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An Investigation of the Impact of Non-formal Education on Sustainable Development in Mafeteng, Lesotho

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Abstract: In the context of this study, non-formal training has been viewed as an intentional educational endeavour that frequently operates outside the traditional schooling system, with the curriculum and instructional systems tailored to the participants' particular needs and requirements. The study explored the relationship between non-formal education training and sustainable development. An interpretive paradigm was espoused in this study using a qualitative approach confined within a case study, and in-depth face-to-face interviews with three managers from one program of poverty reduction were selected. The other 18 beneficiaries participated in three focus group discussions made of six participants per group. Findings from face-to-face interviews revealed challenges that managers faced in convincing old and illiterate beneficiaries to adapt to modern agricultural trends, especially climate change and the preservation of seeds. Furthermore, findings from focus group discussions reveal a number of training difficulties faced by the beneficiaries, including low literacy levels, lack of efficient teaching techniques, insufficient time for beneficiaries to fully comprehend the concepts, information overload, and the frustration they experience during training. On these premises, the study thus recommends that beneficiaries should be actively involved in all decision-making processes in order to understand their requirements and preferences as well as the transparent use of funding.

Keywords: Non-formal education, training, empowerment, poverty alleviation, sustainable development.

1. Introduction

Sustainable development and education have always been seen as essential to success in all aspects of life. Giovetti (2022) and Omoniyi (2013) assert that education provides people with the tools they need, such as skills, resources, and job opportunities to end poverty and promote economic growth. Basic education is thought to improve a person's ability to make wise judgments daily. A study by Hanushek and Woessmann (2021) attributes a 75% growth in gross domestic product between 1960 and 2000 to skilled personnel in both mathematics and science. Furthermore, Casserly (2021) states that poverty reduction is closely linked to education and skills acquisition. Therefore, we argue that poverty eradication is far-fetched if human capital is underdeveloped.

People equipped with basic education stand a chance to assist in economic, social, and cultural aspects of development (Denison, 2008; Bowman, 2010). Education should be recognised as crucial to securing suitable employment in poverty eradication and sustainable development (UN, 1992). Global Partnership for Education (2016) states that poverty could be reduced by 30% from learning improvements outlined by the UN Education Commission. This is because education provides knowledge and skills and enables the right attitudes through which learning skills can be easily acquired (UNESCO, 2013). In addition, Etling (1993) identified three styles of education—formal, non-formal, and informal- linked with advancements towards obtaining education.

On the one hand, Livingstone (1999), Johnson and Majewska (2022) define formal education as an academic ladder which starts from pre-school to university. It is a formal learning process where students attend classes taught by trained professionals (Livingstone, 1999; Schugurensky, 2000; Radović & Passey, 2016). On the other hand, informal education is defined as a voluntaristic process which is not planned, not structured and context-dependent; it also happens in daily life and is motivated by individual wants and interests (Morris, 2019). Furthermore, Islam (2007), Denison (2008), Bowman (2010), and Johnson and Majewska (2022) add that non-formal education complements formal education because it provides people with basic skills required in economic, social, and cultural aspects of development. It does not consider age, but it is community-based-based and organised for a specific purpose. Non-formal education training has, therefore, proven to change people's attitudes and provide skills needed for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2013). The researchers thus believe that non-formal education plays a critical part in community development initiatives because it does not consider a person's level of education. This suggests that communities can sustain themselves because of the skills acquired therein.

Non-Formal Education is available to people of all ages and can occur inside or outside educational institutions (UIS, ISCED, 2012; Ionescu, 2020; Council of Europe, 2022). It typically involves instructional initiatives that may or may not be time-limited and may or may not award certification for the learned skills (UIS, ISCED, 2012). According to UN (1992) and IIEP (2006), non-formal education equips individuals with skills such as environmental awareness and further conscientise them on development-related challenges, and even those who have not gone to schools' benefit because non-formal education acts as a two-way learning process. UN has also acknowledged non-formal education (NFE) for sustainable development, and Agenda 21's Millennium Goals Chapter 36 on sustainable development further emphasises its importance. Chapter 36 maintains that education is significant and enhances peoples' abilities to care for the environment and development issues. The document also states that formal and NFE are equally significant in altering people's perceptions and perspectives about prioritising sustainable development activities (UN, 1992).

Since NFE is critical in sustainable development and because it encourages literacy, NGOs and governments are thus advocating for the NFE initiatives (Wood, 2009). In addition, Lindner et al. (2020) postulate that countries' standards of living and economy are determined by their ability to educate and advance the healthcare services to their citizens and community development initiatives. Furthermore, Wood (2009) posits that unskilled people need some form of literacy and discipline learned through NFE to survive poverty. People are trained and given knowledge and practical skills through NFE. Knook et al. (2018) write that content in NFE is mostly practical, which places more responsibility on the beneficiaries than the facilitator while facilitators are also expected to adapt to meet their beneficiaries' ever-changing demands through their training (Pigozzi, 1999). However, there are no studies to our knowledge on the impact of NFE to sustainable development conducted in Lesotho. Therefore, this study aims to explore the sustainability of the poverty alleviation programs in Lesotho at the Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP) in Mafeteng as well as the role that training plays among the beneficiaries.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The Eco-Club Programme in the Zambezi Region project clarified that the NFE sector significantly aided the formal education system by improving vertical integration from global standards to local communities (Adam et al., 2020). Although beneficiaries in Lesotho receive training on sustainable development and skill development for self-sufficiency, most of the development projects fail despite the fact that beneficiaries have been equipped with sustainability skills. In Lesotho, NFE is part of the country's development policies because it facilitates the transmission of skills necessary for human development (Lindner et al., 2020). The grassroots poverty alleviation projects and their viability have not made a significant transformation in Lesotho because the majority of such projects

fail when training ends. Although training is meant to ensure the sustainability of projects leading to poverty reduction, after training, it is always assumed that the programs would be sustainable and contribute to poverty reduction; however, this is often not the case in Lesotho because such initiatives fail to live up to what they are intended to achieve. It is, therefore, critical to explore why such projects are failing even after providing beneficiaries with the necessary training and skills.

1.2 Research questions

- RQ1: Has there been any training designed to empower the beneficiaries of the Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP) in Mafeteng?
- RQ2: Was the training funding sufficient to bring about the expected results?
- RQ3: What training difficulties has the Lesotho Irrigation Project encountered?

1.3 Theoretical framework

The theory that informs this study is the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI), developed by Everette Rogers in 1962. It is believed that DOI changed the philosophy of development communication by putting more emphasis on outside influences and their major impact on societal progression (García-Avilés, 2020). The theory suggests that outside influences, such as financial assistance, technical knowledge, ideas and resources, amongst others, play a significant role in development (Dearing & Lee, 2016). The theory suggests five adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards, although the majority fall within the middle stages of adoption. Innovators are mostly people who always want to be the first ones to try out the innovation (Rogers, 2003). These people are adventurous and always enticed by new ideas (Dearing & Cox, 2018). Furthermore, they are eager people who do not shy away from risks, and as such, they are always interested in developing new ideas (Rogers, 2003).

Moreover, early adopters are people who take pleasure in leadership roles within community-based projects (Rogers, 2003; Dedehavir et al., 2017; Dearing & Cox, 2018). They enjoy leadership roles and embrace new opportunities. They are open to change, and they can influence others to embrace innovation (Blackburn, 2011). In the context of this study, we believe that early adopters can convince other members to take training seriously for the betterment of the community projects aimed at improving their lives. For the early majority, adopting new ideas or innovation is not a problem since they can adopt them before average community members; however, they need to be convinced since they are skeptical that training in the context of this study are important and that they can improve their lives (Rogers, 2003; Dearing & Cox, 2018).

Nevertheless, we believe that early adopters, in their capacity as opinion leaders, can persuade them to accept innovation aimed at sustaining their communities. Late majorities are people who are doubtful of change and will only espouse an innovation after the majority has tried it (Rogers, 2003; Blackburn, 2011; Dearing & Cox, 2018). Simply put, these people accept change because of peer pressure. Lastly, laggards are people who are skeptical of change because they are highly conservative and are mostly influenced by tradition (Rogers, 2011). They are said to be the most difficult group to convince (Rogers, 2003; Blackburn, 2011). This, therefore, suggests that success stories of other community development initiatives should be used to convince this group that training is needed to have a successful project that will benefit their community.

2. Literature review

2.1 Participatory communication

Participatory communication is crucial for the success of development projects. Urquiola (2021) and Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) posit that participatory communication is grounded on dialogue, which in turn permits the sharing of information and opinions among relevant stakeholders and further facilitates the empowerment of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in society.

While participatory communication gives participants the courage to take risks geared towards community development, italso allows them to participate in decision-making processes on issues that significantly impact their lives (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009; Hardianto, 2013). This, therefore, suggests that dialogues about new non-formal trainings and new projects aimed at developing communities should be conducted in such a way that all the five adopters, as stipulated by DOI, are included. We are of the conviction that the inclusion of all adopters is crucial for the success of community development projects. Ensuring comprehensive participation significantly minimises the likelihood of project failure.

Participatory communication increases project sustainability and guarantees beneficiaries' genuine ownership (Israel et al., 2013). In short, it is envisaged that participatory communication should exist through all stages of any development project as a process rather than a change in emphasis towards a more nuanced and articulated reality (Mendez et al., 2015). In addition, Upadhyay and Inani (2021) also assert that participatory communication goes beyond information sharing in that it advocates for generating new knowledge to bring change. Therefore, this implies that the project manager, beneficiaries, and donors must all agree on the most important goal they want to accomplish. This includes beneficiaries at the center of their development. Through this collaboration, all parties involved will share knowledge and expertise that will enable the sustainability of poverty reduction projects.

2.2 Training and empowerment

Economic stagnation and growth of the informal sector in many less developed nations particularly in Africa, made it necessary to redefine the goals for human resources development and training (Jepson & Halbleib, 2015). Al-Nabae and Sammani (2019) point out that training can improve project processes and the performance of the key stakeholders within the project. The fundamental goal of training is to increase the availability of skilled workers at all levels to meet the demands of the economy and serve as a catalyst for increased productivity, revenue generation, and reduced social inequality (Bardasi, 2013). To increase economic efficiency in the formal and informal sectors, employability, people's economic well-being and labour productivity have been prioritised to encourage entrepreneurship and economic participation (Bardasi, 2013). In the context of this study, the beneficiaries of the training programs are given knowledge and skills that enable the sustainable use of natural resources for increased agricultural output.

There is a connection between training and poverty. Training offers skills to boost production and put innovations into practice, especially in the unorganised sector (Sangurde, 2019). This is because training results in skills acquisition, especially on-the-job training for new and old participants in the project, leading to increased productivity and reduced poverty (Anthony et al., 2021). In addition, Lindner et al. (2020) posit that non-formal agricultural training is broadly dispersed as a method of sustainable development. Furthermore, results from a local TVET facility in Vanuatu show that adults provided with flexible, approved technical and business training have improved in their daily activities (Bardasi, 2013).

Lesotho encouraged income-generating activities for economic security and supported individual empowerment (Lephoto, 1995). This is because empowered people are self-sufficient and independent and take advantage of any opportunity to earn extra money for their families (Counet al., 2022). In this instance, non-formal training for projects aimed at reducing poverty emphasises enhancing the welfare and living circumstances of the underprivileged. It is still important to consider all the five adopters as suggested by the adopted theory of this study before the commencement of non-formal agricultural trainings so that projects can live up to what they are intended to achieve. This means that laggards and late majorities must be convinced to embrace the non-formal training for success of the projects to sustain their communities.

3. Methodology

A qualitative approach confined within a case study was adopted in this study because the researchers sought to understand the phenomenon under investigation by gathering its comprehensive description (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Additionally, this approach managed to help the researchers to comprehend the beneficiaries' intentions and emotions (Mack et al., 2005). The design used is a case study wherein the researcher explores a relationship between phenomena, context and people. It also helps the researcher explore the deeper causes of the phenomena under study (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). The case study allowed researchers to see the connection and mode of communication between the recipients of the NGOs' efforts to combat poverty. Furthermore, the study employed the interpretivist paradigm, which encourages dialogue between researchers and participants to bargain, collaborate, and produce a meaningful understanding of reality. This understanding is specific to a particular situation and environment and cannot be generalised to all situations (Saunders et al., 2016). This paradigm acted as a compass for what the study sought to unravel in order to promote sustainable development through training in the fight against poverty.

Participants in this study were purposively sampled. Purposive sampling involves choosing participants or cases on purpose using discretion to include people or instances who can offer distinctive perspectives or experiences pertinent to the research objective (Patton, 2015). Guest et al. (2006) posit that the participants selected should be consistent with the study goals. The sampling entails choosing subjects drawn from a population that will yield substantial and insightful data to address the research questions (Bertail et al., 2017). The study used purposive sampling to collect data from the beneficiaries because they had the information, knowledge and agricultural experiences required in this study.

Data in this study were gathered through face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. An interview is a more naturalistic and less structured method of gathering data to understand the phenomena being studied, hence its adoption in this study (Hamza, 2014). The researchers minimised participants' influence and bias by using a question guide, which enabled the participants to express their opinions freely and in their own words. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the two project managers, and a government official one. Moreover, focus group discussions with the 18 beneficiaries were also conducted, and the total number of participants was 21. Focus group interviews are in-depth group interviews in which participants are chosen because they have relevant information required for the study (Gill & Baillie, 2018). In addition, Goodman and Evans (2015) assert that these interviews are more fruitful than one-on-one because the researcher gains rich and in-depth data as participants provide a variety of responses and examples and are able to recall knowledge that has been forgotten. The focus group discussions were divided into three groups of six beneficiaries. Participants in the focus group discussions were assigned codes B1 FG1 (Beneficiary 1 Focus Group 1), B1 FG2 (Beneficiary 1 Focus Group 2), respectively.

It was necessary to seek permission from the gatekeepers (Creswell, 2014). The researchers sought permission by calling to book an appointment for face-to-face discussions. Once the participants had given the green light, the researchers briefed them on the purpose of the study. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntarily and, therefore, should they feel disconcerted, they were at liberty to withdraw at any given time during the interviews. Finally, the participants were presented with consent forms to sign.

3.1. Data analysis and trustworthiness

Data in this study were analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) and Frith and Gleeson (2004) procedures. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis allows the researcher to determine precisely the relationships between concepts and compare them with the replicated data. Themes capture data in the most unique manner as different majority experiences

are incorporated therein (Scharp & Sanders, 2018). Thematic analysis helped the researchers link various concepts and opinions of the beneficiaries and further compared them with the data collected in different situations at different times during the project (Ibrahim, 2012). We employed Latent thematic analysis because we went beyond the surface meaning of data (Byrne, 2021). To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the interpretation of the findings was returned to the participants so that they could tell if their views were captured correctly. Furthermore, the researchers shared the study with their colleagues for constructive criticism. After the constructive feedback from colleagues, the authors sat down and implemented some of their comments before sending the study for language editing.

4. Presentation of data

Data from the findings were presented in line with the research objectives and themes derived from the data collected. The following themes were developed from the information gathered during the interviews: organised training to empower beneficiaries, adequate and timely funding and training challenges experienced by the project.

4.1 Training organised to empower the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries admitted to having received training across a range of subjects, and they realised growth in production. They reported that the program enhanced their leadership abilities. One participant said the following:

"*There are different kinds of training we are receiving; for example inter-grouping farming, gardening activities and capacity building*" (B1 FG1).

Another participant added that:

"*There have been some trainings which helped us to change from dependency by improving leadership ability among us. Trainings have also helped in increasing our self–employment capacities*" (B2 FG2).

Most beneficiaries stated that they have received training in new crop cultivation techniques, water conservation, accounting, product marketing, and mitigating the effects of climate change, such as drought, floods, deforestation, and soil degradation. One participant uttered the following comments:

"*We have been trained on food and economic security, which entail the conservation agriculture, new methods to cultivate crops and conserving scarce resources like water*" (B4 FG1).

Another participant added that:

"*Training includes, amongst other things, the mitigation of the impact of climate change such as drought, floods, deforestation and soil degradation*" (B3 FG2).

While most of the beneficiaries applauded the training received, some doubted its impact. One participant provided evidence to support this argument by saying the following:

"*There was training which was too short and very fast, so we could not grasp the important information as the trainers were mostly concentrating on the young ones who were faster than us and the language they were using took us time to understand*" (B2 FG2).

Another participant added that:

"*Some of us are old and not educated, so we take time to understand things, so this training was short, and most educated young members were faster than us; hence we gave up in being active in the discussions*" (B1 FG3).

All beneficiaries admitted that they only received pieces of training during the project implementation, and when it was phased out, training ceased. This was confirmed by a beneficiary who claimed that:

 *"We have not seen any government representative after donors left or received any other training from elsewhere" (*B1 FG1).

Another participant added that:

"*Ever since then, we have been on our own.*"(B1 FG2*).*

The above comments imply that training is important, butit becomes useless if the trainers do no follow-up.

4.2. Adequacy and timeliness of funding

On timeliness of funding and time allotted for the project, most of the beneficiaries confirmed that the project had sufficient time to produce the expected results. However, there were challenges encountered. This was confirmed by one participant who expressed the following:

"*I think time is adequate because we were not introduced to new concepts, we were just being given skills to improve what we have been doing for years* "(B2 FG 1*).*

Another participant affirmed that:

" I think the time is fine because we had at least two years to practice the skills we have acquired in the presence of the NGO" (B3 FG 2*).*

One participant revealed that:

" Funding was enough, but it did not come on time, proper arrangements should be made earlier next time" (B4 FG3).

Few beneficiaries claimed that they did not receive what was promised, and they stated that they doubted if funding was enough for the project. This was disclosed by one participant who claimed that:

"*We received less than what we were promised, and that discouraged us because we felt betrayed and duped*" (B3 FG 2).

Another participant stated that:

 "*I am not sure if the funding was enough because trainers have always been saying they are waiting for the funding, yet the project was already continuing, what I can say is promises were not fulfilled*" (B4 FG 3).

Another participant indicated that:

 "I*t was unclear whether or not the funding was sufficient"* (B7 FG 3).

4.3. Training Challenges faced by the project

Beneficiaries expressed uncertainty regarding the project's sustainability, as some beneficiaries were not adequately trained to conserve the seeds for the next season. One participant supports this argument by saying:

"*There is a young man who stole his grandfather`s potato seeds and ate all of them,*" (B1 FG 1).

One participant revealed that:

"*People end up eating their seeds*" (B2 FG 2).

Another participant affirmed that:

 "Some people sell their seeds and then buy food" (B2 FG 3).

Beneficiaries alluded to improper targeting during their beneficiaries, which resulted in poor engagement and participation in the project. This happened because of improper beneficiary identification and need categorisation. Furthermore, beneficiaries highlighted nepotism and corruption from the leaders who were involved in selecting beneficiaries. One of the participants revealed that:

"*The chief and community leaders were choosing their friends and relatives to take part even when they were not part of the project*" (B3 FG 1).

One project manager claimed that:

"There is no transparency on how the beneficiaries for this particular project were selected" (Project Manager 1).

Another beneficiary added the following:

"*List of members who are supposed to be used for parcel collection and training always changes, the community leaders and the chief are responsible for it"* (B1 FG 3).

Beneficiaries further stated that insufficient training left them with inadequate skills, thus leaving them vulnerable to climate change challenges, affecting their harvest. One project Manager expressed the following:

"The project experienced a huge number of cutworms due to excess water" (Project Manager 2).

On the same note, another participant claimed that:

 "Weather is one of the major challenges; for example, we are about to harvest now, but it is still raining, so we are afraid that the smaise will not dry up," (B2 FG 3).

One participant revealed the following:

"There have been heavy rains this year, which made some of our crops to be heavily affected by the weed" (B7 FG 3).

5. Discussion of the findings

Findings show that beneficiaries had different types of training, which positively impacted the project. This finding is consistent with The DOI theory, which suggests that outside influences, such as technical knowledge and skills, are important in development (Dearing & Lee, 2016). This finding is also substantiated by Al-Nabae and Sammani (2019), that training can be used to improve project processes and further improve the performance of the key stakeholders within the project. Furthermore, it was also discovered that old and illiterate beneficiaries struggled during training due to the pace at which the training was delivered, even rendering some participants to information overload. This finding is contradictory to UIS, ISCED (2012), who argued that non-formal education caters for all people irrespective of age and level of education. However, the finding is commensurate with the DOI theory's fifth adopter category on laggards, which emphasises that this group is highly conservative in nature and bound by traditions. They stick to their traditional ways of doing things; hence, it is difficult to grasp new ideas (LaMorte, 2022). This suggests that trainers need to consider all categories because not all of them enjoy acquiring new things.

The findings further indicate that the level of education and age of some beneficiaries negatively affected the results of the project, as uneducated people, in most instances, took longer to understand

what was discussed during training. This also applies to the elderly, who were generally slow. This group falls under late majority adopters as one of the categories of DOI because they might be slow learners due to their level of education and several other factors, as stipulated by LaMorte (2022). The findings also highlight that donor expectations were not met in projects because their training design did not include the project participants, and the time allotted to them was insufficient. There is also no convincing training method to encourage beneficiaries to fully participate in the project. This means that early majorities will not embrace the training since they are not convincing enough for them to adopt. Therefore, the lack of beneficiaries' participation in the project challenges IFAD (2007b). The results further reveal that the primary issue in this situation is the targeting of beneficiaries and their inaccurate segmentation of the beneficiaries. It was clear that ageing and knowledge overload made it impossible for some beneficiaries to accomplish the desired goals.

The findings also exposed negligence on the part of the government as farmers claimed that the government is not fully committed due to a lack of support once the projects are phased out. It was further revealed that training serves as a means for farmers to communicate and share ideas. Lack of support and training from the government discouraged beneficiaries because they needed refresher courses to nurture their skills towards improved production. This finding is not constant with the participatory communication, which advocates for continuous participation of all relevant stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle and post-project trainings to revive participants and boost their morale (Urquiola, 2021). In consonance, Lindner et al. (2020) substantiate that agricultural training should be broadly dispersed as a method of sustainable development, and should, therefore, be conducted more often.

Moreover, findings reveal that most participants believed that time was insufficient for the project to yield results. Dearing and Lee (2016) support that external assistance to the project is important because financial assistance, technical knowledge, ideas and resources, among others, play a significant role in development. Following the DOI theory, time is of the essence to drive diffusion within societies (Dearing & Cox, 2018). Findings further bring to the surface the beneficiaries' dissatisfaction because the project failed to deliver on its promises; they doubt if funding was enough for the project. In agreement, Scott and McGuire (2017) assert that delayed funding affects training duration, and this leads to poor results. Project funding delays due to processes and guidelines that have to be followed before the project funds are released. This process can take a while and causes delays in the delivery of funds to the beneficiaries. Moreover, findings further show that funding was sufficient to produce the desired results; however, the results on the ground are not a true reflection of the funding injected into the project. The finding is similar to the sudy of Manyakiso et al. (2009), where the project was unable to meet its goal because of unfulfilled financial promises. Similarly, Antwi-Agyei et al. (2015) add that inadequate funding is a significant obstacle to implementing development programs in most African nations.

The findings also pointed to beneficiaries' uncertainty about project sustainability due to unreasonable narrowing in the nomination of beneficiaries since it became clear that beneficiary selection was not transparent. The findings point to corruption and nepotism in beneficiary selection, thus resulting in demoralised project beneficiaries. This finding aligns with Ali and Sonderling (2017) that efforts to address inequalities and poverty challenges have not been sufficient due to a lack of participation from the relevant local communities, which contributes to the projects' failure. Further revealed that the inadequate training had a negative impact on beneficiaries as they could not cope with the climate change challenges. This inadequacy left beneficiaries with no skill to preserve seeds for the betterment of the project (Upadhyay and Inani, 2021). In consonance, Kamol (2011) adds that training boosted self-confidence and further broadened the stakeholders' competencies for successful project implementation.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Although training contributed significantly to farmers' output, nepotism and corruption played a significant role in the ultimate results of the project, as beneficiaries were not selected in a transparent manner. The much-anticipated skills acquisition through non-formal education could not result in project success, and this was because elderly and uneducated beneficiaries could not cope with the pace and the language used during training. It is also evident that the government has neglected its role in supporting beneficiaries, which resulted in poor project results. It is also apparent that funding was adequate, although it came late; the project results were affected as some of the activities were not executed. It can also be concluded that beneficiaries were not equipped with the necessary skills during training to overcome the climate change challenges, hence poor harvest. It is therefore recommended that beneficiary segmentation and selection should be done fairly and transparently to ensure that training is delivered appropriately to the most relevant beneficiaries. It is further recommended that the government should support NGOs initiatives in communities as these are meant for poverty alleviation, which is the mandate of every government to combat poverty. It is also recommended that project funding should be disbursed timely to ensure smooth implementation of the project.

7. Limitations and Recommendations for Further Study

The sample of the study was small, and only one project was identified. As a result, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to other similar projects. It is therefore highly recommended that several similar studies be conducted in different projects to understand if the identified challenges are identical to those of this particular study. One of the challenges was the language used, which hampered old illiterate beneficiaries from grasping the concepts of training, resulting in them losing interest in the project. Therefore, it will be paramount to investigate the role of language in the success of community-based projects. Furthermore, people behave and act differently in different projects, and the challenges may differ.

Conflict of Interest: Authors declare no conflict of interest whatsoever.

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