

**The role of community participation in the sustainability of water supply project in Gairo district, Tanzania**

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This study focused on assessing the role of community participation in the sustainability of water supply project at Gairo district in Morogoro region Tanzania. The study was guided by three research objectives: to determine the importance of community participation towards project sustainability, to identify approaches used in involving the community in undertaking the water supply project during implementation; and to find out the challenges facing water supply projects at community level. Principally, the study used a case study approach. Purposive sampling was used to select study villages and key informants while simple random sampling was used in the selection of respondents for questionnaire interview. Two villages: Mamuli and Kibedya were selected for the study due to their proximity to the project area. The study applied four methods of data collection; questionnaire interviews, in-depth interviews, observation and documentary reviews. Data collected were both qualitative and quantitative. The analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software (version 16.0). Findings are presented in the form of description, frequency tables, pie charts and graphs.

The results from the study show that, there were multiple causes for un-sustainability of water supply project in the study villages. The main cause of failure was nonparticipation of villagers in all stages of water projects (86.6%), poor maintenance of water supply infrastructures (15%) and theft of the project infrastructure (19%). So, the low community and leaders' participation in water supply projects brought about unsustainability of water supply project in the villages. The study recommends that, the government should prepare a clear and elaborate policy of community participation in water supply projects at the level of villages. Also, the government should take initiative and become very serious to district leaders should fail to participate during the implementation of water projects.