did you choose this project?
3. How did you accomplish this project?
4. What results did you obtain?

OBJECTIVE 2: TO IDENTIFY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

5. What was your involvement in this project?
6. In which stages of this development were you involved?
7. What made you to take part in this development project?
8. What was your contribution to the project?
9. What were the limitations that made others not to take part in this project?
10. What caused those limitations?
11. How were those problems addressed?

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL GRASSROOT STRUCTURES IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

12. Which committees took a leading role in the construction of the project?
13. How did you work with the committees?
14. What was their role on this project?
15. What other groups assisted in this development?
16. What did those groups contribute?